



Baseline Report – Step Change Window

Final Version

Evaluation Manager Girls' Education Challenge Fund-
January 2015





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This document has been approved for submission by Coffey's Project Director,
based on a review of satisfactory adherence to our policies on:

- Quality management
- HSSE and risk management
- Financial management and Value for Money (VfM)
- Personnel recruitment and management
- Performance Management and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Ben Ward, Project Director

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Ward", written over a horizontal line.



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance
BL Report	Baseline Report
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EM	Evaluation Manager
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GEC	Girls Education Challenge Fund
HHS	Household Survey
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDI	In-depth Interview
IDPs	Internally-Displaced Persons
IW	Innovation Window
ORB	Opinion Research Business
OOS	Out-Of-School
PbR	Payment by Results
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
RTI	RTI International
SBA	School-based assessment
SCW	Step Change Window
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SPW	Strategic Partnerships Window
SVS	School visit survey
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

US	United States of America
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USAID	United States Agency for International Development
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WPM	Words per Minute
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Project Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for project organisations in tables in this report:

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
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AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
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BRAC	BRAC
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Camfd	Campaign for Female Education
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CARE	CARE International
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CfBT	CfBT Education Trust
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ChHpe	ChildHope
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IRC	International Rescue Committee
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RI	Relief International
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PLAN	Plan International
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STC	Save the Children
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WUSC	World University Service of Canada
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WV	World Vision
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Country Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for countries in tables in this report:

Afg	Afghanistan
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DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
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Eth	Ethiopia
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Ken	Kenya
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Moz	Mozambique
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Sie	Sierra Leone
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Som	Somalia
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Tan	Tanzania
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Zim	Zimbabwe
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Z-T	Zimbabwe- Tanzania
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Executive Summary – Step Change Window

Background to the GEC Step Change Window

In 2012, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) launched the £355 million Girls' Education Challenge Fund (GEC) to support up to a million of the world's most marginalised girls to improve their lives through education. Within the Step Change Window (SCW), non-governmental organisations are being funded to quickly and effectively expand education opportunities for 650,000 girls at primary and secondary school levels.

Fifteen SCW projects were awarded funding of up to £30 million. They operate in Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. These projects plan to provide girls with access to education, materials, safe spaces and a 'voice'. They will also help to mobilise and build capacity within governments, communities and schools, for example, through training and mentoring teachers, governors and community leaders.

Purpose of the baseline report

DFID has appointed Coffey, in partnership with the University of East Anglia, RTI International and ORB as the Evaluation Manager (EM) of the GEC. The EM leads the independent evaluation of the GEC as a whole.

The GEC baseline research explored the scale and nature of educational marginalisation among girls in the project areas before the start of GEC programme activities. It measured girls' current education outcomes with respect to attendance, enrolment, retention and learning. It also explored potential barriers to girls' education, ranging from poverty and household economics through early marriage and pregnancy, cultural attitudes, and violence.

Research approach

The SCW baseline report draws on a wealth of primary data, collected by the projects and the EM. Projects commissioned independent baseline studies to inform the assessment of change at the project level. The EM reviewed and analysed the projects' baseline reports and datasets to prepare this overarching baseline report.

The EM also collected primary data across the 15 SCW project areas, including over 6400 household surveys, 800 qualitative interviews, school-based surveys and classroom observations, and 13,000 learning assessments of boys and girls using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and the Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) tools. The projects collected data from 30,000 household surveys and 31,000 learning assessments. The projects and the EM collected data from treatment and control areas to allow for the use of control groups in assessing the programme's effectiveness and impact.

Key findings

While a majority of girls are enrolled in school, many do not progress at the expected pace. On average across the window, the majority of girls are enrolled in school, with some variation between project areas. However, primary aged school girls tend to be enrolled one grade below their expected grade and secondary school aged girls tend to be two grades behind. Less than half of secondary aged girls are actually enrolled in secondary school. This supports GEC programme assumptions that girls face important obstacles to progressing at pace.

Learning test scores suggest that girls fall further behind expected benchmarks as they grow older and often fail to acquire basic skills. The EGRA test showed low average reading fluency levels among girls of primary and secondary age in virtually all project areas. Generally, girls only reach a basic level of reading comprehension when they enter secondary school and still lag several years behind international benchmarks in terms of their oral reading fluency scores. In some project areas, secondary aged girls were unable to demonstrate foundational mathematic skills. Especially for girls of secondary age these findings indicate a persistent level of educational marginalisation throughout their time in the school system.

Girls are not systematically more disadvantaged than boys in terms of enrolment or learning. The enrolment rates of girls are not systematically lower than those of boys in the SCW project areas. In some contexts, boys are less likely than girls to be enrolled in school. In terms of learning, boys tend to perform slightly higher than girls but

are equally far behind international benchmarks for their age group. It seems that gender gaps in learning are context-specific and that in certain contexts boys also experience degrees of educational marginalisation.

Conclusions

Poverty emerges as a critical structural factor that is dynamic and affects girls' education through a variety of pathways. Analysis of the GEC household survey shows direct and indirect relationships between poverty; intermediary factors such as material deprivation, poor housing, subjective wellbeing and household duties; and girls' enrolment and learning. It is clear that poverty is multifaceted, affects educational outcomes through various pathways, and is not static. Poverty often intensifies temporarily due to natural disruptions that dip agricultural household into acute hardship. If these affect girls at critical times during the school year, such as when school fees and costs must be paid, they can hinder enrolment and attendance during the rest of the year.

Social attitudes and practices such as early pregnancy and early marriage relate to wider economic, cultural and societal pressures and cannot be understood in isolation. Negative attitudes towards girls' education are not widespread across the SCW but they do hinder girls' enrolment and learning where they exist. The EM's qualitative research suggests that attitudes are shaped in relation to cultural beliefs about the role of women, accepted societal arrangements, and economic considerations. The EM qualitative research highlighted the persistence of beliefs whereby marriage should take priority over education in some communities. In some cases, such attitudes seem to stem from a realistic assessment of the pathways available to girls given the local circumstances and realities. It is important that projects recognise and address the structural factors that drive attitudes towards education and phenomena such as early pregnancy and early marriage, to understand what change can be achieved and how.

Various school-based barriers jointly shape the learning environment in school – and affect both boys and girls. In the EM school-based assessment, more than two thirds of schools reported a lack of teachers; the large majority of classrooms did not have electric lighting; and one in four schools reported problems with teacher absenteeism. The EM qualitative and quantitative research findings suggest that overcrowded classrooms, poor school facilities, and an unfriendly environment can hinder girls' learning. Many of these issues seem to be driven by structural problems such as a general under-resourcing of schools. Rather than being gender-specific, school-based barriers affect all children enrolled in school, and schools tend to be the more disadvantaged the more remote and the poorer the community in which they are located.

Findings on the role of violence and disability are inconclusive and more in-depth research is needed to understand how they influence girls' education. In the EM household survey, respondents rarely reported incidences of violence across the SCW. In the EM qualitative interviews, however, they stressed the severe effects that violence (including sexual, physical and psychological abuse) can have on girls' education when it occurs. There was also little clear evidence that disability acts as a barrier to education. This seems counterintuitive and may be due to a lack of understanding or under-reporting of the difficulties linked to living with a disability. These sensitive issues will be subject to additional in-depth thematic research using tailored methods and approaches.

Many barriers that hinder girls' education are interrelated and driven by a common set of structural problems, which projects need to understand better in order to achieve sustainable impact. Many barriers discussed in the report are symptoms or consequences of structural challenges such as a lack of resources in households, communities, schools and government; and social norms, beliefs and attitudes. It is important that projects distinguish symptoms and underlying drivers of educational marginalisation, and account for existing coping strategies to ensure that their interventions have a sustainable impact. This is important to reduce the risk that interventions will be confounded by barriers that projects are either unaware of or are unable to mitigate against in a strategic manner.

Projects have struggled to understand and address the complexity of educational marginalisation, which could limit the effectiveness of project interventions. There has been a tendency for definitions of barriers and target groups to overlap. For example, barriers such as poverty may affect girls with disabilities who may be part of a wider target group defined as 'the poor'. Projects have struggled to define in enough detail the relationships between social barriers to education and being marginalised from education in terms of being in school and learning. Those who defined their target groups in relatively narrow terms may find that their intervention design will be less effective than expected because they do not address the problems in their full complexity. Initially, some projects adapted their designs in response to their baseline findings while others have not.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the GEC Step Change Window

In 2012, the Department for International Development (DFID) launched the £355 million Girls' Education Challenge Fund (GEC). The GEC intends to support up to a million of the world's most marginalised girls to improve their lives through education. For this purpose the GEC operates through three distinct funding windows:

- the Step Change Window (SCW);
- the Innovation Window (IW); and
- the Strategic Partnerships Window (SPW).

Within the Step Change Window, non-governmental organisations aim to quickly and effectively expand education opportunities for 650,000 girls at primary and secondary level in nine focus countries. In January 2013, 15 Step Change Window projects were awarded funding of up to £30 million to complement existing support to education and demonstrate sustainability beyond the life of the GEC. These projects plan to provide girls with access to education, materials, safe spaces to learn and a 'voice'. They will help to mobilise and build capacity within governments, communities and schools through training and mentoring teachers, governors and community leaders. A more detailed overview of the different intervention types covered is presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1: Intervention Types in the SCW

Broad types of interventions	Descriptions of different types of interventions summarised by the Evaluation Manager
1. Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support transition (primary to secondary) • Individual access support for girls with disabilities
2. Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build / fund schools or classrooms • Build / fund alternative schools
3. Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage men /boys (mentor) • Engage champions / community facilitators / religious groups or leaders • Community intervention / mobilisation • Integrate religious teaching into formal education • Engage the private sector • Peer / female mentors
4. Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train school governors / School Management Committees on girls' education best practise • Monitoring & intervention • Establish School Management Committees • International school partnerships • School inspectors • Capacity support system • Policy development • School improvement / school development plans
5. Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life skills / leadership training • Formative assessment (literacy / numeracy) • Develop / extend curriculum • After-school / out-of-school tuition / Support Accelerated Learning Programme • Learning support • School readiness classes • English language programmes (e.g. language of instruction)
6. Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends funding • Other material support • Microfinance • Income generating activities with families • Solar lamps • Kits / materials • Deworming & vitamins

Broad types of interventions	Descriptions of different types of interventions summarised by the Evaluation Manager
7. Safe space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical infrastructure • Facilities / WASH / hygiene education • Anti-gender-based violence • Engage public sector child protection • Girl / boy friendly school • Girls study group • Clubs (child / parent) • Girls spaces
8. Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train / fund (general) teachers • Support psychological / health training • Support government training • Train / fund local teachers • Training para-educators (extend curricula)
9. Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio • Student represent / feedback • Child-led advocacy

1.2 Governance of the GEC evaluation

DFID has appointed Coffey, in partnership with the University of East Anglia, RTI International and ORB as the Evaluation Manager (EM) of the GEC. We are responsible for designing and implementing a rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to assess the effectiveness and impact of individual projects and the GEC as a whole. We will also generate and share lessons learned to inform the GEC design and wider DFID programming. [Table 2](#) below provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the different EM consortium partners.

Table 2: Role and responsibilities of the EM consortium partners

Consortium Partner	Role and key responsibilities
Coffey (Consortium Lead)	<p>Coffey is the overall lead of the EM consortium and responsible for the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Designing and delivering the overarching GEC evaluation strategy; ✓ Providing M&E support to the Fund Manager and individual projects; ✓ Analysis of EM primary data and reporting; and ✓ Sharing key findings and lessons learned.
ORB International	<p>ORB International manages the EM fieldwork and is responsible for the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Training interviewers and piloting research tools; ✓ Overseeing and managing local research partners to qualitative and quantitative data collection in SCW countries; ✓ Quality assurance and data verification; and ✓ Data collation, processing and cleaning.
RTI	<p>RTI are leading on the design of the learning assessment tools (EGRA and EGMA). Their responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Training interviewers in the use of EGRA/EGMA tests; ✓ Processing and cleaning of learning assessment data; and ✓ Peer reviewing and quality assuring the EM analysis of educational outcomes (led by Coffey).
UEA	<p>UEA and its leading experts in the field of gender and international development support the evaluation through the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical lead on the design and implementation of the GEC thematic research; and ✓ Peer reviewing the EM research and analysis (led by Coffey).

We closely collaborate with the GEC Fund Manager (PwC) to ensure that projects generate high quality data, and report results with a minimum level of consistency across the fund. The Fund Manager has played a key role in developing M&E processes and requirements at the project level, and in managing relationships with projects. [Table 3](#) shows the activities carried out by the Fund Manager with regards to M&E in the GEC.

Table 3: Role of the FM with regards to M&E

FM Consortium Lead	Role and key responsibilities with regards to M&E
PwC	<p>The FM is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the GEC, including managing relationships with projects and partners. With regards to M&E, the FM has played a key role in the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developing M&E processes and requirements at the project level (e.g. required sample sizes, target setting, methodological guidance on measuring key outcomes); ✓ Providing support and capacity building to strengthen projects’ M&E designs; ✓ Formal sign-off of project M&E frameworks and logframes; ✓ Developing reporting tools (including the outcome spreadsheet); and ✓ Ongoing work with projects to rectify data inconsistencies and methodological issues.

1.3 The GEC Evaluation Strategy

The overarching purpose of the GEC Evaluation Strategy is to apply a rigorous approach to evaluation that produces reliable evidence that DFID, the FM and projects can use to inform improvements to the GEC programme during its lifetime and beyond; and to influence wider policy change among DFID’s partners and policy-makers to maximise the benefits achieved from the GEC through transformational change at a global scale.

For the SCW, the GEC Evaluation Strategy sets out a combination of project-led research and EM-led research that is conducted in both intervention areas, and in matched control areas to enable a counterfactual evaluation of the effects and impact of project activities and the GEC as a whole at midline and endline. As part of the project-led research, projects are required to:

- Commission an independent evaluator to undertake baseline research and an evaluation at the midline and endline stages;
- Identify intervention groups and matching control or comparison groups either in the form of schools or communities that have not been exposed to the project’s activities;
- Collect a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to support all three phases of the evaluation, including a longitudinal household survey of intervention and control communities;
- Test learning outcomes i.e. literacy and numeracy; and
- Produce a baseline report (2014) and impact evaluation reports at the midline (2015) and endline (2016) stages of the project.

The project-led research is complemented by extensive EM-led primary research to validate the scale of impact achieved by SCW projects, and assess the overall effectiveness, value for money and impact of the GEC as a whole. As part of the EM-led research we deliver the following activities:

- Conduct complementary primary research at the baseline, midline and endline stages, covering both intervention and control areas across the 15 SCW projects. This research includes a longitudinal household survey and qualitative In-depth-Interviews (IDIs);
- Conduct standard learning assessments at baseline, midline and endline stages with girls identified through the household survey;
- Follow up on the household survey and learning tests with a school visit to confirm enrolment, obtain attendance data and to contextualise the girls’ learning outcomes in comparison to their peers;
- Carry out school-based research in 200 intervention and control schools across seven SCW project areas, including classroom observations, teacher surveys and learning assessment with boys and girls; and
- Produce baseline reports and midline and endline evaluation reports for the SCW.

The timescales for key evaluation activities for the SCW are shown in [Table 4](#) below.

Table 4: Timescales for key evaluation activities in the SCW

Project/EM	Key Evaluation Activities for the SCW	Key Timelines
1. Baseline		
EM	Development of research instruments and templates	February – March 2013
EM, projects	Adaptation of EGRA/EGMA tools	March 2013 – June 2014
EM	Training for EGRA/EGMA	July – November 2013
EM	Review SCW project M&E frameworks & sampling frames	April 2013 – December 2013
Projects	Project fieldwork, data analysis and reporting	March 2013 – January 2014
EM	EM fieldwork (quantitative & qualitative)	April 2013 – June 2014
EM	EM data analysis and reporting	March 2014 – January 2015
2. Midline		
EM	Update quantitative research instrument	January – March 2015
EM	EGRA/EGMA test piloting and adaptation	March 2014 – January 2015
EM	EM fieldwork (quantitative only)	July 2015 – January 2016
Projects	Project fieldwork, data analysis and reporting	May 2015 – March 2016
EM	EM data analysis and reporting	November 2015 – June 2016
3. Endline		
EM	Submission of the final GEC evaluation report	June 2017
<i>(Detailed time scales for the endline evaluation are still to be confirmed.)</i>		

1.4 Purpose of this baseline report

The GEC baseline research aims to measure current education outcomes of girls in the project areas and to assess potential barriers to education to capture the scale and nature of educational marginalisation. Project baselines (based on project-led research) will be used to assess change at the project level. The EM baselines will be used to assess change across the SCW as a whole. The purpose of this baseline report is to present the key findings from the project baseline research and the EM's complementary data collection and analysis in order to:

- Assess the extent to which girls in project areas across the Step Change Window are educationally marginalised at baseline with respect to attendance, enrolment, retention and learning outcomes;
- Explore the prevalence and importance of various potential barriers to girls' education and test projects' assumptions about these barriers;
- Review how projects defined marginalisation, identified their target groups; and whether the baseline evidence supports their targeting strategies; and
- Provide an overview of the extent to which projects proceeded to adapt their project design in light of their baseline findings.

This baseline report has been informed by 15 individual project baseline reports and the reanalysis of evidence from 6400 household surveys, 800 In-Depth-Interviews (IDIs) and 13,000 learning assessments that were conducted by the EM and ORB in the intervention and control areas of the 15 SCW projects in Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe between May 2013 and July 2014.

1.5 Structure of this baseline report

This baseline report is structured around the GEC research questions, as shown in [Table 5](#) below.

Table 5: Key Baseline Research Questions and Structure of the Report

Key Baseline Research Questions	Report Sections addressing Questions
1. To what extent are target girls educationally marginalised?	Section 3 – Educational outcomes at baseline
1.1 To what extent are girls attending school?	
1.2 What are girls' current learning outcomes?	
1.3 Does the evidence confirm target girls are educationally marginalised?	
2. What are the barriers to girls attending school and learning?	Section 4 – Barriers to girls' education at baseline
2.1 What are the barriers to girls attending school?	
2.2 What are the barriers to girls learning?	
2.3 What did the projects assume to be the barriers to girls' education in their target areas?	
2.4 Does the evidence confirm the expected barriers?	
3. Does the evidence support project targeting and project design?	Section 5 – Project targeting and changes to project design
3.1 How have the projects defined marginalisation (social and educational)?	
3.2 How have the projects defined their target groups?	
3.3 Has the baseline evidence influenced project intervention design?	
4. Does the evidence support effective project evaluation?	Section 6 – Projects' evidence and effective evaluation
4.1 Which challenges did the projects face during baseline?	
4.2 Will projects' evidence support counterfactual analysis of impact?	

[Section 2](#) presents our approach to answering the above-mentioned questions and introduces the different streams and types of data underpinning the baseline analysis. [Section 3](#) focuses on the extent to which girls targeted by SCW projects are found to be educationally marginalised at baseline in terms of their enrolment, retention, attendance and learning outcomes. [Section 4](#) provides an in-depth analysis of barriers to girls' education. [Section 5](#) describes how projects have defined marginalisation and what groups they specifically target through their interventions. [Section 5](#) also discusses baseline challenges and the extent to which the evidence collected by projects supports counterfactual analysis of their impact. [Section 6](#) presents our conclusions and recommendations.

2 Methodology

This section provides an overview of the data sources and methodology that underpin the analysis presented in this report. In [Section 2.1](#), we provide a brief outline of the field work carried out by the EM. [Section 2.2](#) introduces the different streams of evidence collected by the projects and the EM that inform this report. [Section 2.3](#) explains our approach to measuring baseline outcomes, and [Section 2.5](#) briefly describe the methodology and analytical framework used to analyse how various barriers affect these education outcomes.

2.1 Approach to delivering EM-led baseline fieldwork

The SCW baseline fieldwork was managed by our consortium partner ORB International. In each individual country, ORB worked with local research partners that were responsible for recruiting quantitative and qualitative interviewers and supervisors and overseeing the fieldwork. In [Annex B](#) we provide a detailed discussion of the methodology and processes that we used to carry out this fieldwork, covering issues such as: sampling; interviewer training and piloting; field work supervisions; non-response and managing the burden on respondents (see [Annex B, Section 2](#)). Key points from this discussion are summarised in [Table 6](#) (below).

Table 6: Overview of Coffey’s and ORB’s approach to delivering the EM baseline fieldwork

Methodological issue	EM approach to delivering this aspect of the baseline fieldwork	Reference to Annex B (for more details)
Research permissions	ORB’s local partners used standard country-specific protocols in most countries to obtain research permissions. They generally obtained permission from the National Bureau of Statistics. Where research took place in schools (i.e. school visits; school-based assessments) we also sought permission from the Ministries of Education.	Annex B – Section 2.2
Sampling approach (general)	<p>We defined the overall population in each project area (sample universe) based on a list of project intervention and control locations supplied by the projects (for more details on the responsibilities of projects and the EM in the sampling process, see Table 51 in Section 5.3.1). The projects used templates provided by the EM to prepare sampling frames, which were quality assured by the EM (except for that of Camfed). For the EM household surveys, we selected 40 locations in each project area, and surveyed 10 households in each of these giving a target sample of 400 interviews per project area (and 600 in the case of Camfed project areas which cover two countries). There was no clustering above the sample point so the sample as a whole is representative of the underlying GEC populations (giving equal weight to each project context).</p> <p>We typically drew the sample using a fixed interval and random starting point across the list of project locations. Intervention and control locations were treated as distinct listings. The resulting sample was reasonably proportional by region and district relative to the number of project locations. We used selection based on equal probabilities for each location as our default approach. Households were sampled using a random walk approach based on identification of landmarks and alternating selection of central and peripheral landmarks as start points.</p> <p>Qualitative In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were completed in about 14% of the sampling points chosen for the quantitative sample.</p>	Annex B – Section 2.3
Sampling approach (intervention and control)	Half of the sampling points in each project area were drawn from intervention locations and half from control locations. Where intervention and control locations were randomised, we sampled systematically to ensure that control locations are representative of the whole. In some projects, control locations were identified by the project on an ad hoc or informal matching basis and in relatively small numbers. In these instances the control samples were selected around the requirements of the project.	Annex B – Section 2.3.1

Interviewer training	ORB and RTI jointly trained interviewers and supervisors in administering the survey questionnaire and the EGRA/EGMA tests. Training sessions took place over a two-week period in each country's capital city and covered a range of subjects including field methodology, questionnaire review, quality control, and pilot test review as well as detailed training on the EGRA/EGMA testing.	Annex B – Section 2.4.3
Pilot testing	Teams completed two full days of piloting in each country. Both quantitative and qualitative research teams participated in the pilot.	Annex B – Section 2.4.4
Non-response	We did not experience high rates of ineligible households or household refusals in any of the nine countries. On average only 2% of the contacted households refused to participate in the interview.	Annex B – Section 2.5
Supervision of field work and quality control	A team of supervisors oversaw the fieldwork and undertook quality controls. The supervisors checked all of the questionnaires after they had been filled in. They accompanied at least 10% of the interviews conducted by each interviewer, checking that the correct instructions and procedures were being followed. Team supervisors were also required to back-check approximately 20 per cent of all interviews conducted by each interviewer.	Annex B – Section 2.6
Respondent burden	We reduced the burden on respondents by not testing boys in households and streamlining the questionnaire during testing. We have not used any inducements anywhere.	N/A

2.2 Different streams of evidence

This section introduces the different streams of evidence that we reviewed and analysed to inform this baseline report.

2.2.1 Project data

The GEC Evaluation Strategy requires all SCW projects to carry out qualitative and quantitative baseline research that must cover their intervention areas as well as matching control areas where no project activities will take place. All 15 projects conducted a household survey using a standard survey template that was provided by the EM and aligned with the questionnaire used for the EM household survey. Projects were able to adapt or amend this questionnaire to fit their specific intervention context, target groups or information needs. All of the 15 projects tested the literacy and numeracy skills of a sample of girls in their intervention and control groups, either as part of the household survey or through school-based learning assessments. In addition, projects conducted qualitative research and were encouraged to draw on existing sources of secondary data.

The resulting evidence that projects gathered through their baseline research is documented and reported in three different formats:

- The **project baseline reports** present evidence, key findings, and lessons learned from the projects' self-directed baseline research. Projects were encouraged to review their assumptions about target groups, educational outcomes and barriers based on these findings. The baseline reports were also intended to present representative and precise measures of attendance and learning for the projects' target groups.

However, the projects did not consistently report the same standardised outcome indicators. This makes it difficult to aggregate their findings at the SCW level. Project baseline reports were supplied to the Evaluation Manager by the Fund Manager between November 2013 and August 2014.

- In their **outcome spreadsheets**, projects consistently capture key outcome data, and report on progress against targets for learning and attendance. At baseline, all projects were required to submit the baseline levels for attendance, literacy and numeracy to the Fund Manager, based on their baseline research findings. The outcome levels had to be reported in a relatively standard format and disaggregated by school grade (subject to some variation in the learning assessments used), which enables comparisons and reporting across the SCW. Projects were also required to report on enrolment but without breaking

down by school grade¹. The outcome spreadsheets do not contain any data on retention, or gender differences in learning. Outcome spreadsheets were retrieved from the Fund Manager portal between 16 April and 6 May 2014.

- The **project datasets** were generally expected to compile the evidence gathered through the projects' household surveys and learning assessments, which would form the core of the project baseline reports. The EM has carried out an independent, renewed analysis of this data for a selected number of key outcomes where the relevant information was available, documented and comparable. This "reanalysis" aimed to cross-check and verify the figures and findings presented by the projects in their baseline reports. In addition, the reanalysis can fill gaps where projects have not commented on all outcomes in their baseline reports even though they have collected the relevant data.

The EM used a systematic approach to extracting any relevant information from the different sources of project data. As part of this process, the EM also consulted design documents such as the project proposals, M&E frameworks and logframes. Details on the methodological approach are provided in [Annex B, Section 1](#). A detailed list of all the documents consulted is provided in [Annex G](#). Project-level information and analysis are presented in the form of detailed individual project profiles that can be referred to in [Annexes D1-D15](#).

2.2.2 Evaluation Manager data

The EM-led baseline research complemented the data collection activities of the individual projects and generated additional evidence to deliver the learning and accountability objectives of the programme evaluation. This section introduces the different research activities carried out by the EM at baseline, and the evidence produced.

- The EM completed the first out of three planned waves of **longitudinal quantitative household surveys (HHS)** between May 2013 and July 2014. In each of the 15 SCW project areas, local enumerators conducted on average 400 structured interviews with randomly selected households. The surveys collected information about one randomly selected girl aged 5-15² in the household, her family, living conditions and school situation. While the majority of survey questions were answered by the girl's primary caregiver, the girl herself took part in a short, child-friendly interview and in the learning assessment. The local interviewers used a consistent questionnaire and learning assessment template across all of the surveyed areas, which had been developed by the EM and translated into the relevant local languages. The household surveys were followed up with visits to the girl's school (if she was reported to be enrolled and if consent was given by the primary caregiver) to verify details about her enrolment and attendance.³

The EM worked closely with each project to develop complementary sampling frameworks for the selection of respondent households. Typically, the project identified a sampling framework that was representative of their target populations and consisted of treatment and control communities (sampling points). The EM then drew samples by randomly assigning sampling points into two separate samples so that the EM and the project could conduct household surveys independent of each other (for a more detailed description of our sampling approach, see [Table 6, Section 5.3](#) and [Annex B, Section 2.3](#)).

The EM household survey samples were typically not as large as those achieved by the individual projects. They were not primarily designed to verify project results, although they do support the broader evaluation of project results. Rather, the EM survey is intended to benchmark, complement and supplement project data by capturing the characteristics of girls and their households in a way that is consistent and comparable across the SCW, providing core data for the aggregate analysis of educational outcomes, barriers and impacts at the window level. Moreover, the EM surveys are representative of the general population living in a target community rather than specific target groups that the projects may have

¹ The outcome spreadsheets were initially designed to capture those key outcomes that are subject to payment by results (PbR). These included attendance and learning, but not enrolment and retention. However, outcome spreadsheets are now to be filled in by all projects, regardless of whether they have a PbR component or not.

² In Tanzania and Zimbabwe, a portion of the sample included girls aged 13-17 (general) and girls aged 13-17 who had completed primary school through P4 and had received a bursary.

³ A slightly different methodology was adopted for Camfed (Tanzania & Zimbabwe). Here, surveys were conducted in the home communities of secondary school girls that received bursaries. The samples were slightly larger than in other project areas, combining a random selection of households with a sample of households that accommodated bursary girls (not exclusively project beneficiaries) who were identified with the help of local communities.

focused on in their baseline research. This enables the EM data to support a broader view by identifying and monitoring unanticipated sub-groups that may be marginalised or otherwise of interest.

- **The EM school visit survey (SVS):** To complete the quantitative school sample, ORB's local teams completed two-part surveys in selected schools. Interviewers visited all schools identified as being attended by the randomly selected girls at the household level. They completed a survey with the school's administrator and with each individual girl's teacher if relevant records were kept by teachers.
- The **EM school-based assessment (SBA)** complemented the data collected through the EM household survey with school-based research about levels of literacy and numeracy among boys and girls and the learning conditions in a selection of schools associated with SCW projects in Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and the DRC. At each school, local teams completed one observation of the school facilities, two classroom observations, two teacher surveys, and 32 EGRA and EGMA assessments with boys and girls in primary 2 (P2) and primary 4 (P4) grades. The classroom observations aimed to assess the patterns of boys' and girls' participation in class, their interaction with each other and the teacher. The teacher survey addressed attitudes towards the education of girls and the political-economy of the education system in the district in which the school is based. The SBA allowed us to identify factors in and around school that could potentially hinder girls' learning. A detailed discussion of our findings on school-based barriers is provided in [Section 4](#).
- In all fifteen SCW project areas we carried out **qualitative In-Depth-Interviews (IDIs)** with a randomly selected subset of primary caregivers who had participated in the EM household survey, as well as with a small number of community leaders and teachers. On average around 54 families, community leaders and teachers were interviewed within each project area (for an in-depth discussion of our qualitative fieldwork methodology, see [Annex B, Section 2](#)). The qualitative data gathered through these interviews provides detailed and nuanced information about these respondents' attitudes and perceptions about girls' education and the factors that influence whether girls are able to be in school and learn (see our discussion on the barriers to girls' education in [Section 4](#)).

Given the multiple sources of information, there is no definitive stream of evidence for either outcomes or barriers that takes precedence. Instead, we present evidence from all available sources, discuss the implications and review the consistency of findings across sources in order to inform the overall assessment. [Table 7](#) provides an overview of the streams of evidence upon which we based our analysis of outcomes and barriers.

Box 1: A note on the ownership of GEC data

The GEC data is being collected by the EM and by projects based on the contractual understanding that it would become the intellectual property of the DFID as the donor funding this research, and be eventually released into the public domain. This requires that the data be anonymised and made available in suitable form to DFID.

Currently, project baseline data is uploaded to a web-based location hosted by the EM on behalf of DFID. In theory this data is primarily lodged as a "frozen" version of the evidence used to measure baseline change. However, a final version of all waves of data, including both project and EM data, will become available to DFID after the EM has finished processing the data and applied thorough disclosure controls.

Responsibility for anonymising project datasets rests with the projects themselves, and they are explicitly required to deliver anonymised data. However, the ultimate responsibility for disclosure control will be retained by DFID upon defining the mechanism for the release of the GEC data to the public domain.

Table 7: Overview of the streams of evidence used to inform the analysis presented in this report

Subject of analysis		Data sources used for analysis							
		Project Data				EM Data			
		Baseline Report	Project Data	Outcome spreadsheet	Full Project Proposal	Household Survey	School Visits	SBA ¹ (4 countr.)	Qualitative IDIs ²
Being in school	Attendance	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
	Enrolment	✓	✓			✓			
	Retention	✓	✓			✓			
	Gender gaps					✓			
Learning	Literacy	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
	Numeracy	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
	Gender gaps					✓		✓	
Targeting	Declared target groups	✓			✓				
	Samples achieved	✓				✓			
	Outcomes of target groups	✓	✓			✓			✓
Barriers	Barriers assumed	✓			✓				✓
	Evidence on barriers	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Design	Initial design	✓			✓				
	Changes to design	✓							

Notes: 1. "SBA" refers to the EM's school-based assessment. These were carried out in four out of nine SCW countries, namely DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sierra Leone. 2. "Qualitative IDIs" refers to the EM's qualitative In-Depth-Interviews.

2.3 Approach to measuring and reporting baseline outcomes

2.3.1 Measuring Enrolment, Attendance and Retention

As part of analysing outcome levels at baseline we assessed the extent to which girls across the SCW are being in school. We looked at a combination of three dimensions that come together in order for girls to 'be and stay in school', which are enrolment, attendance and retention. Below we provide a brief discussion of the methodology used by the EM, and by projects to measure each of these outcomes at baseline.⁴

#1 Enrolment

In this report, we examine enrolment levels at baseline through a number of different measures. Firstly, we report a **basic enrolment rate** that is defined as the proportion of girls in a population who are currently enrolled in school, regardless of the grade or school phase that they are enrolled in. This enrolment rate can be disaggregated for different age groups. In addition, we report **net primary and secondary enrolment rates**. These show the percentages of girls at primary or secondary age, who are actually enrolled in primary or secondary school,

⁴ We report results for sub-groups by age (lower primary, upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary). These age sub-groups are based on actual age (5-7, 8-10, 11-13 and 14-15 and 16+) for EM analysis and for reanalysis of project data, but for project reporting and PbR sources the breakdown may reflect grade structures in that school entry and transition ages and grade repetition levels vary.

respectively. Finally, we compare basic enrolment rates between boys and girls to assess **gender gaps in enrolment**.

#1.1 Enrolment measured by projects

Enrolment indicators are not used for Payment by Results and projects did not receive any binding guidance on how to measure and report on enrolment levels. Nevertheless, projects were required to report on enrolment in their outcome spreadsheet with no disaggregation by age or school grade. We therefore do not present these figures in our discussion of outcome levels in [Section 3.1.1](#), but they can be consulted in [Annex C, Table 8](#) and in the project profiles ([Annexes D1-D15](#)).

#1.2 Enrolment measured by the EM

The EM collected information on enrolment through the household survey and the school visit survey. In the household survey the primary caregivers provided information on the current enrolment status of every child in the household aged between 5 and 15. Additional questions were asked about the selected girl i.e. what grade she was enrolled in at the time of the interview, and whether she had ever been enrolled in school, in case she was said to be currently out of school. The school visit survey was used to check that girls who had been reported as being currently enrolled by their primary caregiver during the EM household survey were actually enrolled in the reported school. Findings from this validation of enrolment are shown in [Table 8](#) in [Annex C](#) for project areas in which school visit data was collected.

When calculating net enrolment rates, we accounted for the official country-specific school starting ages that are shown in [Table 8](#). In DRC, for instance primary school officially starts at the age of six and lasts for six years, while in Ethiopia primary school starts at the age of seven and lasts eight years.

Table 8: Official school ages per grade, and duration of primary and secondary school cycles by country

In years	Afgh	DRC	Eth	Ken	Moz	Sie	Som	Zim	Tan
Grade 1	7	6	7	6	6	6	6	7	7
Grade 2	8	7	8	7	7	7	7	8	8
Grade 3	9	8	9	8	8	8	8	9	9
Grade 4	10	9	10	9	9	9	9	10	10
Grade 5	11	10	11	10	10	10	10	11	11
Grade 6	12	11	12	11	11	11	11	12	12
Grade 7	13	12	13	12	12	12	12	13	13
Grade 8	14	13	14	13	13	13	13	14	14
Grade 9	15	14	15	14	14	14	14	15	15
Grade 10	16	15	16	15	15	15	15	16	16
Grade 11	17	16	17	16	16	16	16	17	17
Grade 12	18	17	18	17	17	17	17	18	18
Grade 13								19	19

Notes: Primary school grades shaded in light orange (◐); Secondary-school grades are shaded in darker orange (◑). Entrance age of primary is the age at which students would enter primary education, assuming they had started at the official entrance age for the lowest level of education, had studied full-time throughout and had progressed through the system without repeating or skipping a grade.

Source: For official starting ages: World Bank Development Indicators; UNESCO statistics; USAID Demographics and Health Survey (DHS). For school system information: UNESCO.

An additional indicator of interest is whether girls face gender-based disadvantages in enrolment compared with boys. We therefore measure **gender gaps in enrolment** as the difference in enrolment rates between boys and girls. We used information provided by the primary caregiver about the enrolment status of all children between 5 and 15 living in the surveyed household, to generate the percentage of boys and girls who are enrolled. For the purpose of this analysis, we also considered data from so-called boy-only households so that we reached a sample of 10,508 girls and 8,252 boys.

#2 Attendance

In this report, we report attendance levels as the average proportion of school days on which enrolled girls attend school. While the enrolment rate gives a sense of girls' initial access to education, the attendance rate captures whether girls actually go to school on a regular basis.

#2.1 Attendance measured by projects

During the pre-baseline stage, projects received methodological guidance from the Fund Manager on how to measure and report on attendance levels as a key indicator used for Payment by Results. Projects are not strictly required to collect attendance data from a cohort of girls to be tracked longitudinally, but may report average attendance levels in intervention and control schools. They are required to collect attendance data from school registration systems in preferably all intervention and control schools, but at least in a sample of 50%. At baseline, projects were required to collect historical registration data from the previous year (or the previous quarter if attendance data for the previous year was not available), and to then follow up with regular spot-checks. The school-based attendance data is reported in the projects' outcome spreadsheets.

Most SCW projects included a survey question on self-reported attendance in their longitudinal household survey which is similar to the question included in the EM household survey. However, the EM's reanalysis of project data could not always identify these variables in the dataset.

#2.2 Attendance measured by the EM

The EM estimated the attendance rate by using information about the girl's attendance in school that was provided by the primary caregiver during the EM household survey. We coded a 90% attendance rate for the girl if the primary caregiver stated that the girl had attended school on "most days" over the course of the year. We coded a 75% attendance rate where it was stated that the girl had attended more than half the time⁵; 50% if it was stated she attended about half the time; and 25% if it was stated she had attended less than half the time.

The EM conducted follow-up school visits to collect additional information about the attendance of girls that were surveyed in the households (see [Section 2.2.2](#)) to cross-check and validate the self-reported attendance rates. In the contexts where school visits were carried out⁶, 98% of the caregivers agreed to a check of the information that they had provided about the selected girl (1.0% refused and 0.8% responded that they did not know when asked to provide consent).

The school visit survey collected information about the attendance of the girl over a period of time since the start of the most recent school year, namely the days attended (so far) and possible days of attendance (so far), to calculate an attendance rate. For some school visits, the school year had only just started and the number of days so far was relatively small. Where this was the case and there was plausible equivalent information from the preceding year, we used the preceding year's figures. When comparing the self-reported attendance rates with the school-based information, we found a relatively high level of consistency with figures from both sources differing by only 4% on average. A more detailed discussion of the findings from this validation exercise is provided in [Section 3.1.1, Box 5](#).

We also measure differences in attendance between boys and girls. To this end, we compare the attendance rates reported by the primary caregiver for the randomly selected girl with the rates reported for one randomly selected boy in the same household. This comparison is available for all project areas, apart from those in Afghanistan. This is because of the way in which the survey questionnaire was shortened in Afghanistan to reduce its complexity and length, and allow for the use of paper-and-pencil questionnaires instead of computer-assisted questionnaires (please see [Annex B](#) for more details on the rationale for using paper-and-pencil questionnaires in Afghanistan).

#3 Retention

#3.1 Retention measured by projects

Projects are not required to report systematically on retention and this outcome is not captured in the outcome spreadsheet. Nevertheless, a few projects included measures of retention in their baseline reports, or project datasets. Where year-on-year retention rates were available, they are included in the relevant project profile (see [Annexes D1-D15](#)).

⁵ We recognise that the coding of self-reported attendance involves a value-judgement on the part of the EM. We have therefore applied a sensitivity test to assess the extent to which changes in coding affect the measurement of attendance. We calculated alternative attendance rates based on coding "attending more than half of the time" as 60% attendance instead of 75% and found that the measured attendance rates differed only marginally, with an average variation below 1% on SCW average (within each age group). The attendance rates resulting from both coding approaches can be compared in [Section 3.1.1, Box 5](#).

⁶ School visit surveys were conducted in all SCW project areas, except Camfed project areas and project areas in Afghanistan.

#3.2 Retention measured by the EM

Since longitudinal data about the girls' educational trajectories is not yet available at baseline, we calculated year-on-year retention rates for girls of different ages that are the proportion of girls who were enrolled in one school year and who also enrolled in the following school year. We derived these year-on-year retention rates from the responses provided by the surveyed care givers about the girls' enrolment at the time of the survey, and in the previous year. This simple year-on-year retention rate can also be understood as the inverse of the year-on-year drop-out rate. We also measure the ratio of the enrolment rate in the last year of primary school in relation to the enrolment rate in the first year of primary school. Retention rates are an indicator of longer term trends in enrolment.

Retention comparisons by gender were not available at baseline as relevant information on enrolment in the previous year was not systematically collected from boys in the households. However, differences in enrolment of boys and girls by age give a reasonable guide to likely differences in retention and we will carry out more detailed analysis of retention (for both genders) as new waves of GEC data become available at the midline and endline. This data will also allow us to examine individual learning trajectories and compare girls' enrolment status at different points in time and to reconstruct retention based on actual enrolment status rather than on recalled past status.

2.3.2 Measuring Learning

Learning, in addition to being in school, is the second of the GEC's key outcomes. Throughout this report we use the term "learning" to describe girls' progress in school and the acquisition of new skills and knowledge in relatively broad terms. However when measuring learning as a GEC outcome in [Section 3](#) we apply a more specific definition of learning as "a change in ability over time" in literacy (i.e. reading and reading comprehension), and numeracy (i.e. mathematical and logical) skills. At baseline, learning therefore represents the current measured level of ability or skill from which we expect to measure change at successive measurement points. In other words measuring learning in this report is not measuring a process or change, but a single measurement which captures prior learning progress up to the point of baseline.

#1 Learning assessment tools used by projects

The GEC Evaluation Strategy requires all SCW projects to assess the literacy and numeracy skills of a cohort of girls in their target areas as well as in control areas at different stages of the GEC's life cycle (i.e. at baseline, midline and endline) to document the girls' learning outcomes. Projects conducted the learning assessments either alongside the household survey or in schools. They were able to choose their preferred option from a range of international standardised learning assessment tools taking advice from their independently commissioned evaluators. The Fund Manager provided support during this decision process and the Evaluation Manager provided support where sequencing allowed for adoption of EGRA / EGMA if this was the preferred approach. The tools selected by projects were:

- **ASER** – One project (ACTED Afghanistan) is using the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) tool that was developed in India to test children aged 6-16 years. The ASER literacy test assesses literacy skills at several levels of difficulty, including reading letters, reading words, reading a short paragraph and reading a longer story. The Maths assessment tool equally tests several levels of difficulty including one-digit number recognition (1-9), two-digit number recognition (11-99), two-digit subtraction with carry over and three-digit by one-digit division. Children are marked at the highest level which they can perform comfortably. ACTED's ASER test assigned girls to a competency level between 1 and 5 for reading, and 1 and 7 for maths. ASER has been administered annually in India since 2005 and in Pakistan since 2008.
- **EGRA & EGMA** – A majority of SCW projects use a variant of the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and the Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) tool. They were developed to assess girls' basic foundational skills in literacy and numeracy in early grades (i.e. 1 to 4). EGRA has been administered to children in over 44 developing countries and across more than 30 languages.

During the EGRA test, girls perform a number of oral tasks such as recognising letters, reading simple words, reading sentences and paragraphs, and reading comprehension. During the EGMA test, girls identify numbers, distinguish different quantities, identify missing numbers, complete number patterns, and perform basic addition and subtraction exercises. Additional subtasks involving advanced addition, subtraction, division and multiplication were given only to the best performing students. The FM's PbR

guidance required all projects using the EGMA test to report a score out of 100 in their outcome spreadsheets, weighting each subtasks equally, and to clearly report and agree on any deviations from this methodology.

- **Uwezo** – Uwezo means ‘capability’ in Kiswahili and was originally developed for use in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It was designed to assess whether children of primary school age can perform literacy and numeracy skills at a primary grade 2 level of difficulty. Uwezo is based on the ASER tool and its results are usually displayed as the competency level reached, from 1 (nothing) to 5, 6 or 7 depending on the test used. Three projects in East Africa (i.e. Kenya and Somalia) are using adapted Uwezo tests in the GEC.
- **National Test** – Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) assessed girls’ literacy (i.e. English) and numeracy skills using a test that was designed by national examination boards in Tanzania and Zimbabwe based on Form 2 national examinations.

Several SCW projects adapted standard versions of Uwezo or EGRA/EGMA to fit the specific age groups or grade levels that they target, and their language of instruction. As a result, there are limits to the comparability of results even among projects using the same type of test. Some projects reported oral reading fluency subtask results as a number of words per minute achieved while others reported levels, or a percentage of correct scores.

#2 Learning assessment tools used by the EM

As part of the EM household survey, the EM tested the literacy and numeracy skills of the selected girls using the EGRA/EGMA tool:

- **Literacy** – We considered girls’ performance on each EGRA subtask (i.e. letter recognition, oral reading, reading comprehension, etc.) to calculate an integrated score that is then rescaled to the oral reading fluency score considered as an absolute reference of literacy ability. In doing this we take all the available information from the different subtasks into account. This allows us to capture subtle difference in levels of ability at the lower end of the distribution better than if we used a simple oral reading score, while keeping the score interpretable in terms of word-per-minute oral reading ability. For a detailed description of the methodology used calculate the integrated EGRA score, see [Sections 4.3.1](#) and [4.4](#) of the methodological [Annex B](#)).
- **Numeracy** – We have aggregated the scores that girls achieved across different EGMA subtasks into an aggregate EGMA score scaled from 1 to 100. Students having answered all core subtasks correctly in the given time (with no time remaining) were given a score of 100. Many students had some time remaining and best-performers were given additional subtasks. This explains why we may observe EGMA scores higher than 100.

The EM learning assessments were carried out with the girls selected in each of the surveyed households. In addition, we carried out school-based learning assessments with boys and girls in primary grades 2 and 4 at a sample of selected schools in DRC, Kenya, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone in order to assess gender differences in learning outcomes.

Box 2: The challenge of comparing literacy scores across different languages

In preparation for the EM learning assessments, the EGRA and EGMA templates were adapted for the language in which the project intended to measure an increase in literacy, which was generally the language of instruction. Core texts were adapted rather than simply translated, using a corpus of texts that represent similar levels of difficulty in different languages. It is worth noting that the adaptation of the EGRA tool and its administration in different languages and contexts places a limit on the comparability of literacy scores across contexts.

While research on the early development of reading skills suggests that all children move through the same stages when learning how to read, the pace at which they move through these stages differs by language and the degree of orthographic complexity. Moreover, it is difficult to validate that translation and adaptation efforts do not cause any changes to the degree of difficulty of a given test, which would change the meaning of the test scores. These challenges notwithstanding, a tool such as EGRA still allows us to assess to what extent children of a given age or grade are able to read, and to compare these findings across countries.

In addition, extra analytical work has been undertaken for the GEC baseline to develop EGRA scores that draw on all elements (subtasks) of the test. This means that the scores being compared are able to distinguish small differences in test performance among the lowest performing students who achieved a zero word-per-minute score on the oral reading fluency subtask; and less likely to be biased by the specific relative difficulty of a single skill (subtask) in a specific language.

#3 Benchmarks for literacy (i.e. reading fluency)

In this the report, we relate literacy scores measured in words per minute (wpm) in the project areas to international benchmarks for oral reading fluency. This provides us with a sense of how girls in SCW project areas fare in comparison with the reading fluency levels that could be expected at a given age. International education experts consider oral reading fluency a strong predictor of later literacy. Children who do not acquire basic reading skills at an early age are more likely to repeat grades and eventually drop out of school, while the performance gap between early readers and non-readers increases over time. It is generally assumed that students must be able to read a minimum of 45-60 words per minute to be considered fluent readers, and that this is a valid proxy indicator for overall literacy. Existing research suggests that this standard can possibly be applied worldwide.⁷

We use specific reading fluency benchmarks published by Abdazi (2001)⁸ for use by the World Bank. Abdazi presents a distribution of oral reading fluency scores achieved by US students and suggests using the score achieved by students at the 50th percentile of the distribution within each school grade as a benchmark. Abdazi further presents the scores achieved by students at the lower end of the distribution, notably at the 18th percentile. Students of grade 2 at this stage of the distribution scored 45 wpm. This corresponds to the benchmark recommended by USAID for use with students from poor countries:

“[...] most scholars converge on the idea that by the end of grade 2, children learning to read in English ought to be reading at about 60 correct words per minute, respectively. Based on our experience in approximately 10 countries to date, for a poor country with linguistic complexity or particularly difficult orthographies, these benchmarks could perhaps reasonably be relaxed to something like 45 correct words per minute.” (RTI International 2009)⁹

On this basis, we use the EGRA scores achieved by US students at the 18th percentile of the distribution within each grade as benchmarks for students in developing countries (see [Table 9](#)).

To date, no comparable benchmarks have been developed for the assessment of EGMA results. There is no established, aggregate EGMA score that readily represents mathematical ability as accurately as oral reading fluency (in wpm) represents literacy across subtasks. In discussion with RTI International we have therefore decided not to present any benchmarks for EGMA scores in this baseline report.

⁷ See Abadzi, H. (2011), *Reading Fluency Measurements in EFA FTI Partner Countries: Outcomes and Improvement Prospects*, GPE Working Paper Series on Learning, No. 1, Education for All Fast Track Initiative Secretariat, World Bank, Washington DC.

⁸ Abadzi, H. (2011), *Reading Fluency Measurements in EFA FTI Partner Countries: Outcomes and Improvement Prospects*, GPE Working Paper Series on Learning, No. 1, Education for All Fast Track Initiative Secretariat, World Bank, Washington DC.

⁹ RTI International (2009), *Early Grade Reading Assessment Toolkit*, prepared for the World Bank, Office of Human Development, Washington DC.

Table 9: International benchmarks of oral reading fluency by grade

Grade	Equivalent Age	Expected words per minute
1	See Table 8 for corresponding ages by country.	21
2		45
3		63
4		85
5		90
6		108
7		110
8		110

2.3.3 Reporting across different data sources and age groups

As described in [Section 2.1](#) this report draws on evidence from a range of different data sources. For the purpose of simplicity, however, we only present data from the projects' outcome spreadsheets and the EM household survey when discussing education outcomes in [Section 3](#). Additional evidence (i.e. from project baseline reports or the reanalysis of project datasets) is presented in the individual project profiles (see [Annexes D1-D15](#)) and in [Annex C](#).

Our discussion of outcome levels at baseline focusses on two age groups, namely 9 to 11 year olds and 14 to 15 year olds, for the following reasons:

- Based on official school starting ages 9 to 11 year olds would be of primary school age in all SCW project areas. By examining this group, rather than 6 to 8 year olds we avoid any bias stemming from 6 year olds not being enrolled where the official school starting age is seven years.
- The age group of 14 to 15 year olds is officially of secondary school age in all countries, except Ethiopia where 14 year olds would be enrolled in the last year of primary school (Grade 8).

In summary, we present evidence on outcome levels for one age group that is representative of a primary school population, and one age group that broadly represents secondary school girls. More detailed breakdowns of outcome levels by age and grade are provided in [Annex C](#). When comparing the outcome levels of specific age groups across project areas and countries, it is worth keeping in mind that official starting ages and the length of primary school cycles vary by country (see [Table 8](#)).

It is important to note that the projects' outcome spreadsheets and baseline reports reported outcome levels by school grade rather than by age group. When extracting outcome figures from these sources, we converted school grades into the equivalent ages based on the official school starting ages in each country. This conversion assumes that the majority of girls are enrolled in a school grade that corresponds to their age. However, as shown by the analysis presented in [Section 3.1.1](#), a considerable share of girls is actually enrolled below their expected grade level. Where projects did not report any data for one or several grades, we estimated the missing figures for the whole age category based on a linear extrapolation from the available data. Because of these particularities, the outcome figures from the outcome spreadsheets and project's baseline reports are not directly comparable with those from the EM analysis and reanalysis of projects' datasets as they may refer to girls of slightly different ages.

Box 3: Inconsistency observed across the different streams of evidence

This box summarises some key findings with regards to the consistency of different streams of baseline evidence across the SCW. Figures from all available project data sources can be compared in the individual project profiles (see [Annexes D1-D15](#)).

For the purpose of triangulation and verification the EM has reviewed and analysed all available project and EM data sources on GEC outcomes at baseline. As described in more detail in [Section 2.2](#), this included the analysis of EM household survey data; the review of projects' outcome spreadsheets; the reanalysis of project data and the review of project baseline reports. This triangulation exercise was intended to identify possible inconsistencies between the different streams of data and to explore their drivers in order to improve the robustness and reliability of the baseline analysis.

Key findings on consistency

For the two age groups of 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls, the EM analysis of being-in-school outcomes tends to show higher average enrolment and attendance rates than the reanalysis of project datasets; and the reanalysis tends to show higher average rates than the project-reported streams of evidence (i.e. the baseline reports and outcome spreadsheets, with the former tending to exhibit the lowest figures among the full set of estimates available).

In terms of learning outcomes, it is not possible to directly assess the consistency of different data sources for most projects. This is because projects may have used different learning tests than the EM (e.g. Uwezo/ASER when the EM used EGRA/EGMA); and when projects opted for the EGRA/EGMA test they still may have used different scales to report reading fluency and numeracy scores. However, in some projects where scores can be compared across different streams of evidence, we only observe relatively low levels of consistency between EM Data and the reanalysis of project datasets, and/or between the reanalysis and project-reported streams of evidence.

Potential factors that explain inconsistencies

There are several factors that may explain the inconsistencies observed between different data sources at baseline:

- **Use of different definitions and measures for the same outcome:** This applies to both learning outcomes and being-in-school outcomes, as indicated above. For instance, the EM measured attendance based on self-reported information provided by the primary caregiver whereas projects were required to draw on school records as their primary data source. Retention could also have been subject to diverging measures with some projects reporting rates across school phase rather than year-on-year retention rates.
- **Different samples:** Discrepancies between the EM data and the reanalysis of project datasets may be an indication that the project samples have captured specific population sub-groups that the projects considered educationally marginalised (see [Section 5.1.2](#)), whereas the EM sample may have covered a more general population of girls living in the project areas. While project samples were generally specified in a similar way as EM samples at the level of the selection of sampling points, the approach to selecting specific households may have differed. For example, ACTED (Afghanistan) had a target of selecting 50% of girls that were out-of-school, and 50% that were in-school, and similar approaches were used by BRAC in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. This may explain the low levels of enrolment documented in the project data from these areas (see the project profiles in [Annexes D1-D15](#)), and the deviation from the EM data, which reports higher enrolment rates.
- **Mistakes in the (re)analysis of project datasets:** Differences in findings from the reanalysis of project data on the one hand, and project reporting (i.e. baseline reports and outcome spreadsheets) on the other hand may arise because of mistakes in the data analysis, either on the part of projects (when preparing their report) or of the EM (when conducting the reanalysis). For many projects the EM lacked contextual information to accurately reanalyse their datasets. Such information would have typically covered the characteristics of the assessed population (gender, age, in-school/out-of-school, etc.), the structure of the datasets and the labelling of the outcome variables and values (especially those related to learning outcomes where different scales/scoring systems could be used for the same test). As a result, the EM could have misinterpreted variables or associated them wrongly to specific sampled populations, which limits the validity and reliability of the reanalysis figures presented in project profiles.

- **Bias in age-grade equivalence:** Reanalysis was done by age categories while most projects reported outcomes by grades in their project baseline reports and outcome spreadsheets. In this report we decided to present findings across the age categories of 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls (outcomes for other age categories being presented in [Annex C](#)). We use an age-grade equivalence to report outcome figures from the project baseline report and outcome spreadsheet, using secondary information about the official school starting ages and the length of school phases in each country. This places a limit on the direct comparability between project-reported outcomes and findings from the EM reanalysis of project data as we had to use official rather than actual age-grade distributions. In practice, girls are likely to fall behind their expected grade, which implies that project-reported results as presented in our aggregated outcome tables may actually relate to older girls than the age category under which they appear.

2.4 Flagging outcomes that potentially challenge GEC-relevant assumptions

The GEC baseline provides an opportunity to review the programmatic assumptions that drove the design of the fund as a whole, and the project-level assumptions that underpin the individual projects' theories of change. At the fund level, the GEC business case sets out the following key assumptions about the educational marginalisation of girls in GEC countries:

- A significant number of girls in the GEC focus countries are not enrolled in primary school, and many drop out of school without having acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills;
- Even though enrolment gaps between girls and boys of primary age have narrowed in recent years, girls are still less likely than boys to enrol in primary school;
- Enrolment gaps between boys and girls widen significantly when girls reach secondary school age;
- Girls are more likely than boys to lack basic literacy skills; and
- Girls who have never been enrolled in primary school tend to come from the most disadvantaged communities and face multiple obstacles: among other factors, they come from remote rural areas; are affected by poverty; and/or live in conflict and post conflict environments.

[Section 3.1](#) of this report presents baseline findings on the education outcomes of girls across the SCW project areas and assesses whether any of these findings challenge the above-mentioned GEC-relevant assumptions about the degree of educational marginalisation. The objective of this is not to provide a specific rating or “critique” of individual projects or assumptions, or to validate or check findings presented in project baseline reports. Instead, we intend to highlight cases where a specific project may have a case for reviewing its intervention logic, where it may have a more difficult time generating and demonstrating positive change or cases where further investigation and analysis may be needed.

2.5 Approach to analysing potential barriers to education

In [Section 4](#) we discuss qualitative and quantitative findings about barriers to girls' education. We have grouped the various sub-level barriers cited by SCW projects in their design documents and baseline reports into five broader categories (see [Figure 20](#)). These are economic factors, school-based factors, attitudes and support in the families and communities, violence and safety, and personal factors.

We first discuss specific barriers to enrolment, attendance and learning that emerge as the most salient across the fund. We explored the salience of barriers by introducing all potential barriers captured through the EM household survey and school-based assessment into a multivariate regression model. We then identified those barriers as ‘most salient’ that showed a significant association with enrolment, attendance or learning, having controlled for all other potential barriers. The methodology underpinning this analysis, as well as its benefits and limitations, are explained in more detail in [Section 4.2.1](#).

We then discuss each of the potential barriers that projects assumed to affect girls' education in more depth, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative evidence (see [Section 4.2.2](#)). We aim to identify immediate obstacles and structural barriers to education, and to examine how different barriers interact with each other. This allows us to unpack barriers systematically, and to understand their key dimensions, drivers, and relative influence.

3 Educational Outcomes at Baseline

3.1 To what extent are target girls educationally marginalised?

The GEC takes as its foundation the general assumption that every girl and every boy should have “access to a good quality education but that there is a specific need for an additional focus on girls”¹⁰. This is because girls are assumed to face gender specific obstacles to enrolling, remaining in school and learning. On this basis, girls who are targeted by the GEC would be expected to display relatively poor learning outcomes at baseline, both in terms of attendance and learning. In the following section we assess the extent to which girls in the SCW project areas are educationally marginalised.

Our key findings suggest that the picture at baseline is mixed across the 15 SCW project areas. There are some project areas where enrolment, attendance and retention appear higher than would have been expected on the basis of GEC programme assumptions about the educational marginalisation of girls. With regards to learning outcomes we see a more consistent picture of girls who demonstrate relatively low levels of literacy and numeracy (in comparison with international norms) across virtually all project areas – in line with what would have been expected based on GEC-relevant assumptions.

As explained in [Section 2.3](#), the analysis presented below is based on evidence from the projects’ outcome spreadsheets and the analysis of EM household survey and school-based assessment data. It focuses on two age groups, namely girls aged 9 to 11 and 14 to 15. Outcome levels of other age groups (i.e. under-six-year-olds, 6-8, 12-13 and 16-19-years-olds) are presented in [Annex C, Section 2](#). They are also included in the individual project profiles ([Annexes D1-D15](#)), which provide a more detailed discussion of education outcomes in the individual project areas and present additional outcome data from the project baseline reports and the EM reanalysis of project data.

When analysing EM outcome data we did not distinguish between the outcome levels measured in the intervention and control groups but reported the average across the entire project area. In projects’ outcome spreadsheets and baseline reports, outcome data was often disaggregated for intervention and control groups and in this case we reported the average for the intervention group. It is worth noting that the averages presented in the outcome tables are unweighted, which means that every individual project average feeds into the overall SCW average at equal weight, regardless of small differences in sample size.

3.1.1 To what extent are girls attending school?

Enrolment

In this section we present two measures of enrolment. The enrolment rate captures the percentage of girls in the target communities who were enrolled in school, regardless of the grade or school type that they were enrolled in. The net enrolment rate, in turn, shows the percentage of girls that are enrolled in the ‘right’ school phase – that is the school phase that corresponds to their age (i.e. either primary or secondary school). While projects reported on enrolment in their outcome spreadsheet, they did not disaggregate enrolment by school grade. We therefore do not present these figures in this section but focus on the analysis of EM household survey data. Figures from the outcome spreadsheets can be consulted in [Annex C \(Table 8\)](#).

As shown in [Figure 1](#) and [Table 10](#), analysis of EM household survey data suggests that about **87% of girls aged 9-11** were enrolled in school across the 15 SCW project areas. There was considerable variation at the project level, ranging from enrolment rates of 58% in CARE project areas to 98% in STC (Mozambique), Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe), ChildHope (Ethiopia) and World Vision (Zimbabwe) project areas.

¹⁰ DFID (2012): DFID 5685: Evaluation Manager for the Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC).

Figure 1: Comparison of enrolment rates across project areas and data sources, 9-11 year olds

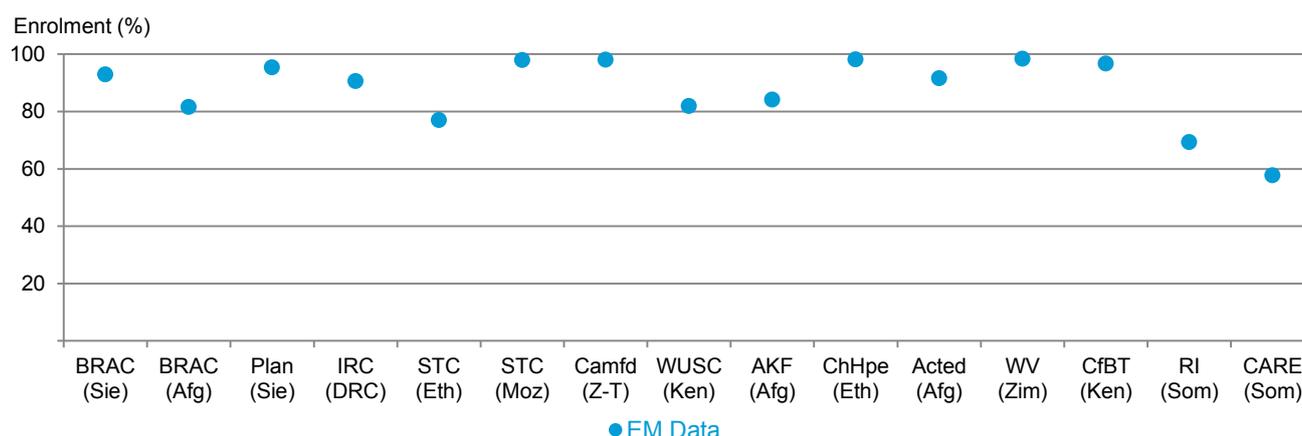


Table 10: Enrolment rates by project area and data source, 9-11 year olds

Enrolment % 9-11	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	PLAN	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
● EM Data	93	82	95	91	77	98	98	82	84	98	92	98	97	69	58	87

As shown in Figure 2 and Table 11, the analysis of EM data indicates that **14-15 year olds** have slightly lower average enrolment rates than the 9-11 year olds. Across the 15 project areas, 80% of the 14-15 year olds were enrolled in school (this could be either in primary or in secondary school). At the project level, enrolment varied significantly from 56% in STC (Ethiopia) project areas to 95% in IRC (DRC) project areas.

Figure 2: Comparison of enrolment rates across project areas and data sources, 14-15 year olds

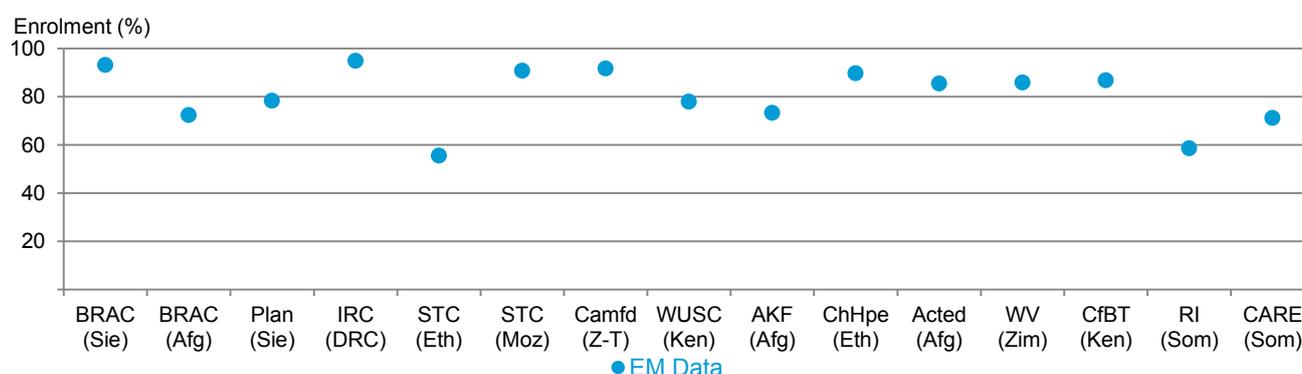


Table 11: Enrolment rates by project area and data source, 14-15 year olds

Enrolment % 14-15	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
● EM Data	93	72	78	95	56	91	92	78	73	90	85	86	87	59	71	80

The analysis presented thus far shows that a majority of girls in the age groups 9-11 and 14-15 are enrolled in school. For the 14-15 year olds, this is regardless of whether they are enrolled in primary or secondary school. International statistics generally report a different indicator of enrolment that captures more information about enrolment across the primary and secondary school phases. The net enrolment rate shows the percentage of girls at the official primary or secondary school age that are actually enrolled in primary or secondary school.

Table 12 shows the net enrolment rates for girls of primary age. This rate differs from the age-specific enrolment rates presented in Table 10 as it accounts for *all* girls at primary age, accounting for differences in the official school starting age (for a more detailed explanation of this measure see Section 2.3.1).

The analysis of EM data showed a net primary enrolment rate of 77%, on average across the SCW project areas. This is 10 percentage points below the rate of 9-11 year olds, which can be explained by the fact that many girls have reached the official school starting age but are not yet enrolled in primary school (see the first two grades in Figure 3), whereas a larger share has enrolled by the age of nine. On average, girls at primary age tend to be one year behind their expected grade level, with some variation across project areas. The largest gaps were observed in WUSC (Kenya) project areas where girls were, on average, 2.5 years below their expected grade level, and in Somali project areas where the gaps were between 2 and 2.3 years.

Table 12: Net Primary Enrolment Rates and grades behind, by project area

Net enrolment % Primary	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
Net enrolment rate in % (primary school aged girls)																
Best Guess	82	n/a	83	85	67	96	91	59	n/a	92	n/a	93	80	53	48	77
Min,Max ¹	78,83	n/a	76,84	78,86	66,67	94,96	82,92	58,60	n/a	91,92	n/a	93,93	87,80	50,55	47,49	74,77
Grades behind expected grade (primary school aged girls)																
Grades behind	0.61	n/a	0.80	0.69	1.61	1.07	0.82	2.47	n/a	0.89	n/a	0.58	1.13	2.08	2.33	1.20
Number of girls in the sample																
N	200	n/a	245	213	258	298	255	310	n/a	279	n/a	266	357	303	287	3271

1: Minimum/maximum net enrolment rates assuming that all girls whose grade is unknown are enrolled in the right/wrong school phase respectively.

The analysis of enrolment rates among the 14-15 year olds, presented in Table 11 suggests that a majority of girls at this age are enrolled in school. Table 13 looks more specifically at the percentage of girls at the official secondary school age (accounting for differences by country) who are actually enrolled in secondary school. These rates are considerably lower than the basic enrolment rates presented in Table 11. Less than half of the girls at secondary school age are actually enrolled in secondary school. The highest net secondary enrolment was recorded in Zimbabwean project areas, at 64% in Camfed project areas and 46% in World Vision project areas. Net secondary enrolment was zero among the girls surveyed in Save the Children (Ethiopia), and WUSC (Kenya). In these project areas, girls were on average between 4 and 5 years behind their expected grade level. It is worth noting that these projects target specific populations, notably pastoralist communities in the case of Save the Children (Ethiopia), and girls living in refugee camps in the case of WUSC (Kenya). On average across the SCW (excluding Afghanistan), secondary school aged girls were enrolled 2 years below their expected grade level. In summary, while the majority of 14-15 year olds are enrolled in school across the SCW, they tend to lag behind in terms of their expected grade and school phase.

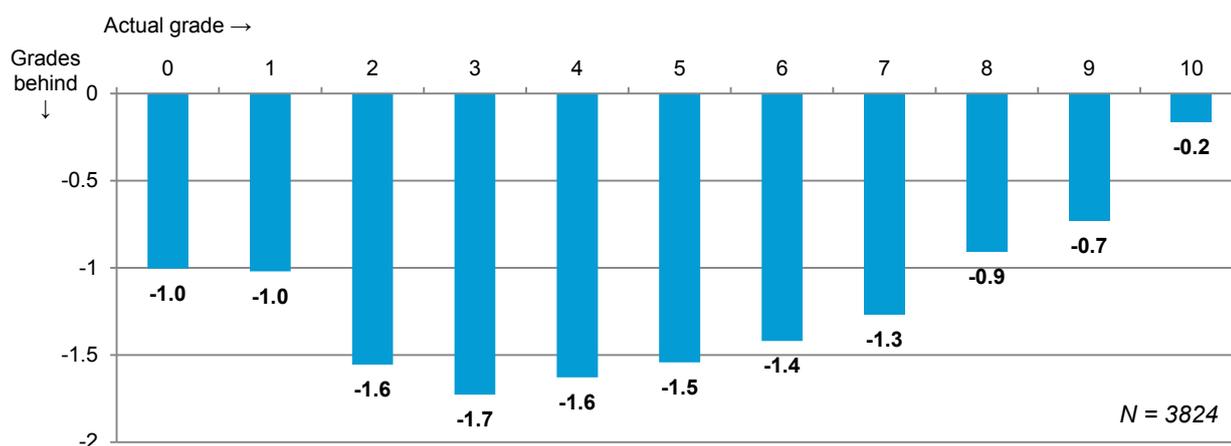
Table 13: Net Secondary Enrolment Rates and grades behind, by project area

Net enrolment % Secondary	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
Net enrolment rate in % (secondary school aged girls)																
Best Guess	37	n/a	19	38	0	18	64	0	n/a	22	n/a	46	11	13	5	34
Min, Max ¹	33,45	n/a	19,21	33,45	0,0	17,22	61,66	0,2	n/a	22,22	n/a	46,47	11,11	13,16	5,5	27,47
Grades behind expected grade (secondary school aged girls)																
Grades behind	2.44	n/a	2.79	2.27	5.25	2.58	1.16	4.38	n/a	1.95	n/a	1.08	2.87	2.47	4.42	2.18
Number of girls in the sample																
N	132	n/a	100	132	29	94	392	59	n/a	23	n/a	111	54	62	85	1611

1: Minimum/maximum net enrolment rates assuming that all girls whose grade is unknown are enrolled in the right/wrong school phase respectively.

Figure 3 looks deeper into the trajectories of girls throughout the school cycle, showing the difference between the expected grade level and the grade that girls are actually in. It shows that girls are, on average, already one year behind when enrolling in the first grade – suggesting that many do not start school at the official school age. Girls enrolled in the third year of primary school are, on average, 1.6 grades behind. The gap decreases in higher grades and Figure 3 suggests that on average, girls who actually reach secondary school tend to be fewer years behind than the average of girls in primary school. This suggests that it is girls who perform the strongest and attend school without major disruptions that actually reach the final grades of secondary school.

Figure 3: Grade behind trajectory across actual grades (SCW average, in negative years)



Box 4: Comparison of EM net enrolment rates with secondary data at the country level

The EM baseline fieldwork was limited to SCW project areas and hence the outcome figures presented in this report are not representative of the national population in each country. Nevertheless, Table 14 shows a comparison of the EM net enrolment rates, and net enrolment rates documented through USAID’s Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) that covers a majority of SCW countries. While there is considerable variation between the two sources there is no clear trend of EM figures being either systematically higher or lower than DHS national figures.

Table 14: Net enrolment rates by SCW country, EM data vs. DHS data

EM Data	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
DHS year	2010-11	2011	2008-09		2013/14	2013	2011	2010	2010-11
Net primary enrolment in %									
EM data	n/a	85	80	70	96	82	50	92	92
DHS	n/a	65	80	n/a	79	73	77	81	87
Net secondary enrolment in %									
EM data	n/a	38	10	5	18	29	8	53	62
DHS	n/a	13	18	n/a	37	40	22	25	48

Summary: Does the evidence suggest that 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls are marginalised with regards to school enrolment?

To conclude, the analysis of EM data showed average enrolment rates of 87% among 9-11 year olds, and 80% among 14-15 year olds. However, while the majority of 14-15 year-old girls are still enrolled in school, they tend to lag on average two years behind their expected grade level (given their age), which means that many are still enrolled in primary school. On average across the SCW, less than half of the girls who are at secondary school age are actually enrolled in secondary school. Further analysis shows that those girls, who do reach secondary school grades, tend to lag fewer years behind than the average girl at primary level. This suggests that the highest-achieving girls are those who progress at pace while girls experience disruptions and delays seem more likely to leave school early. These findings are in line with GEC-relevant assumptions whereby girls of secondary school age experience particular degrees of educational marginalisation. However, the analysis suggests that this may be due to disadvantages that are being accumulated across the primary school phase.

Gaps in enrolment between boys and girls

One of the programmatic assumptions underpinning the GEC (as stated in the GEC business case, see [Section 1.3.2](#)) is that there are significant enrolment gaps between girls and boys, with girls being less often enrolled, and that these gaps tend to increase as children reach secondary school age. When conducting the EM household survey, we collected information on the enrolment status of all children living in the household, so that we would be able to calculate enrolment rates for girls and boys as a way of assessing gender-specific enrolment gaps.

Based on the analysis of EM household survey data, we did not find a clear trend of girls having lower average enrolment rates than boys at age 9-11 (see [Figure 4](#)). Instead, we found mixed patterns:

- At age 9-11 we found no difference in the enrolment rates of boys and girls, measured on average across the SCW project areas. However, when comparing enrolment at the project level, we found that girls have lower average enrolment rates than boys in about half of the SCW project areas, while their enrolment rates are higher in the other half of projects. When taking an average across all project areas, these trends cancel each other out, leading to a difference of around zero across the 15 SCW project areas.
- We found that girls aged 9-11 were most disadvantaged in CARE (Somalia), AKF (Afghanistan) and IRC (DRC) project areas (i.e. having enrolment rates in the sample that are seven to 11 percentage points below those of boys). Girls were most advantaged, in comparison with boys, in ChildHope (Ethiopia) project areas (i.e. having a 12 percentage point higher enrolment rate than boys).

The picture shifts slightly when looking at the age group of 14-15 year olds:

- In four project areas, the negative enrolment gap (to the disadvantage of girls) observed among children aged 9-11 year widens among those aged 14-15 suggesting retention was poorer among girls than boys. This is the case in BRAC (Afghanistan), PLAN (Sierra Leone), WUSC (Kenya) and AKF (Afghanistan) project areas.
- In four project areas, we found that girls had a higher enrolment rate than boys at age 9-11, but the positive gap narrowed among the 14-15 year olds (ChildHope, Ethiopia) or even became a gap in favour of boys, again suggesting that retention was poorer among girls than boys in STC (Mozambique), ACTED (Afghanistan), and Relief International (Somalia) project areas.
- In six project areas, the negative enrolment gap for girls observed at age 9-11 either narrowed in the older age group (IRC, DRC), or became a gap in favour of girls at age 14-15, (BRAC, Sierra Leone), STC (Ethiopia), Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe), World Vision (Zimbabwe), CfBT (Kenya) and CARE (Somalia).

Figure 4: Gaps in enrolment rates between boys and girls by age group (sorted by the size of the gap and direction of the gap among 9-11 year olds)

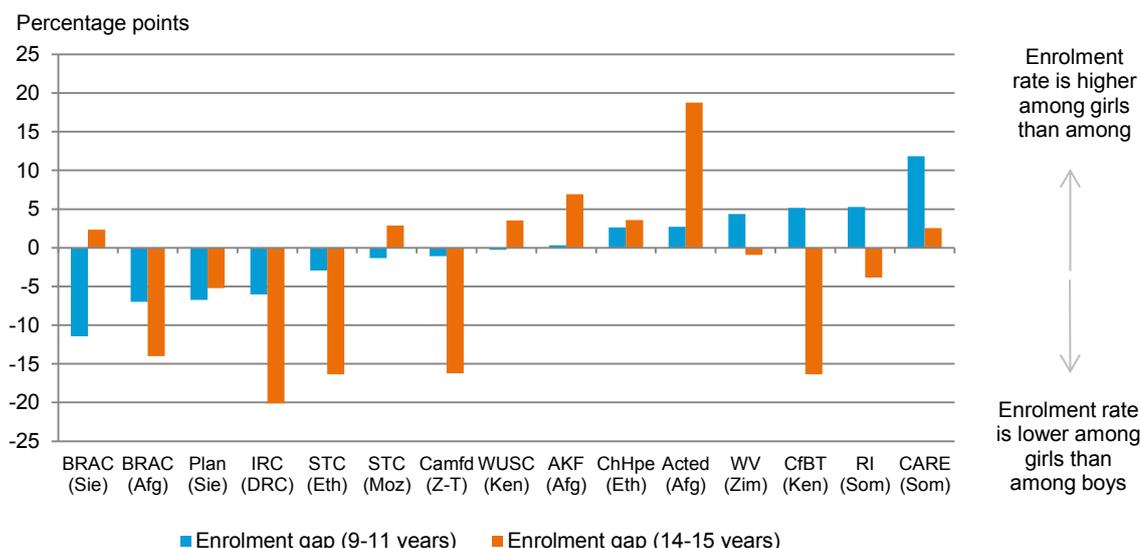


Table 15: Enrolment rates of boys and girls, by age group (EM data)

Enrolment Girls vs. Boys	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC (Sie)	BRAC (Afg)	Plan (Sie)	IRC (DRC)	STC (Eth)	STC (Moz)	Camf (Z-T)	WUSC (Ken)	AKF (Afg)	ChHp (Eth)	Actd (Afg)	WV (Zim)	CfBT (Ken)	RI (Som)	CARE (Som)	
Girls aged 9-11 years																
Girls	94	86	91	89	72	97	99	79	77	95	84	97	95	66	62	86
Boys	93	92	92	96	72	91	96	82	84	84	80	99	93	60	73	86
Difference ¹	0	-6	-1	-7*	0	5*	3	-3	-7	12*	4	-1	3	5	-11*	0
Girls aged 14-15 years																
Girls	89	69	75	92	66	85	89	71	71	85	75	84	90	64	73	79
Boys	82	90	91	97	63	89	70	87	85	82	76	81	86	80	71	82
Difference ¹	7	-20*	-16*	-5	4	-4	19*	-16*	-14*	3	-1	3	4	-16*	2	-3

Notes: 1. In percentage points.
 * indicates that p-value from linear regression is strictly below 0.05.
 • indicates that p-value from logistic regression is strictly below 0.05.
 ** indicates that both p-values are strictly below 0.05.

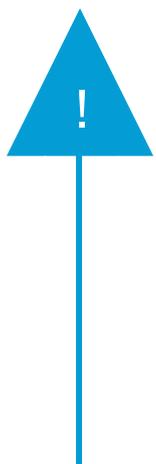
Summary: Does the evidence suggest that 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls are marginalised with regards differences in enrolment between boys and girls?

In summary, the EM evidence does not suggest that girls have *systematically* lower enrolment rates than boys at the SCW level and our evidence does not support the assumption that existing gaps generally widen when children reach secondary school age. Instead, we find a mixed picture with some girls being advantaged rather than disadvantaged in some project areas. Gaps exist in both directions and change in both directions. In a set of project areas we found that girls were less often enrolled than boys at ages 9-11 and had even larger disadvantages at ages 14-15. In other project areas, girls had higher enrolment rates than boys at ages 9-11, but were less often enrolled than boys at age 14-15. In yet another set of project areas we observed little difference between boys and girls at ages 9-11 but a considerably higher enrolment for girls than for boys at ages 14-15. These findings raise questions about the assumption that girls are systematically less likely than boys to be enrolled and suggest that boys in some of these areas may actually face greater degrees of educational marginalisation than girls and would benefit from an educational programme targeting both boys and girls.

Attendance

Attendance rates measure the time that girls actually spend in school when they are enrolled. As explained in [Section 2.3.1](#), we report attendance levels as the percentage of available school time that girls spend in school. This section will focus on the attendance levels reported in the projects’ outcome spreadsheets and by the EM analysis. However, for the purpose of triangulating and verifying the different streams of available data, we also analysed attendance levels based on data from the project baseline reports and the reanalysis of project data. The resulting figures are included in the project profiles ([Annexes D1-D15](#)).

It is worth noting that projects have been asked to collect data from school registers as their primary data source to measure attendance. There may be incentives for schools and teachers to artificially inflate these registers, and projects are therefore required to undertake at least three unannounced spot checks on these registers every year. Even with spot-checks ensuring the validity and reliability of school-based attendance data remains a challenge. This also drove the decision to allow projects to remove the attendance element of PbR, where applicable. The potential for bias should be kept in mind when interpreting attendance figures reported in the projects’ outcome spreadsheets.



When comparing attendance figures measured by the EM and by projects presented in this section and in the project profiles ([Annexes D1-D15](#)), it is important to note that these are based on different measurement approaches. As explained in more detail in [Section 2.3.1, #2](#), projects’ primarily reported attendance based on school records whereas the EM’s measure is based on subjective self-reporting at the household level. In addition, projects are not required to measure attendance longitudinally in a cohort of girls.

Finally, **project outcome spreadsheets usually report attendance by grade whereas the EM data refers to attendance by age.** As discussed in [Box 5](#), we have conducted a sensitivity check of our coding of self-reported attendance levels, as well as a cross-checking exercise comparing attendance levels measured through the EM household survey and through school records. We find that there are only relatively small discrepancies between self-reported and school-based attendance data on average across the SCW, but that discrepancies are considerable in certain project areas. It is possible that such discrepancies contribute to variation in attendance levels measured by projects and by the EM at baseline.

As shown in [Figure 5](#) and [Table 16](#), the following are our key findings on the attendance of 9-11 year olds across the SCW:

- **Outcome spreadsheets:** Four projects submitted figures on the attendance in school grades corresponding to the ages of 9-11 year olds in their outcome spreadsheets. The lowest attendance was reported by IRC in DRC at 79%, and the highest was reported by Save the Children in Ethiopia at 94%.
- **EM household survey data:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. At the project-level, attendance ranged from 83% in AKF (Afghanistan) project areas to 90% in CARE (Somalia) and World Vision (Zimbabwe) project areas.

Figure 5: Comparison of attendance rates across project areas and data sources, 9-11 year olds

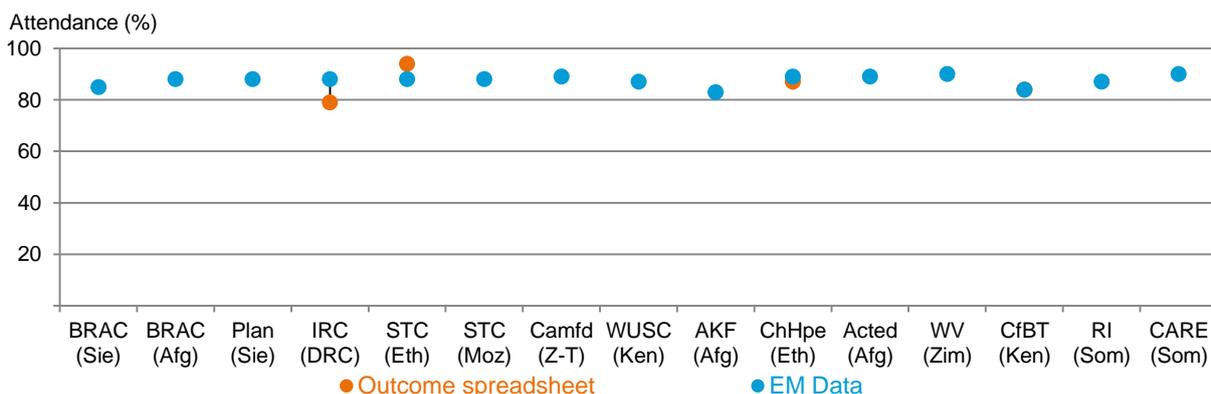


Table 16: Attendance rates by project area and data source, 9-11 year olds

Attendance % 9-11	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
● Outcome spreadsheet				79	94					87			84			
● EM Data	85	88	88	88	88	88	89	87	83	89	89	90	84	87	90	88

Among the **14-15 year olds**, both the outcome spreadsheets and the EM analysis suggested average attendance levels similar to those of girls aged 9-11. As shown in [Figure 6](#) and [Table 17](#) the following are our key findings on the attendance of 14-15 year olds across the SCW:

- **Outcome spreadsheets:** Only one project, ChildHope (Ethiopia), submitted figures on the attendance of 14-15 year olds in their outcome spreadsheet (i.e. 83 %).
- **EM household survey data:** Analysis of EM data showed an average attendance rate of 87% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW project areas. At the project level, attendance ranged from 85% in four project areas to 90% in BRAC (Afghanistan) project areas.

Figure 6: Comparison of attendance rates across project areas and data sources, 14-15 year olds

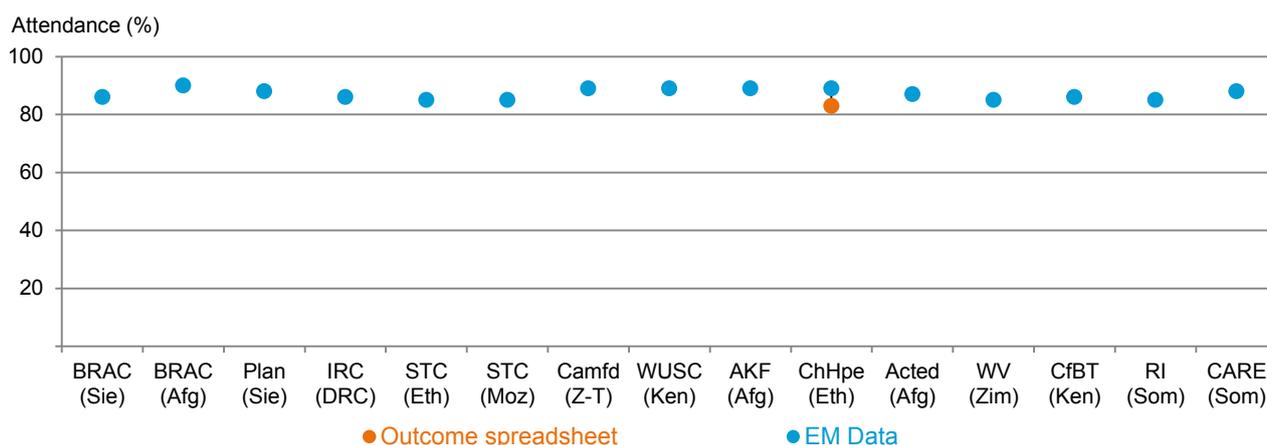


Table 17: Attendance rates by project area and data source, 14-15 year olds

Attendance % 14-15	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
● Outcome spreadsheet										83						
● EM Data	86	90	88	86	85	85	89	89	89	89	87	85	86	85	88	87

Box 5: Validation of self-reported attendance using sensitivity checks and data from the EM school visits

The EM analysis of attendance is based on a self-reported measure. During the household survey, the caregiver of the selected girl was asked to estimate how often the girl had attended school in the previous year. Possible response categories ranged from “most days” to “less than half of the available time” and these were subsequently coded into an approximate percentage of days attended (a detailed explanation is provided in Section 2.3.1).

We recognise that the coding of self-reported attendance involves a value-judgement on the part of the EM. We have therefore applied a sensitivity test to assess the extent to which changes in coding affect our measurement of attendance. To this end we calculated alternative attendance rates based on coding the response “attending more than half of the time” as 60% attendance instead of 75% (which is the coding upon which the figures presented above are based). As shown in Table 18, we found that the measured attendance rates differed only marginally, with an average variation below 1% across SCW project areas.

Table 18: Comparison of attendance measures based on different approaches to coding self-reported attendance (i.e. coding “attending more than half of the time” as 60% attendance instead of 75%).

Attendance % In-school girls	5063 BRAC Sie	5085 BRAC Afg	5096 Plan Sie	5097 IRC DRC	5098 STC Eth	5099 STC Moz	5101 Camfd Z-T	5136 WUSC Ken	5147 AKF Afg	5170 ChHpe Eth	5224 Acted Afg	5243 WV Zim	5252 CfBT Ken	5253 RI Som	5274 CARE Som	Avg.
9-11 year olds																
HH survey - 75% hyp.	85	88	88	88	88	88	89	87	83	89	89	90	84	87	90	88
HH survey - 60% hyp.	84	88	86	87	88	88	88	86	82	89	89	89	83	87	89	87
Difference ¹	-1.2	0.2	-2.4	-0.9	-0.9	-1.0	-0.2	-2.1	5.3	-1.1	0.0	-1.5	2.3	-4.4	-7.6	-1.2
14-15 year olds																
HH survey - 75% hyp.	86	90	88	86	85	85	89	89	89	89	87	85	86	85	88	87
HH survey - 60% hyp.	85	89	85	85	85	84	88	87	89	89	86	84	85	84	88	87
Difference ¹	-0.6	-0.3	-2.4	-0.3	-0.5	-0.3	-0.8	-1.3	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-0.7	-0.3	-0.4	-0.8	-0.6

1: In percentage points.

We further recognise that there is a risk of upwards bias in self-reported attendance data as caregivers may feel a need to provide socially desirable responses, leading to an overstatement of the girls’ actual attendance. We used data from the EM’s follow-up school visits to check for such bias by comparing the self-reported attendance for a selected girl with her actual attendance record in school. These visits were carried out whenever a girl was stated to be enrolled in school and where the caregiver gave their consent to the follow-up visit (see Section 2.3.1 #2.2 for more methodological detail). We did not conduct any school visits in Afghanistan or in Camfed project areas for reasons that are explained in detail in Annex B. This triangulation exercise also enables us to check whether our coding of the qualitative responses provided by the caregiver was appropriate (see Section 2.3.1 for methodological details).

Table 19 shows the average attendance rates measured among girls for whom follow-up school visits were conducted (please note that this is a sub-sample of all surveyed girls and that attendance figures therefore differ slightly from those presented in Table 18. We present the attendance reported by the primary caregiver as well as the rate recorded in the school records, and the difference between the two.

The average attendance rates generated by the two streams of evidence differed by about 4% across all SCW project areas, which indicates a relatively high level of consistency between the two data sources. However, this average figure somewhat conceals more important discrepancies at the project level:

- In five project areas the school-based attendance rates were considerably lower than the self-reported rates for the 9-11 year olds, ranging from a difference of 9.9% in CARE (Somalia) project areas to a difference of 16.9% in STC (Ethiopia) project areas.
- In another five project areas, school-based attendance was actually higher than the self-reported measure for the 9-11 year olds but the discrepancies between the two data sources were generally smaller (i.e. ranging from 2.2 and 7.9 percent in World Vision and IRC project areas, respectively).
- There was virtually no difference between the two streams of attendance data in CfBT project areas.

Table 19: Comparison of attendance data from the EM household survey and the EM school visits, by age

Attendance % In-school girls	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf d	WUS C	AKF	ChHp e	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
9-11 year olds																
HH survey	85		87	88	89	89		86		89		90	84	90	89	88
School visit	89		78	96	75	92		76		77		92	85	93	81	85
<i>Difference¹</i>	4.3		-9.0	7.3	-13.9	2.6		-10.5		-12.1		2.0	0.0	2.7	-8.4	4.3
14-15 year olds																
HH survey	83		84	77	90	80		89		90		84	86	80	87	85
School visit	81		74	97	81	90		85		92		91	88	95	93	88
<i>Difference¹</i>	-2.2		-10.0	20.4	-8.7	9.6		-3.2		1.7		6.4	2.0	14.5	5.9	-2.2

1: In percentage points.

It is worth noting, that school records did not always yield universally complete or plausible information – for example, some records suggested that the girl attended more days than were available in a given school year. This means that the school-based attendance figures do not necessarily represent a measure that is more reliable than self-reported attendance. Our cross-comparison indicates that the self-reported measure of attendance does not systematically over-estimate attendance in comparison with the levels measured in school. However, there are considerable discrepancies in some project areas which will need to be explored further at midline and endline.

Gender gaps in attendance

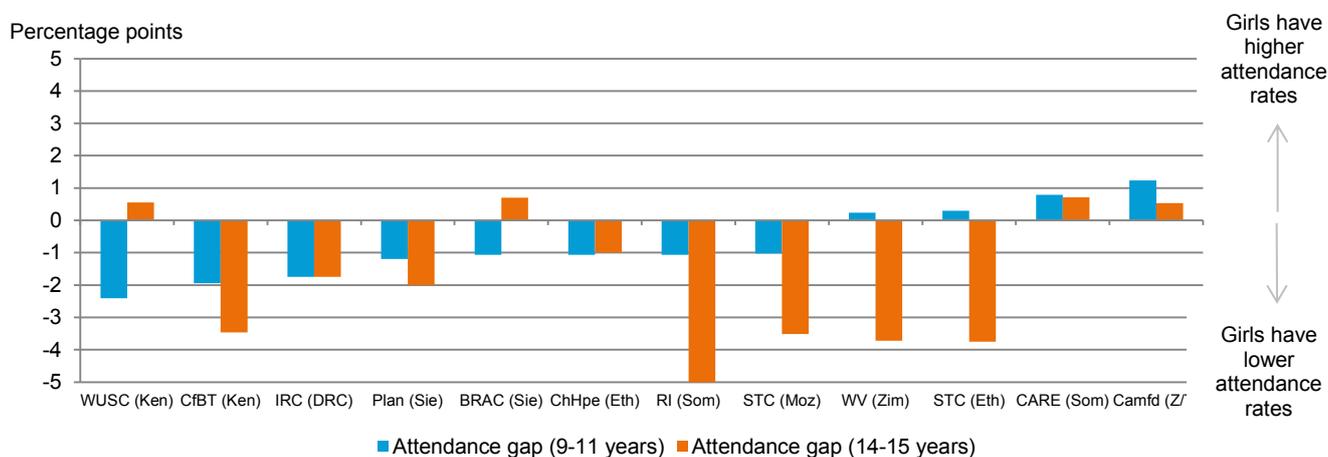
During the EM household survey, the primary caregiver was asked to also provide information on the attendance levels of one randomly selected boy in the household, in addition to reporting on one selected girl. On this basis, we are able to compare the self-reported attendance rates of boys and girls and to examine whether there are any systematic gender gaps in attendance (see [Figure 7](#) and [Table 20](#))¹¹. The following are our key findings:

- For children aged 9-11, we observe a difference of 0.6 percentage points in the attendance of boys and girls across the SCW project areas (excluding Afghanistan). Boys attend school slightly more often than girls in eight project areas, but the differences tend to be marginal.
- Among the 14-15 year olds, we observe a slightly larger difference in attendance rates of 1.8 percentage points at the disadvantage of girls. Boys attended more often than girls in eight project areas. We also observed more variation across project areas with gaps ranging from 0.7 percentage points to the advantage of girls in BRAC (Sierra Leone) and CARE (Somalia) project areas to 5 percentage points to the disadvantage of girls in Relief International (Somalia) project areas.
- In four project areas, it seems that the negative attendance gap (to the disadvantage of girls) observed among the 9-11 year-olds widens among those aged 14-15. This is the case in PLAN (Sierra Leone), STC (Mozambique), CfBT (Kenya) and Relief International (Somalia) project areas. In two project areas we observed virtually no gap among the 9-11 year olds, but gaps became apparent among the 14-15 year olds. This is the case in Save the Children (Ethiopia) and World Vision (Zimbabwe) project areas. In Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) and CARE (Somalia) project areas, small gaps existed to the advantage of girls among the 9-11 year olds and narrowed slightly among the 14-15 year olds.
- Finally, in BRAC (Sierra Leone) and WUSC (Kenya) project areas, we observed small gaps to the disadvantage of girls among the 9-11 year olds, but these reversed into gaps to the advantage of girls among the 14-15 year olds.

¹¹ It was not possible to calculate gender differences in attendance rates for project areas in Afghanistan due to the way in which the household survey questionnaire was shortened to reduce respondent burden and the length of the survey.

In summary, it appears that there are small gender gaps in attendance among the 9-11 year olds in a majority of project areas and that these tend to widen among the 14-15 year olds. However, there are some contexts in which girls attend more often than boys in both age groups.

Figure 7: Gaps in attendance rates between boys and girls by age group (sorted by the size of the gap and direction of the gap among 9-11 year olds)



Note: It was not possible to calculate gender differences in attendance rates for project areas in Afghanistan due to the way in which the household survey questionnaire was shortened to reduce respondent burden and the length of the survey.

Table 20: Attendance rates of boys and girls, by age group (EM data)

Attendance Girls vs. Boys	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC Sie	BRAC Afg	Plan Sie	IRC DRC	STC Eth	STC Moz	Camf Z-T	WUSC Ken	AKF Afg	ChHp Eth	Actd Afg	WV Zim	CfBT Ken	RI Som	CARE Som	
Girls and boys aged 9-11 years																
Girls	85	88	88	88	88	88	89	87	83	89	89	90	84	87	90	88
Boys	86	n/a	89	90	88	89	88	89	n/a	90	n/a	90	86	90	89	89
Difference ²	-0.7	n/a ¹	-1.1	-1.5*	0.1	-0.7	1.2	-2.9*	n/a ¹	-0.4	n/a ¹	-0.2	-1.5	-2.7*	0.5	-1.0*
Girls and boys aged 14-15 years																
Girls	86	90	88	86	85	85	89	89	89	89	87	85	86	85	88	87
Boys	85	n/a	90	84	89	89	88	88	n/a	90	n/a	89	89	90	87	88
Difference ²	0.6	n/a ¹	-2.4*	1.8	-3.3	-3.9	0.4	0.2	n/a ¹	-1.5	n/a ¹	-4.1	-3.7	-5.1	1.2	-0.7

Notes: 1: It was not possible to calculate gender differences in attendance rates for project areas in Afghanistan due to the way in which the household survey questionnaire was shortened to reduce respondent burden and the length of the survey.
 * indicates that the p-value from two sample t-test is strictly below 0.05.
 2: In percentage points.

Summary: Does the evidence suggest that 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls are marginalised with regards to attendance

Our findings on attendance suggest that older girls attend school just about as much as younger girls once they are enrolled. In comparison with EM evidence on enrolment, we also found attendance rates to vary less across project areas and to fall within a relatively narrow range of 83-93%. However; it is worth noting that the EM measure of attendance is based on self-reported data provided by the caregiver in the household survey. School records showed considerably lower attendance rates in a number of project areas which indicates that more research is required to establish reliable measures of attendance.

In terms of gender differences, boys aged 9-11 appear to attend slightly more often than girls and this gap tends to widen among the 14-15 year olds. However, there are some contexts in which girls attend more often than boys in both age groups, which suggest that the prevalence of gendered disadvantages may vary across contexts.

Retention rates

Projects are not required to report systematically on retention at baseline and this outcome is not captured in the outcome spreadsheets. In this section we focus on retention data from the EM household survey. However, additional information from projects baseline reports and the reanalysis of project data is included in the project profiles, if it was available (see Annexes D1-D15). We present year-on-year retention rates that can also be understood as being complementary to the year-on-year drop-out rate (for a more detailed explanation of this indicator, see Section 2.3.1, #3.2)

As shown in Figure 8 and in Table 21, analysis of EM data shows an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds across all SCW project areas. At the project-level, year-on-year retention rates ranged from 90% in IRC (DRC) project areas to 100% in six other project areas.

Figure 8: Comparison of year-on-year retention rates across project areas and data sources, 9-11 year olds

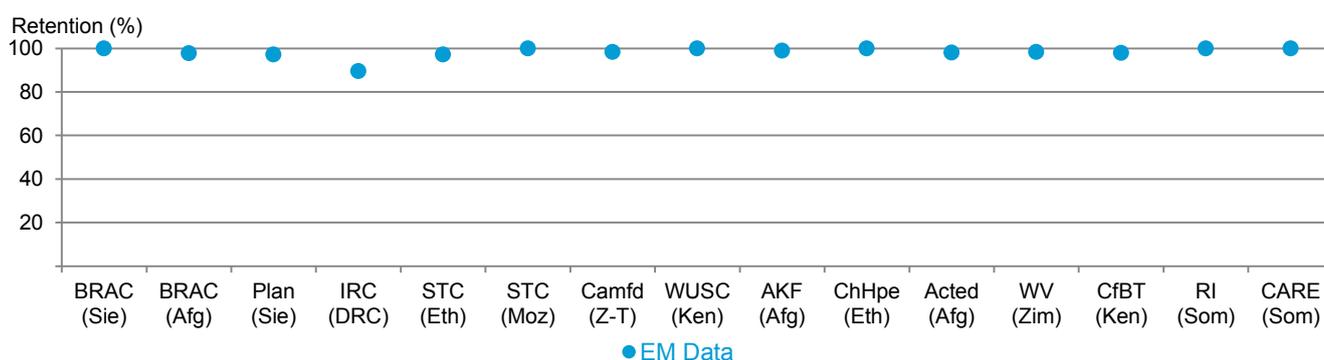


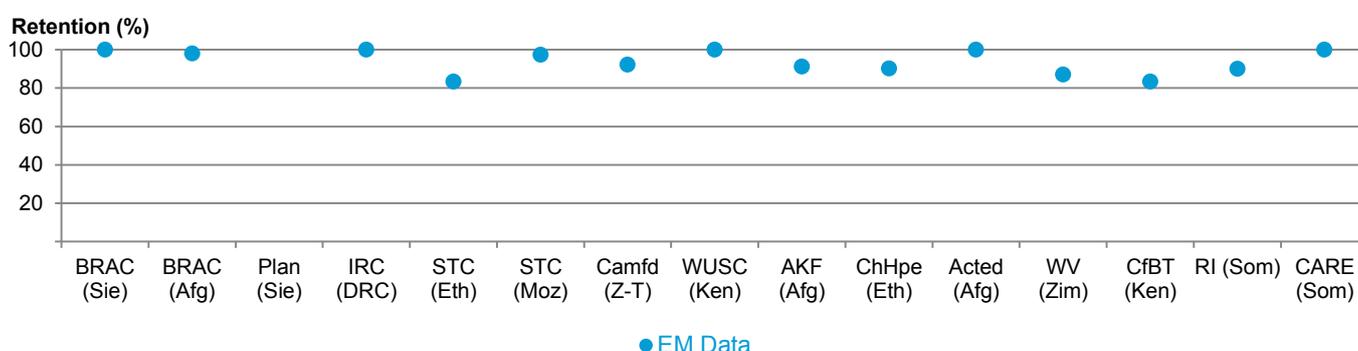
Table 21: Year-on-year retention rates by project area and data source, 9-11 year olds

Retention % 9-11	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC (Sie)	BRAC (Afg)	Plan (Sie)	IRC (DRC)	STC (Eth)	STC (Moz)	Camfd (Z-T)	WUSC (Ken)	AKF (Afg)	ChHpe (Eth)	Acted (Afg)	WV (Zim)	CfBT (Ken)	RI (Som)	CARE (Som)	
● EM Data	100	98	97	90	97	100	98	100	99	100	98	98	98	100	100	98

When comparing retention between 9-11 year olds and 14-15 year olds, we found that there was more variation in the rates of the latter age group (Figure 8 and Figure 9) and that average year-on-year retention rates were slightly lower¹² among 14-15 year olds than among 9-11 year olds.

As shown in Figure 9 and Table 22, the analysis of EM data suggested an average year-on-year retention rate of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. At the project-level, year-on-year retention ranged from 83% in IRC (DRC) and CfBT (Kenya) project areas to universal (100%) retention in five project areas.

Figure 9: Comparison of year-on-year retention rates across project areas and data sources, 14-15 year olds



¹² The differences between age groups have not been tested for significance using statistical methods such as a t-test.

Table 22: Year-on-year retention rates by project area and data source, 14-15 year olds

Retention % 14-15	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
● EM Data	100	98		100	83	97	92	100	91	90	100	87	83	90	100	94

While the year-on-year retention rates found across the SCW project areas appear relatively high, it is important to translate them into the cumulative retention or drop out across the entire school phase, as year-on-year retention is only a snapshot of retention at one point in time.

Table 23 compares survival rates across the primary school phase, from UNESCO data (2010) and those derived cumulatively from EM year-on-year retention rates. The UNESCO data shows the percentage of a cohort of pupils enrolled in primary grade 1 who are expected to reach the last grade of primary school, regardless of repetition. This survival rate was relatively low in three out of four GEC countries for which data was available, notably 49% in DRC, 42% in Ethiopia and only 29% in Mozambique. It was relatively high, in comparison, in Tanzania (87%).

Table 23: Survival rate across the primary school phase (approximate) by project area and data source

Survival rate (%)	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
UNESCO data 2010				49	42	29	87			42					
EM data	99	87	90	62	32	83	52	69	64	72	84	78	88	59	31

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Database (UIS) database; EM household survey data.

The survival rate across the primary school phase derived from the year-on-year retention rates in the EM data is the product of the year-on-year rate across the relevant period. The resultant approximate survival rates vary considerably across GEC project areas and do not align closely with UNESCO estimates, with the approximated rates being markedly higher than UNESCO data in Save the Children (Mozambique) and ChildHope (Ethiopia), and lower in Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) project areas. The estimated survival rates are very low for some project areas such as CARE (Somalia) or STC (Ethiopia).

As explained in Section 2.3.1, we could not measure gender differences in retention at baseline. However, we will carry out more detailed analysis of retention (for both genders) at the midline and endline, including analysis of individual learning trajectories.

Summary: Does the evidence suggest that 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls are marginalised with regards to retention?

In summary, our analysis of year-on-year retention using the EM data indicated that on average across the SCW, only a small proportion of 9-11 year old girls had dropped out of primary school from one year to the next. On average, 98% of girls remained enrolled. Even though there was little variation in year-on-year retention rates across the SCW, we found that small differences accumulate across the primary school phase, leading to approximate primary survival rates ranging from 31% in CARE (Somalia) project areas to 99% in BRAC (Sierra Leone) project areas.

In our analysis of barriers (Section 4) we address some of the factors and barriers that affect the retention of girls in secondary school.

With regards to 14-15 year olds we found lower year-on-year retention rates than among the 9-11 year olds and a higher degree of variation between project areas. They ranged from 100% year-on-year in four project areas to only 83% in two project areas, meaning that in these communities roughly seven out of forty girls do not continue secondary school in the following year. This supports the GEC assumption that retaining girls in school becomes more challenging as the girls grow older.

3.1.2 What are current learning outcomes?

Learning, in addition to attendance, is the second of the GEC’s key outcomes and consists of reading fluency and numeracy. As discussed in [Section 2.3.2](#), projects used different test tools to assess girls’ reading fluency and numeracy levels. Projects adapted existing tests to their specific contexts, target groups and languages of instruction, and chose different formats to present the test results (see [Table 24](#)). As a consequence, the reading fluency and numeracy levels measured at the project level are not easily interpretable and comparable across the SCW project areas.

Table 24: Overview of literacy test and the format of results reporting used by SCW projects

	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTED	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Type of learning assessment used															
ASER											✓				
EGRA	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
National Test							✓								
UWEZO													✓	✓	✓
Format of results reported in the outcome spreadsheets															
Words per minute					✓					✓		✓			
Percentage	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓
Levels											✓		✓		
Unspecified				✓											

As shown in [Table 24](#), nine SCW projects used EGRA/EGMA tests to assess the literacy and numeracy skills of girls in their target communities. Three projects followed the example of the relevant PbR guidance provided by the FM in summarising EGRA reading scores in terms of words per minute (wpm) attained on the oral fluency subtask. The remaining six projects specified their literacy scores as a total EGRA score (out of 100) in their outcome spreadsheet. The EM reports test results as an integrated reading fluency score that is scaled to be closely equivalent to words per minute, and is directly comparable with the three projects reporting wpm (for a brief description of the methodology used to calculate this integrated reading fluency score, see [Section 2.3.2, #2](#) of this main report; for a detailed description see [Sections 4.3.1 and 4.4](#) of the methodological [Annex B](#)). Literacy scores expressed as a total of 100 can be compared but are difficult to relate to international benchmarks expressed in words per minute. We therefore do not report those comparisons in the section below.

The FM PbR guidance required all projects using the EGMA test to report a score out of 100 in their outcome spreadsheets, weighting each subtasks equally, and to clearly report and agree on any deviations from this methodology. However, as discussed in [Section 2.3.2](#), there is no internationally established way of aggregating EGMA results across subtasks to achieve an easy-to-interpret score similar to the words per minute score. As a consequence, there are currently no international benchmarks for the assessment of EGMA results.

Four projects used Uwezo or ASER tests for literacy and numeracy skills and reported results as competency levels. [Table 25](#) provides an example of the Uwezo competency levels that were used in the 2012 Uwezo assessment in Uganda. Every competency level relates to specific literacy and numeracy skills that children were expected to demonstrate in a broadly sequenced staging. However, it is worth noting that some SCW projects in the GEC adapted the Uwezo tool for their own purposes, defined a larger number of competency levels or used exercises of a different level of difficulty (e.g. tasks that were equivalent to grade 5 rather than grade 2 exercises when testing older girls). Therefore, the example provided in [Table 25](#) can only provide an indication as to how Uwezo and ASER levels can be interpreted. Relief International (Somalia) used the Uwezo tool but appear to have reported a percentage of correct answers which is not typical for reporting Uwezo test results. Given our uncertainty about the correct interpretation of these scores, we have refrained from commenting on them in the discussion below. We have also not commented on scores reported by Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) that are based on tools used for national examinations, due to our unfamiliarity with how these tools were used by projects.

Considering the heterogeneity of approaches used by the SCW projects to measure and report on learning outcomes, the following section focuses on findings from the EM-led EGRA and EGMA assessments and comparing these findings across SCW projects. Nevertheless, we present all available streams of evidence and comment on any observable differences in outcomes between age groups.

Table 25: Uwezo assessment levels for literacy and numeracy

Uwezo / ASER Levels	Literacy		Numeracy
	English language literacy	Local language	
Level 1	<i>Non-readers/nothing</i> – Inability to recognize letters of the alphabet	<i>Non-readers/nothing</i> – Inability to recognize letters of the local language alphabet	<i>Nothing</i> – Inability to count at least 4 out of 5 numerical numbers from 1 – 9.
Level 2	<i>Letter</i> – Ability to recognize letters of the alphabet	<i>Letter</i> – Ability to recognize letters of the local language	<i>1-9</i> – Ability to count numerical numbers from 1 to 9
Level 3	<i>Word</i> – Ability to read words of Primary 2 level difficulty	<i>Syllable</i> – Ability to recognize syllables of the local language	<i>10-99</i> – Ability to recognize numerical numbers from 10 to 99
Level 4	<i>Sentence</i> – Ability to read a paragraph of Primary 2 level difficulty	<i>Word</i> – Ability to read simple words of the local language	<i>Addition</i> – the ability to solve at least two numerical written addition sums of Primary 2 difficulty
Level 5	<i>Story</i> – Ability to correctly read a story of Primary 2 level difficulty	<i>Sentence</i> – Ability to read a simple paragraph of the local language	<i>Subtraction</i> – Ability to solve at least two numerical written subtraction sums of Primary 2 difficulty
Level 6	<i>Comprehension</i> – Ability to correctly read and understand a story of Primary 2 level difficulty and answer related question	<i>Story</i> – Ability to correctly read a simple 'story' text of the local language	<i>Multiplication</i> – Ability to solve at least two numerical written multiplication sums of Primary 2 difficulty
Level 7		<i>Comprehension</i> – Ability to correctly read and understand a simple 'story' text of the local language	<i>Division</i> – Ability to solve at least two numerical written division sums of Primary 2 difficulty

Note: These assessment levels were used by the 2012 Uwezo assessment in Uganda during which around 80 000 children aged 6-16 were tested.

Reading fluency scores

In this section we present evidence on girls' reading fluency levels at baseline, drawing on the projects' outcome spreadsheets and the analysis of EM data. We provide data on literacy scores that was extracted from project baseline reports or the reanalysis of project data in the individual project profiles (see [Annexes D1-D15](#)). We only compare data from the project outcome spreadsheets with EM data where the projects clearly stated that they reported EGRA scores as words per minute (wpm) and as such used the same unit for reporting as the EM.

As shown in [Figure 10](#) and [Table 26](#) (below), our key findings on the literacy levels of 9-11 year old girls who were enrolled in school across the SCW are as follows:

- **Outcome spreadsheets:** At the time of writing, data on the literacy of 9-11 year olds was available from 11 projects' Outcome spreadsheets. Three of these projects reported EGRA results as words per minute with scores ranging from 10 wpm in STC (Ethiopia) project areas to 49 wpm in ChildHope (Ethiopia) project areas. Four projects reported Uwezo/ASER levels and these ranged from a level of 1.4 in Plan (Sierra Leone) project areas to a level of 4.1 in CfBT (Kenya).
- **EM data:** Based on the analysis of EM data, we were able to generate comparable EGRA scores for all 15 SCW project areas. Among 9-11 year old girls we found an average EGRA score of 28 words per minute across the SCW. We measured the lowest reading fluency levels in STC Ethiopia project areas (2 wpm) and the highest in World Vision (Zimbabwe) and CfBT (Kenya) project areas (54 wpm and 53 wpm, respectively).

Figure 10: Comparison of literacy (i.e. oral reading fluency) scores in words per minute across project areas, EM data only, 9-11 year olds (enrolled in school)

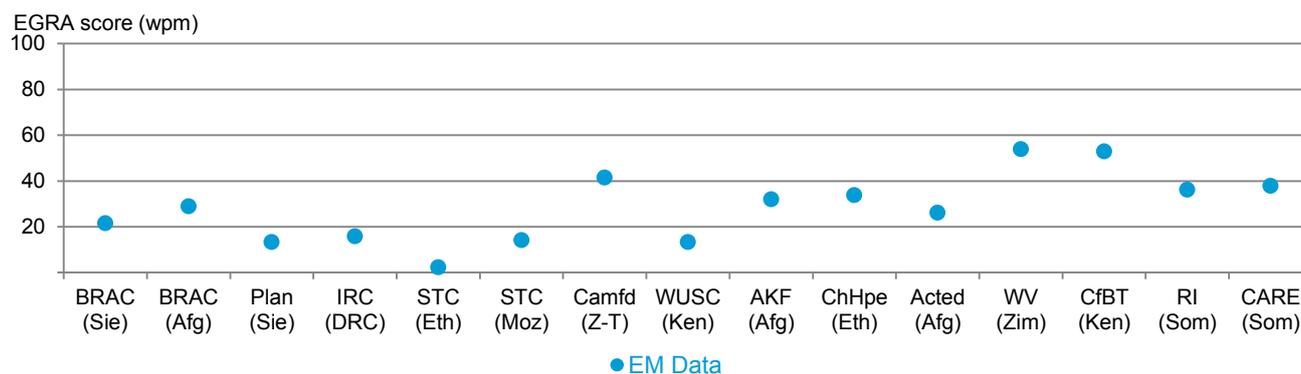


Table 26: Literacy scores by project area and data source, 9-11 year olds (enrolled in school)

Literacy scores In-school girls 9-11	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC Sie	BRAC Afg	Plan Sie	IRC DRC	STC Eth	STC Moz	Camfd Z-T	WUSC Ken	AKF Afg	ChHpe Eth	Acted Afg	WV Zim	CfBT Ken	RI Som	CARE Som	
Test - project	EGRA	EGRA	ASER	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	National	EGRA	EGRA ¹	EGRA	ASER	EGRA ¹	UWEZO ²	UWEZO	UWEZO ¹	
Unit	total/100	wpm	total/100*	unspec	wpm	total/100*	total/100	unspec	wpm	wpm	levels	wpm	levels	total/100	levels	
Outcome spreadsheet	45		1.4	47	10	50	34			49	2.0	50	4.1	91		
Test - EM	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in words per minute)															
EM Data	22	29	13	16	2	14	42	13	32	34	26	54	53	36	38	28
Years behind ³	-3.9	-2.4	-4.6	-4.2	-4.2	-4.4	-2.5	-4.5	-2.4	-2.4	-2.9	-2.2	-2.2	-3.2	-3.4	-3.2

1. Reported by age. 2. ASAL only. 3. As compared to international literacy benchmarks in words per minute.

The EM learning assessment showed an average EGRA score of 28 words per minute among girls aged 9-11. This is below the 45 wpm norm for 7-year old students in developing countries that we use for benchmarking purposes (see Table 9 above). The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) suggest that children reading less than 45 words in grade two (i.e. age 7-8) can be considered “at risk”. At age 9-11, the suggested benchmark reading fluency for students would be 85-108 wpm. On this basis, an average EGRA score of 28 wpm indicates an average gap in performance that is equivalent to three years of schooling (see the bottom row in Table 26). At the project level, gaps ranged from two years behind to over 4 years behind.

Based on our analysis of EM data, we found that performance gaps tend to widen among older girls aged 14-15. The EM data suggested that literacy gaps were on average twice as large among the 14-15 year olds as among the 9-11 year olds (compare Table 26 and Table 27).

As shown in Figure 11 and Table 27 our key findings on the literacy levels of 14-15 year old girls who were enrolled in school across the SCW are as follows:

- **Outcome spreadsheets:** Figures on literacy among 14-15 year olds were available from two projects’ outcome spreadsheets. One project reported EGRA scores as wpm, which was ChildHope in Ethiopia (54 wpm). PLAN (Sierra Leone), reported Uwezo levels corresponding to this age group (i.e. level 5.9).
- **EM data:** Based on the analysis of EM data, we were able to generate comparable EGRA scores for all 15 SCW project areas. Among the 14-15 year old we found literacy levels equivalent to an oral reading fluency averaging 55 wpm across the SCW project areas. We measured the lowest literacy scores in STC (Ethiopia) project areas (5 wpm). We measured the highest literacy levels in Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) project areas (89 wpm).

Figure 11: Comparison of literacy scores (words per minute) across project area, EM data only, 14-15 year olds (enrolled in school)

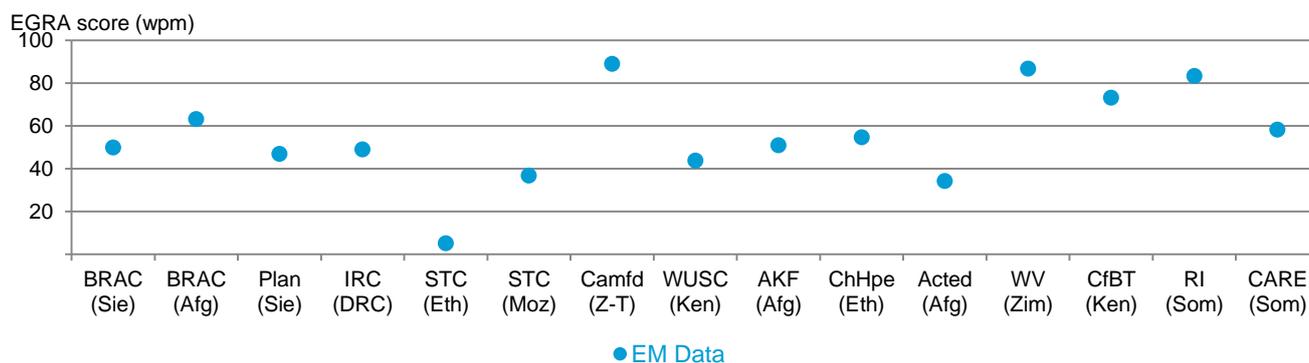


Table 27: Literacy scores by project area and data source, 14-15 year olds (enrolled in school)

Literacy scores In-school girls 14-15	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
Test - project	EGRA	EGRA	ASER	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	National	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	ASER ¹	EGRA ¹	UWEZO ²	UWEZO	UWEZO ¹	
Unit	total/100	wpm	total/100*	unspec	wpm	total/100	total/100*	unspec	wpm	wpm	levels	wpm	levels	total/100	levels	
● Outcome spreadsheet			5.9							54						
Test - EM	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)															
● EM Data	50	63	47	49	5	37	89	44	51	55	34	87	73	83	58	55
Years behind ³	-6.9	-5.6	-7.3	-7.1	-8.5	-7.8	-4.5	-7.3	-6.0	-5.9	-6.8	-4.9	-5.6	-5.3	-6.8	-6.0

1. Reported by age. 2. ASAL only. 3. As compared to international literacy benchmarks in words per minute.

As shown in Table 27, the EM data suggests that 14-15 year old students are able to read at an average level of about 55 wpm, across the SCW. This means that the tested girls are on average six years behind international benchmarks of oral reading fluency (see Table 9). We also found an average difference in literacy scores of 27 wpm between 9-11 and 14-15 year olds which corresponds to an increase in ability that is clearly lower than would be expected given that 14-15 year olds would usually have spent between four and five additional years in school.



It is worth noting that the reading fluency scores presented above were achieved by secondary-aged girls reading passages of texts at a level of difficulty appropriate to primary grade 3. However, international reading fluency benchmarks are pitched at grade appropriate texts. This means that in relative terms, the results may actually be worse than they see and that our analysis might still underestimate the extent to which girls in SCW project areas are marginalised in terms of their reading fluency.

Figure 12 shows the average gaps in reading fluency of girls tested by the EM across the SCW. It shows that girls fall further behind international benchmarks of reading fluency, the older they get. Our analysis of enrolment has shown that many girls are enrolled one or several years below their expected grade level and which could potentially explain why they read slower than expected for their age. However, our analysis shown in Figure 13 shows that at every respective grade level, the girls’ average performance lags behind international benchmarks, suggesting that performance gaps in reading do not exclusively stem from girls not progressing from grade to grade at pace, but that advantages are being accumulated across the school phase, at every grade level. The finding that girls are not able to achieve gains in reading fluency that reflect their age and the time spent in education, suggests that educational barriers are impeding the learning of girls in SCW project areas and as such contribute to their educational marginalisation – this is in line with GEC-relevant assumptions

Figure 12: Average trajectory of literacy skills (i.e. oral reading fluency) across SCW, among enrolled girls, by age, in years behind international benchmarks

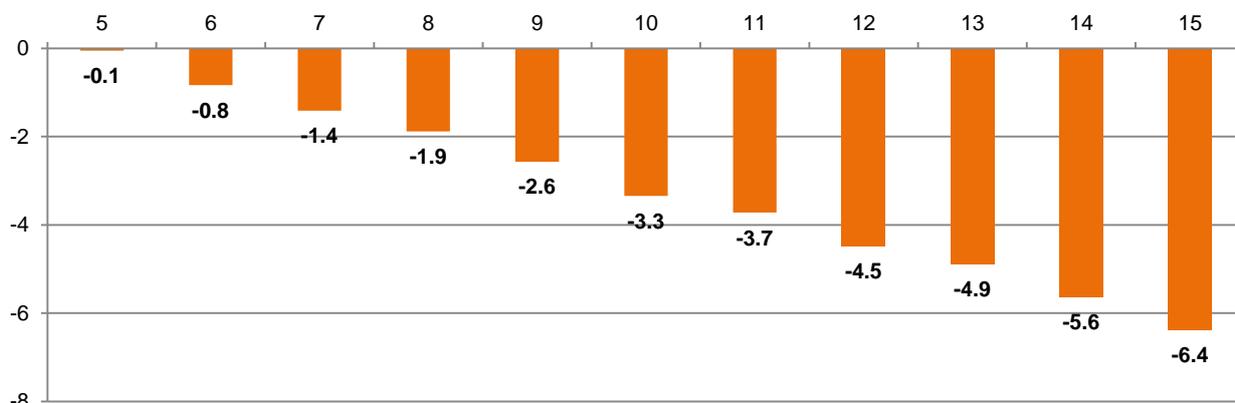
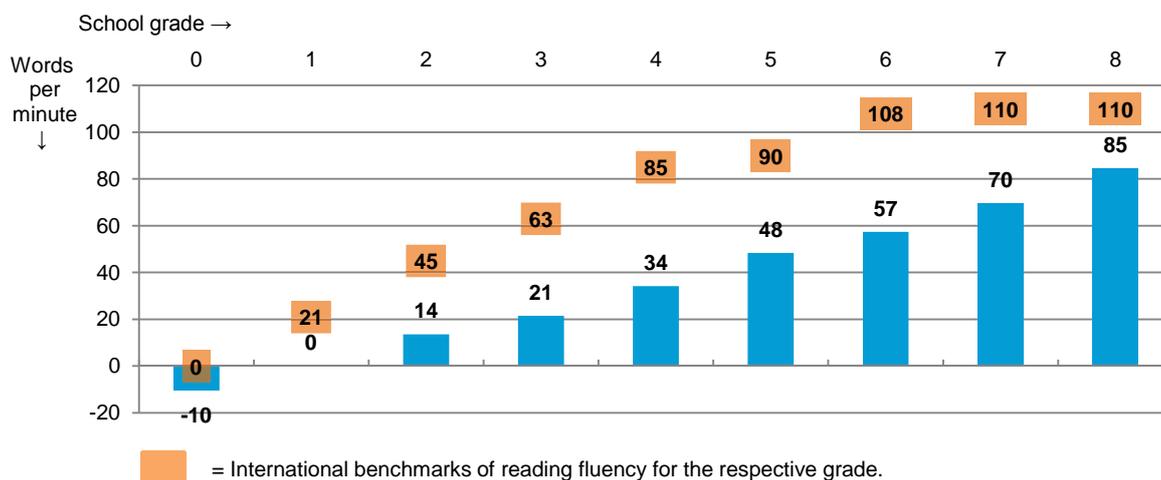


Figure 13: Average trajectory of literacy skills (i.e. oral reading fluency) across SCW, among enrolled girls, by grade, in words per minute, compared to international benchmarks



Gender differences in reading fluency

Gender differences in basic literacy ratios as measured by the EM’s household survey

Through the EM household survey we asked the caregiver to report for every child aged 5-15 in the household whether they were able to read and write a letter. From this we derived basic literacy rates for boys and girls in the project areas as the proportion of boys and girls able to read and write a letter in the language of instruction.

Our key findings with regards to differences in basic literacy rates between boys and girls living in the surveyed households across 15 SCW project areas are as follows (see [Figure 14](#) and [Table 28](#)):

- On average across all 15 SCW project areas, we found an average positive gap (to the advantage of girls) in basic literacy rates of 9-11 year olds of 4 percentage points (52% of girls reported as being able to read / write a letter compared with 48% of boys). We found that girls aged 9-11 had lower rates of reported basic literacy than boys in seven project areas, and higher rates of reported basic literacy in eight project areas.
- Among the 14-15 year olds, the picture is equally mixed. In six project areas we found that basic literacy rates were lower for girls aged 14-15 than for boys, while they were higher in seven project areas.
- On average, these variations evened out so that we observed a small gap (+4%) in favour of girls within the age group of 9-11 year olds, and virtually no difference between boys and girls aged 14-15 years.

In summary, our analysis of basic literacy ratios showed a mixed pattern across all 15 SCW project areas. Our findings do not support the GEC’s programmatic assumption that girls generally have lower levels of basic literacy than boys. While this was found to be the case in about half the project areas, girls had higher measured basic literacy ratios than boys in the other half. This suggests that the nature and scale of gender differences in basic literacy ratios may vary across contexts.

Figure 14: Comparison of gaps in basic literacy rates among girls and boys, by age group (EM data)

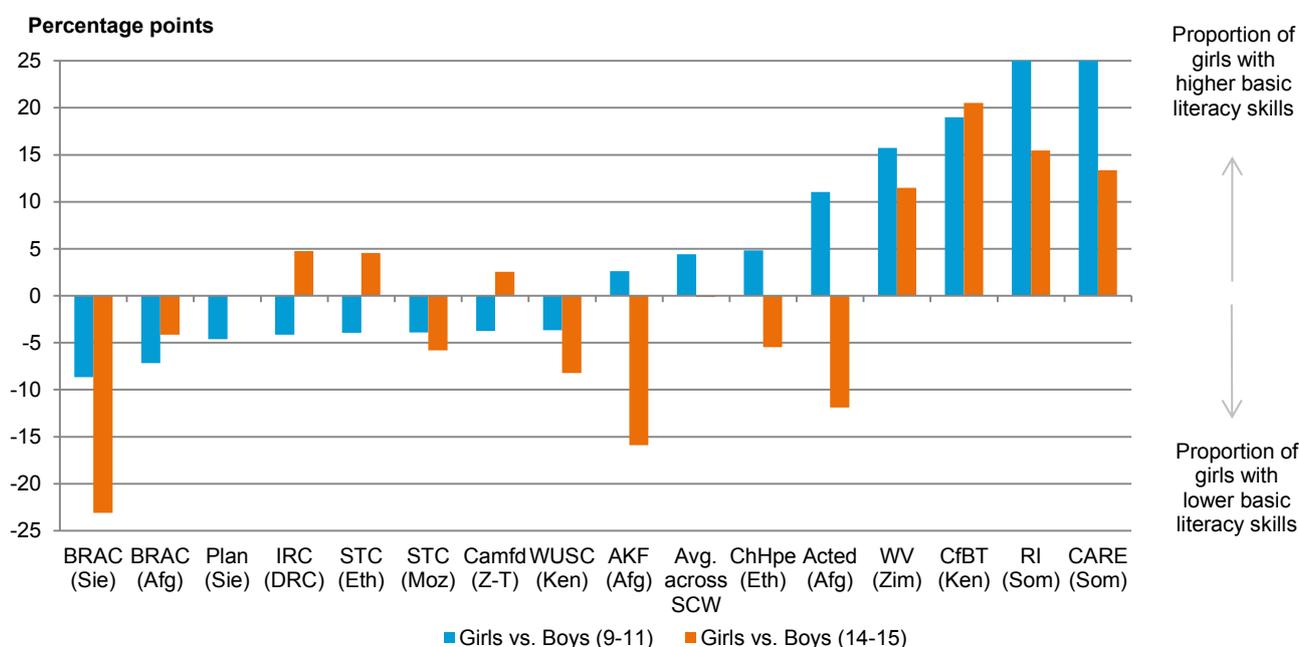


Table 28: Gaps in basic literacy rates among girls and boys, by age group (EM data)

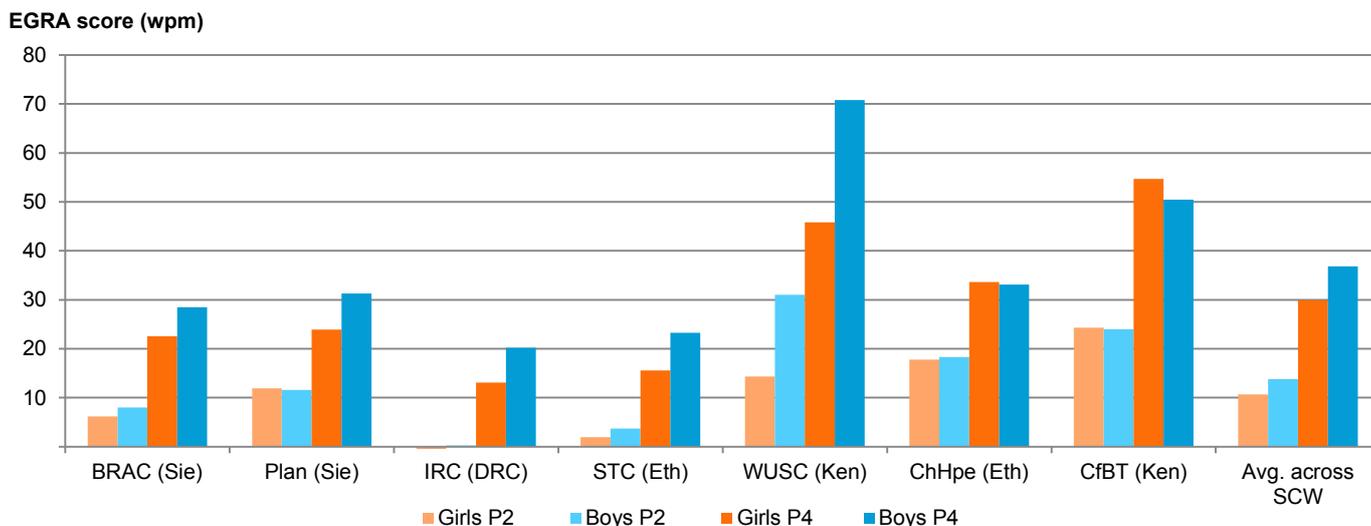
Basic literacy rates Girls vs. Boys	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC (Sie)	BRAC (Afg)	Plan (Sie)	IRC (DRC)	STC (Eth)	STC (Moz)	Camf (Z-T)	WUSC (Ken)	AKF (Afg)	ChHp (Eth)	Acted (Afg)	WV (Zim)	CfBT (Ken)	RI (Som)	CARE (Som)	
Children aged 9-11																
Girls	63	60	61	30	25	27	54	50	55	75	36	57	72	58	55	52
Boys	67	69	65	37	29	23	29	54	53	47	40	38	57	47	59	48
Difference	-5	-9	-4	-7	-4	5	25**	-4	3	28**	-4	19**	16**	11**	-4	4
Children aged 14-15																
Girls	86	64	81	64	47	67	85	75	69	92	57	81	94	73	80	74
Boys	86	88	89	68	53	73	70	71	85	79	53	60	82	85	77	75
Difference	0	-23**	-8	-4	-6	-5	15**	5	-16**	13	5	21**	11**	-12	3	0

Notes:
 ** Indicates that both p-values are strictly below 0.05.
 * Indicates that only the p-value from linear regression is strictly below 0.05.
 • Indicates that only the p-value from logistic regression is strictly below 0.05.

Gender differences in literacy scores as measured by the EM’s school-based learning assessments

As part of the EM-led baseline research we conducted school-based learning assessments of boys and girls in four of the nine SCW countries, namely DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sierra Leone. In each school, we tested the literacy and numeracy levels of children in primary grades 2 and 4. Figure 15 compares the literacy scores (as wpm) that we found among girls and boys in each of these two grades.

Figure 15: Comparison of literacy scores (words per minute) by gender and grade (EM school-based assessment)



Our key findings with regards to differences in literacy levels between boys and girls tested in schools in seven out of 15 SCW project areas are as follows (see Figure 15 and Table 29).

- In primary grade 2 (P2), the reading assessment (EGRA) showed an average reading fluency score of 11 wpm for girls and 14 wpm for boys across the seven project areas covered. In two project areas (i.e. CfBT (Kenya) and PLAN (Sierra Leone)) we did not find any difference in reading fluency scores among children at this grade level from our analysis of the data. In four project areas we found small negative gaps which suggest that girls read on average between one and three words less per minute than boys. In WUSC (Kenya) project areas, however, we found a gap of 17 wpm with girls reading only about half as many words per minute (i.e. 14 wpm) as boys (i.e. 31 wpm).
- In primary grade 4 (P4), the reading assessment showed an average reading fluency score of 30 wpm for girls and 37 wpm for boys. In two project areas (ChildHope (Ethiopia) and CfBT (Kenya)) we found small positive gaps (at the expense of boys). In four project areas, we measured negative gaps of six to eight wpm (at the expense of girls). In WUSC project areas in Kenya, we found a negative gap of 25 words per minute (at the expense of girls).

Table 29: Literacy scores (words per minute) by gender and grade (EM school-based assessment)

Literacy scores P2 and P4 Girls vs. Boys	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camd	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
Children in P2																
Girls	6		12	-2	2			14		18			24			11
Boys	8		12	0	4			31		18			24			14
Difference	-2		0	-2	-2			-17**		-1			0			-3
Children in P4																
Girls	23		24	13	16			46		34			55			30
Boys	28		31	20	23			71		33			50			37
Difference	-6**		-7**	-7**	-8**			-25**		1			4			-7

Notes: For some project areas, cells are shaded in grey because they were not covered by the EM's school-based assessment.
 ** indicates that both p-values are strictly below 0.05.
 * indicates that only the p-value from linear regression is strictly below 0.05.
 • indicates that only the p-value from logistic regression is strictly below 0.05.

Even though we found small differences in reading fluency scores in a number of projects (and larger differences in WUSC Kenya project areas), these would not make a substantial difference with regards to literacy levels. In P2, findings suggested that neither girls nor boys demonstrated a foundational level of reading fluency equivalent to international benchmarks suggested for grade 2 in developing countries. While gaps were slightly larger among older children they still indicated roughly similar levels of reading fluency among boys and girls that were low in comparison with international benchmarks (see [Table 9](#)).

Summary: Does the evidence suggest that 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls are marginalised with regards to learning (literacy)?

The analysis of EM household survey data shows that girls across the SCW achieve low literacy outcomes in terms of reading fluency scores. Girls aged 9-11 are on average three years behind oral reading fluency benchmarks for students tested in developing countries, and girls aged 14-15 are on average six years behind. This suggests that girls, rather than catching up, fall further behind as they progress through the school system, and advance by only a little in terms of their reading fluency skills. These findings highlight the importance of acquiring foundational reading skills in early grades as a prerequisite for effective learning in later grades, which supports GEC-relevant assumptions whereby girls are marginalised in terms of their learning outcomes.

Our analysis of gender differences in basic literacy levels and EGRA reading fluency scores does not show any substantive differences in these outcomes. We tended to observe small gaps in EGRA scores from the school-based assessment (at the expense of girls), but overall the scores achieved by both boys and girls suggested that they lag behind international benchmarks of oral reading fluency. We found that gaps in basic literacy (to the disadvantage of girls) existed in half of the 15 project areas. It seems that gender gaps in learning are context-specific and that further research is required to better understand possible differences in learning between boys and girls.

Box 6: Does the learning test disadvantage girls who do not speak the language of instruction at home?

The literature around the impact of learning in a language which is different from the language spoken at home is relatively well-established. UNESCO guidance has encouraged school instruction in students' mother tongue since 1953. The negative effects of learning in a language which is different from the language spoken at home on learning outcomes and retention are also fairly clear. Analysis conducted for UNESCO in 2008 which assessed data from 22 countries and 160 languages found that children who are taught in the same language spoken at home are significantly more likely to be enrolled in school and significantly less likely to drop out¹³. Studies have also found significant negative effects on learning outcomes. The 2011 PIRLS assessment found that students not taught in their mother tongue were significantly less likely to achieve minimum learning standards in reading than students who were taught in their home language¹⁴. Several key examples of these learning disparities stand out in the study: for instance in Benin, over 80% of Grade 5 students who are taught in their mother tongue achieve minimum scores in reading, compared with less than 60% of Grade 5 students who are not taught in the same language they speak at home.

In each project area, the EM learning assessment was conducted in the language of instruction in which the project expected to demonstrate an improvement in learning over the course of the GEC. As shown in [Table 30](#) there are several project areas in which a majority of girls do not usually speak the language of instruction at home.

This is the case, for instance, among roughly 95% of girls surveyed in the project areas of BRAC (Sierra Leone) and Save the Children (Mozambique). In other project areas, less than 20% of the surveyed girls do not speak the language of instruction at home. Finally, there are areas where the situation is mixed.

¹³ Smits et al. "Home language and education in the developing world" Commissioned study for Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009. Nijmegen Centre for Economics, Radboud University, 2008.

¹⁴ UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2013/2014 "Children need to be taught in a language they understand" (http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/pdf/language_factsheet.pdf)

Table 30: Girls tested who do not speak the language of instruction at home (EM household survey)

Not speaking language of instruction at home %	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM data	95	18	93	77	65	94	45	84	22	3	50	38	70	26	13

This heterogeneity raises the question of whether girls who do speak the language of instruction at home have an advantage over their peers who do not, when taking the EGRA and EGMA test. Figure 16 shows the average literacy score (i.e. words per minute) achieved by both groups of girls across all ages in each of the SCW projects. While girls speaking the language of instruction at home fared better in five project areas, they were actually outpaced by their peers who do *not* speak the language of instruction in as many as six project areas. Based on this evidence we have no reason to assume that girls not speaking the language of instruction at home are at a systematic disadvantage when taking the EGRA/EGMA test.

Figure 16: Comparison of average literacy scores (words per minute) of girls who do speak the language of instruction at home compared to girls who do not (EM household survey data)

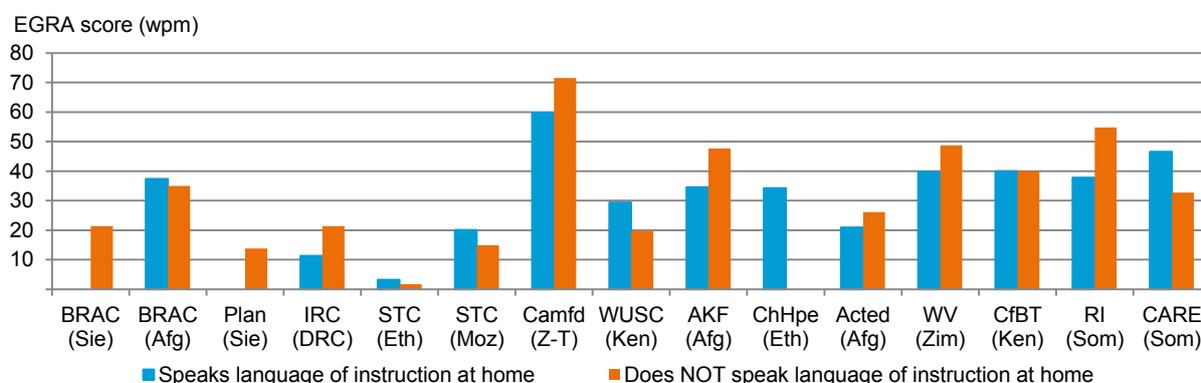


Table 31: Difference in EGRA scores measured among girls who do speak the language of instruction at home compared to girls who do not speak the language of instruction at home

EGRA scores (wpm)	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Speaking		37		11	3	20	60	29	35	34	21	40	40	38	47
Not speaking	21	35	14	21	2	15	72	20	48		26	49	40	55	33
Difference		-2		10*	-1	-5	12**	-10*	13*		5	9	0	17**	-14**

Notes:

- ** Indicates that both p-values are strictly below 0.05.
- * Indicates that only the p-value from linear regression is strictly below 0.05.
- Indicates that only the p-value from Wilcoxon rank-test is strictly below 0.05.

Numeracy scores

As in the case of the literacy assessments, projects used different tools to assess the mathematical abilities of girls in their target areas and reported results in different formats. It is important to note that the EM-led research generated EGMA scores that are not directly comparable with those presented by the projects (for a more detailed explanation, see Section 2.3.2). In addition, there are currently no international norms or benchmarks applicable to EGMA scores, due to the fact that aggregate EGMA scores are rarely calculated and reported. As a consequence, we can only compare the EGMA scores measured in the EM data between project areas and age groups but we cannot relate these back to a qualitative indication of mathematical ability that would be similar to the words per minute benchmarks. Therefore, we cannot readily compare EGMA scores between project and EM data sources.

As shown in [Figure 17](#) and [Table 32](#), our key findings on the numeracy scores of **9-11 year old** girls who were enrolled in school across the SCW are as follows:

- **Outcome spreadsheets:** Figures on numeracy levels of 9-11 year olds were available from ten projects' outcome spreadsheets. Across the five projects reporting EGMA scores as total/100, the lowest EGMA score was reported by BRAC (Sierra Leone) with a score of 31, while the highest was reported by STC (Mozambique) with a score of 65.

Two projects reported Uwezo/ASER as levels. ACTED (Afghanistan) reported an ASER level of 2.4 while CfBT (Kenya) reported an Uwezo level of 5.5 (which indicates an ability to solve at least two numerical written subtraction sums of Primary 2 difficulty).

- **EM data:** Based on the analysis of EM data, we were able to generate comparable EGMA scores for all 15 SCW project areas. We found an average numeracy score of 62 among girls aged 14-15 across the SCW project areas.¹⁵ We measured the lowest EGMA scores in STC (Ethiopia) project areas (i.e. 27), and the highest EGMA scores in World Vision (Zimbabwe) and ChildHope (Ethiopia) project areas (i.e. 90 and 91, respectively).

Figure 17: Comparison of numeracy scores (EGMA score scaled from 0-100) across project areas, EM data only, 9-11 year olds (enrolled in school)

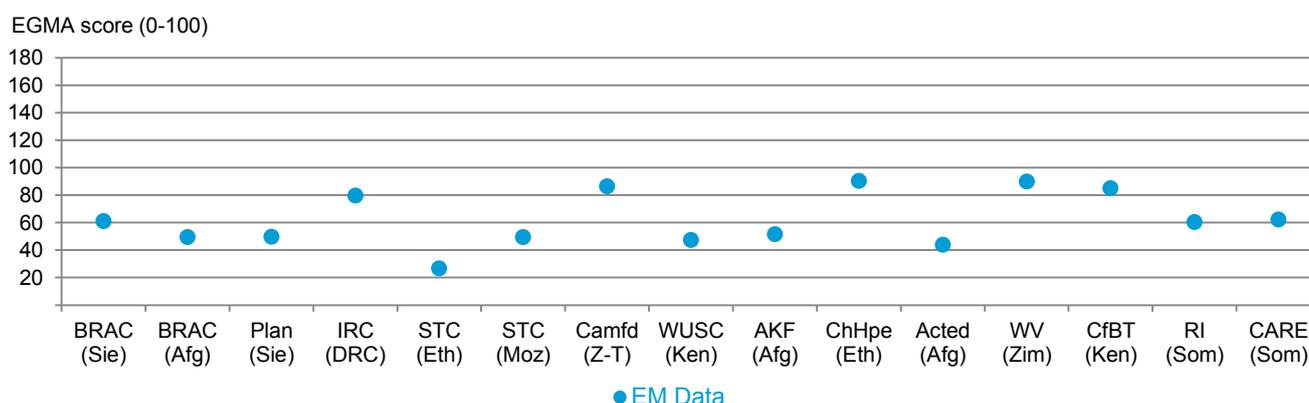


Table 32: Numeracy scores by project area and data source, 9-11 year olds (enrolled in school)

Numeracy scores In-school girls 9-11	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Test used by project	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	National	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA ¹	UWEZO ²	UWEZO	UWEZO ¹
Unit	total/100	total/100	total/100*	unspec	total/100	total/100	total/100	unspec	unspec	total/100	levels	total/100	levels	total/100	levels
Outcome spreadsheet	31		8.9	48	39	65				59	2.4	62	5.5	79	
Test used by EM	EGMA - augmented and harmonised numeracy score (scaled from 0 to 100)														
EM Data	61	49	50	80	27	50	86	47	52	91	44	90	85	60	62

*Unit in BL Report and Outcome spreadsheet differ (wpm/ total/100).
Notes: 1. Reported by age. 2. ASAL only.

As shown in [Figure 18](#) and [Table 33](#), our key findings on the numeracy levels of **14-15 year old** girls enrolled in school across the SCW are as follows:

- **Outcome spreadsheets:** Figures on numeracy levels among 14-15 year olds were available from four projects' outcome spreadsheets. Among projects reporting EGMA scores as total/100, the highest score

¹⁵ These scores are out of a notional 0-100 in which all items are answered correctly in exactly the allotted time. Higher scores are possible when the scores are obtained in less than the allotted time.

was reported by ChildHope in Ethiopia (i.e. 78) while the lowest score was reported by World Vision in Zimbabwe (i.e. 75). One project, PLAN (Sierra Leone), reported an average ASER level of 14 for 14-15 year olds in their Outcome spreadsheet.

- **EM data:** Based on the analysis of EM data, we were able to generate comparable EGMA scores of 14-15 year olds for all 15 SCW project areas. We found an average EGMA score of 99 among girls aged 14-15 across the 15 SCW project areas. We measured the lowest EGMA scores in STC (Ethiopia) project areas (i.e. 40) and the highest in ChildHope (Ethiopia) project areas (i.e. 157).

Figure 18: Comparison of numeracy scores (EGMA score scaled from 0-100) across project areas, EM data only, 14-15 year olds (enrolled in school)

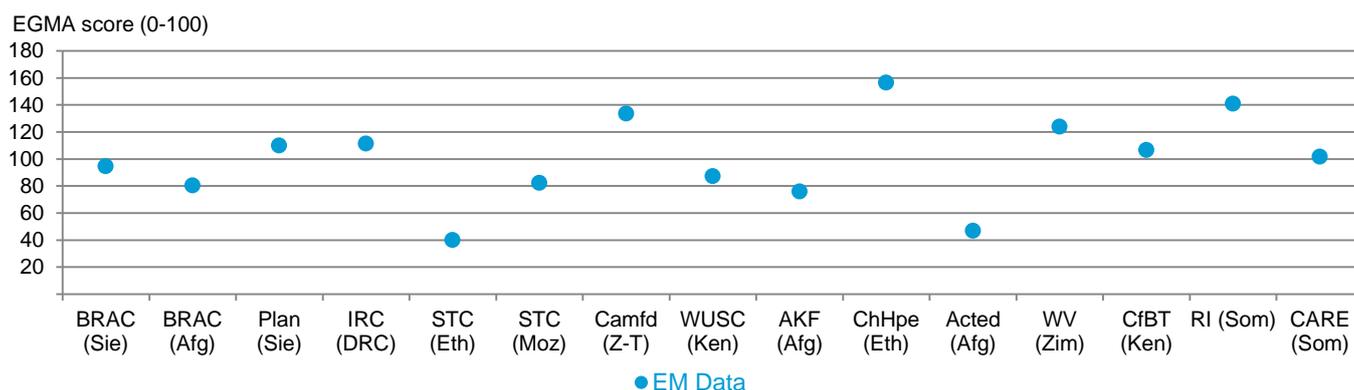


Table 33: Numeracy scores by project area and data source, 14-15 year olds (enrolled in school)

Numeracy scores In-school girls 14-15	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Test used by project	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	National	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA ¹	UWEZO ²	UWEZO	UWEZO ¹
Unit	total/100	total/100	total/100*	unspec	total/100	total/100	total/100*	unspec	unspec	total/100	levels	total/100	levels	total/100	levels
Outcome spreadsheet			14				11			78		75			
Test used by EM	EGMA - augmented and harmonised numeracy score (scaled from 0 to 100)														
EM Data	95	80	110	111	40	82	134	87	76	157	47	124	107	141	102

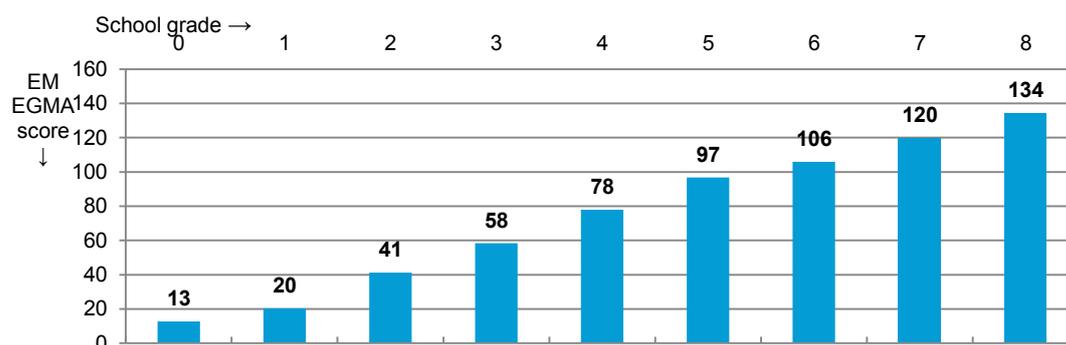
*Unit in BL Report and Outcome spreadsheet differ (wpm/ total/100).
Notes: 1. Reported by age. 2. ASAL only.

In some project areas (e.g. STC, Ethiopia) girls aged 14-15 years achieved less than half of the possible scores awarded for the completion of the set exercises, meaning that their average performance in mathematics was below a basic foundational level (i.e. the level taught in the first grades of primary school). In contrast, there is other project areas where girls aged 9-11 attained an average score that was around 100, meaning that they completed the task correctly in the time deemed suitable for assessing early grade skills. In some locations, girls aged 14-15 obtained average scores above 100 meaning that they completed all mandatory exercises with time remaining (scores are adjusted above 100 when time is remaining). Such scores indicate that these girls had clearly obtained foundational numeracy skills.



As shown in [Figure 19](#) our analysis of data from the EM EGMA assessment suggests the existence of a continuous learning progression from grade to grade. Nevertheless, it appears that girls reach a plateau in terms of numeracy skills in secondary school, with only a marginal increase in learning between S1 and S2. A similar plateau effect was found between S2 and S3 in terms of literacy skills. This may be an indication of ceiling effects when using EGMA and EGMA tests, which are designed to capture foundational skills, to assess the advanced abilities of secondary school girls.

Figure 19: Average trajectory of numeracy skills across SCW, among enrolled girls, by grade



Gender differences in numeracy

Our key findings with regards to differences in numeracy levels between boys and girls tested in schools in seven out of 15 SCW project areas are as follows (see Table 34).

- In P2, the maths assessment showed an average numeracy score of 54 for girls and 63 for boys across the seven project areas covered. Girls scored lower than boys in each project area except for PLAN (Sierra Leone) project areas where we did not measure any gender difference in numeracy scores in P2. The average difference in numeracy scores was nine EGMA points.
- In P4, the maths assessment showed an average numeracy score of 99 for girls and 114 for boys. Girls scored lower than boys across all seven project areas that were covered by the school-based assessment and the average difference in numeracy scores was 14 points.

Children participating in the school-based assessment generally achieved higher aggregate numeracy scores than reading fluency scores which is partly due to the different measurement scales used to analyse performance across sub-tasks in both assessments. As a consequence, gender differences in numeracy scores appear larger in absolute terms than differences in reading fluency scores even though they are actually smaller in relation to the total scores achieved by boys and girls.

Nevertheless, boys scored consistently higher than girls in both grades and across all project areas (with the exception of children in P2 grades in PLAN Sierra Leone project areas). At the same time, these differences do not appear to be substantial in terms of their implications for the children’s foundational maths skills. In P2, boys and girls achieved more than half but less than two thirds of the available points, which indicates that both groups lacked foundational numeracy skills. In P4, girls reached almost 100 points (on average), suggesting that they may master foundational numeracy skills. Boys were, on average, able to complete the test with time remaining, or answered additional questions therefore reaching an average score above 100.

Table 34: Numeracy scores (EGMA) by gender and grade (EM school-based assessment)

Numeracy scores P2 and P4 Girls vs. Boys	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camd	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
Children in P2																
Girls	49		54	45	29			73		65			60			54
Boys	51		53	52	43			92		83			63			63
<i>Difference</i>	-2		1	-7*	-14**			-19**		-18**			-3			-9
Children in P4																
Girls	80		83	94	85			115		130			110			99
Boys	95		92	105	112			141		144			107			114
<i>Difference</i>	-16**		-9**	-12**	-27**			-26**		-14**			-2			-14

Notes: For some project areas, cells are shaded in grey because they were not covered by the EM's school-based assessment.
 ** Indicates that both p-values are strictly below 0.05.
 * Indicates that only the p-value from linear regression is strictly below 0.05.
 • Indicates that only the p-value from logistic regression is strictly below 0.05.

Summary: Does the evidence suggest that 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls are marginalised with regards to learning (numeracy)?

The analysis of data from the EM EGMA assessment showed that average levels of mathematical skills varied markedly across SCW project areas.

In some project areas (e.g. STC Ethiopia) girls of secondary school age achieved less than half of the possible scores awarded for the completion of the set exercises, meaning that average performance was below basic foundational level (i.e. the level taught in the first grades of primary school). Given their age, this implies that a level of persistent educational marginalisation affects these girls throughout their time in the school system.

For high achieving groups in other project areas, their progress relative to international numeracy benchmarks can only be inferred as EGMA is not designed to assess more advanced skills and key foundational skills (by definition) do not progress in a linear way with age. However, it is clear that the majority of these girls are operating comfortably with key maths skills. Although we cannot say exactly how close they are to normed mathematical skills we can say that they are not as grossly marginalised as their peers in other project locations with regards to numeracy. In addition, this level of comfort and fluency with numeracy tasks speaks of familiarity and experience with numbers which implies meaningful learning support in mathematics on a regular basis over an extended period of time.

With regards to gender differences in numeracy levels, our analysis does not show any substantive gender gaps. Children in primary grade 2 appear to lack some foundational numeracy skills regardless of their gender, but both boys and girls appear to have achieved these skills by the time they enter primary grade 4.

Box 7: Learning outcomes among out-of-school girls

Nine out of 15 SCW projects target out-of school girls (see [Table 45](#) in [Section 5.1.2](#)) and this is a group that we would expect to be particularly marginalised with regards to their education outcomes.

Table 35: Percentage of girls who are currently out of school, and those who have never been enrolled

Out-of-school status All ages	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camd	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
	% of all girls sampled in each project area															
Out-of-school	17	30	18	16	40	6	12	31	31	18	23	7	7	47	50	23
Never enrolled	14	26	14	9	32	3	3	28	27	14	22	2	4	39	45	18

As shown in [Table 35](#), 23% of girls surveyed by the EM across the SCW were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey. This percentage includes girls who were previously enrolled but have dropped out. Eighteen per cent of all surveyed girls have never been enrolled according to their primary caregiver.

Based on analysis of EM data from the household-based EGRA assessments, [Table 36](#) shows the average literacy (i.e. reading fluency) scores achieved by girls who were enrolled in school; girls who were out of school at the time of the household interview; and the subgroup of out-of-school girls who have never been enrolled, according to the primary caregiver surveyed in the household.

Table 36: Literacy scores (in words per minute) by school enrolment status, EM data only

Literacy scores (in wpm) All ages	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	Avg.
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camd	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)															
In-school	23	37	17	19	2	15	65	21	37	35	24	43	39	42	44	31
Out-of-school	-4	3	6	-13	-1	1	35	-3	-1	-3	-10	14	-11	3	2	1
Never enrolled	-8	-4	-2	-21	-1	-9	-42	-4	-4	-9	-10	-15	-25	-3	-3	-11

Table 36 shows that out-of-school girls read only 1 wpm on average across age groups and SCW project areas, compared with 31 wpm among the in-school girls. Among girls who have never been enrolled, we measured a negative average reading score of -11wpm.

Negative wpm scores are possible because our EGRA score is scaled to words per minute, but contains information from all EGRA subtasks. This enables us to measure differences in ability even among very low-performing girls who would otherwise obtain a common score of zero (i.e. we would observe a “floor” effect).

The literacy scores shown in Table 36 suggest that out-of-school girls are, on average, illiterate, but that those girls who have never been enrolled displayed even lower literacy ability when considering information from all subtasks. There is only one project area (Camfed, Tanzania/Zimbabwe) where out-of-school girls demonstrated an average literacy level above benchmarks suggested for students in grade 1.

Nevertheless, it is important to consider these scores from the perspective of the age distribution of each category and schooling to date. As shown in Table 37 the proportion of girls who are below the age of eight is considerably higher among out-of-school girls (53%) and the subset of girls who have never been enrolled (71%) than among in-school girls (30%) in our EM sample.

Table 37: Distribution of girls across age groups, by school enrolment status, EM data only

Distribution (%)	Enrolment status		
	In school	Out-of-school	Never enrolled
Age group			
< 6	5	20	32
6 to 8	25	33	39
9 to 11	29	11	9
12 to 13	19	12	7
14 to 15	17	15	5
16 to 19	1	2	0

It is likely that these younger groups contain many girls who are not yet enrolled because they have not yet reached their country’s official school starting age (see Table 8). This would partly explain the low average literacy scores achieved by out-of-school girls.

3.1.3 Does the evidence confirm that target girls are educationally marginalised?

Based on the review and reanalysis of project data, and the analysis of EM data we have assessed the baseline levels of GEC outcomes and compared our findings with some of the programmatic assumptions underpinning the GEC. The basic assumption was that girls have poor learning outcomes that leave substantial space for measurable improvement. The following were our key findings with regards to this assumption:

- Across the SCW project areas we found that average **enrolment rates** of 9-11 and 14-15 year olds generally did leave room for improvement, especially among girls of secondary school age. However, in some project areas the EM data indicates that primary enrolment was already close to 100%. This would suggest that some projects may not be able to demonstrate a measurable improvement in enrolment over the GEC’s lifecycle and that girls may be less marginalised in terms of enrolment than might have been expected based on the GEC’s programme assumptions.
- In terms of **attendance**, we found virtually no differences between girls aged 9-11 and girls aged 14-15. Even though enrolment tended to be lower among older girls, they appeared to attend school just as much

as their younger peers once they were enrolled. Based on the EM data we found attendance rates between 83% and 93% at the project level. This suggests that girls still missed about three school days in a given month (assuming that the school operates five days a week) which would have negative effects on their learning and would indicate an area for improvement.

- In terms of **retention**, we found a wider spread in the year-on-year retention rates of 14-15 year olds, compared with 9-11 year olds. Moreover, all streams of evidence indicated that average year-on-year retention was slightly lower among 14-15 year olds than among 9-11 year olds, which is in line with GEC-relevant assumptions. However, the EM data showed retention rates of 100% in a number of projects which suggests that the projects would not be able to demonstrate a measurable improvement over the course of the GEC.
- With regards to **gender differences in enrolment**, the analysis of EM data did not suggest that girls have systematically lower enrolment rates than boys. Our evidence did not support the assumption that existing gaps generally widen when children reach secondary school age. We found that gaps exist in both directions and change in both directions.
- With regards to **literacy (i.e. reading fluency)**, the analysis of EM data showed low average literacy levels among girls of both age groups. The average reading fluency scores of 9-11 and 14-15 year olds suggested that the girls lagged several years behind international norms of reading fluency. These performance gaps tend to widen as the girls grow older, suggesting that their literacy levels increase only a little over the course of their schooling. These findings are in line with the GEC programme assumption that girls targeted by the GEC are marginalised in terms of their learning outcomes and progress.
- With regards to **numeracy**, the analysis of EM data showed that average levels of mathematical skills varied markedly across SCW project areas. In some project areas, girls of both age groups were unable to demonstrate basic foundational numeracy skills (i.e. at the level taught in the first grades of primary school). This suggests that girls aged 14-15 in particular experience a persistent level of educational marginalisation throughout their time in the school system. In contrast, in other project areas, girls aged 9-11 attained an average score that was around 100, meaning they completed the task correctly in the given time. In some locations, girls aged 14-15 obtained average scores above 100 meaning that they completed all mandatory exercises with time remaining (scores are adjusted above 100 when time is remaining). Such scores indicate that these girls had clearly obtained foundational numeracy skills. Although we cannot say exactly how close they are to normed mathematical skills we can say that they are not as grossly educationally marginalised in terms of numeracy as their peers in other project locations.
- In terms of **differences in learning** between boys and girls, we generally observed only small gaps (at the expense of girls) in reading fluency based on EGRA scores from the school-based assessment. The scores suggested that both boys and girls were lagging behind international benchmarks of oral reading fluency. Based on data from the EM household surveys we found that gaps in basic literacy (to the disadvantage of girls) existed in half of the project areas, but that girls had higher rates of basic literacy in the other half. It seems that gender gaps in learning are context-specific and that further research is required to better understand possible differences in learning between boys and girls.

4 Barriers to Girls' Education at Baseline

4.1 What did the projects assume to be the barriers to girls' education in their target areas?

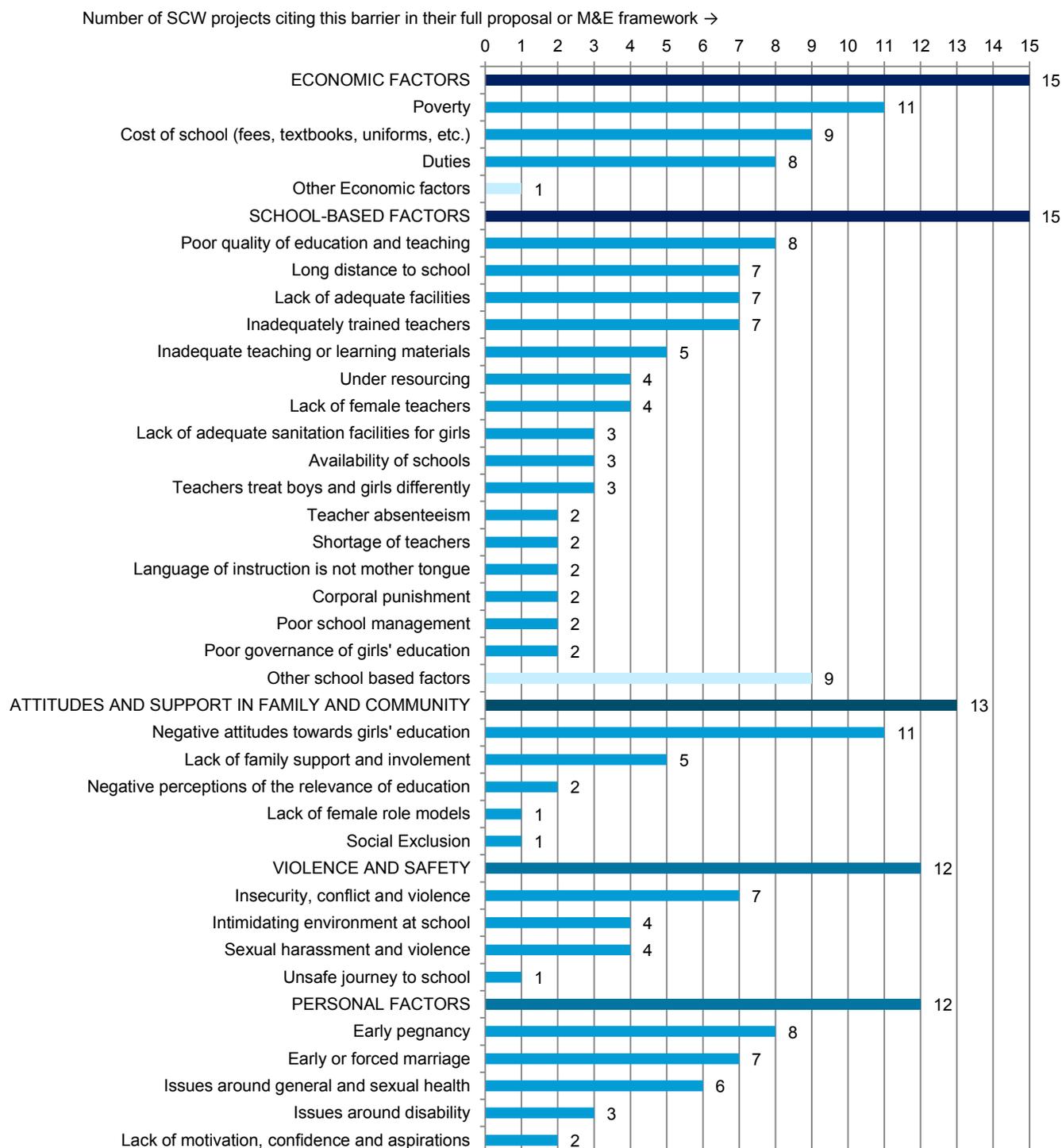
In their initial project proposals and M&E frameworks, SCW projects identified a range of potential barriers to girls' education which they expected to exist in their project areas (for details see the individual project profiles, [Annexes D1-D15](#)). We have grouped the various specific barriers mentioned by projects into five thematic categories: economic factors; school based factors; attitudinal factors; violence-related factors; and personal factors.

As shown in [Figure 20](#) (below), **all 15 SCW projects assumed that economic and school-related factors were affecting girls' education in their target communities**. Thirteen projects assumed barriers relating to family or community attitudes towards girls' education and twelve projects assumed barriers relating to violence or personal factors. Within each category, the most commonly cited sub-barriers were the following:

- **Economic factors:** General poverty (11 projects); parents' inability to afford the cost of schooling (9 projects), and girls' domestic chores and duties (8 projects).
- **School related factors:** Poor quality of education and teaching (8 projects); long distances to school (7 projects); inadequate school or classroom facilities (7 projects); and inadequately trained teachers (7 projects).
- **Attitudes in the family and in the community:** Negative attitudes towards girls' education (11 projects); lack of family support or involvement in girls' education (5 projects); and negative perceptions of the relevance of education (2 projects).
- **Violence and Safety:** Insecurity, conflict and violence (7 projects); harassment at school (4 projects) and sexual violence (4 projects).
- **Personal factors:** Early pregnancy (8 projects); early or forced marriage (7 projects); as well as issues around general and sexual health (6 projects).

In summary, SCW projects suggested a wide variety of potential barriers to girls' education. In the following section, we present findings from our analysis of quantitative and qualitative EM data that aimed to explore these barriers (as far as data was available) and to assess the programme and project assumptions about their prevalence and influence on girls' education.

Figure 20: The number of projects citing different barriers by theme



Note: Other economic factors include: tradition of migrating to work as house girls (1 project); and families cannot afford lighting facilities (1 project). Other school-based factors (mentioned by one project each) include: poor access to nearby schools; negative boy-girl relationships; lack of school fences; poor school infrastructure; girls lack knowledge on their sexual and reproductive health; curriculum is unfitting to the communities' needs; inadequate training and mentoring of school councils; lack of extra-curricular activities; lack of psychosocial support for girls; disrespectful behaviour by male teachers; lack of learning time.

4.2 What are the barriers to girls attending school and learning?

This section focuses on EM findings about barriers to girls' education across the SCW. The analysis is based on the following strands of qualitative and quantitative data that was collected by the EM in the intervention and control areas of all 15 SCW projects at baseline:

- the [household survey \(HHS\)](#) that was conducted with primary caregivers and selected girls in roughly 6400 households (intervention and control) across all 15 SCW project areas;
- the [school-based assessment \(SBA\)](#) that included classroom and facilities observations, teacher surveys and learning assessments with boys and girls in school, and was conducted at 28 intervention and control schools across seven project areas in DRC (IRC), Ethiopia (ChildHope and Save the Children), Kenya (CfBT and WUSC), and Sierra Leone (BRAC and PLAN). The analysis presented here is based on observations and learning assessments from a sub-set of 89 schools (for reasons that are discussed in detail in the methodological [Annex B](#)); and
- 800 qualitative [in-depth-interviews \(IDIs\)](#) that were conducted with households, community leaders and school officials in all 15 SCW project areas (intervention and control locations).

Project-specific findings based on project data are presented in the individual project profiles (see [Annexes D1-D15](#)) and summarised in [Table 48](#) in [Section 5.2](#).

We start our discussion of barriers in [Section 4.2.1](#) by presenting findings from a multivariate analysis of potential barriers based on data from the EM household survey and EM school-based assessment. In this analysis we focus on those potential barriers that have a significant association with girls' education outcomes, having controlled for other potential barriers that we have data for. A detailed description of the variables and indices we used for analysis is shown in [Table 48](#) in [Annex C](#). In [Section 4.2.2](#) we present a more detailed discussion of each potential barrier based on the analysis of qualitative data from the EM's In-Depth-Interviews (IDIs) and looking at significant associations between potential barriers and outcomes that were not discussed in [Section 4.2.1](#) because they were not significant when controlling for other factors. We present a summary of our findings that relate back to the projects' assumptions about barriers in [Section 4.2.3](#).

4.2.1 Analysis of the most significant barriers to girls' education

In this section we discuss our findings about barriers to girls' education based on the analysis of data from the EM household survey and the EM school-based assessment at the fund-level. Project-level tables are reported at the end of [Annex C](#), which also includes a descriptive list of the variables and indices that we used to analyse the EM household survey data. We examine how barriers relate to the key outcomes of enrolment, attendance and learning in terms of reading fluency. We present our analytical results in the form of regression tables that list all potential barriers that were introduced into a multivariate regression model, and highlight those barriers that emerged as significant when controlling for all other potential barriers. We did not generally include any interaction effects between different barrier variables in these regression models, except for gender interaction terms that we included in the analysis of data from the EM school-based-assessment.

The benefits and limitations of using multivariate regression analysis to identify educational barriers

Outcomes around "being-in-school" and learning are potentially influenced by a wide range of economic, social, structural and personal factors that interact with each other on different levels and scales. This implies that a single factor (or barrier) can often only explain a small part of the complex set of issues influencing these outcomes.

The analysis of relationships between only one barrier and the outcome of interest (i.e. of '**bivariate relationships**') helps us explore whether the barrier and outcome are somehow related. However, **we cannot tell whether the barrier really causes changes in the outcome, or if any other factor(s) may be confounding this relationship**. There is a risk of jumping to conclusions without examining other potential explanations and without accounting for the complexity of causal relationships which generally involve several barriers interacting with each other.

One example of the limitation of bivariate regression in education studies is that of the influence of class size on students' learning outcomes. In our analysis we find that girls who study in more crowded classrooms tend to achieve lower reading fluency scores than their peers in less crowded classrooms. While it is possible that students receive less individual attention in crowded classrooms, we cannot simply assume that crowded classrooms *cause* students to have poorer results. To identify the proper causal link between class size and learning outcomes we

would need to include a wide range of other factors in the regression model such as: the average socio-economic status of students in the classroom; their past results; their motivation; but also some higher-level variables such as teachers' qualifications; the schools' performance and available resources. This is because some of these factors may actually drive the bivariate relationship that we observe in the sense that classrooms may be more crowded in areas where a schools face resource constrains and can afford only a few teachers, which could in itself impact on girls' learning outcomes. Many of these other factors may be unobservable or impossible to measure objectively, which implies that we will never get a perfect idea of the causality link between class size and student's results.¹⁶ **A linear regression coefficient should therefore *never* be interpreted in terms of direct causality.**

However, by including a wide range of variables in a single regression model we can yield a more exhaustive picture of the potential barriers influencing the outcome of interest, and a more accurate estimate of the causal linkages between barriers and girls' education outcomes.

For each outcome of interest (i.e. enrolment, attendance and learning in terms of reading fluency), we have built a multivariate regression model including all of the 'eligible' barriers along with country dummies¹⁷ and the girls' age as control variables. We then successively removed those barriers that did not have any statistically significant relationship with the outcome. The resulting multivariate model contains only those variables that retain a significant relationship with the outcome.¹⁸ A wide majority of potential barriers did not make their way into the final multivariate model. This does not mean that they do not play an active role in explaining the outcome of interest because their influence may be "captured" by other variables and their statistical significance artificially reduced. In the case of educational barriers, we find that there is a high level of correlation between all of the potential barriers so that some bivariate relationships are likely to become invisible in the multivariate model.

Besides, a variable may have made its way into the final multivariate model but eventually account for a very small proportion of the observed variation of the outcome of interest. This is the case when the multivariate model fails to explain a significant part of the outcome variation – as reported at the bottom of our tables. This may also happen when the control variables used in the model (i.e. the girl's age and country dummies) have a large explanatory power, implying that most of the observed outcome is explained by age and country specific factors.

From a policy-maker's perspective, variables of the multivariate model would therefore be interpreted as the most salient barriers influencing the education outcome of interest at the level of the SCW overall. It is important to interpret the findings presented in Section 4.2.1 in conjunction with the qualitative evidence on these barriers presented in Section 4.2.2



We would ideally explore the models presented below not only at the SCW level, but also at the country level using project data as well as EM data. However, this is not advisable until more project data is fully processed and prepared for analysis, which is currently pending due to inconsistencies in the data structure, and labelling. Once this data became available, it would be possible to explore interactions between different barrier variables, which should enable us to explain more variance in all outcomes, although for social science modelling of complex behaviours there are always limits to what can be predicted, as explained above. In general, quantitative modelling will not detect all relevant factors influencing girls' education or their interactions, but will help identify broad candidate barriers. In turn, qualitative analysis can identify more diverse patterns and explore the ways in which barriers are perceived to interact and depend on each other, but may not reveal associations that are not clear to the respondents themselves. In summary, both the quantitative and qualitative analysis form partial and complementary approaches in the attempt to better understand barriers to girls' education.

Barriers to enrolment

Table 38 shows the results from our analysis of barriers to girls' enrolment based on data from the EM household survey. The final multivariate model includes twelve barrier variables that are able to explain 21% of the variation in

¹⁶ In more technical terms, the R^2 of the regression (percentage of the outcome variance explained) will never reach 100% in practice.

¹⁷ Including country dummies implies that our model is accounting for country-specific effects and should therefore be interpreted at the general fund-level.

¹⁸ This means that that the e p-value of the associated beta coefficient is strictly below 0.1

girls' enrolment observed across the SCW, when including the girl's age and country dummies as controls. About half (9.7%) of the variation in enrolment is explained by the ten potential barriers alone.

Table 38: Results of the EM analysis of barriers to girls' enrolment

Barriers to enrolment	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Multivariate model ¹⁹ including all significant barriers ²⁰		Bivariate associations with outcome for all potential barriers	
			Beta coeff. & significance	Variance explained (in %points)	No country controls	With country controls
Description of Variable		In unit of variable			Beta coeff. & significance	Beta coeff. & significance
Economic factors						
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	12%	-34%***	2%	-53%***	-38%***
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-0.09	-3%***	0%	-4%***	-4%***
Housing conditions	[0,2]	1.22	2%*	0%	-3%**	-2%**
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	51%			10%***	5%***
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	13%			-6%*	-8%***
Household income after housing costs (reversed and standardised within country)	SD	0.32			-3%*	0%
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.09			-1%	-3%***
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.29			0%	-1%
School based factors						
Language of instruction different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	55%	-7%***	0%	4%*	-9%***
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	26%	-3% [†]	0%	0%	-5%**
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	33%	2% [†]	0%	3% [†]	1%
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.55			1%	-1%
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	85%			1%	-6%
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	26%			2%	0%
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	5.77			3%***	0%
Attitudes and support in family and community						
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.36	-9%***	2%	-13%***	-13%***
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	82%	-22%***	1%	-14%**	-24%***
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	15%	-8%***	1%	-17%***	-16%***
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.16	-3%***	1%	-4%***	-5%***
Caregiver low aspirations for girl's educ.	[0,2]	0.27	-5%***	0%	-14%***	-9%***
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	0			-1%	0%
Violence and safety						
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	24%			3%	-1%
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.06			2%	1%
Personal factors						
Low level of family education	[0,1]	0.64	-7%***	0%	-20%***	-15%***
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	4%	-6% [†]	0%	-3%	-10%***
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.03			-13%*	-10%*
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.48			1% [†]	-1%*
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	14%			1%	-1%
Additional control variables for the multivariate model	Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe country dummies. Girl age in years.					
Total variance explained by the multivariate model	21%					
Sample for the multivariate model	N = 5272					
Total variance explained by significant barriers	9.7%					

Note: Asterisks are used to indicate levels of statistical significance: *** indicates a p-value below 0.001; ** indicates a p-value below 0.01; and * indicates a p-value below 0.05. † indicates a marginal value of significance of p < 0.1. Barriers with too low prevalence were excluded from the table.

¹⁹ controlling for other drivers

²⁰ after non-significant drivers (p > 0.1) removed sequentially

Based on the analysis presented in [Table 38](#), the following barriers showed **statistically significant associations** with enrolment and are more likely candidates to be obstacles to girls' enrolment across the GEC as a whole.

#1 Economic barriers to enrolment

- **Proportion of time spent on duties** – The more time girls are reported to spend on household duties and livelihood activities the lower the chances that they are enrolled in school. This effect is relatively large.
- **Employment situation in the household** – Whether the primary caregiver and the head of household are employed in skilled jobs, unskilled jobs, or no jobs at all influences whether girls are enrolled in school or not.²¹
- **Housing conditions** – Poor quality of floor and roofing materials in the home seem to have a negative association with girls' enrolment.

#2 School-based barriers to enrolment

- **Language of instruction** – On average across the fund level, we measured a negative association between girls not speaking the language of instruction at home and their chances to be enrolled in school.

#3 Attitudes and support in the family and in the community as barriers to enrolment

- **Negative attitudes towards girls' education** – The more negative the caregiver's attitude towards girls' education, the lower are the chances for girls in these households to be enrolled.
- **Families are not engaged with education** – In villages where caregivers tended to state that no family members were involved in any school committees, girls were significantly less likely to be enrolled than in villages where families do get involved in their children's education.
- **Girls' education is unusual in the community** – Where caregivers stated that it was unusual for people in the community to send their children to school, girls were significantly less likely to be enrolled than in families that did not report girls' education to be unusual. An association should be expected with this variable by definition, but it is included here to control for family's perceptions about norms of community behaviour.
- **Social exclusion** – The indices of social exclusion developed from the survey data involved items such as recent moves of the family and a lack of supportive people or friends in the local community. We generally measured low scores on these social exclusion scales across the SCW but where households reported isolation and hostility of community members, girls tended to be less likely to be enrolled in school.
- **Caregiver has low aspirations** – The lower the level of education that the caregivers initially wanted their girls to achieve when they were young the less likely are these girls to be enrolled at present.

#4 Personal barriers to enrolment

- **Low levels of education in the family** – The lower the level of education in the family (considering the schooling of both the caregiver and the head of household) the lower the chances for girls to be enrolled.

While all of these associations are statistically significant, they contribute only relatively little to explaining the variation in enrolment observed across the SCW. The largest share of variance is explained by the proportion of time spent on duties, and negative attitudes towards girls' education, both of which explain 2 percentage points of the observed variation in attendance (compared with 21% explained by the model as a whole).

Summary: What are the barriers to girls' enrolment?

The evidence supports the view that based on the information available from households a combination of economic, school-based, attitudinal and personal factors function as the main potential barriers to enrolment. The barriers that specifically seem most important for explaining variance in enrolment are negative attitudes to girls'

²¹ As explained above, a variable may have made its way into the final multivariate model but eventually account for a very small proportion of the observed variation of the outcome of interest. This is the case when the multivariate model fails to explain a significant part of the outcome variation – as reported at the bottom of our tables. This may also happen when the control variables used in the model (i.e. the girl's age and country dummies) have a large explanatory power, implying that most of the observed outcome is explained by age and country specific factors.

education and girls' duties in the home, followed by low levels of family education and community support and social exclusion. There will be more opportunity to determine causal factors when longitudinal data is available at midline and where pathways and interactions between factors can be assessed more clearly.

Barriers to attendance

We next consider barriers to the attendance of girls based on approximate attendance levels reported by the caregivers in the household survey (see Section 2.3.1 for a more detailed explanation of this attendance measure). Table 39 shows the results from this analysis. The final multivariate regression model can explain only 3% of the variation in school attendance that we observed across the SCW. It shows five potential barriers that remain significant predictors of attendance when controlling for other factors.

Table 39: Results of the EM analysis of barriers to girls' attendance

Barriers to attendance	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Multivariate model ²² including all significant barriers ²³		Bivariate associations with outcome for all potential barriers	
			In unit of variable	Beta coeff. & significance	Variance explained (in %points)	No country controls
Description of Variable					Beta coeff. & significance	Beta coeff. & significance
Economic factors						
Household income after housing costs (reversed and standardised within country)	SD	0.32	-1%*	0%	-1%*	-1%*
Employment situation in household	[-1,1]	-0.09	0% [†]	0%	0%	0%
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	51%			1%	1% [†]
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	13%			0%	0%
Housing conditions	[0,2]	1.22			0%	0%
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.09			0%	0%
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	12%			2%	2%
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.29			0%	0%
School factors						
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.55	-1%**	0%	-1%***	-1%***
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	5.77			0%	0%
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	26%			0%	0%
Language of instruction different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	55%			0%	0%
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	85%			0%	0%
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	26%			-1%*	-1%*
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	33%			0%	0%
Attitudes and support in family and community						
Caregiver low aspirations for girl's educ.	[0,2]	0.27	1%*	0%	0%	1%
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.36	-1% [†]	0%	-1%*	-1%*
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	0	0% [†]	0%	0%	0%
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	82%			-2%**	-3%**
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	15%			-1% [†]	-2% [†]
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.16			-1%**	0%
Violence and safety						
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	24%	-1%*	0%	-1%[†]	-1%*
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.06			-1% [†]	-1% [†]
Personal factors						
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.03	-4%*	0%	-4%**	-4%**
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	4%	-2% [†]	0%	-2%	-2%
Low level of family education	[0,1]	0.64			0%	0%
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.48			0%	0%
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	14%			0%	0%
Additional control variables for the multivariate model	Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe country dummies. Girl age in years.					
Total variance explained by multivariate model	3%					
Sample for multivariate model	N = 3939					
Total variance explained by significant barriers	1.8%					
<i>Note: Asterisks are used to indicate levels of statistical significance: *** indicates a p-value below 0.001; ** indicates a p-value below 0.01; and * indicates a p-value below 0.05. † indicates a marginal value of significance of p < 0.1. Barriers with too low prevalence were excluded from the table.</i>						

²² controlling for other drivers²³ after non-significant drivers (p > 0.1) removed sequentially

Available evidence fails to explain much of the variation in attendance and it would be merited to analyse additional information on attendance where available from schools. Based on the findings presented in [Table 39](#) the following barriers showed significant associations with attendance and are the best evidenced candidates to be obstacles to girls' attendance across the GEC as a whole:

#1 Economic factors

- **Household income (after rent)** – There is a significant association between household income and attendance. The smaller a family's income after rent, the lower the attendance rate of girls in these households.

#2 School-based factors

- **Girls don't like going to school** – The more negatively girls described their experience at school the lower their average attendance rate.

#4 Violence related factors

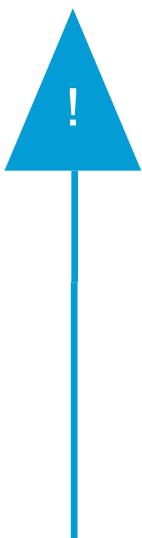
- **Local journeys are dangerous** – Where caregivers stated that the journey to the girl's school was dangerous, girls had a significantly lower attendance rate than in families that did not report insecurity. However, the change in attendance from one scenario to the other is relatively small.

#5 Personal factors

- **Girls don't try to do well at school** – Girls reporting that they were not trying to do well in school tended to have significantly lower attendance rates than their peers who said they tried to do well and pay attention.

The model also shows a significant *positive* association between **low levels of aspirations on the part of the caregiver**, and girls' attendance rates. This finding is counterintuitive and suggests that low parental aspirations do not systematically hinder attendance once girls are enrolled in school. This is consistent with other findings that some factors affect enrolment but once enrolled do not affect attendance. However, further analysis at the midline will be required to unpack and explore this finding further.

While all of these associations are statistically significant, they only contribute in a small way to explaining the variation in attendance observed across the SCW.



Using this measure, we have not been able to clearly identify any such factors, as indicated by the low percentage of variance explained by our multivariate model (i.e. $R^2 = 3\%$, see [Table 39](#)). To explain this, we have hypothesised that families make decisions about enrolment based on their assessment of possible risk factors or barriers, but once the girl is enrolled, they try generally to maintain attendance, but this hypothesis requires further detailed analysis. It is also plausible that for those making the sacrifices to overcome barriers to enrolment the factors that subsequently affect attendance may be relatively circumstantial and perhaps seasonal or short term, or relate to the phasing of the school year. Therefore they would not be easily identifiable by our analysis of broader barriers measured and addressed by GEC. Another issue is that there is also likely to be error in the variable representing the caregiver estimates of attendance since it is subjective, retrospective (and referring to a varying time period).

In addition to this caveat, we would seek to analyse barriers to attendance specifically, using school-reported attendance as an outcome measure rather than the self-reported attendance from the EM household survey. This might allow us to explain more variance in attendance. At the time of writing, school record data was not always available and where provided does not yield universally complete or plausible information (for example, some records suggested that the girl attended more days than were available in a given school year).

Summary: What are the barriers to girls' attendance?

Our findings suggest that a combination of low household income, low aspirations of caregivers, little enjoyment of school on the part of girls, and dangerous journeys to school may function as barriers to girls' attendance. However our model explains only a relatively small proportion (3%) of the variance in attendance rates observed across the SCW. This suggests that there may be other factors influencing girls' attendance, which our evidence cannot reflect. There will be more opportunity to capture additional information on attendance and to identify potential drivers when longitudinal data becomes available.

Barriers to learning

In this section we present two strands of analysis to assess barriers that potentially affect girls' learning in terms of reading fluency. We first present the results from our analysis of data from the EM household survey (Table 40), followed by our analysis of data from a subset of the EM school-based assessment that is restricted to the 30% of schools where we were able to link students to the corresponding classroom and school-level data.

Ideally, we would have liked to analyse the personal and contextual barriers covered in the EM household survey and the school factors covered in the school-based assessment in the same multivariate model. This would have allowed us to assess the relative importance of factors such as poverty and attitudes on the one hand, and school-based factors on the other hand for girls' learning outcomes in terms of reading fluency. However, we have not been able to link a sufficient number of observations between these two datasets because they do not cover the same sample of girls.

As shown in Table 40, the final multivariate regression model using data from the EM household survey explains 47% of the variance in reading fluency scores observed across the SCW. Ten potential barriers retain a significant association with reading fluency when controlling for other potential barriers. Altogether these significant barriers account for about 10% of the variance in reading fluency.

Table 40: Results of the EM analysis of barriers to learning (reading fluency), EM household survey data

Barriers to learning	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Multivariate model ²⁴ including all significant barriers ²⁵		Bivariate associations with outcome for all potential barriers	
			Beta coeff. & significance	Variance explained (in %points)	No country controls	With country controls
Description of Variable		In unit of variable			Beta coeff. & significance	Beta coeff. & significance
Economic factors						
Housing conditions	[0,2]	1.22	-5***	1%	-9***	-9***
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	12%	-16***	0%	-30***	-23***
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.29	-2***	0%	-2***	-3***
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.09	-1**	0%	-3***	-5***
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	51%	2 [†]	0%	13***	9***
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	13%			-11***	-10***
Employment situation in household	[-1,1]	-0.09			-2**	-3***
Household income after housing costs (reversed and standardised within country)	SD	0.32			-2	-1
School based factors						
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.55	-2***	0%	-5***	-4***
Hours or schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	5.77	6***	2%	7***	7***
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	26%	-3 [†]	0%	-5**	-7***
Language of instruction different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	55%			-5***	-4*
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins.	Yes/No	26%			2	-2
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	85%			2	-6
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	33%			-4**	-3*
Attitudes and support in family and community						
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.36	-6***	1%	-11***	-9***
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.16	-1*	0%	-1*	-3***
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	82%			8*	-6***
Caregiver low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.27			-7***	-3*
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	15%			-12***	-9***
Low levels of female autonomy in household	SD	0			-2**	-1
Violence and safety						
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	24%			3*	1
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.06			1	0
Personal factors						
Low level of family education	[0,1]	0.64	-13***	1%	-25***	-24***
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.03	-11**	0%	-21***	-19***
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	4%			-10***	-11***
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.48			4***	0
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	14%			-4**	-2
Additional control variables for the multivariate model	Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe country dummies. Girl age in years.					
Total variance explained by the multivariate model	47%					
Sample for the multivariate model	N = 4474					
Total variance explained by significant barriers	9.8%					
Note: Asterisks are used to indicate levels of statistical significance: *** indicates a p-value below 0.001; ** indicates a p-value below 0.01; and * indicates a p-value below 0.05. † indicates a marginal value of significance of p < 0.1. Barriers with too low prevalence were excluded from the table.						

²⁴ controlling for other drivers²⁵ after non-significant drivers (p > 0.1) removed sequentially

Based on the findings presented in [Table 40](#), the following barriers showed statistically significant associations with reading fluency scores and are more likely candidates to be obstacles to learning across the GEC as a whole:

#1 Economic factors

- **Poor housing conditions** – Poor quality of family housing in terms of roofing and flooring materials was associated with lower average reading fluency scores.
- **Material deprivation** – The higher the degree of material deprivation that households reported (in terms of not owning items such as a source of electricity, a TV or radio, a vehicle, a phone, a safe water source, cooking fuel, or a private toilet) the lower the girls' average reading fluency score. There is some ambiguity with regards to the ways in which material deprivation affects girls' learning. On the one hand, the absence of the above mentioned items may be an indicator of general poverty which may affect learning. On the other hand, the lack of electricity or safe water sources may have direct negative effects on learning, as they can reduce the girls' study time at home or make them more vulnerable to illness.
- **Time spent on duties** – The more time girls are reported to spend carrying out household duties and livelihood activities, the lower their average reading fluency scores. This effect is relatively large and highly significant.
- **Subjective poverty** – The higher a household's score on the subjective poverty index, the lower the girls' average reading fluency scores. The effect is relatively small but highly significant.

#2 School-based factors

- **Girls don't like going to school** – The more negatively girls described their experience at school the lower their average reading fluency scores.
- **Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)** – The higher the average number of hours spent in school per day the higher the girls' average reading fluency scores.

#3 Attitudes and support in the family and in the community

- **Negative attitudes towards girls' education** – The more negative the caregiver's attitude towards girls' education, the lower the girls' average reading fluency scores.
- **Social exclusion** – Where households indicated some degree of isolation or exclusion from their local community, girls tended to have lower average reading fluency scores.

#4 Personal factors

- **Low levels of education in the family** – The lower the level of education in the family (considering the schooling of both the caregiver and the head of household) the lower the average reading fluency score achieved by girls. This association is highly significant and the largest effect measured in the model.
- **Girls don't try to do well at school** – Girls reporting that they weren't trying to do well in school or trying to pay attention tended to have significantly lower reading fluency scores than their peers.

Our model further suggests that there is a significant *positive* association between **not speaking the language of instruction at home** and girls' reading fluency scores. This is counterintuitive and should be treated with caution. We have discussed this phenomenon in more detail in [Section 3.1.2](#).

While all of these associations are statistically significant, they contribute relatively little to explaining the variation in reading fluency scores observed across the SCW. The highest share of variance was explained by the number of hours of schooling per day which contributes to more than 2% of average variation of the wpm score.

As shown in [Table 41](#), the multivariate regression model using data from the [EM school-based assessment](#) can explain 32% of the variance in reading ability across the SCW. This model has been run on girls only and contains school-level, class-level and individual-level variables (the prevalence shown in the tables having been computed as the relevant level). Seven potential barriers retain a significant association with reading fluency when controlling for other potential barriers – they are discussed in detail below.

We also calculated gender effects as the regression coefficient of the gender interaction term over the whole population (boys and girls). This coefficient was obtained by regressing the literacy score on the potential barrier, the girl dummy (variable equal to 1 if the student is a girl, and to 0 if it is a boy) and the gender interaction term

(which is a multiplication of the other two variables). Age, grade and country dummies were also included as controls. A negative gender effect means that the presence of the potential barrier tends to be associated with lower outcomes for girls specifically.

Table 41: Results of EM analysis of barriers to learning (reading fluency), EM school-based assessment

Barriers to learning (reading fluency)	Unit/ Range	Prevalence	Multivariate model ²⁶ including all significant barriers ²⁷ (girls only)		Bivariate associations with outcome (girls only)		Gender effect (girls and boys)
			In unit of variable	Beta coeff. & significance	Variance explained (in % points)	No country controls	With country controls
Description of Variable					Beta coeff. & significance	Beta coeff. & significance	Beta coeff. of gender interaction & significance
School based factors							
% of girls in the class	[0,1]	49%	-57.19**	2.4%	-24.50	-41.96 [†]	13.34
Class size	Nb st.	43	-0.24**	2.2%	-0.21*	-0.22*	-0.03
Classroom does not have electric lighting	Yes/No	91%	-20.08*	2.0%	-31.42**	-38.38***	-6.19
Teacher is a male	Yes/No	64%	-11.42*	1.6%	-17.03**	-20.23***	-5.78 [†]
Teacher thinks corporal punishment is ok	Yes/No	54%	-9.30*	1.6%	-6.29	-9.52 [†]	1.23
School has no boundary wall taller than adult	Yes/No	83%	-16.82 [†]	1.8%	-31.47**	-35.74***	-8.80*
% of students who do cleaning/tidying	[0,1]	7%			-2.93	-18.20	4.14
% of students victim of aggression	[0,1]	2%			84.18*	116.02**	50.63**
% of students showing distracting behaviour	[0,1]	19%			34.54***	40.28***	11.42
% of students reprimanded/punished by teacher	[0,1]	6%			65.56***	78.63***	10.69
% of students that do not have writing material	[0,1]	8%			-4.12	-16.50	3.51
% of students that do not have textbook	[0,1]	38%			9.91	-1.88	2.90
% of students that do not have chair/mat	[0,1]	14%			-7.29	-10.79	3.39
% of students that do not have bench/desk	[0,1]	13%			-11.95 [†]	-12.46*	2.50
Number of teacher's years of experience	Years	10.7			-0.10	-0.31	0.31*
Teacher does not have a teaching certificate	Yes/No	28%			-4.58	-9.81 [†]	1.86
Problems with teachers not turning up to work	Yes/No	28%			2.66	-1.64	6.12 [†]
Shortage of teachers in the school	Yes/No	77%			-12.41*	-6.03	-6.77 [†]
No mid-day meal served at school	Yes/No	66%			11.27 [†]	-0.44	7.75 [†]
School does not have electricity	Yes/No	73%			-27.11***	-28.32***	2.12
Classroom does not have a floor	Yes/No	22%			3.41	-3.49	4.03
School does not have separate girls toilet	Yes/No	37%			-3.38	-10.71*	3.67
Toilet is not private and cannot be locked	Yes/No	44%			0.50	-6.21	3.84
Unreliable payment of teachers in last 3 months	Yes/No	33%			-5.10	-5.14	-3.57
Teacher has no village activities outside school	Yes/No	37%			-0.38	3.96	-0.98
Teacher not involved in political activity	Yes/No	68%			4.31	8.93	-7.04*
No active union for teachers in the area	Yes/No	19%			5.20	0.23	5.35 [†]
Personal factors							
Father has low education	Yes/No	77%	-11.78**	1.8%	-20.49***	-19.89***	-7.62*
Girl thinks education less important for girls	Yes/No	3%	-13.91*	0.4%	-8.81 [†]	-11.58*	-5.45
Mother has low education	Yes/No	84%			-25.09***	-27.23***	-9.12*
Not attended this school since 1st grade	Yes/No	15%			3.16	3.73	-1.29
Additional control variables for the multivariate model	DRC country dummy; Ethiopia country dummy; Kenya country dummy; Sierra Leone country dummy; Engaged in P2 grade (as opposed to P4 grade); Girl age in years.						
Total variance explained by the multivariate model	32%						
Sample for the multivariate model	N = 813						
Total variance explained by significant barriers	13.8%						
<i>Note:</i> Asterisks are used to indicate levels of statistical significance: *** indicates a p-value below 0.001; ** indicates a p-value below 0.01; and * indicates a p-value below 0.05. † indicates a marginal value of significance of p < 0.1. Barriers with too low prevalence were excluded from the table.							

²⁶ Controlling for other drivers²⁷ After non-significant drivers (p > 0.1) removed sequentially

Based on the findings presented in [Table 41](#), the following school-based barriers show statistically significant associations with reading fluency scores are the best evidenced candidates to be obstacles to learning in terms of reading fluency across the GEC as a whole:

#1 School-based factors

- **Proportion of girls in the class** – The average proportion of girls in classrooms observed in the school-based assessment was 51%. Analysis shows that girls' average reading fluency scores are negatively correlated with the proportion of girls in the class.
- **Class Size** – The higher the number of children in the classroom the lower the average reading fluency score achieved by girls in these classrooms.
- **Classrooms lack electric lighting** – Where classrooms lack electric lighting, girls have average reading fluency scores that are 20 words per minute points lower than girls studying in classrooms that have electricity. While a lack of electricity may affect girls' learning directly, it is also possible that it correlates with other, unobserved factors such as the degree of remoteness of the given school. This association should therefore be interpreted with care until more analysis can be carried out at midline.
- **Teacher is a male** – Several projects have assumed that a lack of female teachers functions as a barrier. The analysis shows a significant negative association between having a male class teacher and girls' reading fluency scores.
- **Corporal punishment** – Where class teachers state that corporal punishment in school is appropriate, girls tend to have a significantly lower reading fluency score than in schools where this is not the case. One possible explanation is that girls are intimidated and less assertive to participate and learn in a threatening school environment. Another possible explanation may be that corporal punishment is part of a canon of rigid teaching methods that are less effective in promoting learning than other teaching methods. A third option may be that discipline responds to levels of hostility that inhibits girls performance.

#2 Personal factors

- **Father has low education** – There is a significant negative association between girls reporting that their fathers have a low level of education, and their average reading fluency score. This is in line with findings from the analysis of the EM household survey data (see above) which suggests that low levels of education in the family may indeed be a barrier to girls' learning.
- **Girls think education is less important for girls than for boys** – Girls stating that they thought education was less important for girls than for boys tended to have significantly lower average reading scores than girls who believed that education was just as important for girls as for boys.

All of these associations are statistically significant. They each explain around 2% of the average variation in reading fluency scores observed across the SCW (with the exception of girls' views about the value of girls' education).

Summary: What are the barriers to girls' learning?

Our findings from the analysis of the EM household survey suggest that a combination of different factors function as barriers to girls' learning in terms of reading fluency. These include factors relating to poverty (i.e. subjective poverty; poor housing conditions and material deprivation), social exclusion and a low degree of active family engagement with their children's education; a low level of education in the family, and girls having low aspirations or not enjoying school. At present, our model explains almost half (45%) of the variance in average reading fluency across the SCW. There will be more opportunity to determine causal factors when longitudinal data is available at midline.

Analysis of data from the school-based assessment suggests that our analytical model of potential school-based barriers can explain around a third (32%) of the variance in reading fluency measured across the relevant schools. It is again a combination of different factors that appear to affect girls' reading fluency. These include the gender of the class teacher (with girls taught by a female teacher showing higher average reading fluency); teachers' beliefs that corporal punishment is appropriate; classrooms lacking electricity; class size; and the proportion of girls in the class. In addition some personal factors appear to be linked to lower reading fluency such as girls' believing that education is less important for girls than for boys, and the father's level of education.

4.2.2 Discussion of potential barriers by theme

In this section we take a one-by-one approach to discussing potential barriers to girls' education assumed by SCW projects. The discussion is organised by barrier theme, starting with the themes most often covered by projects. As shown in Figure 20, all 15 projects assumed barriers relating to economic and school-based factors and these will be discussed first and in greatest detail. We then proceed to the discussion of factors relating to attitudes, violence, personal and other issues. The findings presented in this section are based on the analysis of qualitative data from the EM's IDIs, as well as the analysis of quantitative data (EM household survey and school-based assessment) presented above. In this section, we will also discuss bivariate associations between a potential barrier and an outcome of interest even if these associations became insignificant when controlling for other potential barriers and should be interpreted with great caution.

Economic barriers to education

In this section we present quantitative and qualitative analysis on three potential economic barriers that were often mentioned by SCW projects and which were covered in our baseline data collection. These are poverty (11 projects), costs associated with schooling (9 projects) and duties (8 projects). We will unpack these barriers by analysing their multiple dimensions, as listed below:

- **Poverty:** Difficulty maintaining steady incomes or employment, poor housing conditions, material deprivation, subjective poverty, hunger; social stigma.
- **Cost of schooling:** Difficulty affording high school fees, uniforms, equipment and textbooks.
- **Duties:** Girls' housework commitments and domestic chores such as caring for siblings; participating in livelihood activities (e.g. farming; watching cattle; and working outside the home).

Economic barrier #1 – Poverty

11 out of 15 SCW projects have assumed that poverty is affecting girls' education outcomes. The analysis presented in Section 4.2.1 suggests that at the fund level, all three outcomes under scrutiny (enrolment, attendance and reading fluency) are influenced by some dimension(s) of poverty such as poor housing conditions, low household income, material deprivation, employment issues in the household, and subjective poverty. Evidence from the qualitative IDIs highlights additional dimensions of poverty such as food poverty and social stigma as potential barriers to girls' education. We will discuss these factors below.

Issues with employment and steady income: IDI respondents across the SCW reported the difficulties they face maintaining steady employment or a steady income. In some cases, this was because households rely on livestock which are sensitive to environmental disruptions or shocks. In other cases it was because of the difficulties faced by small farmers, who are unable to support themselves fully off their land and cannot find other work. Finally, in some cases households reported difficulties in terms of a lack of formal employment, or in terms of sickness within the household which prevents the adults from working:

This community depends on cacao and coffee plantation, if a particular year we have low harvest there will be a problem because our main source of income is in this plantation. Parent will find it difficult to enrol their child to school.

School Official, Gbeworbu, Sierra Leone

The EM analysis of **employment status** from household survey data showed that on average across the SCW, 43% of families reported that neither the head of household nor the girls' caregiver were in employment outside of the home. Some of these families are likely to be dependent on charity or to draw their support from subsistence farming. Although income from paid employment may also be unreliable, especially from unskilled work, livelihoods based on subsistence farming may be more vulnerable to seasonal disruptions. As a result, these households may face an increased risk of poverty and food insecurity, as discussed below. In 51% of households across the fund, either the head of household or the caregiver were in semi-skilled or skilled employment.

We measured a significant negative association between household employment status and girls' enrolment even when controlling for other variables. We also observed a bivariate association between employment issues and reading fluency, but this became insignificant when controlling for other barriers, suggesting that some other barrier(s) related to economic factors may be more immediately associated with girls' reading fluency (e.g. the quality of housing, see below). We did not find any significant association between household employment and

attendance, but there was an association between low household income (after housing costs) and low attendance. This association remained significant even when controlling for other potential barriers.

Based on the household survey data we could examine different dimensions and symptoms of income poverty.

Subjective poverty: Households scored on average 0.29 on a subjective poverty index ranging from -3 to 3. The index is constructed based on two questions about the caregiver's satisfaction with the family's living conditions and wellbeing. Around half the GEC respondents were located on the zero score which means that they recorded some aspects of self-assessed hardship. Around one in eight respondents perceived lower levels of hardship and the remainder perceived higher levels with around a quarter of families on the highest score (+3). Higher scores of perceived hardship are associated with lower reading ability among girls and the association remains significant when controlling for other dimensions of poverty, suggesting that perceptions of hardship may affect how well girls perform in school, or that they are a proxy for other facades of poverty that influence girls' education.

Quality of housing: Across the SCW, 53% of homes had low quality roofing materials (such as cardboard) and 69% had floor materials that were less stable or secure such as mud or dung. Low quality housing materials were associated with lower levels of enrolment and reading fluency among girls in these families, even when controlling for the effect of other barriers. It appears unlikely that the quality of floors and roofs would directly influence girls' chances to be enrolled and learn but housing quality is likely to further reflect the degree of poverty and resources available to a family, which in turn affect girls' education through different pathways.

Material resources deprivation: In addition to income, employment, subjective poverty and quality of housing, we also reviewed access to material resources. To this end we constructed an index that captured slightly different resources in different contexts according to which household items were correlated with one another (see [Table 42](#) below). Across the SCW, households had an average score of 3 on our material resources deprivation index that ranges from 0 (lowest degree of deprivation) to 5 (highest degree of deprivation). This indicates that many families tend to lack some of the relevant household items.

Table 42: Construction of a material resources deprivation index by SCW context

Material resource deprivation index	Type of household item considered for material resource deprivation index						
	Electricity supply	TV or radio	Car or bicycle	Telephone	Quality of water access	Quality of cooking facilities	Quality of toilet facilities
DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Afghanistan	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Ethiopia, Somalia	✓	✓			✓		✓
Zimbabwe	✓	✓				✓	✓

Note: Countries were grouped according to the household items that were correlated according to the data collected within each country.

In fact, 84% of households across the SCW stated that they had unreliable or no access to electricity. Half of the households stated to have neither a radio nor a television. In DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Tanzania, the availability of a phone or vehicle was also correlated with household income and we examined these factors as additional indicators of material deprivation. In these countries, 76% of families had no means of transportation (either a car or a bicycle), and 76% had no telephone. In other countries, we used the availability of a private toilet, safe water source or the quality of cooking fuel as part of the indicator of material deprivation.

A higher deprivation score was associated with a significant decrease in girls' reading fluency, even when controlling for other economic barriers. While material deprivation (as well as housing condition), may capture the effects of poverty more generally, the material manifestations of poverty may also affect girls' learning directly. For instance, a lack of electricity in the home may limit study time and a lack of access to a safe water source may increase the risk of illness, which can disrupt school attendance.

The qualitative research suggests some ways in which income poverty may affect girls' enrolment, attendance and learning that were not covered in the household survey. Projects across the SCW, particularly in Zimbabwe,

Afghanistan, Somalia, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia, reported that **basic food security** was an issue, as households were sometimes forced to choose between paying for school expenses and paying food:

I don't have enough income for school expenses and food expense; sometimes I can't pay for both school and the household food.

Household, Somalia

Other households noted the effects that going to school hungry has on children's ability to concentrate and learn:

When I'm going to school and I don't have lunch, I only have one exercise book. This is making me not to concentrate in class. When the teacher is teaching and I'm hungry I can't even pay attention to what he is teaching in class.

(Household, Malegohun, Sierra Leone)

Households in several SCW project areas, including Afghanistan and Somalia, also noted the **psychological effects** that poverty and the inability to afford school fees can have on children, particularly in terms of **social shame** and embarrassment, which can also discourage children from attending school:

My girl wishes to have school fees paid on time, which doesn't happen, as she would like. She always feels intimidated whenever the teacher asks her to stand up and get out of class due to my failure to pay fees on time.

Household, Somalia

In terms of the linkages between poverty, attendance and learning, respondents also reported that poverty disrupts attendance, when children are **turned away from school for being improperly equipped** (not having a clean uniform, textbooks, or other required school materials). This decreases the amount of time these children are able to spend in class, as well as discouraging them from returning to school, reducing their wellbeing and ability to learn:

There are some girls who are not learning, because their families are very poor to fulfil their learning material. There are some where the school fulfilled these materials and they started learning. The school can't help all of them though. In general their problem is poverty.

School Official, Amhara, Ethiopia

While a lack of food and social stigma were reported by IDI respondents in relation to poverty, the issue most often mentioned as a specific poverty-related barrier to education was parent's inability to afford the cost of school, which we discuss in the next sub-section.

Economic barrier #2 – Costs associated with school

Nine SCW projects identified costs associated with school as a barrier to education, including the cost of uniforms, school books and school fees. The multivariate regression analysis presented in [Section 4.2.1](#) found some evidence of an association between costs, enrolment and learning, and costs were one of the most common concerns raised by IDI respondents who described multiple ways in which costs affect girls' education.

Dropping out due to costs of school: Enrolment in primary school and especially in secondary school is a major long-term economic commitment for many households in the SCW project areas. IDI respondents across the SCW commonly stated that families' inability to afford schooling costs caused children to miss class on some days, to drop-out altogether, or to not continue school after the end of primary school. This is reflected in the following quote:

Many people don't send their girls to school. This is mainly the poor people. These people have no money to pay school fees.

School Official, Somalia

Struggling to pay additional costs even when it's meant to be 'free': Many IDI respondents across the SCW noted that they struggled to pay for school-related costs even when education was provided for free. Some respondents reported that students were sent home from school because they were lacking school materials or uniforms, missing a few days until the necessary money or materials could be found. At worst, this could lead to student dropping out of school altogether. This problem was stressed in Zimbabwe by the following household:

There are many things to think about pertaining to the long lists of school requirements beginning of school year. I have to sell some of my farm produce to buy [girl's name] school shoes, uniforms and other things. I thank God that Camfed is helping pay her school fees otherwise I don't know what I will do.

Household, Zimbabwe

Costs affecting school quality: In terms of learning, a few respondents (primarily school officials and teachers) reported they had difficulty paying for teacher salaries, school resources and materials if parents did not pay school fees, affecting the quality of education they were able to provide. At the same time, schools and teachers did not receive sufficient funds from the government to cover the cost of school materials, or even teacher salaries. This point was made by a school official in Somalia:

The school is sometimes closed because students cannot pay the fees at the end of the month and there is nothing to run the school with financially and the teachers want to be paid so you are forced to shut the school.

School Official, Somalia

While most aspects of this barrier were not described as specifically gendered, some respondents did describe cases where households were less willing to pay for girls' school fees because they expected them to get married so that the investment would be seen as a waste.

Half (51%) the households surveyed in the SCW project areas stated that they had to pay for school-related costs such as school fees, uniforms or teaching materials. About half equally stated that they faced difficulties affording the costs of school. We observed a negative bivariate association between the cost of school and girls' enrolment and reading fluency. However, these bivariate associations were not significant when controlling for other barriers.

Since the costs of school were a particularly salient issue in the qualitative research, it is possible that these significant bivariate relationships were 'captured' by other economic factors in our multivariate model, such as barriers relating to poverty which are obviously related to difficulties affording the costs of school. They could also have been obscured by systematic differences between project areas with different levels of enrolment and attendance. Finally, families and girls themselves may use coping strategies to overcome difficulties associated with cost-related barriers. Findings from the qualitative research highlight ways in which families adapt to the negative effects of costs by employing a range of coping strategies (see [Box 8](#), below).

Box 8: Coping strategies: Overcoming the cost of school

Even though many households reported that they struggled to pay school related fees and costs, some IDI respondents also described the great economic sacrifices that they made to provide their girls with the opportunity of education. Selling off cattle, negotiating payment plans with the school, taking on extra work and borrowing money from relatives were a few of the different economic coping mechanisms that households described, like this respondent:

I worried about the kids. I sent them to school but they failed, so I sold my agricultural land and sent them to private college. Now I am worried about that college fee.

Household, Amhara, Ethiopia

There are clear policy-relevant imperatives for GEC in considering the impact of households trying to resource education. If families sacrifice long term stable resources such as land to meet an enhanced demand for education stimulated by the GEC the investment trade-off should be considered. This should form an integral part of the final impact evaluation and as far as possible the measurement strategy for midline and endline.

The majority of coping strategies used to help girls to enrol and attend primary school involved support from an external source rather than strategies employed by the household itself. This assistance was usually provided by the government or the school itself and in some cases by the local community or international donors.

School fees paid by school / government

The most commonly cited strategies through which poorer households can afford girls to go to primary school was through government-funded school places or through schools exempting them from paying fees. Nevertheless, it is important to note that mention of government or school-provided places was almost exclusive to Zimbabwe (i.e. the BEAM government scholarship programme²⁸) and Somalia, with schools exempting children from very poor backgrounds from paying the school fees. The following comments highlight the important role of government scholarship programmes:

Younger girls are not affected that much as primary school is quite affordable to many and many children in primary school are on BEAM. When they are now going to secondary school it becomes a problem because fees are expensive and many drop out at this stage.

Household, Zimbabwe

Community contributes to education

Respondents discussed a number of examples in which the local community provides financial assistance for girls' education. In most of the cases this assistance involved raising money to help deprived families pay school fees. Other examples included: a local women's group that provided sanitary pads and pens for girls; a community that assisted the school with the provision of firewood and drinking water; or an Ethiopian community that helped to equip girls with school uniforms:

Some of the girls do not wear uniforms because their parents can't afford to buy one, in this case the school administration together with the contribution from the community will buy uniform for the students.

School Official, Ethiopia

International donor pays for school fees, meals and books

IDI respondents also described assistance provided by international donors, ranging from provision of books, uniforms and equipment to paying schools fees, examination costs and teacher salaries.

CARE now provides the food in schools, which lures these children to attend lessons. Some schools prepare some porridge for the children. There is also UNICEF that had provided textbooks to local schools. For primary schools, UNICEF went to the extent of donating exercise books, pens and pencils for children.

Community Leader, Zimbabwe

Girls provided with bursaries

A small number of IDI respondents mentioned bursaries as a mechanism through which children from poor backgrounds can attend school. The interviews suggested that the extent to which bursaries are available ranged from a limited number for children from poor families or exceptionally bright children to large numbers of children within a community. The source of bursaries was not always stated but those mentioned included the government, the school and in one case an individual person:

If you have a bright child in school but no school fees, you can be assisted through government bursary, some people have found sponsors who educate their children who were lacking basic needs.

Community Leader, Kenya

There are schools that provide free education for girls. Also when families have five children and send all of them to the school and such families go to the teacher and tell him to give them one scholarship. Then these families give the scholarship to the poor girls.

Household, Somalia

²⁸ The Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) in Zimbabwe aims to help orphans and vulnerable children access education by addressing demand-side barriers such as the inability to afford the cost of schooling.

Economic barrier #3 – Domestic chores and livelihood activities

Eight projects cited domestic chores and livelihood activities as a potential barrier to girls' education outcomes. Such responsibilities include: [taking care of siblings](#); [helping with farming](#); or [guarding the livestock](#). Structurally, such duties are likely to be related to economic circumstances as poorer families may be more reliant on girls to carry out domestic duties, subsistence activities like farming or other livelihood activities such as working for money or assisting with a family business.

Significant housework duties were reported fairly often by respondents in the qualitative IDIs and often directly cited as a reason for children not going to school and/or learning. IDI respondents frequently stressed that children missed school days because they were supporting the household, generating income or helping with livelihood activities. Difficulties with enrolment and attendance due to helping with livelihood activities were mentioned particularly often with reference to pastoralist households in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia:

We entirely depend on livestock, and livestock also must be looked after and that's why it's hard to enrol all the children belonging to one family.

Household, Samburu, Kenya

The livelihood of most families depends on livestock. Almost each family of the community has some kind of animals around like goats or camel. So, if drought comes and the child is in the school they just move with their child and look for pasture and water for their animals. They may need the child's support during long walks for pasture and water. Because the parent may not understand the importance of education and give more value to their livestock and because their lives are at risk. So the most difficult time [is the] drought seasons.

School Official, Somalia

Analysis of data from the EM household survey showed that **a majority of girls across the SCW were involved in household duties** such as doing housework (66%) or caring for other members of the household (55%). Less common, but still mentioned by 22% of households was that girls helped out with farming. It appears less common that girls work in a business outside of their parents' home (7%). On average across the SCW girls spent 12% of their time on such duties.

Findings from the multivariate analysis of household survey data supported the qualitative research findings on girls' duties - the **higher the proportion of time that they reportedly spent on duties, the lower the chances that girls were enrolled and the lower their reading fluency scores**. These negative relationships were highly significant even when controlling for the influence of other barriers. The relationship between household duties and attendance was less clear than that for enrolment and learning and we did not find any significant association. This may imply that while girls' commitments shape the decision to enrol in school, once enrolment occurs, attendance is less affected by the level of household duties girls have to undertake. In other words, families make a decision about whether to enrol girls based on their duties, but having made that decision, arrangements are made for the girl to attend school despite these responsibilities (see [Box 9](#) on coping strategies below). Nevertheless, our findings also suggest that such arrangements come with a cost attached in terms of the girls' learning.

This is in line with findings from the IDIs as respondents in all projects areas stated that duties had a negative impact on learning in the sense that girls completed their tasks and chores before coming to school or after going back home in the evening. They would be exhausted by the time they get to school and unable to concentrate, or they would be busy at home and unable to do their homework. This was stressed by a school official in Ethiopia:

Their participation is very low. This is a result of influence on girls from family. They come to class very tired; sometimes they sleep in the class.

School Official, Amhara, Ethiopia

In terms of the **gendered effects of duties inside and outside the home**, IDI respondents were split, describing the need for children to support household incomes as being the same for boys and girls, but that some household responsibilities, particularly around taking care of younger siblings and home chores, specifically affected girls. Additional quantitative analysis (controlling for age and differences between countries and projects in Kenya) showed that duties also had negative associations with boys' enrolment.

Box 9: Coping Strategies: Overcoming duties as a barrier to attendance

Findings from the IDIs support the sense that girls and their families may use coping strategies to enable school attendance despite considerable duties and responsibilities at home. A common strategy, mentioned in particular by respondents in Afghanistan, is for the girl to undertake her household chores before and/or after school.

Yes she cares for the younger children too and this doesn't affect her either and she goes to school in the morning and she does the housework after school.

Household, Afghanistan

She also looks after her children and there is no problem with going to school because her school time is afternoon and she does her activities in morning.

Household, Afghanistan

Summary: How do economic factors affect girls' education?

We found both qualitative and quantitative evidence to suggest that economic factors play an important role in girls' education. The quantitative analysis indicates that employment issues in the family, and girls' domestic chores and duties may influence the families' decision not to enrol them in school, or shape their own decision to drop out. Evidence from the qualitative research suggests that a common reason for dropping out of school relates to difficulties in affording the costs associated with attending school (in particular secondary school). These factors appear to have less of an influence on the attendance of girls who are enrolled in school, suggesting that they and their families may use coping strategies to overcome barriers relating to the costs of school, and to work around domestic chores and duties. Finally, it is worth keeping in mind that there are some limitations to the robustness of the EM's self-reported attendance measure and that further research will be necessary to confirm these initial baseline findings.

Finally, the quantitative analysis suggests that a range of poverty dimensions are related to girls' learning, such as housing conditions, material deprivation and subjective poverty. The qualitative research highlights some of the pathways through which poverty may actually affect learning, such as social stigma and psychological effects, hunger, or the practice of sending girls home from school if they haven't paid their fees or haven't bought textbooks and uniforms. Both the qualitative and quantitative findings further suggest that girls' duties at home have adverse effects on their learning.

School-based barriers to education

All 15 SCW projects assumed that school-based factors are influencing girls' learning. In this section we present quantitative and qualitative findings on a range of school-based factors. As projects mentioned a variety of factors we grouped these into six broader categories as listed below:

- **Quality of education and teaching:** General concerns with quality of education; lack of qualified teachers; teacher absenteeism; corporal punishment.
- **Behaviour in the classroom:** Patterns of student interaction.
- **Supply and resourcing:** Overcrowded classrooms; under resourcing; availability of schools.
- **Facilities:** Lack of desks and chairs; lack of buildings or buildings in need of repair; lack of basic infrastructure; lack of adequate sanitation facilities; lack of school meals; structural drivers.
- **Learning environment:** Lack of textbooks; lack of notepads; lack of uniforms.
- **Accessibility:** Long distances to schools; lack of access due to frequent resettlement.

School-based barrier #1 – Quality of education and teaching

Eight out of 15 SCW projects assumed that issues with the quality of education and teaching were a barrier to girls' education. The multivariate analysis of potential barriers suggests that factors relating to teaching have a significant negative association with attendance and reading fluency. In the IDIs, respondents across the SCW regularly reported that teachers at their children's school, or at schools in their area were unqualified, were frequently absent from school, or that there was a general shortage in teachers. They frequently described that teacher absenteeism

and a lack of teachers caused overcrowded classrooms where teachers were unable to give attention to individual students. In this section we look at the prevalence of a lack of qualified teachers, teacher absenteeism and general concerns about the quality of education, and the effects on children's learning.

It is worth noting that IDI respondents did not tend to describe barriers related to teaching as affecting boys and girls differently. Similarly, the quantitative analysis although presented here in terms of effects measured for girls **did not find differential effects on boys and girls**, except for the effect of having a female class teacher.

#1.1 Concerns with the quality of schools in general

As mentioned above, eight SCW projects assumed that poor quality of education functioned as a barrier to girls' education. In the qualitative research, many households expressed concerns with the general quality of teaching and education provided at local schools. These views were most strongly expressed in Zimbabwe and Kenya. Households primarily reported these concerns in terms of pass rates and literacy, noting that children were still unable to read after having attended school for some years:

Right now our children cannot even read or write. They cannot even spend twenty minutes speaking in English language. If you have some time here, I would have taken a Grade Three book and ask a Form Three student to read. They hardly can read.

Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe

Some households also reported having made efforts to enrol their children in higher quality schools, in urban areas or private schools in the area, after assessing the poor quality of local schools:

Before I transferred her I decided she should take exams from public school, and comparing the exam in public school to that of the private school, it was easier than the one from the private school so I decided it is not challenging enough.

Household, Nairobi, Kenya

While it is difficult to measure school quality without an independently conducted assessment, subjective measures such as perceptions of students and caregivers can be useful, especially since their value judgments about education are the ones that relate most closely to decisions about participation in school and learning. Our analysis of the EM household survey data shows a significant association between the caregiver's dissatisfaction with teacher quality expressed by around a quarter (26%) of caregivers, and girls' enrolment and learning outcomes.

As for the girls' perceptions, there was also a clear link between the extent to which girls say they enjoy their school experience and the levels of attendance and learning they achieve. Eight percent of enrolled girls said that they generally did not like school and a similar percentage stated that school was not generally a nice place to be. Twenty-seven percent stated that they didn't generally find that school was fun and 12% did not often feel happy at school. The less girls reported that they enjoy school, the lower their average attendance level and reading score. Clearly, these associations may reflect a reverse causality (success leading to satisfaction / enjoyment), but it is also consistent with the expectation that the quality of schooling affects learning outcomes. Findings on corporal punishment (see [school-based barrier #1.4](#)) also suggest that the friendliness of the school environment may affect girls' learning in school. We next review some of the more specific aspects of these links between schooling quality and outcomes.

#1.2 Lack of qualified teachers

Seven SCW projects mentioned inadequately trained teachers as a potential barrier to girls' learning; four mentioned a lack of female teachers as a barrier; and two mentioned more general teacher shortages. In fact, a lack of teachers – and a lack of qualified teachers in particular – was the concern most often reported by IDI respondents when speaking about issues associated with teaching. In Kenya for example, a caregiver made the following statement:

Teachers are not trained and the children don't learn much, I don't think they are learning useful things.

Household, Garissa, Kenya

In Zimbabwe in particular, respondents stated that it was common practice to hire teachers that might only have completed a primary level of education. In Afghanistan, respondents commented upon the lack of female teachers. IDI respondents further indicated that teachers may be forced to cover subjects in which they are not

knowledgeable, which can affect the quality of teaching, or mean that the subject will not be taught at all, causing reductions in learning or interrupted schedules. These findings indicate that there may be problems with the supply of teachers and a lack of qualifications among those teachers who are available.

Shortage of teachers: In the school based assessment, 77% of the relevant schools reported a shortage of teachers, which supports the qualitative research finding that teachers tend to be scarce across many SCW project areas. In schools that reported to lack teachers we measured systematically lower reading fluency scores among girls than in other schools. However, this negative association between teacher shortage and learning became insignificant once we controlled for other barriers in the multivariate regression model. This suggests that there may be some other barrier(s) in our model that are correlated with the absence of teachers and have a more significant influence on girls' learning outcomes.

Lack of female teachers: Around one out of three classes (36%) observed in the school-based assessment had a female class teacher. In these classes, we measured significantly higher average reading fluency scores among girls than in classes with male class teachers. This association remains significant when controlling for other potential school-based barriers in a multivariate regression model. This suggests that the gender of the class teacher may influence girls' learning and that a lack of female teachers can place girls at a disadvantage in terms of their learning.

Inadequately trained teachers: In terms of qualifications, teachers actually working at the assessed schools had, on average, 11 years of teaching experience. We did not find any significant association between teaching experience and girls' reading fluency. More than one in four teachers (28%) reported that they did not have a teaching certificate, which supports findings from the IDIs whereby teachers frequently lack formal qualifications. While further analysis showed a significant negative association between not having a teaching certificate and girls' reading fluency, this association lost its statistical significance when controlling for other potential barriers in the multivariate regression model. This suggests that a lack of a teaching certificate may correlate with other school-related barriers in our model that are better suited to explain the observed variance in reading fluency.

#1.3 Teacher absenteeism

Two SCW projects assumed that teacher absenteeism was a barrier to girls' education. In the qualitative IDIs the issue of teacher absenteeism was typically reported by respondents in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. Often respondents pointed out that the absence of teachers made families less willing to send children to school, or that it discouraged the children themselves from going. This point was made, for instance, by a community leader in the Ethiopian Afar region:

For the sake of our cattle and goats and the fact that teachers come once or twice a week we are not that interested to send our daughters to school.

Community Leader, Afar, Ethiopia

Problems with teachers not turning up to work were reported by 28% of the schools covered by the EM school-based assessment. However, we did not find any statistically significant association between teacher absenteeism and girls' reading fluency. This suggests that teacher absenteeism may not be systematically associated with lower learning outcomes but that other barriers may be more important at the fund level. However, within the household data we found a significant bivariate relationship between the caregiver reporting teacher absence and lower reading scores, and also with slightly reduced levels of attendance. It may be that caregivers explain poor learning by reference to perceived problems with schools and also that schools which are prepared to report absenteeism are more diligent about monitoring in general – more research and analysis is required to clarify this issue.

Potential structural drivers of teacher absenteeism: IDI respondents often described teacher absenteeism as the symptom of structural problems. In the case of Ethiopia, respondents mentioned poor infrastructure, transportation and access to water as drivers of poor teacher attendance. It was also commonly reported that teachers were poorly paid and that this had negative effects on their motivation and attendance, leading to high turnover rates as teachers leave to find better paid positions, particularly in urban areas or in private schools. In other cases, low salaries were reported to be a cause (although perhaps not the only one) of insufficient numbers of trained teachers, as it is not seen as a desirable job:

When the teacher is not paid well he does not teach well, he is discouraged and that is a challenge to the school. Therefore teachers leave the school and look for better places.

Community Leader, Galadogob, Puntland

The analysis of EM school-based assessment data showed that 33% of the surveyed teachers stated that their payment had been unreliable in the preceding three months. However, this was not associated with any significant difference in the average reading fluency of girls taught by these teachers. Likewise, our analysis did not find any significant associations between teachers' activities outside of school (i.e. community activities or political activism) and their student's reading fluency. This should not be taken as definitive proof that there is no effect of teacher resourcing on learning outcomes, since by definition, teachers who are not paid but who were still present at school and available to respond to our questions rather than having left their position to seek other work, may be more diligent and committed than average teachers, which in turn may be reflected in their students' learning outcomes.

#1.4 Corporal punishment

Two SCW projects suggested that the use or over-reliance on corporal punishment in schools may be a barrier to girls' education. The quantitative analysis showed a significant negative association between corporal punishment and girls' learning even when controlling for the influence of other barriers.

In the qualitative IDIs, corporal punishment did not emerge as a key obstacle to girls' education. Most caregivers who spoke about corporal punishment noted that, within certain limits, it was an acceptable form of discipline that the teacher could and should use in the classroom. Some caregivers noted concerns with corporal punishment that might go beyond what parents see as normal (termed here as 'non-normative'). In such cases parents might take issue with corporal punishment and in some cases confront the teacher:

The teacher is okay but she was a little bit too strict and she was beating them up, so they ended up refusing to go to school because they were scared of her. We then complained about it so she is fine now.

Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

Among teachers interviewed during the school-based assessment, 54% said that they considered corporal punishment appropriate. Girls taught by these teachers had an average reading fluency score that was nine words per minute lower than girls taught by teachers who did not speak out in favour of corporal punishment. In fact, this association was significant even after controlling for other school-based factors, including aggressive behaviour of students in the classroom, and was one of the few individual barriers that remained significant in the multivariate regression model. This evidence suggests that girls learn less well in teaching environments that promote the use of corporal punishment. This case shows that the perceptions and attitudes of IDI respondents, captured through the qualitative research, can diverge considerably from the statistical associations found by the quantitative analysis.

School-based barrier #2 – Supply and resourcing

Several SCW projects mentioned factors relating to the supply and resourcing of education as potential barriers. Seven projects mentioned inadequate classroom facilities and/or overcrowding; four mentioned under-resourcing more generally; and three mentioned the poor availability of schools.

#2.2 Overcrowding

In the qualitative research, overcrowded classrooms were often identified by IDI respondents as a barrier to learning and, to a lesser extent, as a barrier to attendance. Overcrowding is the result of the insufficient supply of school facilities and teachers to meet levels of student demand. The issue of teacher supply has already been addressed above so here we will address the issues concerned with the provision of school facilities and resources.

IDI respondents often mentioned negative effects on learning, caused by teachers having to teach overcrowded classrooms. They reported that high student-teacher ratios made it difficult for teachers to give individual attention to students in need, and to detect issues with learning at an early stage. In addition, respondents reported that tracking the performance of students and measuring attendance became increasingly difficult with larger class sizes. This point was made, for instance, by a school official in Ethiopia:

Because, the number of students in our school is very high compared to number of teachers, it is mismatched. We have got 130 students in a class. It is difficult for me to say the quality of teaching is good.

School Official, Oromia, Ethiopia

Respondents also noted that overcrowding can be caused by having insufficient numbers of classrooms or poor school buildings, resulting in classes being crowded together.

The biggest problem that we face is the shortage of classrooms because lots of classrooms are made from tents and containers; students and teachers are not comfortable in such classrooms, especially in bad weathers like in the summer or during a storm.

School Official, Kabul, Afghanistan

In some cases, particularly for projects in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Mozambique, overcrowding appears to be related to national government policies around free primary education. While government policies have increased primary enrolment rates this has not been met by an equivalent increase in the supply of teachers.

Quantitative analysis of data from the school-based assessment showed an average class size of 43 children. In line with the concerns raised by IDI respondents, we found a statistically significant negative association between class size and children’s reading fluency. This association remains statistically significant when controlling for other school-based barriers in the multivariate regression model. It suggests that overcrowded classrooms may in fact be a key barrier to learning. While a large body of social science research exists on the effects of class size on learning, there is no clear consensus on the extent to which smaller classes improve students learning²⁹. Research is even scarcer on the specific effects of class size on reading fluency. This issue therefore merits further analysis beyond what has been possible within the context of the baseline analysis presented in this report.

Box 10: Coping mechanisms: classroom overcrowding

Several IDI respondents described coping mechanisms that schools are using to try and address the common issue of overcrowding and the related problem of a lack of teachers. These coping strategies included the following:

- ‘Hot-seating’ with groups of children being scheduled to use the classroom during specific time slots. In some cases, the remaining students are taught outside or sent home;
- Multi-grade classes where students from different grades are placed together. These were described as relatively common in the project areas;
- The practice of having open-air classes, often under a tree for shade as a way to manage overcrowded classrooms; and
- A variation of multi-grade classes that was described by some respondents, where two classes shared a classroom with students sitting back-to-back, making it difficult for students to concentrate with two teachers conducting lessons at the same time:

All of these coping strategies come with costs in terms of teaching quality and some incur a reduction in actual teaching time, which was reported to affect students’ learning and attendance.

Potential structural drivers of overcrowding: IDI respondents in several SCW projects, particularly in Somalia, Mozambique, DRC and Sierra Leone noted that limited government capacity to support schools and train teachers lead to some of the supply-side barriers children faced at school, including overcrowded classrooms and insufficient numbers of trained teachers. Respondents noted that limited institutional support, both in terms of systems and finances, leaves schools unsupported in terms of obtaining resources and building capacity, often resulting in poor quality education. This issue was mentioned, for instance by a school official in Sierra Leone:

The teachers that are here are community teachers and they are not on payroll. The community is not supporting them we have tried our best for the Government to approve them, but we have not succeeded.

School Official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone

²⁹ See T. Filges, C. S. Sonne-Schmidt, T. Nielsen, A.-M. Klint Jørgensen (2012): Title Registration for Systematic Review: Small Class Sizes for Improving Student Achievement in Primary and Secondary Schools, Campbell Collaboration, http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/download/2372/Filges_Small_Class_Sizes_Title.pdf.

To conclude, the overcrowding of classrooms appears to be a product of a shortage in the supply of both teachers and insufficient school facilities.

School-based barrier #3 – Facilities

Seven projects mentioned barriers relating to inadequate school and classroom facilities. Three projects explicitly mentioned inadequate sanitation. By facilities we are referring to the school buildings, classroom furniture, and basic infrastructure including water and sanitation and electricity. Problems with school facilities were reported relatively often by IDI respondents, even though they were not frequently cited as a direct reason for children not attending school.

#3.1 Lack of desks and chairs in the classroom

IDI respondents frequently mentioned the lack of desks and chairs as a concern in local schools, which forced children to sit on the floor as well as making their uniforms dirty. This discomfort was said to make it difficult for students to write and to concentrate. This issue was raised, for instance, in the following statement:

The other difficulty is the lack of school facilities like desks, as you can see, standard one pupil are sitting on the floor and others on blocks. Do you think that such a student to write properly?

School Official, Morogoro Region, Tanzania

Analysis of data from the school-based assessment showed that 14% of students in a classroom did, on average, not have a chair, bench or desk (see [Table 41](#)). While we did find a significant bivariate association between the lack of classroom furniture and reading fluency, this association became insignificant when controlling for other barriers.

#3.2 Lack of buildings or buildings in need of repair

IDI respondents also frequently mentioned that basic school facilities were lacking (leading to classes being taught in the open air), or in need of repair. Poorly built classrooms, structural damages, and leaking or missing roofs were reported relatively frequently by IDI respondents across the SCW. In some cases, respondents cited wind or storms as being the cause of the poor state of the buildings. More frequently, the lack of support from government and communities was cited as the key issue.

The worse thing is that students are studying in open area and without classrooms. They are studying under hot and cold weathers; they are studying on the ground. This causes the minds of students to get dismissed and don't learn anything.

School Official, Ghor, Afghanistan

As shown in [Table 41](#), the school-based assessment found that one in four classrooms were lacking a proper floor, but statistical analysis did not show any significant association with reading fluency.

#3.3 Lack of basic infrastructure

A lack of basic infrastructure was regularly reported in IDIs across the SCW, but less often directly cited as a cause of children not going to school or learning. When mentioned in relation to education, infrastructure was associated with unsafe and unclean sanitation conditions that could cause disease outbreaks, deter students from attending, or cause long breaks in the school day while children walk to find water, which affects their learning.

Across the SCW, **water access and water security** was by far the most frequently cited barrier relating to infrastructure based on the IDIs, both in terms of prevalence and severity. In a few cases, IDI respondents stated that not having safe water and unsafe sanitary situations at schools was linked to outbreaks of cholera and other diseases among students. In other cases, students were forced to interrupt their school day to fetch water, which may require a long walk if the nearest water source is far away, as highlighted in the following quote:

What is not so good is access to water especially in winter, we get our water from a stream 700m away and it dries up in winter. The nearest borehole is 1.5km away.

School Official, Mataberland North Zimbabwe

The school-based assessment found that 73% of the schools and 91% of the classrooms visited had **no electricity** (see [Table 41](#)). A lack of electricity in the classroom had a significant negative association with girls' reading fluency even when controlling for other school-based factors in the multivariate model. While it is plausible that a

lack of electricity can hinder learning in school, it may also correlate with unobserved factors such as the resources available to the school or the community. Therefore, this association should be interpreted with caution.

Despite the relatively high prevalence of lacking electricity found by the quantitative analysis, IDI respondents did not widely report the lack of electricity as an issue. This may be due to expectations in which a lack of electricity is considered the norm and therefore rarely considered as an issue. However, in relation to learning outcomes, several respondents described how a lack of electricity was putting students at a disadvantage compared to students attending schools with electricity. A school official from Kenya explained:

No electricity in schools is causing the children to go home early putting them to a disadvantage with children from other schools where they do have electricity thus they can extend their learning sessions up to about 8pm.

School Official, Kilifi, Kenya

#3.4 Lack of appropriate sanitation facilities

Three projects assumed that a lack of separate and safe toilet facilities contribute to school drop-out, especially among older girls.

Analysis of data from the school-based assessment showed that 37% of the schools in the sample had no separate toilet facilities for girls and that 44% had toilets that could not be locked (see [Table 41](#)). We found only a marginally significant association between a lack of separate toilets and girls' reading fluency and this became insignificant when controlling for other barriers. Even though safe toilets are frequently lacking across the SCW, this does not seem to be directly related to girls' learning outcomes. This is in line with findings from the qualitative analysis, where the lack of toilets was rarely mentioned as a barrier to education.

#3.5 Lack of school meals

A barrier that was not assumed by SCW projects but frequently mentioned by IDI respondents across the SCW in relation to facilities and infrastructure was a lack of school lunches. IDI respondents often described meal provisions for students as a powerful incentive for attending school, such as this caregiver from Kenya:

That food used to help a lot, lunchtime they ate in school and so they didn't come back home for lunch, they only came back in the evening and that makes them concentrate with their education.

Household, Kilifi, Kenya

In many cases IDI respondents noted that schools are not able to provide full lunches due to a lack of funds. As shown in [Table 41](#), the analysis of data from the school-based assessment showed that 66% of the surveyed schools did not serve a midday-meal. While we could not assess the relationship between school meals and attendance, we did examine the influence on reading fluency and did not find a significant association.

#3.6 Potential structural factors driving poor facilities

In the IDIs, respondents mentioned two structural factors in relation to the poor facilities of building, namely **environmental disruptions** and **poor government**.

Respondents in several projects areas, including in Afghanistan, DRC, Zimbabwe and Mozambique noted that school buildings can be damaged during major **storms**, and are often left un-repaired, contributing to a long-term reduction in the quality of education provided by that school.

Particularly in Afghanistan, respondents often noted that issues associated with poor buildings and a lack of services provided in schools could be attributed to **poor government support in terms of resources or systems**. A school official in Baghlan noted the following:

The bad point of our school is that we don't have enough teaching materials; chairs, desks and also the school window glasses are broken. Also, we had the chairs and desks but it's broken. We don't have budget to fix them and the Education Ministry doesn't give money to repair.

School Official, Baghlan, Afghanistan

In Afghanistan and Somalia, respondents cited the lack, or limited presence, of functioning government in their area as a cause for these issues:

There is no functioning government and the school is dependent on the student's fee as source of income. Such attempts made cannot solve more than 20% of the school financial problem.

School Official, Waaberi, Somalia

School-based barrier #4 – Learning environment

In addition to safe and functioning facilities, schools generally require a sufficient supply of stationary, textbooks, learning materials and teaching resources to provide a stimulating and effective learning environment. Five SCW projects mentioned inadequate teaching and learning resources as a potential barrier. Issues relating to a poor learning environment were discussed fairly often by IDI respondents who frequently mentioned these as a reason for children not being in school or learning. A lack of learning materials (e.g. textbooks, stationary or uniforms) was frequently mentioned as a barrier to attendance, as respondents reported that children were sometimes turned away from school for being improperly equipped. The quantitative analysis did not find that any of these factors had a significant association with learning when controlling for other school-based factors.

#4.1 Lack of textbooks

Many IDI respondents reported a lack of school materials and textbooks in their local schools. A school official from Mataberland North in Zimbabwe, for instance, stated that “*books are shared at times 10 - 15 pupils per book*”. While it seems intuitive that a lack of textbooks would impede learning, only a few IDI respondents, mainly teachers, accounted for how the lack of textbooks affects students’ learning processes, for example, by limiting opportunities for self-study and having a negative effect on pass rates. Respondents also noted that a lack of textbooks generally contributed to a difficult learning environment for students, affecting their motivation to study.

In some severe cases it was reported that a complete absence of textbooks resulted in teachers having to teach orally and make use of what teaching aids were available, which was reported to make it even more difficult to acquire reading skills, slowing down the overall learning process.

Data from the school-based assessment showed that 38% of students did not have a textbook. However, there was no statistically significant association with girls’ reading fluency.

#4.2 Lack of notebooks

Less commonly than the lack of textbooks, IDI respondents reported a lack of notebooks as a barrier to learning. This issue was most often reported in World Vision (Zimbabwe), Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) and both of the Save the Children project areas. Not having enough notebooks was reported to interrupt the learning process and to lead to gaps in the advancement of writing skills, as explained in the following quote:

The school also has problems with parents not buying their children exercise books, so sometimes the children can go three days without writing anything. This affects the children and the teacher can do nothing about it.

Community Leader, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

It was also reported to limit the ability of teachers to assess student's performance:

For a teacher to know how good or how bad a child is doing, they base on written work, so if one is not writing, the teacher has no way of judging their performance.

School staff, Masvingo, Zimbabwe

Analysis of data from the school-based assessment showed that only 8% of girls in the observed classrooms were lacking stationary (see [Table 41](#)). We initially found that an increase in the proportion of girls not having stationary was associated with an average decrease in reading fluency but this association became insignificant when controlling for other school-based factors. This suggests that the observed association between a lack of textbooks and reading fluency may be confounded by other, unobserved factors e.g. lack of textbooks being an indicator of poverty which in turn affects learning in the ways described above.

#4.3 Lack of uniforms

A third issue mentioned by IDI respondents in relation to school equipment and the learning environment was a lack of school uniforms. Not having uniforms was often described as causing feelings of embarrassment and social exclusion among students, as uniforms were described as having high symbolic value for children. In a few cases,

respondents stated that having uniforms provided would encourage girls to go to school, giving them a sense of pride and raising their spirits.

School-related barrier #5 – Accessibility

In terms of barriers relating to the accessibility of schools, seven projects assumed that long distances to school prevent girls from enrolling in school, attending, and learning. While no projects mentioned a pastoralist lifestyle or frequent mobility as an explicit barrier, several projects target pastoralist communities, recognising that girls in these communities may face particular obstacles to accessing education. There is some qualitative evidence that local schools are not sufficiently accessible for girls from these groups.

#5.1 Long distances to school

While long distances to school was not among the most common issues reported by IDI respondents in the qualitative research, respondents in several project areas, notably in Mozambique, Faryab province in Afghanistan and Zimbabwe described that long journeys become a particular obstacle to school attendance when considering **seasonal disruptions** (e.g. impassable rivers). In the rainy season, one school official noted that the rivers and wells overflow, hindering attendance in school:

There are some families who stay a long distance from this school, like 4 to 5 kilometres away. Despite their willingness to enrol their children for grade zero, some parents do not do this because of long distance. In the end children just come to enrol for grade one which is against government policy. During the rainy season some children miss school because of flooded rivers.

School Official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe

Respondents from SCW projects in Afghanistan particularly noted that long distances were a concern because of the fragile security situation and the risk that may suffer from violence, adverse weather conditions or abduction on long journeys.

In my opinion, school is very far away, they are scared that their daughter will be bothered or attacked on the way to school by anyone.

School Official, Faryab, Afghanistan

Data from the EM household survey suggests that in 26% of households across the SCW, girls would have to walk more than 30 minutes to reach the next school. Long journeys are associated with a significantly lower probability of being enrolled, as well as with lower reading fluency scores, but the latter association becomes insignificant when controlling for other factors.

While long distances stem from insufficient numbers of local schools in rural areas (which relates to issues about the supply and resourcing of education discussed previously), IDI respondents did not frequently mention the lack of rural schools as a barrier to education. They may have become accustomed to the limited availability of schools and therefore focus on related, but more immediate barriers, such as the resulting journeys that girls have to cope with in their everyday lives.

#5.2 Frequent moves and resettlements

Respondents from several project areas (World Vision Zimbabwe, CfBT Kenya, Save the Children Mozambique, WUSC Kenya and ChildHope Ethiopia) described how families who **move and resettle frequently**, such as families migrating in search of work or living in refugee settlements, face difficulty in terms of transferring and re-enrolling their children in school, which causes poor attendance, disruptions in enrolment or drop-out. Beyond the normal disruptions in attendance that such resettlements might lead to, IDI respondents in the World Vision Zimbabwe project areas noted that children face an additional difficulty as they are not able to re-enrol without a transfer letter, which they can only obtain from their previous school if they have paid all of their school fees.

No quantitative evidence was available to examine this issue in more depth.

Summary: How do school-based factors affect girls' education?

We have assessed a variety of school-based factors and many of these appear to be interrelated. They all seem to be part of a general problem of under-resourcing which leads to a lack of schools, long journeys, a lack of teachers and teacher training, overcrowded classrooms, poor school facilities, a lack of teaching and learning resources and poor accessibility of available schools. Evidence from the qualitative research suggests that most of these factors may not be gender specific but affect girls and boys to a similar extent.

With regards to the **quality of education and teaching**, IDI respondents across the SCW regularly reported a general lack of teachers, inadequately qualified teachers or a frequent absence of teachers who are available. In the school-based assessment, 77% of schools reported a lack of teachers, and only one in four available teachers had a teaching certificate. This evidence suggests that issues around teaching may be an obstacle to girls' education even though we did not find any significant associations with education outcomes in our multivariate model. As different school-based factors interact with each other it may well be that the effect of teaching is captured by another variable in our model. For instance, the model did suggest that girls learn less well if they have a male rather than a female class teacher, and if their teacher approves of the use of corporal punishment – issues that were not widely discussed among IDI respondents.

With regards to the **supply and resourcing of education**, IDI respondents often mentioned overcrowded classrooms as a barrier to learning and, to a lesser extent, as a barrier to attendance, resulting from a structural lack of schools, classrooms and teachers. This is supported by the quantitative finding that girls in large classes achieve lower average reading scores (after controlling for other factors). It is plausible that we would observe a similar effect among boys and the qualitative research did not suggest that overcrowding affected girls more than boys.

In the IDIs, respondents frequently mentioned difficulties with learning in school due to a **lack of facilities** such as benches and chairs in the classroom, proper school buildings (including steady floors and roofs) and access to a safe water source. The quantitative analysis did not find any significant relationship between these factors, and girls' learning, but girls were found to achieve lower reading scores in classrooms that have no electricity – an issue that concerned 91% of the assessed classrooms. While it is plausible that a lack of electricity can hinder learning, this should be interpreted with caution as a lack of electricity may also correlate with unobserved factors such as the resources available to the school or the community. The issue was not frequently mentioned by IDI respondents. The evidence remained inconclusive with respect to the importance of separate and lockable toilets for girls' learning outcomes.

IDI respondents frequently mentioned the lack of **teaching and learning materials** (e.g. textbooks, stationary or uniforms) as a barrier to attendance and learning, noting that children without the required equipment were sometimes turned away from school. The quantitative analysis did not find that any of these factors had a significant association with learning when controlling for other school-based factors.

With regards to the **accessibility of schools**, a lack of schools and long journeys to the schools available were sometimes mentioned in the IDIs, but were not a frequently reported barrier. The household survey suggests that girls in one out of four households have to walk more than 30 minutes to reach the nearest school, so it may be that long journeys are perceived as normal in many SCW contexts. There was a marginally significant association between the distance to the next school, and enrolment suggesting that girls in very remote areas may face the greatest obstacles to enrolment. This would support the assumptions of SCW projects that target rural and remote communities. In addition, IDI respondents pointed out that girls who resettle frequently with their families (such as pastoralists) may have difficulties transferring to schools due to bureaucratic hurdles.

Attitudes and support in family and community

In this section we examine factors relating to attitudes and support for girls' education and the effects on girls' education. Thirteen out of 15 SCW projects have assumed that some dimensions of family and community attitudes or support function as a barrier to girls' education. We will focus on the following factors:

- **Negative attitudes towards girls' education:** Perceptions about the relevance of schooling and parental aspirations for girls in particular, in the family and community.
- **Family support and involvement in education:** Parents are not involved in school activities.

- **Negative perceptions of the relevance of education:** Relevance of schooling regardless of gender.
- **Social exclusion:** exclusion of minorities; perceptions of hostility and isolation in the community.

Attitudes and support #1 – Negative attitudes towards girls' education

This barrier includes opinions in the family or community that are negative towards educating girls specifically, as opposed to being against education in a more general, non-gendered sense (which we discuss below, see [Attitudes and support #3](#)). Eleven SCW projects assumed that negative attitudes towards girls' education in families or communities was a barrier to girls' enrolment, attendance and learning, and three projects mentioned a lack of community support more specifically.

Preferences for marriage over girls' education: Negative attitudes towards girls' education were not frequently reported by IDI respondents across the SCW overall. However, when the issue did arise (which was frequently the case in Afghanistan and Somalia) it was regularly cited as a direct cause of girls not going to school. Negative attitudes were often said to stem from a belief that marriage is the top priority for girls and that education was either not relevant to them, or would benefit only the husband's family:

With the families around here, there are some who still think that sending girls to school will not solve anything. The girls will go and enrich the family she will go to when married.

School Official, Manicaland, Zimbabwe

In this latter case, households recognise a benefit to educating girls, but do not want to invest if they feel the benefits will accrue to another household. Receiving a dowry for a girl upon her marriage was also described by respondents as an added incentive for households to prioritise girls' marriage over education:

My male relatives have come here to complain, asking why I have to take all girls to school, saying that I deny them dowry that they could have gotten from the girls.

Household, Turkana, Kenya

Attitudes relating to the girls' role in the family: Another frequently stated reason for families to deprioritise girls' education was their feeling that girls were better suited for carrying out household chores and getting married, and that resources should therefore be invested in the schooling of boys in the family:

Then there is this category of families who do not value the education of girls because they think the girl's place is in the kitchen so educating them is a waste of resources that could be used to educate boys.

School Official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe

Cultural practice and values: Some respondents, particularly in Afghanistan and Somalia, noted that perceptions still exists whereby it is not culturally appropriate to educate girls. They described high levels of social pressure against educating girls which is considered shameful:

Currently there are some people who are not allowing their daughters to go to school. Some of those people even encourage my husband not to allow his to go to school. In some gatherings and meetings when my husband meets relatives, then those relatives tell him that you have done a really shameful thing for allowing your daughter to go to school, because it is not something that we often do in our area. Then he complains to me and says I am listening to all these things because of you. These people let their daughters only till 5 or 6th standard and then take them away from school.

Household, Kabul, Afghanistan

Fear of undesirable behaviour: Finally, particularly in WUSC (Kenya), CfBT (Kenya) and Save the Children's (Mozambique) targeted communities it was mentioned that educating girls might lead to behaviour that is not seen as acceptable by the family or community. This 'undesirable' behaviour was described in several ways, particularly by respondents in Mozambique and Kenya, including sexual relations with boys outside of marriage or 'prostitution':

But it is often that they end up being pregnant because of playing with boys. Thus this makes some parents for not sending their daughters to school to continue study [at secondary level] even if they have the possibility, they say that they will be prostitutes.

Household, Manica, Mozambique

Similarly, respondents noted that in some cases girls are forced to drop out of school and marry due to these fears of sexual activity. As described by one community leader:

There are men who believe that once a girl is 15 years old she is to be married off. They fear that the girl can engage in sexual activity with boys

Community Leader, Garissa, Kenya

A reason for not sending a girl to school was also sometimes described in terms of economic empowerment where **girls challenge social and behavioural norms** such as demanding equal property rights as male siblings, as described by one community leader:

Some parents complain that when you take the girl child to school, the girls lose control or become exposed. They look at their own interest and some even go to the extent of claiming for inheritance of family property, which is not customarily right in our community.

Community Leader, Samburu, Kenya

Similarly, respondents noted that men may be particularly wary of marrying a woman more educated than them for fear that this type of woman would upset traditional gendered household arrangements.

Yes, especially the men. You find that the men in some communities don't like to see their women more educated than them. That is why if you go around you will find very many housewives in these homes. Some got work but many of them are just at home doing nothing. Some men even stop them from going to work and force them to stay at home.

School Official, Kilifi, Kenya

In the EM household survey: 10% of caregivers stated that they believe that girls learn less than boys in school; 7% believed that it is best if a girl is married at age 18; and 18% believed that the girl being married or working was better than her being in education at age 18. These figures suggest that only a relative minority of caregivers have a markedly negative attitude towards girls' education. However, the more negative the caregivers' attitude towards girls' education, the lower the chances of these girls being enrolled. Out of all of the most significant barriers to enrolment, **negative attitudes are the factors that contribute the most to explaining variations in enrolment**. In addition, negative attitudes are also a significant predictor of lower average reading fluency, when controlling for other barriers. These findings suggest that negative attitudes towards girls' education do influence decisions about enrolment, and the girls' performance in school, where they prevail.

In 15% of the families, caregivers stated that it was unusual for people in the community to send their children to school. In these families, girls were significantly less likely to be enrolled than in families that did not report girls' education to be unusual. An association would be expected with this variable by definition, but it is included to control for family's perceptions about norms of community behaviour.

Attitudes and support #2 – Lack of family support and parental involvement

Five SCW projects assumed that a lack of family support and parental involvement was a barrier to girls' education. While this issue is closely related to negative attitudes, we focus on parents' behaviour in terms of active engagement with girls' education rather than their views and attitudes. While the qualitative research did not generate much evidence about the level of families' active engagement with girls' education, the quantitative evidence suggested that there may be a negative relationship between a lack of active family support, and girls' enrolment and learning.

The EM household survey suggests that 82% of families in SCW project areas are not actively engaged in their children's education in the sense that they do not participate in any school committee. In villages where caregivers tended to state that no family members were involved in school committees, girls were significantly less likely to be enrolled and had significantly lower average reading scores than in villages where families tended to get actively involved in their children's education. This association was significant even when controlling for other variables.

Attitudes and support #3 – Negative perception of the relevance of education

Negative perceptions of the relevance of education include all cases where respondents indicated that they themselves or others in their community did not see the value of education (for both boys and girls). Two projects assumed this to be a barrier to girls' education. Negative perceptions of the relevance of education were **regularly**

reported by IDI respondents across the SCW, and directly cited as a reason for children not attending school. Attitudes towards education in general were not measured in the EM household survey.

Perception that education is a ‘waste of resources’: Within most project areas, IDI respondents mentioned households in their communities that perceive education as not important or a waste of resources, because children’s time could be better invested in livelihood type activities, and supporting the household economically:

They believe that education can’t change someone’s life and they prefer their children to look after their goats, camels and cattle.

School Official, Afar Ethiopia

In a few cases, especially in communities targeted by ChildHope (Ethiopia) and World Vision (Zimbabwe), some respondents reported that local families do not perceive children’s education as very important, as the girls could seize other opportunities and find work abroad even without completing their education:

It has been the tendency here that school leavers and some never having gone to school, find easy solace in going into South Africa and easily get employment there. It dries up their appetite for school where they know they will not get jobs afterwards.

School Official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe

Cultural and traditional practices: Some respondents, especially in CfBT (Kenya) and WUSC’s (Kenya) project areas noted that education and schooling were not perceived as relevant because of cultural habits, traditional practices and lifestyles that were said to be strongly embedded within some families in these communities. This attitude was described with regards to the Samburu, Turkana and Somali communities in Kenya:

I would say Turkanas were against education because of illiteracy and their pastoralist culture, therefore their life was more about the animals, while Somalis arrived in [the community] to do business and they also are not usually very keen on schooling their children. They are focused more on religious school ‘the Madrasa’ and most of their children join in the businesses while women stay at home but in [community].

Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya

Respondents also identified communities influenced by religious practices and tradition who **do not value secular education** for either boys or girls, specifically as followers of apostolic churches in Zimbabwe:

We also have the white garment churches [apostolic sects] who do not value education. Their girls are married early and the boys are taught tin smithing and carpentry skills at an early age.

School Official, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

The EM household survey does not provide any data on perceptions of the relevance of education, although attitudes can be inferred from the caregiver’s statements about whether education helps people make better lives for themselves; and preferences for what the girl should be doing at the age of 18. In terms of parental aspirations, 5% of caregivers stated that they had not wanted their girl to get any education when she was young, and 22% said that they hadn’t wanted her to get more than a primary education. The lower the level of the caregiver’s initial aspirations for the girl, the less likely these girls appeared to be enrolled at present. We also found an association between aspirations and girls’ learning but this became insignificant when controlling for other barriers.

Attitudes and support #4 – Social exclusion

One SCW project assumed that the social exclusion of minority groups was a barrier to education. Issues of social exclusion were not widely discussed by IDI respondents, apart from stigma relating to early pregnancy which we discuss below ([Personal factors #1](#)). However, we did find some quantitative evidence which suggests that social exclusion may influence girls’ education.

The EM household survey contained several questions on experiences of social exclusion that touched upon issues such as whether the family has people to talk to in the community, whether local people are hostile, and whether the girl has friends in the community. On the basis of these items we constructed a scale that generally measured low levels of exclusion across the SCW. However, in contexts where households reported isolation and hostility, girls tended to be less likely to be enrolled in school and had lower average reading fluency scores than their peers, even when controlling for other barriers.

Summary: How do attitudes and support factors affect girls' education?

Negative attitudes to girls' education were cited as potential barriers by around two thirds of the SCW projects. The qualitative research generated evidence to support this assumption and suggested several pathways through which attitudes may drive education outcomes. These typically related to traditional perceptions about the role of girls in the family and economic imperatives such as obtaining dowries. School was sometimes viewed as undesirable for cultural reasons or due to the perception that educated girls may develop behaviours that challenge established social norms and power relations. In our quantitative analysis, negative attitudes to girls' education could explain some of the variation in enrolment and reading fluency.

In addition, the **lack of active participation in education** (e.g. family members participating in school committees) was associated with lower enrolment and reading scores. **Negative perceptions of the relevance of education** (regardless of gender) were related to low attendance both in the household survey and IDI responses.

A final area related to attitudes and social circumstances relates to **social exclusion** as a potential barrier to education. Social exclusion was not widely cited by SCW projects or discussed by IDI respondents and indeed it is a fluid concept which may be expressed differently across contexts and subgroups. Only a few of the surveyed households (1%) reported feelings of social exclusion, but those that did we tended to find lower levels of girls' enrolment and reading.

Violence related factors

Twelve out of 15 SCW projects assumed that issues around safety and violence function as barriers to girls' education. In this section we will examine the following factors in relation to violence and safety:

- **Harassment and insecurity:** Insecurity, conflict, incidences of violence, domestic violence
- **Sexual violence:** Sexual harassment, assault or violence

Violence and safety #1 – Insecurity, conflict and violence

Seven projects assumed barriers relating to insecurity, conflict or violence, and four projects specifically mentioned harassment and violence in school as a potential obstacle to girls' education. One project specifically mentioned unsafe journeys to school. Incidences of violence within the family, school or community were one of the most commonly discussed barriers in the qualitative research. Respondents frequently described the negative effects of violence in the form of corporal punishment (discussed above) and active inter-tribal conflict on attendance and learning.

Active inter-tribal conflict: IDI respondents in WUSC and Save the Children (Ethiopia) project areas described that active inter-tribal conflict posed an obstacle to girls' going to school by destroying schools and discouraging children (particularly girls from the less powerful tribe) from attending during periods of active conflict:

When two tribes or clans fight one, the girls from the smaller tribe may not come to class because on their way, they might be stopped by the people who are fighting.

School official, Garissa, Kenya

In other instances, girl students were reported to be directly attacked, or students kept home by their families to avoid assault or various other potential traumas which might happen on the way to or from school:

It affects students because they lose their parents through war. They even killed an old woman last week and raped girls. It has affected our children a lot.

Community leader, Turkana, Kenya

Domestic violence: In several project areas IDI respondents mentioned incidences of domestic violence that usually involved the male and female caregivers that were often triggered by alcohol abuse. In most instances, reports of domestic violence and its impact on attendance and learning came from school staff members and community leaders rather than households themselves, like this teacher:

Yes we have seen parents' conflicts, which really affect the children. You will know when the parents have fought at home, the child will be reserved, will not participate. The child who used to be very clever will start dropping in performance, so it really affects.

School official, Nairobi, Kenya

Respondents described a range of ways in which domestic violence affects girls' education. These included psychological trauma affecting children's concentration in class and children missing school days or fighting with other students as a result of witnessing violence at home.

Respondents in Zimbabwe and Kenya described context-specific ways in which harassment and insecurity manifest and affect children's education.

Violence around elections: In Zimbabwe, politics and political violence were often cited as a cause of insecurity and adverse student attendance, especially (but not exclusively) around election time. A community leader in Manicaland noted that although it might not have impacted on the local community, the political conflict in 2007 and 2008 affected schooling and caused insecurity:

Children were no longer going to school in fear of being attacked on their way to and from school. If a parent has been attacked, the child will not even do well in school. There were a number of youths especially dropouts, who were roaming around the village and road harassing people. There are those girls who drop out due to pregnancy. Such girls were also joining those militant youth group, inciting violence in the community.

Community leader, Manicaland, Zimbabwe

Gangs and insecurity in slums: A few caregivers and school staff members in Kenya, especially those living or working in slums, noted that local gangs and unruly groups led them to feel insecure and concerned about their children and students. Respondents were made insecure through harassment by these unruly groups, concerns about the presence of unsavoury characters, and fears that their children might be lured into joining such groups:

It is not very safe here. Since the boys here are naughty, some are members of the Mungiki [a banned organisation in Kenya, similar to organized crime], when you set up a job they come and demolish. If maybe you are cooking fries they come and spill them, unless you give them some money. They collect some amount from everyone doing business every day illegally and the government does nothing about it.

Household, Nairobi, Kenya

When asked about the kinds of violence that happen to girls on their way to school, a school staff member in Nairobi, Kenya more explicitly set out the key concerns, noting:

Usually they don't experience violence, but In the slums, like where our school is situated and with some children out there who are not going to school, some sniffing glue, collecting metal for selling, sometimes you find some of our children are lured into that life and by the time the teacher realizes this child has not been coming to school it is too late and they have already been introduced to sniffing glue or other harder drugs.

School Staff, Nairobi, Kenya

In the EM household survey, 24% of households stated that [journeys to the girls' school were dangerous](#). This was associated with a small but significant decrease in girls' attendance rates even when controlling for other potential barriers. It was one out of six barriers that appear to influence attendance in the multivariate regression model. Initially we also measured bivariate associations between dangerous school journeys, enrolment and learning but these became insignificant when controlling for other factors. **The prevalence of violence in school, as reported by households, was relatively small across the SCW.**

Apart from dangerous journeys, households rarely reported incidences of violence. Only 4% of families stated that there had been reports of violence at the girl's school during the previous year, and 1% stated that the girl had become witness to violence at school herself. Less than 1% of households stated that the girl was afraid to attend school as a consequence of violent incidences.

These findings suggest that incidences of violence may be less widespread that we might think based on the qualitative IDIs. At the same time, it is worth noting that violence is a particularly sensitive topic to discuss in household interviews, so some level of social desirability bias may be present where respondents have in fact been exposed to violence but did not want to disclose that information during the survey, due to the personal and sensitive nature of such information or to present their household and community in the best light possible.

Also, many other potential barriers that are more common than violence do not explain much variation in outcomes in our multivariate models. A relatively infrequent barrier such as violence may appear insignificant but could have a marked impact on lives where it does occur and may actually be as important as other, more commonly reported barriers. Although relatively few families discussed that they or the girls are worried about attending school as a result of violence, clearly the real human impact of violence and fear of violence are reflected in their subjective importance even for those who are not directly exposed. As an important theme that affects family and community decisions about education it is important to monitor, research and understand further the effects of different forms of violence on education marginalisation throughout the course of the GEC.

Violence and safety #2 – Sexual harassment and violence

Four projects assumed that sexual harassment and violence pose a barrier to girls' education. Sexual harassment and violence were discussed by IDI respondents in the qualitative research and repeatedly described as a barrier to education. Due to the sensitivity of the issue, the EM did not collect any quantitative evidence to assess the prevalence or effects of sexual violence.

#2.1 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment was described as a fairly common occurrence by IDI respondents across the SCW. Though sometimes described by respondents as a normal or accepted part of life, several respondents described sexual harassment as something that negatively impacts education outcomes, particularly in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Kenya. Respondents noted that sexual harassment can negatively affect girls' attendance at school as well as their psychological well-being. Most often, sexual harassment was described by households and community leaders as occurring to girls on their way to or from school, thereby discouraging girls from attending.

#2.2 Sexual violence

In most SCW project areas, caregivers mentioned that their girls faced issues in terms of **sexual assault and rape, usually on the way to or from school**. In project areas in Ethiopia, IDI respondents also discussed issues in terms of girls being abducted. These fears of sexual assault were reported to affect girls to varying extents. In some cases it was reported to prevent girls from attending school and in other cases it was reported to just shape their behaviour when traveling to and from school:

There were boys who would sit and wait for school children to harass them and rape some of them...children from that area began fearing going to school and for their safety they would travel in groups from school.

Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

To a lesser extent, respondents also noted that sexual assault also impeded learning, in the sense that victims of sexual assault may have difficulty concentrating in class after such trauma. Sexual assault and rape are particularly sensitive subjects, which respondents may be reluctant to discuss with interviewers. This may be due to the fear of social stigma, sensitivity or social desirability bias as respondents strive to portray their families and communities in a positive light. Nonetheless, the frequency with which sexual assault was mentioned by IDI respondents does provide some indication of the impact that sexual assault might be having on learning outcomes as well as providing a potential glimpse of the frequency with which sexual assault occurs. This issue could not be covered in the quantitative research due to its high degree of sensitivity around the subject.

Summary: How do factors relating to safety and violence affect girls' education?

Evidence from the qualitative research suggests that issues around **insecurity and violence** are a common concern among families in SCW project areas and affect girls' attendance and learning. The IDIs mention different forms of violence (e.g. political conflict, active inter-tribal conflict, domestic violence, or sexual harassment) and different effects on girls' education, ranging from the physical destruction of schools to psychological trauma or aggressive behaviour in school. Due to the highly sensitive nature of issues around violence, and sexual violence in particular, we have very limited quantitative evidence about this barrier. The household survey suggests that a significant proportion of girls (24%) have unsafe journeys to school and that this affects their attendance. However, further in-depth research is required to explore the prevalence and intensity of violence and harassment at home, on the way to and from school, at school and in the communities. This is a likely focus of one of the areas to explore further through the GEC thematic research.

Personal factors

Twelve out of 15 SCW projects assumed that personal factors influence girls' education. In this section we will examine the following personal factors:

- **Early pregnancy:** Attitudes towards early pregnancy
- **Early and forced marriage:** Attitudes towards early marriage
- **Issues around disability:** Accessibility, social stigma and discrimination
- **Issues around general and sexual health:** General health issues, menstruation, lack of sanitary towels
- **Self-esteem, aspirations and motivation:** Low self-esteem and confidence, low aspirations
- **Low level of education in the family:** Parental education; and
- **Migration and mobility:** Frequent resettlement, migration, pastoralist lifestyles

Personal factors #1 – Early pregnancy

Early pregnancy was one of the individual factors most often described by SCW projects as a barrier to education (eight projects). In the qualitative research, pregnancy was a commonly reported issue preventing girls from attending school across the SCW. Pregnancy was not measured in the EM's household survey as it is a sensitive subject and can be retrospectively recorded at later survey waves (i.e. midline and endline).

IDI respondents described **pregnancy as being a severe barrier to girls staying in school**, as in nearly all cases respondents reported that girls are not welcome back at school after giving birth:

Ah no, she would not be welcome because she would teach others bad thing like sleeping with men. Girls don't come back to school when they fall pregnant.

Household, Matabeland South, Zimbabwe

Incidences of unplanned pregnancy were reported in most project areas, and respondents noted that girls who become pregnant are often **subject to strong social stigma and discrimination**, similar to the concerns voiced by this respondent:

Interviewer: *If a girl had been out of school for a while, or was pregnant or was disabled, would she be welcomed at school?*

Respondent: *No, she will never be welcomed in case of pregnancy.*

Interviewer: *Why they are not welcomed back?*

Respondent: *Because she is already destroyed.*

Household, Kilombero, Tanzania

Respondents also commonly reported a perception that girls are more likely to become pregnant if they attend school, so in some project areas the **fear of pregnancy can be a reason to keep girls away from school**, as highlighted by this Community Leader:

They [girls] came here [to school] with nothing but pregnancy. So because of that people think that it is a waste of time to send their daughters.

Community Leader, Moyamba, Sierra Leone

While the household survey did not ask whether the surveyed girl had ever given birth herself, it did contain a question about the presence of mothers under the age of 20 in the household, which is an indication of the probability that the girl herself or her siblings may have experienced an early pregnancy. There is a marked variation in the reported prevalence in project areas, ranging from 2% (ChildHope, Ethiopia) to 41% (Plan, Sierra Leone), and this variation is likely to be indicative of the range of rates of early motherhood. The presence of young mothers in the household was not significantly associated with girls' education outcomes overall across the SCW.

Personal factors #2 – Early and forced marriage

Seven SCW projects assumed that early or forced marriage functions as a barrier to girls' education. While we did not collect any quantitative evidence on this sensitive issue, early marriage was frequently discussed as a barrier by IDI respondents in the qualitative research.

The causal relationship between early marriage and leaving school was described in various ways and sometimes related to issues of pregnancy discussed above. Some IDI respondents said that girls became pregnant and dropped out of school after marriage, while others described that girls dropped out first and then got married. Respondents noted that girls' agency in these situations varies, and that they may be pushed into marriage in some cases, while others girls were said to push for marriage themselves (this was mentioned by respondents in Zimbabwe, and Mozambique).

Most often respondents described that early marriage forced girls to **drop out of school**, generally once girls reach puberty. Early marriage was often described as an accepted and expected part of the local culture or community:

Here these families are very tied to traditional values because children aged from 1st to 5th class manage to attend school but once the 1st menstruation arrives the girl become much more important in the community than at school. Then they prefer to tell her that you stay at home, do not go anymore to school and get married. Then the number of girls at 1st class is high compared to EP2 (6th and 7th class) and lower at secondary school. There is that thinking that me with this age I cannot go to school. I have to get married or because my friend got married. Then this limits girls from progressing at school.

School Official, Tete, Mozambique

In other cases, households reported that girls **get married as a way to provide extra income** for the household, through the bride payment or dowry. In these cases it appears that it is poverty that drives early marriage, making it an economic decision rather than a cultural expectation.

In my idea, the girls should marry at the age of 18 to 20 but our village people sell their daughters because they are poor at the age of 10 to 14. If we did not make our daughter marry, we would send her to school.

Household, Faryab, Afghanistan

Respondents frequently noted that **older girls are more likely to drop out of school, for marriage, due to pregnancy**, or other increased household and community commitments which indicate that households across the SCW view education for younger girls in a different way (generally more positively) than for older girls.

In our village there are some people that permit their daughters up to 4th or 5th grade and then don't let them to go to school and they don't like their daughters going to school. It is as their tradition that they don't permit girls going to school and suppose it as a shame for their selves that their [older] girls should go to school, and they tell that when girl become [older], they shouldn't go to school, that she must stay at home and education is not their right.

School Official, Balkh, Afghanistan

Data from the EM household survey is not available on attitudes towards early marriage, but respondents were asked whether they would prefer their daughter to be married, in education or in employment when she reaches the age of 18. The prevalence of caregivers preferring marriage to education or employment varied across projects, from 0% in World Vision (Zimbabwe) project areas to 19% in BRAC (Afghanistan) project areas. This is likely to be indicative of the attitudes to early marriage. We did not find any direct association with girls' learning outcomes, but as discussed in [Section 4.2.1](#), the caregiver's general aspirations concerning the girls' level of education were a significant predictor of their chances to be enrolled.

Personal factors #3 – General and sexual health

Six SCW projects assumed that issues around health, personal hygiene or sexual and reproductive health were a barrier to girls' education. Two projects specifically described menstruation and the lack of sanitary towels as an obstacle. None of these issues was frequently mentioned in the qualitative research. The EM household survey did include questions about general health but we did not find any significant association between health and education outcomes. While the lack of sanitary towels during menstruation or poor health may affect girls'

attendance and learning, they do not emerge as key barriers from our baseline evidence, compared with some of the other factors discussed in this section.

Personal factors #4 – Issues around disability

Three SCW projects considered that issues around disability hinder girls from being in school and learning. These issues include a lack of physical access to schools, a lack of special learning aids, as well as social stigma around disability. The majority of IDI respondents across the window did not describe disability as a major barrier to attending school. However, the quantitative analysis suggested that disability may be barrier to attendance and learning, even though the observed associations were only marginally significant.

Even though issues around disability weren't widely reported by IDI respondents, some did describe obstacles that can cause children to drop out, such as a lack of equipment and resources in schools to support disabled children (e.g. wheel chairs and ramps), or teasing and discriminating behaviour on the part of abled students at school. However, IDI respondents in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Mozambique project areas often indicated that stigma and discrimination were not common and that help was generally available for disabled children to attend school. Respondents did **not generally note any particularly gendered differences** between challenges faced by disabled boys and girls.

Evidence from the EM household survey suggests that 4% of girls suffer from some kind of difficulty hearing, seeing, talking or moving around across the SCW with some variation by context. Girls who were reported to have such difficulties tended to have slightly lower attendance rates and lower average reading fluency scores than their peers even when controlling for other factors. However, this association was only marginally significant.

Disability is a difficult subject to examine through survey research, especially in cross-cultural surveys. Definitions and interpretations of disability may vary from one context to another, as may the degree of social stigma attached. It may be that different types of difficulty or disability affect different outcomes. More research is required to assess whether there are sufficient coping and support mechanisms in SCW communities to help disabled children attend and learn in school, as suggested by the IDIs. This is likely to be one of the focus areas of the GEC thematic research.

Personal factors #5 – Self-esteem, aspirations and motivation

Two SCW projects assumed that a lack of confidence, self-esteem and aspirations on the part of girls may be a barrier to their education. While we found some quantitative evidence that personal aspirations affect education outcomes, low self-esteem, self-confidence and aspirations were rarely mentioned as an issue affecting girls' education in the qualitative IDIs.

While the qualitative interviews included questions to capture girls' degree of confidence, younger girls in particular often remained quiet during their section of the interview. This made it difficult to assess their aspirations and levels of confidence. This silence might in itself be a sign of low confidence around strangers, or indicate that girls are not used to expressing their own opinions about themselves.

The quantitative analysis of EM household survey data found that girls who stated that they are **not trying to do well** in school tended to have significantly lower attendance rates and reading fluency scores than their peers, even when controlling for other potential barriers. In addition, girls who stated that **education was less important for girls** than for boys (in the school-based assessment survey) tended to have significantly lower average reading fluency scores than girls who believed that education was just as important for girls as boys. These findings support the assumption that girls' motivation and aspirations affect their learning outcomes, but there may also be a feedback effect of learning outcomes on the girls' motivation and aspiration.

Personal factors #6 – Parental education

SCW projects did not describe low levels of education in the family as a key barrier to education. They may have described other factors such as poverty, or targeted particular target groups that are known to have difficulty accessing education such as rural or pastoralist communities. However, the quantitative evidence suggests that parental education is a **key factor in relation to girls' enrolment and learning**, which is a common finding in international education research.

Findings from the EM household survey suggest that the level of education in the family is low in 64% of the households across the GEC. The lower the level of education in the family (considering the schooling of both the

caregiver and the head of household) the lower the chances for girls to be enrolled and the lower their average reading score. This finding is supported by evidence from the school-based assessment which shows that 77% of the fathers and 84% of the mothers of girls assessed in the schools had a low level of education. Low education on the side of the father was associated with lower average reading scores.

Personal factors #7 – Mobility and migration

Several SCW projects target mobile or pastoralist communities, but only one project specifically described migration as a barrier to girls' education. Based on the household survey we have only limited evidence on recent migration but not on the patterns of frequent resettlement. We did not find any significant association with learning outcomes although reading scores do vary by context in ways that may reflect in part differences in modes of living that are difficult to measure directly. In the qualitative research, however, IDI respondents regularly mentioned migration and resettlement, and fairly often cited these phenomena as a reason for children (generally boys and girls) not attending school.

Difficulties transferring children to a new school: The most widely reported way in which migration and mobility affect girls' ability to go to school was for families that **migrate in search** of work or **refugees** who are resettled, and then face difficulties transferring their children to a new school, causing disruptions in enrolment and sometimes drop-out. As mentioned above, in Zimbabwe respondents in World Vision project areas noted that children face an additional difficulty as they are not able to re-enrol without a transfer letter, which they can only obtain from their previous school if they have paid all their school fees.

Dropping out in search of work: A secondary issue respondents described concerned girls migrating themselves for work. Respondents from Zimbabwe and Ethiopia described the effect that the promise of work, in South Africa and the Middle East respectively, has on girls, causing them to drop-out of school at an early age to go in search of better opportunities and work there. The promise of paid work was reported by respondents to lure these girls to drop-out of school, although the quality and reliability of this work is unknown.

Irregular attendance for with seasonal migration: Finally, respondents in CfBT (Kenya) and Save the Children (Ethiopia) project areas described the particular barriers faced by children (and sometimes girls specifically) from pastoralist households:

Families' difficulties in this area are the problem of permanent settlement. Since they move with the changing season in search of rain their likelihood of being a resident at a specific place is very little. They move from place to place with their goats and cattle's. This is not a good life trend for their children's education.

School official, Afar, Ethiopia

Frequent migrations and children transferring between schools were also said to affect the teachers' ability to complete their lesson plans and teach a full year's curriculum:

Many students drop out school at drought seasons. So it hinders the teaching learning process. We can't perform as per our plan.

School official, Afar, Ethiopia

Another mobile group mentioned by IDI respondents in ChildHope (Ethiopia) and Save the Children (Mozambique) were the **landless poor**, that is households that do not own land and have to move more frequently than other families, due to the cost of living and their need to find work. While children from these families are able to enrol in school, migration may disrupt their learning as they transfer between schools, as these households are not able to settle in one place permanently.

Resettlement within refugee camps: Another group affected by migration and resettlement are refugees living in camps in WUSC's (Kenya) project areas. High numbers of respondents in Garissa identified themselves as refugees, which is to be expected given that WUSC is targeting two large refugee camps. Several respondents in WUSC's project areas described the educational difficulties faced by children from families:

Since the schools are free, most people enrol their girls but there are a few who want their girls to be at home and do housework duties, and others because of the nature of camp life, it is not clear whether it is permanent or we are soon moving to another place, they tend to not take education seriously, sometimes I understand them since camp life can also have a sense of hopelessness.

Community leader, Garissa Kenya

Schools trying to help pastoralist households settle permanently: Schools in these areas are making some efforts to retain students from pastoralist households, offering lunches in school and FAFA (food rations) to households who enrol their children in school. These incentives help to encourage and enable pastoralist households to remain in one location for longer and enrol their children in school. It is described by respondents as effective at accomplishing this:

We have FAFA. I said there is a diet /food/ for our children. As we have been taking FAFA, we will not go far looking for another settlement area. We are now limited to [the local community]. We have also access to education in our village.

Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia

Summary: How do personal factors affect girls' education?

Early motherhood and pregnancy along with **early or forced marriage** were often mentioned as barriers to education in the qualitative IDIs. In particular, IDI respondents described the stigmatisation of young mothers which often ends their participation in school. We could not directly measure the effects of pregnancy on schooling in the household survey and it may be that early pregnancy affects girls who are the most likely to not be in school for other reasons. The prevalence of early pregnancy also varies by context, and it is plausible that stigma would be less likely to occur or act as a barrier where early pregnancy is more common. Finally, there is also an association between leaving school deliberately to start a family based on considerations about the role of women and viable economic pathways rather than it being viewed as a failure or actual drop-out.

In the IDIs, **disability** was not generally viewed as a barrier to children's participation in education. The quantitative evidence showed that some forms of disability were marginally associated with attendance and learning, but more research is required, to explore potential linkages between disability and educational marginalisation.

There was some quantitative evidence that attendance and reading scores were linked with the **girls' motivation to do well in school, and their aspirations**, but this was not salient in IDI discussions and it may be that the causality runs in both directions with better performing girls being more motivated and aspiring as a result of achieving good results.

In general **aspects of health and health related hygiene** did not feature prominently in qualitative or quantitative evidence as factors related to education outcomes.

Low parental education was found to be associated with girls' educational outcomes. This is in line with the international literature about education and the intergenerational transmission of educational disadvantage, but low parental education was not specifically cited by projects as a barrier to education.

No quantitative evidence was available to link **mobility and migration** with poor education outcomes controlling for other factors, although reading levels in some pastoralist contexts were low (see [Section 3.1.2](#)). However, IDI respondents did mention migration and resettlement as causes of poor outcomes through the disruption of enrolment and attendance. These issues are likely to require more detailed analysis of the specific pathways between economic factors and mobility and how these interact with coping strategies.

4.2.3 Summary of baseline findings on barriers to girls' education

We have discussed the most salient barriers to girls' education based on evidence from multivariate regression analysis; and we have discussed potential barriers one by one based on the triangulation of evidence from the EM's qualitative and quantitative research. Our key findings from the multivariate models discussed in [Section 4.2.1](#) are summarised in [Table 43](#) below. This summary Table shows the statistical significance of associations that we found across the SCW (or in the countries covered by the school-based assessment), and in the relevant subset of countries where projects assumed the relevant barriers. We also show whether the qualitative evidence supported the assumptions at the SCW level.

When comparing the EM evidence with the projects' initial assumptions about barriers, the following key findings emerge:

- The individual barriers most frequently cited by projects were **poverty and negative attitudes towards girls' education** – cited by eleven projects each. These are equally the barriers most strongly evidenced by the EM's baseline research.

- Our quantitative findings suggest that **poverty**, in its various dimensions, affects girls' enrolment, attendance and learning. In addition, poverty was one of the most frequently mentioned barriers in the qualitative research, where it was often mentioned in parallel with issues relating to the **cost of schooling**.
- It appears that **negative attitudes towards girls' education** affect decisions about enrolment and conditions that support girls' learning. To what extent and how they affect attendance requires further research at the midline stage of the evaluation.
- Projects mentioned **various school-based factors** as barriers to girls' education. While the quantitative evidence showed some significant associations between girls' learning and issues such as lack of adequate facilities, class size or the use of corporal punishment, the role of individual school-based factors is difficult to capture statistically as they each contribute only a small share to explaining the observed variance in learning and tend to be interrelated. The qualitative evidence provides more nuanced insights into the barriers facing girls (and boys) at school and suggests that a general under-resourcing of education is a root cause for many of these barriers.
- In term of personal factors, more than one third of projects assumed that **early pregnancy** (8 projects) and **early or forced marriage** (6 projects) were barriers to girls' education. While we could not assess these assumptions statistically, there was strong qualitative evidence that these barriers are linked to low attendance and school drop-out.

It has become clear that many of the barriers discussed above are **interrelated and driven by a common set of structural problems**, including a lack of resources in households, communities, schools and government; as well as social norms, beliefs and attitudes that de-prioritise education (especially for older girls) compared to other options such as employment and marriage. Sustainability and leverage are a key GEC outcomes in addition to being in school and learning, and it is important that projects distinguish between symptomatic barriers on the one hand and structural drivers on the other hand, in order to achieve sustainable impact.

It is important to note that the findings discussed in this section refer to the SCW as a whole. Both the prevalence and salience of barriers tends to vary by context and issues may be salient in one project area, even though they do not emerge as key barriers across the window as a whole. We have calculated the same regression models presented in [Section 4.2.1](#) for each SCW country and these tables are included in [Annex C](#). The project briefs in [Annex E](#) provide a detailed discussion of qualitative findings on potential barriers in each project area. Finally, to achieve a more comprehensive picture of the structural drivers behind educational barriers and educational outcomes, we need to consider the political, economic, social, environmental and legislative context in GEC countries. In [Annex A](#) we provide a contextual background analysis for four selected SCW countries, namely Afghanistan, Kenya, Mozambique and Sierra Leone.

Table 43: Summary of findings on assumed barriers to girls' education based on EM evidence

EM evidence of assumed barriers	Number of projects assuming this barrier	EM quantitative evidence of a significant association between the potential barrier and the outcome of interest (controlling for other potential barriers)						EM qualitative evidence
		Across the SCW			Only countries where barrier was assumed			Across the SCW
Potential barrier assumed by SCW projects		Enrol.	Attend.	Learn.	Enrol.	Attend.	Learn.	Any outcome
ECONOMIC FACTORS	15							
Poverty	11	***	*	***	***	**	***	✓
Cost of school (fees, books, uniforms, etc.)	9			†				✓
Domestic chores and livelihood activities	8	***		***	***		*	✓
Other economic factors	1	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
SCHOOL BASED FACTORS	15							
Poor quality of education and teaching	8		**	***			*	✓
Long distance to school	7	†						✓
Lack of adequate facilities	7	†		*				✓
Inadequately trained teachers	7							✓
Inadequate teaching or learning materials	5							✓
Under resourcing (class size)	4			**				✓
Lack of female teachers	4			*				
Lack of adequate sanitation facilities	3							
Availability of schools	3							
Teachers treat boys and girls differently	3							
Teacher absenteeism	2							✓
Shortage of teachers	2							✓
Corporal punishment	2			*				
Language of instruction not mother tongue	2	***			†			
Poor school management	2	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Poor governance of girls' education	2	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
Other school based factors	9	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
ATTITUDES AND SUPPORT	13							
Negative attitudes towards girls' education	11	***	†	***	***	*	***	✓
Lack of family support and parental involvement girls' education	5	***			†			
Negative perceptions of the relevance of education	2	***	*		**	†		✓
Social exclusion	1	***		*				
VIOLENCE AND SAFETY	12							
Insecurity and fear of violence	7							✓
Lack of safety or harassment at school	4				***	*		✓
Sexual harassment and violence	4	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
Unsafe journey to school	1		*					✓
PERSONAL FACTORS	11							
Early pregnancy	8	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
Early or forced marriage	7	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
Issues around general and sexual health	6							
Issues around disability	3	†	†					
Lack of motivation, confidence, aspirations	2		*	**				
UNEXPECTED FACTORS	0							
Low levels of education in family	0	***		***	***		*	

Note: Asterisks are used to indicate levels of statistical significance: *** indicates a p-value below 0.001; ** indicates a p-value below 0.01; and * indicates a p-value below 0.05. † indicates a marginal value of significance of p < 0.1. Barriers with too low prevalence were excluded from the table. ● indicates that no evidence was available to assess this barrier.

The school-based assessment was only carried out in four countries, namely DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sierra Leone. It was therefore not possible to assess relevant school-based barriers specifically for those projects that assumed them, as some of these project areas may not have been covered by the school-based assessment. Therefore the relevant cells in the table are greyed out.

5 Project Targeting and Changes to Project Design

5.1 Does the evidence support project targeting?

5.1.1 How have the projects defined marginalisation (social and educational)?

As a challenge fund, the GEC was designed to support projects that are “able to demonstrate new and effective ways to expand education opportunities to marginalised girls”.³⁰ In the GEC business case, marginalised girls are broadly defined as “those [...] who have not been enrolled or dropped out from school or [are] in danger of doing so (whether living in slums, remote areas, ethnic/religious minorities, girls with disabilities, girls who become pregnant, [or] girls affected by conflict)”.³¹ All projects were encouraged to focus on the girls who are most vulnerable and/or have the greatest educational needs within their communities or countries. On this basis, projects were invited to come forward with their own definitions of marginalisation. The projects then identified different drivers of marginalisation, educational barriers, and population sub-groups affected (see [Table 44](#), below).

In the course of developing their theories of change, all projects formulated assumptions about the factors that shape girls’ education in the targeted areas. On the one hand, projects identified educational *barriers* that can have an almost universal influence on girls within a given community or school. These include, for example: seasonal poverty; long distance to the next secondary school; corporal punishment in school; or a lack of trained teachers.

In addition, projects identified certain population *sub-groups* that are particularly affected by educational barriers or bundles of barriers due to girls being socially marginalised in terms of their livelihoods and/or status within society. For example, Relief International (Somalia) is targeting young mothers, disabled girls and forcefully displaced girls (among others), assuming that these groups face particular barriers to education.

There tends to be an element of overlap between the definition of barriers and population sub-groups. In [Section 4](#) we have seen that different dimensions of poverty act as barriers to girls’ education, and many projects have simply defined “the poor” as their target group. Similarly, we have treated disability as a barrier to girls’ education, but girls affected by disability are also a population sub-group facing a distinctive bundle of barriers related to their disability (e.g. restricted mobility; dependence on learning aids; potential experience of social exclusion or stigma; elevated risk of being victim of abuse) that may affect their education. In this section, we have tried to distinguish between definitions of marginalisation that focus on girls’ affected by social barriers to education such as poverty or disability; and definitions of marginalisation that focus on the girls’ educational situation. In the first case, we use the term ‘socially defined marginalisation’. In the latter case we use the term ‘educational marginalisation’. Finally, there are projects that use an even wider definition of marginalisation by considering that all girls living in a geographic area are affected by significant social or educational marginalisation. [Table 44](#) provides an overview of projects’ definitions of marginalisation along these lines.

A couple of projects had not clearly articulated their understanding of marginalisation; although some have listed possible barriers to girls’ education (see the project profiles in [Annexes D1-D15](#)).

³⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/girls-education-challenge#girls-education-challenge--the-portfolio-of-projects>

³¹ DFID (2012), Girls’ Education Challenge, Business Case Version 4, June 2012, p. 30.

Table 44: Conceptual approaches to defining marginalisation and projects' actual definitions

Approaches to defining marginalisation	Actual definitions of marginalisation adopted by SCW Projects
Focussing primarily on the socially marginalised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ChildHope (Ethiopia) defines marginalised girls as those being affected by a number of social phenomena: early or forced marriage; unpaid/low paid domestic labour; uninformed migration; street-involvement; sexual exploitation; and/or low levels of parental education. • Relief International (Somalia) defines marginalised girls as those belonging to any of the following population sub-groups: orphans; disabled; young mothers; survivors of violence; members of the urban poor; rural and displaced populations. • PLAN International (Sierra Leone) defines as marginalised those girls who are: poor; living in rural areas; and who have a disability.
Focussing primarily on the educationally marginalised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save the Children (Mozambique) defines marginalised girls as those coming from poor households, who have dropped out of school; who are at risk of dropping out of school; or who have never enrolled in school.
Focussing on both the educationally and socially marginalised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) defines as socially marginalised girls who: are orphans; affected by disability; and/or receiving any form of welfare. They define as educationally marginalised girls who have graduated from primary school but not transitioned to secondary school, or who are at risk of dropping out of secondary school. • BRAC (Sierra Leone) defines girls as marginalised if they are out of school; have low social or emotional skills; and/or live in an environment where girls' education is not valued.
Focussing primarily on socially marginalisation by geographic area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTED (Afghanistan) considers that all girls living in its target areas in Northern Afghanistan can be considered marginalised by nature of their difficult environment. • Save the Children (Ethiopia) identifies girls living in pastoralist communities in the Afar region as marginalised due to their lifestyle. • WUSC (Kenya) focus on girls living in refugee camps and consider them marginalised because they are people who have been displaced from their homes living in relative poverty. • CfBT (Kenya) identifies marginalised girls as those living in rural, less developed parts of Kenya (i.e. in arid and semi-arid lands communities in Turkana, Samburu and Kilifi) or those living in slums (i.e. in Nairobi). • The Aga Khan Foundation (Afghanistan) is targeting girls in rural parts of Afghanistan, as they consider these areas most marginalised in terms of access to education. • CARE (Somalia) is targeting girls in poor households in five rural regions which it considers to be particularly marginalised. • Initially, World Vision (Zimbabwe) was targeting girls who live in rural parts of Zimbabwe which it considers particularly marginalised. It developed a more detailed assessment of marginalisation after baseline data collection.
Not defined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRC (DRC) has not provided a clear definition of marginalisation, although they have listed a set of barriers to girls' education. • BRAC (Afghanistan) have not specifically detailed their concept of marginalisation.

5.1.2 How have the projects defined their target groups (project beneficiaries)?

Based on their definition of marginalisation SCW projects identified specific contexts and groups of girls to target through their interventions. Table 45 provides an overview of each project's primary target groups, as set out in their full project proposal. When reviewing the project proposals, we aimed to distinguish primary target groups from other groups that projects mentioned as being marginalised and in need of support but did not specifically target.

Table 45: Project targeting – Primary target group(s) by SCW project

Baseline	Number of projects using this definition	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
		BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
		Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
School Age																
Lower primary	12		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Upper primary	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lower secondary	11	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Upper secondary	2		✓												✓	
Social Groups																
Disabled girls	3			✓									✓	✓		
Pastoralist girls	2					✓								✓		
Displaced girls	3								✓	✓					✓	
Remote girls (Rural)	6			✓					✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Slum-dwellers	2													✓	✓	
Other girls ¹	4	✓									✓		✓	✓		
Child labourers	1										✓					
Poor/Hunger	6			✓			✓	✓	✓						✓	✓
Young mothers/expecting	1													✓		
Street Children	1										✓					
Educational Sub-groups																
OOS girls ²	9	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Girls dropped out ³	4		✓				✓					✓		✓		
At risk of dropout	6			✓		✓	✓			✓		✓		✓		
At risk of poor learning	2								✓					✓		
Girls In-school	9	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Key																
1: "Other girls" include a number of different sub-groups such as girls affected by early marriage, migration, or domestic labour, teenage mothers or girls who have been victims of sexual abuse.																
2: "OOS girls" refers to out-of-school girls (that is girls who are not currently enrolled).																
3: "Girls dropped out" refers to girls who were enrolled in the past but de-enrolled prematurely.																

All SCW projects, with the exception of Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe), were targeting girls of primary school age (or grade level), while 11 out of 15 projects also targeted girls of lower secondary age. Only two projects – BRAC (Afghanistan) and Relief International (Somalia) – planned to engage girls of upper secondary school age. This means that younger girls (aged 5-12) are represented more strongly among the GEC SCW's targeted groups of girls, than older girls who are in upper secondary school (or have the equivalent age without actually being enrolled).

In terms of the current educational situation of marginalised girls, nine projects primarily targeted out-of-school girls – that is girls who are not currently enrolled in school. BRAC (Afghanistan) is the only project to focus exclusively

on out-of-school girls. Six projects planned to primarily target girls who are enrolled in school but who were described as being at risk of dropping out, and two targeted girls who were described as being at risk of achieving poor learning outcomes.

Most projects did not only define educational target groups, but also named specific social groups or geographic areas, which are listed in [Table 45](#). The primary target group most commonly mentioned in the projects' full proposal were girls living in poverty or suffering from hunger and the least often mentioned were street-involved girls and young mothers, and child labourers. For those projects that had not defined their understanding of marginalisation the target groups tended to be difficult to establish.

Identification of primary project target groups during the project's baseline data collection

In their baseline studies, projects were encouraged to collect data that is representative of their target group(s), as well as of a control group of marginalised girls, who will not receive the intervention but are similar in other relevant respects. In the SCW, projects have achieved the representation of target girls to varying degrees.

In some project areas, target girls are relatively heterogeneous. WUSC (Kenya) for instance, engages girls in the slums of Nairobi, as well as in arid and semi-arid rural areas. Girls who live in different contexts or belong to different sub-populations are likely to face educational barriers of different types and degrees. They may also have different levels of exposure to the project interventions. Projects were therefore encouraged to collect data from a population that is sufficiently large and representative of the target population(s) so that results can be disaggregated to the level of relevant sub-groups or contexts later on. This is going to be crucial at later stages of the evaluation in measuring and understanding the different type and scale of effects on different types of marginalised groups.

Four SCW projects used a socio-economic index to identify marginalised girls within their population samples. During their baseline data collection, ChildHope (Ethiopia), World Vision (Zimbabwe), Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) and PLAN (Sierra Leone) asked surveyed girls questions that aimed to identify their level of marginalisation or poverty relative to the other girls in the sample or other girls in the country.

According to their baseline reports, projects sampled between 848 households (ACTED Afghanistan) and roughly 3,400 (IRC, DRC) households with the exception of Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe), which did not survey households and instead primarily surveyed in schools. A majority obtained sample sizes of between 1,000 and 3,000 respondents. All projects sampled respondents in control areas in addition to those in the treatment areas. Some projects carried out additional surveys or learning assessments in schools or among specific target groups.

In their baseline reports, projects provided relatively little information on the representation of sub-groups in their samples. PLAN (Sierra Leone) indicated that they surveyed 224 disabled girls (out of which 81 were physically disabled) and about 650 girls who they identified as marginalised based on their marginalisation index. These girls were either disabled, lived in rural areas or in poverty (or were subject to a combination of the three factors). World Vision (Zimbabwe) and Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) also identified disabled girls in their sample, as well as orphans, poor girls and other specific target groups. [Table 46](#) (below) provides a detailed breakdown of the sub-samples that projects achieved during their baseline research.

Table 46: Composition of project sample sizes, by project and population sub-groups

Composition of project samples	Total	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
		BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACT	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
		Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Number targeted	448718	19577	66150	15669	54194	11095	19244	132577	27203	40465	9699	9432	40481	59724	24255	16802
Number sampled	24368	3120 ⁴	1280	1400	3434	2700	1437	5872 ⁵	1332	1078	1950	848	2850	2295	1897	3109
Treatment	16332	1040	640	1163	1726	1350	776	3562	1205	1078	975	545	1900	1650	1260	1809
Control	10475	1040	640	237	1708	1350	661	2310	127	0	975	303	950	645	637	1300
School Age																
Lower primary	1577				850		697			495			727		1406	1016
Upper primary	3598			125	2547		905			148			926		883	288
Lower secondary	6250	1803		1208			173	2880		64			359		1107	
Upper secondary	195	195								13						
Social Groups																
Disabled girls	1577		1280													
Pastoralist girls	6250			224				111					257			
Displaced girls	195							1809					561			
Remote girls (Rural)	1280					2700	1149								1897	549
Slum-dwellers																
Other girls ¹	592			651												
Child labourers	2370															
Poor/Hunger	6295			651			454	1987					388			
Young mothers/expecting																
Street Children	1834						1956			717						
Educational Sub-groups																
OOS girls ²	3480			651			454	1987					388			
Girls dropped out ³																
At risk of dropout																
At risk of poor learning																
Girls In-school	2673						1956			717						
Key																
1: "Other girls" include a number of different sub-groups such as girls affected by early marriage, migration, or domestic labour, teenage mothers or girls who have been victims of sexual abuse.																
2: "OOS girls" refers to out-of-school girls (that is girls who are not currently enrolled).																
3: "Girls dropped out" refers to girls who were enrolled in the past but de-enrolled prematurely.																
4: BRAC (Sierra Leone) set out to sample 2080 girls eligible for Community Girls' Schools (1040 each in intervention and control areas), as well as 1040 non-eligible girls. In addition, they also sampled girls in government schools but those sample sizes are not included above.																
5: The figures for Camfed contain the achieved samples for marginalised girls (in school) and out-of school girls in the intervention and comparison group, but not in non-GEC partner areas in Zimbabwe.																

Identification of project target groups in the EM's baseline data

The EM conducted 400 household surveys in each of the project target areas to complement the projects' baseline research and to collect data that could easily be harmonised at the fund level. These household surveys followed a sampling plan that aimed to represent the general population in these areas, rather than capturing more specific groups targeted by projects (with the exception of data collection in Camfed's project areas in Tanzania and Zimbabwe. This means that the populations surveyed by the EM enumerators do not necessarily correspond to sub-groups being targeted by projects; instead they represent the general population in the communities being targeted by the project. It is important to note these differences in the composition of the samples when comparing findings between project and EM data. Table 47 provides a detailed breakdown of the Evaluation Manager samples achieved during the baseline research.

Table 47: Composition of EM samples, by project and population sub-group

Baseline	Number of projects using this definition	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
		BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
		Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Number sampled	6324	376	400	395	384	377	410	681	423	399	363	400	414	481	404	417
School Age																
< 6	505	33	25	34	26	52	18	26	48	17	31	22	37	67	33	36
6-8	1708	107	111	134	82	129	112	84	134	89	87	117	105	168	128	121
9-11	1589	71	98	88	107	96	148	105	95	120	109	131	126	124	88	83
12-13	1093	57	90	57	57	46	77	128	68	98	87	68	75	56	66	63
14-15	1063	59	76	37	59	54	54	217	59	75	49	62	71	53	58	80
16-19	120							120								
Social Groups																
Disabled girls	576	47	9	36	29	16	60	115	48	14	18	6	62	66	23	27
Orphan girls ¹	673	32	10	34	31	21	43	186	59	5	38	8	103	47	23	33
Pastoralist girls	405	0	1	1	14	377	5	1	0	2	3	0	1	0	0	0
Displaced girls	3309	207	70	183	230	157	330	440	405	44	76	20	224	414	252	257
Remote girls (Rural) ²	684	1	0	0	0	66	99	0	87	0	12	0	0	70	95	254
Slum-dwellers ²	542	14	0	0	70	0	0	1	10	0	18	0	0	405	24	0
Other girls ³		n/a														
Child labourers	638	84	8	84	15	26	55	120	9	20	27	26	96	40	14	14
Poor/Hunger	3573	164	147	236	254	293	188	405	341	128	227	195	283	288	216	208
Disadvantaged caste/ethnic minority	0															
Affected by HIV/AIDS	2310	200	93	169	186	120	159	304	126	68	132	19	192	192	189	161
Young mothers/expecting	742	94	22	154	32	9	78	44	26	63	6	87	24	23	34	46
Street Children		n/a														
Educational Sub-groups																
OOS girls ⁴	1450	64	120	70	62	151	25	81	132	122	67	92	29	36	190	209
Never enrolled girls	1139	51	103	54	36	122	11	18	120	109	52	88	10	19	158	188
In-school girls	4871	312	280	325	321	226	384	600	290	277	296	308	385	445	214	208
Key																
1: Including half-orphans.																
2: Indicative figures based on extrapolated population density.																
3: "Other girls" include a number of different sub-groups such as girls affected by early marriage, migration, or domestic labour, teenage mothers or girls who have been victims of sexual abuse.																
4: "OOS girls" refers to out-of-school girls (that is girls who are not currently enrolled).																

5.2 Has the evidence influenced project intervention design and targeting?

In this section we summarise the projects' baseline findings and review whether projects have changed their target groups, outcome targets or project designs (e.g. intervention activities), in response to their baseline research findings. It is important to note that the EM had limited information on the project design changes that took place after the baseline research. Project design changes were discussed between the FM and the SCW projects, and the EM used the information available for the purpose of this baseline research.

Summary of projects' baseline findings on educational barriers

In addition to evidence on outcome levels, projects also provided evidence about the prevalence of expected barriers to education. This evidence is compiled and presented in the project profiles (see [Annexes D1-D15](#)). As shown in [Table 48](#), every project found baseline evidence to support at least some of its assumptions about barriers to girls' education, although the reported intensity of the barriers tended to vary across projects. Five projects found evidence that challenged some of their assumptions about barriers to girls' education. This may have prompted these projects to review their theories of change and consider adjusting their definition of target groups or their intervention design in order to address the most relevant barriers in the most effective possible way.

Table 48: Summary of project evidence on expected barriers (from baseline reports), by barrier category

Project baseline evidence – Barriers	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Economic factors															
Poverty	•	✓	✓+	✓				✓	✓		•	✓	✓	✓	✓
Costs	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Duties			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓
School based factors															
Teaching	?	+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓+	?	•	•
Supply	✓	✓	✓		•	✓	?	✓+	✓				✓	✓+	✓
Facilities					✓	✓		✓+			✓	?	✓	✓	✓
Governance	•		?					✓							
Attitudes and support in the family and community															
Attitudes		✓	✓	?	•	✓	✓		✓	?		?	✓		?
Lack of family support		✓		•					✓				✓	✓	
Relevance of education			✓										✓		✓
Exclusion				✓											
Violence and safety															
Insecurity/violence		✓		✓			•	✓	✓		✓			?	
Harassment at school	✓				✓					✓		?			
Sexual harassment			✓		✓									•	•
Unsafe journey to school														•	
Personal factors															
Early pregnancy	•		✓		✓		?					✓	?	+	•
Early marriage		?	•			✓	✓					✓		✓	✓
Health	•		✓	•				✓					+		✓
Disability	•		✓										•		
Motivation			✓					•						✓	✓

Key	Type of evidence in relation to barriers
✓	Barriers found and reported: Assumed barriers were mentioned by a relatively high number of respondents compared to respondents in other projects. Barriers found and reported are marked with '✓'.
✦	Barriers not found: Assumed barriers were mentioned by a relatively low number of respondents compared to respondents in other IW projects. Barriers not found are marked with '✦'.
✓✦	Mixed evidence: There was mixed evidence about a barrier.
?	Ambiguous evidence: Evidence reported does not have a clear interpretation.
•	Barriers not reported: Barriers were assumed but not reported/ discussed/ measured by the project. Missing evidence is marked with '•'.
	Non Applicable: Barriers neither assumed nor reported are marked in Grey .

Intervention Opportunities

All projects were required to report on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation (that is levels on outcome indicators), and encouraged to analyse barriers to education. In addition, some projects also reported on existing opportunities for their planned interventions to take place in the target communities. For example, some projects verified that textbooks are actually in short supply or that communities have not yet been exposed to community radio messages on girls' education. [Table 49](#) (below) provides an overview of the broad intervention types that projects set out to implement according to their full proposal application. Grey cells indicate that a project was not planning an intervention of the given type. The table further indicates whether the baseline reports contained evidence that either challenged or supported the assumption that there was an opportunity for these interventions.

Table 49: Evidence reported on opportunities for planned project interventions

Intervention types and baseline evidence	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CiBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Access			✓										•		
Capacity	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
Community interventions	✓	✦	✓	✓	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✦	✓	✓	✦	•
Governance			✓		✓	•			•	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning support				✓	✓	•	✓	✓	•	✓	✓			✦	✓
Material Support	•	✓	✓	✓		•	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe-spaces			✓✦		✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teaching inputs	•	✦	✓	•	✓	•	✓	✓	•	✦	✓		•	✓	✓
Female Voice			✓						✓	•	✓			•	
Key	Type of evidence in relation to intervention activities														
✓	Evidenced intervention activities: Evidence was reported by the project which is supporting proposed project intervention activities. Evidenced intervention activities are marked with '✓'.														
✦	Challenged intervention activities: Evidence was reported by the project which is challenging proposed project intervention activities. Challenged intervention activities are marked with '✦'.														
✓✦	Mixed evidence: There was mixed evidence about the need for this intervention.														
•	Missing evidence: Opportunities for intervention activities was not discussed by the project. Missing evidence is marked with '•'.														
	Non Applicable: Intervention activities not planned by the project are marked in Grey .														

For the majority of projects, baseline evidence was broadly supportive in the sense that it indicated clear opportunities for the proposed interventions. In some cases, however, projects found evidence suggesting that some of their planned interventions may not be as relevant as they originally anticipated:

- In the case of two projects (BRAC Afghanistan and ChildHope Ethiopia) the baseline evidence challenged their intention to invest in the improvement of teaching inputs;

- In the case of BRAC (Afghanistan), ACTED (Afghanistan) and Relief International (Sierra Leone) the baseline evidence suggested that target communities were already relatively supportive of girls’ education and that there may be less need for community interventions than originally anticipated;
- Relief International (Somalia) found that girls could already access supplementary lessons if they missed school due to menstruation, which suggests that additional learning support may be needed less than expected; and
- PLAN (Sierra Leone) found evidence that both supported and challenged their assumption that it would be worthwhile to generate safe spaces in school.

In response to these findings, projects may have wanted or needed to adjust their intervention design, to improve the likelihood of generating a measurable impact in the target communities within the lifetime of the project.

Revisions to the project design

A primary purpose of the projects’ baseline research was to test assumptions about degrees and types of marginalisation, barriers to girls’ education, and the rationale and opportunities for implementing planned interventions. The results of these tests should enable projects to adjust their outcome targets, the composition of their target groups or the intervention design before the start of project implementation. Table 50 (below) summarises the challenges that projects have encountered with respect to their assumptions about outcome levels, barriers and interventions, as a result of the baseline analysis. The table further indicates whether a project has made any changes or adjustments to the definition of their target groups, their outcome targets, or their intervention design.

Projects would most obviously adjust their **targets for changes in outcomes** on the basis of evidence about baseline levels of educational marginalisation, or because of evidence that certain barriers were more prevalent or of greater relative importance than expected. As shown in Table 50 most projects made adjustments to their outcome targets, even though only World Vision found evidence on baseline outcomes that clearly challenged GEC programme assumptions about educational marginalisation (in terms of enrolment).

Table 50: Summary of challenging findings and adjustments to the intervention design, by project

Baseline	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Evidence challenges assumption about:															
Barriers	✓?	✓+	✓+	✓?	✓•	✓•	✓?	✓+	✓?	✓?	✓•	✓+	✓?	✓+	✓•
Interventions		+								+	+			+	
Project made adjustments to:															
Target groups	✓		✓					✓			✓	✓			
Outcome targets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Intervention design						✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	

Projects may have wanted to adjust their target population on the basis of evidence about marginalisation for either of the following reasons:

- Because a sub-group was found to be more or less marginalised than expected; or
- Because evidence about expected barriers was different than expected (for example the assumed barrier that the intervention targets is not unique to a sub-group).

A small number of other projects decided to adjust their target population based on the evidence collected at baseline, as indicated in Table 50, as summarised below:

- World Vision (Zimbabwe) found enrolment rates at baseline that were higher than expected and as a result made relevant changes to their target group by focusing more strongly on girls who are at risk of dropping out of school. World Vision (Zimbabwe) also decided to conduct further research about orphans and girls affected by migration. These are groups that also emerged as educationally marginalised from the EM’s

qualitative research in the World Vision (Zimbabwe) target areas. In the case of World Vision, it seems that baseline evidence has been used to adjust the composition of their target population;

- PLAN (Sierra Leone) chose to drop girls in grade 6 from their target group, although they did not find any specific evidence suggesting that girls in this grade are not educationally marginalised;
- WUSC (Kenya) found that primary school girls demonstrated better learning and attendance than had been expected. They adjusted the composition of their target group to support a larger percentage of lower secondary school girls, many of whom demonstrated low levels of attendance and learning.

One finding that emerged from the EM's qualitative research was that girls with disabilities were not frequently described as being educationally marginalised. It is not entirely clear whether projects targeting this group of girls gained a similar insight, but none of the projects decided to stop targeting girls with disabilities following the baseline research.

Based on a review of the baseline evidence, projects may decide to change their intervention type or mix of interventions due to one of the following baseline findings:

- The evidence about one or several educational barriers contradicts assumptions about the way in which the intervention should support marginalised girls (for example, the barrier is not present in the population or operates in a different way or is less important than another barrier);
- The evidence about outcomes levels in the target groups contradicts assumptions about the educational needs of the groups of girls that are targeted (for example, the project finds that they need to help a larger group or less disadvantaged girls rather than a small group of very disadvantaged girls or vice versa); and
- The evidence about intervention opportunities suggests that there is no specific need for the planned intervention type.

As shown in [Table 50](#) four projects found baseline evidence that challenged their assumption about existing opportunities for some of their planned activities. Only one of these projects, Relief International, adjusted their intervention design in order to account (among other things) for the finding that community attitudes towards girls' education were more positive than expected at baseline. WUSC (Kenya), CfBT (Kenya), World Vision (Zimbabwe) and STC (Mozambique) also made changes to their intervention design after baseline even though they did not find any evidence that clearly challenged their assumptions about intervention opportunities.

Summary: Has the baseline evidence influenced project targeting and project intervention design?

Projects' reported baseline evidence was [mostly supportive](#) of projects' planned interventions and project design. Based on a review of the evidence from the baseline research, most projects made adjustments to their [outcome targets](#) even though the outcome levels reported in project baseline reports rarely demonstrated levels that challenged GEC programme assumptions – this was though contrary to some of the findings on outcomes that emerged from the EM's re-analysis of project data and the analysis of EM primary data. All projects found evidence that supported at least some of their [assumptions about barriers](#) to girls' education, but five also found some challenging evidence. Five projects made changes to their proposed [intervention activities](#), responding in part to challenging findings about expected barriers or intervention opportunities. Four projects found challenging evidence but did not make any adjustments, which may potentially reduce the opportunity for generating the required changes to these outcome levels and measuring the change that does occur. It is anticipated that more evidence will emerge about target groups and barriers as the GEC progresses, some of which will require longitudinal data to fully understand and evaluate.

5.3 Does the evidence support effective project evaluation?

5.3.1 Is the project evidence-base representative and reliable?

#1 Background

#1.1 Common framework for evaluating impact across 15 project areas

The GEC Evaluation Strategy encourages the **harmonisation of data collection approaches and tools across the SCW projects to develop a common framework for evaluation**, which would enable comparison across contexts and meta-analysis of project data across the window, while respecting differences in project approaches and contexts. As explained in [Section 1.3](#) the GEC evaluation strategy requires all SCW projects to design their M&E frameworks around a number of core elements, including an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design; a longitudinal household survey in both intervention and control areas; structured qualitative data collection; longitudinal tracking of a cohort of girls in school; and administration of a learning assessment (for details on projects' data collection activities during the GEC baseline see [Sections 2.2.1](#) and [2.3](#)).

#1.2 Key principles of measuring additionality in the GEC

The FM has provided mandatory methodological guidance for projects to measure additionality in improving key GEC outcomes (i.e. in learning and attendance):

- **Measuring attributable changes in learning outcomes:** SCW projects are required to carry out three subsequent learning assessments (at baseline, midline, and endline), either as part of the household survey or at school (or a mixture of both). The assessments must be undertaken for a cohort of girls that is being tracked throughout the projects' lifetime, and which is representative of the population of girls expected to benefit from the project, as well as girls in the control group. Additionality in learning will be measured at midline and endline as the additional achievement of girls in the intervention group in terms of their literacy and numeracy, over and above the increase achieved during the same period by girls in the control group (i.e. using a difference-in-difference methodology).

The EM will replicate this approach to assessing additionality in learning.

- **Measuring attributable change in attendance:** SCW projects are encouraged to measure attendance for a cohort of girls that will be tracked throughout the lifetime of the GEC, and that is representative of the target population in the intervention group and of girls in the control group. If they cannot measure attendance in a specific cohort, projects can measure attendance by selecting data from a random sample of intervention and control schools, covering the grades targeted by the intervention. Additionality will then be measured as the difference in pre-and post-intervention attendance rates in the intervention schools (i.e. the relevant grades) over and above the change that is observed in control schools.

The EM will not measure attendance at the school level, but based on the self-reported attendance data for a tracked cohort of girls, that is collected during the household survey.

In many cases, project evaluation designs and data collection approaches evolved during the baseline design process and in some instances it became necessary to carry out remedial data collection post baseline or to re-design certain elements of the data collection strategy. **Some projects have used evaluation designs or data collection approaches which diverged from the standard evaluation template** for reasons related to their intervention population, such as the need to adapt tools for girls with disabilities; or to practical limitations, such as the use of paper and pencil questionnaires in Afghanistan.

#1.3 Joint sampling approach

There is a strong degree of alignment between the household survey conducted by the projects and that conducted by the EM. The project and EM household surveys were carried out separately, but based on a jointly developed sampling frame in each project area. Projects initially developed a draft sampling framework to prepare for the randomisation of intervention and control areas. The sampling framework was then quality-assured by the EM and used to draw the samples for the project and EM household survey in the relevant project area. A more detailed overview of the role and responsibilities of projects and the EM in this process is provided in [Table 51](#).

Table 51: Division of responsibilities between projects and the EM in developing a joint sampling framework for the SCW household surveys

Project responsibilities	EM responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide intervention areas into districts of operation and create a community-level sampling frame for each district, consisting of a list of settlements or urban areas. • Stratify districts into intervention and control areas. • Propose a protocol for sampling a representative selection of households (or the nearest equivalent) within the sampling point, including, where appropriate screening and oversampling. • Propose a sample size that will provide estimates of intervention effects on girls with a level of statistical precision that is proportionate to the targets for attributable change in key outcomes set by the project. • Account for relevant characteristics of the population, such as the anticipated variation between localities, and of the necessary sampling approach. • The sample must be representative of the overall target population to allow for inference from samples to that population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality-assure the community-level sampling frames, sampling protocols and sample sizes proposed by the projects. • Specify a 'boost' to the project sample for purposes of cross-validation and data augmentation. • Draw an appropriate sample of sampling points from the sampling frames across relevant intervention and control areas. • Divide the selected sample of sampling points randomly (but not in equal proportions) between the EM and the projects for the implementation of the surveys.

The sample sizes proposed at the project level varied depending on: the size, characteristics and clustering of the target population; the nature of the interventions; and, most importantly, on the target effect sizes which the projects were seeking to achieve – the smaller the anticipated effect, the larger the sample size needed to be to demonstrate an effect with confidence. Every SCW project was required to document the power calculation formula used to calculate the sample size for the longitudinal household survey and these were reviewed by the FM and the EM during the quality assurance of projects' M&E frameworks to ensure that the sample sizes were appropriate (e.g. that they account for attrition, or design effects if a clustered sampling approach was used). As a rough indication, the EM recommended that projects sample at least 1200 girls. The actual sample sizes achieved by projects are shown in [Table 46](#), in [Section 5.1.2](#).

The EM-led surveys involve sample sizes of on average 400 households per project area and wave of data collection, with EGRA and EGMA tests administered to one girl per sampled household in both treatment and control groups. This average sample size was calculated based on the following assumptions: a target effect size of 0.2 standard deviations; target statistical power of 0.8; a +/- 7.5% confidence interval; an attrition rate of 0.9; and design effect of 2. This is a conservative estimate that anticipates a high level of intra-cluster correlation, but may be revised down if the evidence suggests otherwise.

The EM's samples were not primarily designed to measure a similar effect at a similar level of precision and level of statistical significance as the projects' larger datasets. However, it is anticipated that on average, the EM sample sizes will be sufficient to validate or invalidate the project-led survey findings. Additionally, these sample sizes shall be sufficient to inform a robust evaluation of impact at the programme level, which was the priority for the EM.

As the EM's complementary data collection was based on the sampling frame developed jointly with the projects, the EM has adopted the projects' definitions of intervention and control groups rather than using a separate evaluation design.

#2 Baseline Challenges

The baseline process for the SCW has been an extended, staggered process, as different projects proceeded at different speeds. Some projects completed baseline data collection relatively early and were able to quickly move on to implementation. In other cases, this process has been more protracted. After conducting baseline data collection, some projects identified, in conjunction with the Fund Manager, a shortfall in the data they gathered,

either in terms of sample size or representativeness. This process has led to some re-sampling and re-designs of evaluation strategies, baseline data collection approaches, and tools.

SCW projects faced a diverse set of difficulties while conducting baseline data collection, issues both in and out of their control, which have been described in project baseline reports. From these reports, the most significant research challenges, experienced by around half of the projects across all or most regions, were: an inability to achieve full sample size; an inability to obtain reliable administrative data (particularly on attendance); and difficulties in survey logistics owing to travel distances or delays.

Several projects noted respondent fatigue during the household survey due to the length of the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire template was developed by the EM with a view to collecting information on a range of contextual factors, including poverty, violence, social cohesion, health and disability, to inform a thorough assessment of potential barriers to girls' education at baseline. In order to facilitate the harmonisation and aggregation of data across the SCW, all projects were required to use this EM template, propose adaptations if required, and to add context-specific questions where appropriate. While there was a clear rationale for maintaining a relatively comprehensive standard survey template, we recognise that there is a trade-off with regards to the burden placed on respondents. The EM will therefore seek to provide a shorter questionnaire for data collection at midline and endline.

Baseline Evidence

Even with perfect delivery of the M&E plans agreed with the EM and FM there was likely to be some imbalances or unrepresentativeness in the baseline data collected by projects, which might require remedial data collection activity. The emergence of issues and challenges to evaluation prospects were to be expected, given: the number of SCW projects; the challenging contexts in which they are working; and practical constraints to sampling such as adverse circumstances in the field or a lack of background knowledge at the time of designing the sampling frame. In most cases, projects overcame or mitigated these challenges. In some cases, however, issues appear to still be unresolved, either because these concerns have not been addressed by projects or because they were not discussed fully in project baseline reports.

Some issues were raised during the EM and FM's review of project baseline reports with regard to a lack of detailed data analysis or of a failure to make use of qualitative data to support analysis. These issues, combined with the often incomplete documentation of project data and the variety of sampling approaches make it more difficult to assess whether the evidence base for midline and endline is likely to be robust for every project.

#3 Representativeness

#3.1 Concerns relating to achieved samples

One aspect of the representativeness of baseline data involves the data's capacity to reliably identify target groups within the overall population. A number of projects appeared to have had some difficulties in identifying and articulating their target groups within their project areas. **Some projects faced challenges in fulfilling their intended sampling approach.** Where this affected primarily the size of the achieved sample we can expect a decrease in statistical precision but not necessarily in the representativeness of the data:

- **PLAN (Sierra Leone)** did not achieve the planned sample size and some data within household surveys was missing;
- **Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe)** reported difficulties achieving the full sample size, particularly for out-of-school girls; it is unclear to what extent an external evaluator was involved in preparing the baseline report;
- **CfBT (Kenya)** reported difficulties achieving the planned sample size and have conducted a boost survey to gather more data;
- **ACTED (Afghanistan)** reported challenges to randomly selecting households due to the importance of first meeting the village elder and explaining the work before finding people to survey; and
- **CARE (Somalia)** had to carry out a re-sampling among their initial sample of respondents because households from Puntland were found to be highly over-represented due to enumeration errors. This led to a substantial loss in the number of observations.

However, some project baseline data was imbalanced relative to the planned sample, such as World Vision (Zimbabwe) who reported difficulties achieving their full sample size for out-of-school girls.

#3.2 Concerns relating to baseline attendance records

Another issue potentially affecting the representativeness of baseline evidence is the reliability or quality of the data. A number of projects raised **concerns about the baseline attendance records** gathered from schools. These included BRAC (Afghanistan), ACTED (Afghanistan), Save the Children (Ethiopia), WUSC (Kenya), Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe) and PLAN (Sierra Leone). Some specific issues arose regarding the quality and completeness of data and with data processing, of which examples include:

- **BRAC (Sierra Leone)** did not describe data verification procedures;
- **Save the Children (Ethiopia)** reported that attendance data was not fully collected during baseline;
- **BRAC (Afghanistan)** did not collect attendance data at baseline and had to commit to doing so through on-going monitoring. The literacy assessment conducted lacked a timing component for reading fluency and was subject to scores bunching together for some age groups;
- **CfBT (Kenya)**, **WUSC (Kenya)** and **Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe)** initially did not gather all of the data required;
- **BRAC (Afghanistan)**, **IRC (DRC)**, **Save the Children (Ethiopia)**, **BRAC (Sierra Leone)** and **Camfed (Tanzania/Zimbabwe)** reported issues with data processing or analysis;
- **Relief International (Somalia)** found that school-based enrolment and attendance records were often incomplete; and where they were available, they often lack credibility because they showed perfect or near perfect attendance; and
- **CARE (Somalia)** reported difficulties with establishing linkages between girls surveyed in the households and the attendance records found during school visits.

Following the end of the baseline research, some of these issues have been addressed through remedial data collection activities. This process was negotiated with the FM on the basis of seeking to develop data which has a reasonable prospect of evidencing PbR requirements for project impact evaluation. The EM has provided input in the form of advice and guidance, although a number of the issues involved are specific to PbR requirements rather than to the broader GEC evaluation process. In addition, projects will carry out at least three unannounced spot-checks per year (one of which is to be conducted by the external evaluator) to cross-check and triangulate attendance data from school registries and improve the reliability of their attendance measures.

#3.3 Concerns relating to control matching

Another key area in terms of the representativeness of baseline data collection concerns the extent to which the control group is representative (or matched) to the intervention population. Some projects have noted issues at baseline or had questions raised about their control samples during baseline review:

- **ChildHope (Ethiopia)** reported some significant differences between treatment and control groups in their baseline report;
- **Save the Children (Ethiopia)** identified some differences between groups in terms of living conditions and enrolment rates, with control areas more disadvantaged than intervention areas. Contamination between treatment and control groups was another issue which has been mitigated by selecting new control groups;
- **CFBT (Kenya)** and **World Vision (Zimbabwe)** identified differences between intervention and control results;
- **IRC (DRC)** reported concerns with their counterfactual, as they wish to discontinue collecting data from out-of-school girls;
- **BRAC (Sierra Leone)** had identified differences between intervention and control data characteristics;
- **ACTED (Afghanistan)** reported difficulties relating to intervention and control locations being very near to each other in most areas. Security issues sometimes made it impossible to access both the intervention and control location in a given area; and
- **Relief International's (Somalia)** intervention groups could not be selected at random as they were selected purposefully by the three respective Ministries of Education.

A more in-depth discussion of projects' evaluation designs is provided in [Section 5.3.2](#).

5.3.2 Will the project evidence support counterfactual analysis of impact?

As mentioned above, all SCW projects were required to identify comparison or control groups to enable an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design. It was understood that some projects may find it challenging to collect data from an appropriate control or comparison group and in such cases they were encouraged to develop an alternative evaluation design in consultation with the EM and FM to ensure that the research undertaken is as rigorous as possible given the project's circumstances.

Projects had differing outlooks on the feasibility and desirability of establishing control groups in their project locations. In some cases, projects pushed to adopt an RCT evaluation design while other projects raised concerns about using control groups, proposing to limit their use to the extent possible, usually out of concerns that the use of control groups would affect the quality of project implementation, or invoke ethical problems.

All of the different individual project evaluation designs and data collection approaches have been reviewed by the EM and FM, both as outline designs at the proposal stage and as detailed designs at the pre-baseline approval stage. Project designs were reviewed for their ability to represent target groups and to deliver representative data on key outcomes for target populations and control or contrast groups along with contextual data on barriers and context. While the EM reviewed evaluation approaches, did not 'approve' or guarantee their suitability – final approval rested with the FM. The focus on achieving specified precision on learning outcomes and attendance for PbR purposes has led to some unification of approach between projects, but some diversity of sample design and approach also remains.

Projects using Randomised Control Trials (RCTs)

A number of projects used experimental designs that randomly assign girls, schools, or communities to intervention or control groups to ensure that there is no selection bias. Randomised Control Trials (RCTs) are considered the 'gold standard' of evaluation designs and enable an assessment of additionality by comparing changes in treatment groups compared to control groups. However, they are less common in projects because random selection of sites and students is not always feasible.

The following projects used an RCT impact evaluation design:

- **BRAC (Sierra Leone)** – Randomisation occurred at the village level, and at the school level (for in-school interventions).
- **IRC (DRC)** – Randomisation happened at the school level. School clusters were categorized by province and subdivision, and selected using a stratified random sampling technique. School clusters within each subdivision were randomly selected to receive the intervention. Unselected school clusters were assigned to the control group.
- **Save the Children (Mozambique)** – STC is conducting an RCT using difference-in-difference and covariate analysis. Control and treatment areas were randomised at the "Zonas de Influência Pedagógica" (ZIP) level. Most of the interventions will take place at the school level, but some components are at the ZIP level and every community in the same ZIP will benefit from them.
- **World Vision (Zimbabwe)** – Schools were randomly assigned to intervention and control groups and sampling points were defined by school catchment areas that formed sampling clusters.

Projects using quasi-experimental designs

For ethical and/or practical reasons it is often not possible for projects to implement fully randomised control trials. In these circumstances, it may be more appropriate to use quasi-experimental evaluation designs. These designs still require a control group but differ from RCTs because the allocation of individuals to the treatment group is not random. Recipients would need to select control groups that are representative (closely matched) to their treatment groups. Wherever possible, we have eliminated bias (e.g. bias from picking the best performers) by randomising a sample from within these two groups so that both groups can be assumed to have similar characteristics.

The following SCW projects use a quasi-experimental design to measure impact at midline and endline:

- **PLAN (Sierra Leone)** – Control sites were purposively selected at the school and community level with a view to ensuring that they are sufficiently separate from intervention areas and to the greatest possible extent matched with the socio-economic characteristics of intervention communities.

- **Save the Children (Ethiopia)** – Intervention areas were selected from within eight districts (woredas), and the control cohort was sampled from separate sites. Considering the mobile nature of pastoral communities in the Afar region, STC sampled a control cohort from communities that are geographically far from project implementation areas (but sharing similar characteristics) to prevent spill-over effects. While it is not guaranteed that there will be no contamination of the control over the course of the GEC (i.e. members of the control group starting to receive some type of education support), participants were selected on the basis that they had not previously been benefiting from a specific project. To ensure the existence of ‘pure’ control groups throughout the GEC’s lifetime, each non-intervention area is being monitored for the introduction of similar projects.
- **Camfed (Tanzania & Zimbabwe)** – Camfed uses an adapted quasi-experimental evaluation design, using a school survey rather than a household (population-level) survey, which accounts for specific aspects of the project contexts and is intended to provide a comparable level of rigour to the quasi-experimental models used by other SCW projects. Camfed selected comparison schools in districts where they had no previous intervention history.
- **ChildHope (Ethiopia)** – Within their larger intervention district ChildHope have identified a set of control kebeles (wards) based on criteria such as agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions, population density and distance to schools to ensure that they match intervention kebeles. Within every selected kebele, schools were randomly selected as the main sampling units. Finally, girls were randomly selected from the community roster where the selected school was located. ChildHope intend to use propensity score matching (PSM) to match individual girls in the control and intervention groups on pre-intervention characteristics.
- **CfBT (Kenya)** – CfBT purposively selected 500 schools and their communities for intervention. They were chosen based on criteria such as examination performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and enrolment rates and gender parity index/numbers of girls to boys enrolled. They then identified 120 comparison schools and their catchment communities sharing similar characteristics with the intervention schools. Through clustered proportionate sampling, 150 intervention schools representing 30% of the total population were selected. In addition, 45 comparison schools were selected. The schools (intervention and comparison) were then linked to Enumeration Areas (EAs).

Projects that have dropped the use of control groups after baseline

During the course of the GEC baseline research, it became clear that some projects operate in high-risk environments where using a control groups poses an additional risk to the communities and data collectors. In consultation with DFID and the FM it was therefore agreed that the PbR would be adapted to allow six SCW projects to drop the use of control groups going forward. This was the case for the following projects which collected data from intervention and control groups at baseline but will not do so at midline and endline:

- **BRAC (Afghanistan)** – BRAC originally designed an RCT and collected baseline data from intervention and control groups. However, given the security risk involved in accessing control communities in Afghanistan, BRAC is no longer required to use control groups.
- **WUSC (Kenya)** – WUSC originally intended to conduct a quasi-experiment, using comparisons between intervention and control groups as well as comparison with a hypothetical ‘do nothing’ scenario. However, it has become clear that in refugee camps, tracking cohorts is very difficult, as is establishing comparable control groups due to high levels of mobility. WUSC have therefore been released from the requirement to use control groups.
- **AKF (Afghanistan)** – AKF is now using pre-and post-intervention comparison approach to compare cohort girls and sampled communities at baseline, midline and endline. They originally planned a quasi-experimental design in order to demonstrate additionality. However, the intervention design was revised in consultation with DFID and the FM after the AKF encountered a range of barriers in accessing government control groups during baseline.
- **ACTED (Afghanistan)** – At baseline, ACTED faced significant challenges in accessing control locations. They had originally selected control sites based on key characteristics such as ethnic composition, population size and similar geography, as well as access. However, only one or two areas did not have test

and control locations very near to each other. Moreover, security issues meant that at times, in two nearby locations, only one was accessible, highlighting the fluidity of the threat of violence in the target province. Due to these challenges, ACTED has been allowed to drop the use of control groups.

- **Relief International (Somalia)** – Relief International is now using a pre-post intervention comparison design. They had originally planned to conduct a quasi-experimental evaluation using propensity score matching to assess impact in primary schools, and before-after comparisons for secondary schools. After baseline, however, the FM, DFID and the project agreed to cease the use of control groups going forwards because of the security risks posed by the use of control schools.
- **CARE (Somalia)** – CARE originally designed a quasi-experimental evaluation, but observed political tension around surveying in control areas during baseline. There seemed to be a risk for exacerbating conflict as rivalries emerged between clans over who would receive project activities. In consultation with the FM and DFID CARE therefore decided to start rolling out project activities in the control areas. CARE will now carry out a longitudinal performance evaluation using a before-and-after comparison within the intervention schools and communities. The project’s contribution will be assessed through triangulating data from multiple sources, taking into consideration whether other external factors (policy changes, violence outbreaks, drought, famine, etc.) might have had an influence.

Table 52 summarises which SCW projects will use an experimental, quasi-experimental or non-experimental evaluation design going forward.

Table 52: Evaluation designs used by SCW project to measure impact at midline and endline

Baseline	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camf	WUSC	AKF	ChHp	ACTD	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Randomised Control Trial	✓	✦		✓		✓						✓			
Quasi-Experimental Design			✓		✓		✓	✦	✦	✓	✦		✓	✦	✦
Discontinue use of control groups		✓						✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
✓	Projects use this design.														
✦	Projects initially intended to use this design but decided to use a different design at midline and endline after encountering challenges during baseline research.														
	Non Applicable: Intervention activities not planned by the project are marked in Grey.														

In summary, four projects have adopted rigorous RCT approaches while five projects continue to use quasi-experimental designs. Out of these, four projects (Save the Children Ethiopia, ChildHope Ethiopia, CfBT Kenya and BRAC Sierra Leone) reported some differences between their treatment and control groups (as noted above) and six projects will discontinue the use of control groups at midline and endline following consultation with the FM and DFID.

All projects specified sample sizes that should provide a reasonable chance of detecting the agreed level of impact for the key GEC outcomes (attendance and learning). The precision of counterfactual analysis is always subject to individual circumstances of data collection and local variations. However, **the rigour of the projects’ designs means that the collection of longitudinal data from intervention and control samples (of sufficient sizes), supported by complementary qualitative research should support counterfactual analysis of impact.**

Strategies to mitigate against risks for the robustness of the evaluation

Projects have already experienced some challenges and limitations with regards to: their planned evaluation designs; achieved sample sizes; data quality; and matching of control and intervention groups. These issues may make it difficult for some projects to demonstrate impact where it occurs as definitively as intended by the GEC evaluation strategy and PbR requirements. The use of probability sampling and multiple projects in the SCW means that there is always a risk that some projects will fail to evidence actual change or will falsely evidence or overstate non-existent impact. Nonetheless, there are aspects of the default evaluation approach that provide some protection against these risks and challenges:

- **Surveys and cohort studies are designed to be longitudinal** and this provides some scope to evaluate change even if intervention and control locations are not ideally matched. Longitudinal analysis will enable

us to estimate effects with a greater precision than if we used cross-sectional data because unobservable differences between individuals that are stable over time can be excluded, reducing measurement error.

- **The standard template for the household survey collects a wide range of demographic and socio-economic information** and we may be able to identify barriers to girls' education outcomes that can be used to control for systematic differences between the intervention and control groups where they occur, or to support matching work for the same purpose.
- **The EM's independent data collection can provide a second view of each project area**, in some instances with a distinct learning assessment tool that can be calibrated across project contexts. Where target groups are measured in common this can add some additional analytical support and on balance the error from the two sources will be smaller than from the project data alone. Where the target group of the project is a sub-group of the underlying population, the presence of the EM data will support analysis of the relationship between project data and population. This is expected to be available for household surveys at midline and endline and for qualitative in-depth interviews at endline.
- Where re-contact rates are lower at midline, projects may need to adapt to **implement a mixed longitudinal and cross-sectional approach** across their project locations.

We will seek to maintain a working approach with projects that should enable them to improve the quality of their datasets and develop evaluation tools and research instruments from existing templates without repeated upheavals and redefinitions. In summary we recognise and anticipate that some projects will experience challenges providing counterfactual evidencing of impact. Where possible these can be identified in advance through further analysis of baseline data in collaboration with the projects. While acknowledging the complex circumstances and challenges arising in the SCW, we are optimistic that we can provide support to projects, the Fund Manager and DFID to mitigate these risks to evaluation at the project level and minimise their impact on results evidencing and learning at the SCW level.

Possible Future Concerns

There are a number of concerns for the project level evaluations going forward:

- A number of projects are working with mobile populations: for example in refugee camps or pastoralist communities. Where sampled populations are displaced and/or migratory, this may make it difficult to find the same households at midline;
- Learning assessments will need to be maintained, modified and in some instances adapted to capture variation in outcomes for all sub-groups and age groups of relevance to measure the projects' impacts;
- At midline, the challenge for data collection and analysis will be to detect and identify the level of exposure for target groups to project activities and intermediary outcomes, which are quite diverse, while retaining as much consistency as possible across the GEC; and
- The absence of control groups in six project areas will make it impossible to robustly attribute observed changes to the project interventions and to identify the impact made by these projects over and above changes that would have happened anyway.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

To what extent are target girls educationally marginalised?

Conclusion 1 – Girls targeted by SCW projects are educationally marginalised in terms of the pace at which they progress through school, and in terms of the literacy levels that they achieve. Our evidence suggests that the majority of girls in SCW project areas are enrolled in school, but that they tend to be enrolled below their expected grade level. This means that girls of secondary school age are often still enrolled in primary school. With regards to literacy, our evidence shows that on average girls tend to fall further behind expected learning benchmarks as they grow up, including those who are enrolled.

Across the SCW, target girls also appear marginalised in terms of their levels of numeracy, attendance and retention, although girls' were not *universally* disadvantaged. There was significant variation in numeracy and retention across project areas. There was no evidence of *systematic* differences in enrolment between boys and girls with gaps occurring in both directions, while we did observe a tendency towards small gaps in attendance that widen among older boys and girls. The differences in learning levels between boys and girls appear small with significant variations occurring between project areas.

Across the SCW we found evidence that confirmed girls were marginalised in terms of their enrolment, attendance and retention at school and that on average there was sufficient room for improvement in these outcomes. However, outcomes in terms of “being in school” are somewhat heterogeneous. For example, the EM data indicated an average enrolment rate of 87% among 9-11 year old girls across the SCW but we found significant levels of variation between project areas, ranging from 69% to close to 100% in several project areas. This suggests that **some SCW projects may struggle to demonstrate a measurable improvement in enrolment** over the GEC's lifecycle and that girls may be less marginalised in this respect than might have been expected based on the GEC's programme assumptions.

Another key finding on enrolment is that **while the majority of girls across the GEC are enrolled in school, less than half of those of secondary school age are actually enrolled in secondary school** which seems to be linked to the finding that girls on average are two years behind their expected grade level. Girls who are actually enrolled in secondary school tend to be closer to the expected age, which suggests that there is a relationship between delays accumulated across the school phase and opportunities for girls to transit into secondary education.

With regards to **literacy (as measured by the oral reading fluency score), the analysis of EM data generally showed low average literacy levels among girls of the two reported age groups (i.e. aged 9-11 and 14-15)**. The average reading fluency scores of 9-11 and 14-15 year olds suggested that the girls lagged several years behind international benchmarks of reading fluency, that are derived from the international literature. These performance gaps tend to widen as the girls grow older, with average literacy levels increasing only a little over the course of their schooling. These findings are in line with the GEC programme assumption that girls targeted by the GEC are marginalised in terms of their learning outcomes and progress, especially at secondary school age.

With regards to **numeracy, the analysis of EM data showed that average levels of mathematical skills varied markedly across SCW project areas**. In some project areas, girls of both age groups were unable to demonstrate basic foundational numeracy skills (i.e. at the level taught in the first grades of primary school). This indicates that girls aged 14-15 in particular experience a persistent level of educational marginalisation throughout their time in the school system. In contrast, in other project areas, younger girls aged 9-11 attained an average score that was around 100, meaning they completed the tasks correctly in the given time. In these instances, we cannot say exactly how close they are to demonstrating age-appropriate mathematical skills, but we are able to say that they are not as grossly marginalised with regards to these skills as their peers in other project areas. Comparing the projects' baseline findings on learning is a difficult exercise as projects used different tests adapted to the context of their interventions, and reported test results that used different scales and units.

With regards to **gender differences in enrolment**, the analysis of EM data did not suggest that girls have systematically lower enrolment rates than boys. Our evidence did not support the GEC assumption that existing gaps generally widen when children reach secondary school age. We found that gaps exist in both directions and

change in both directions. This suggests that boys in some contexts may face degrees of educational marginalisation in relation to girls. With regards to attendance, we found that boys attend slightly more often than girls at age 9-11 and that these gaps widen slightly as the children grow older. In terms of **gender differences in learning** between boys and girls, we generally observed only small gaps in reading fluency (based on EGRA scores), and numeracy skills (based on EGMA scores) from our school-based assessments. With regards to reading fluency, scores suggested that both boys and girls were lagging behind international benchmarks for their age groups. Based on data from the EM household survey we found that gaps in basic literacy (that is the ability to read and write a letter in the language of instruction) existed in around half of the project areas to the disadvantage of girls. It seems that gender gaps in learning are context-specific and that further research is required to better understand possible gender differences in learning outcomes between boys and girls.

Which barriers were found to affect girls' education?

Conclusion 2 – Economic factors, negative attitudes, school-based factors and parental education emerge as the most likely candidates for barriers affecting girls' education. **Poverty appears to affect girls' enrolment and learning** through various dimensions such as an inability to afford the costs of school, material deprivation, poor housing conditions, and low subjective wellbeing. In addition, negative attitudes towards girls' education and the level of parental education appear to be linked with household decisions about enrolling girls in school and with how well they learn once enrolled. According to our qualitative research both economic factors and attitudes seem to influence the occurrence of **early marriage** in SCW communities which in turn is a potential barrier to enrolment. There are a range of **school-based factors that relate to the quality of education in schools across the SCW that influence learning**. Many of these factors are interrelated, stemming from poor resourcing of local schools, and they are likely to affect both boys and girls.

Our findings show that barriers to girls' education are complex and dynamic. While we found significant associations between individual barriers and education outcomes, these tended to explain relatively little of the variance in outcomes that we observed across the SCW. This is likely to be due to different barriers being interrelated and to outcomes being influenced by many other barriers that are likely to vary by context and sub-group that we have not been able to capture through the available data and analysis. It is important that we continue to develop our understanding of the relationships between these barriers, the ways in which they combine to affect girls, households and their communities and the educational outcomes that the GEC has set out to achieve.

We have grouped potential barriers to girls' education into five broader categories and unpacked these systematically based on the EM's baseline evidence. We have tried to understand the dimensions and relative influence of barriers relating to economic issues, school-based factors, attitudes and support in the families and communities, violence and personal factors. Our analysis suggests that barriers such as poverty or attitudes in the household affect girls' education in a variety of ways, which are challenging to analyse. However, it is important that projects develop an understanding of these complex pathways so that they are able to intervene at the right point, right time and in the right ways to influence the cause and effect relationships between a multidimensional barrier like poverty and the educational outcomes that they anticipate changing. This understanding is also important to enable projects to constructively tap into existing coping strategies that poor families employ, and to avoid interventions that could potentially have unforeseen consequences on such strategies.

As discussed in [Section 3.1.1](#) and [Section 4](#) we found relatively little variation in attendance levels across the SCW and our statistical model could only explain a small part of this variation. Nevertheless, it does seem likely that key barriers primarily affect decisions to enroll a girl in school or to remain enrolled; and shape the conditions under which girls learn. The influence of key barriers on attendance is harder to quantify but it may be that further analysis of attendance data gathered from schools will provide us with a clearer understanding. With regards to poverty, the lack of an apparent effect on attendance may be due to families using coping strategies to overcome difficulties affording the costs of schooling. The same appears to be true about the effects of girls' household duties on their education. It seems that the need for the girl to support her family shapes decisions about whether or not to enroll her in the first place; and may unavoidably influence her learning, but that families generally try to ensure that girls continue to attend school by developing coping strategies to reconcile their duties at home.

Poverty emerged as a fundamentally important structural and dynamic factor. EM analysis of the household survey data showed direct and indirect relationships between poverty, its different dimensions such as material deprivation, poor housing conditions, subjective wellbeing and household duties; and girls' enrolment and learning. It is clear from our analysis that poverty has a number of facets and that there are several complex potential

pathways between poverty and its effects on educational outcomes which require considerable work to identify and evaluate. In addition, poverty tends to be a dynamic factor. Rather than living at a stable socio-economic level, households across the SCW described how their livelihoods are regularly affected by storms, droughts and floods, which exacerbate or cause a household to ‘dip’ into acute poverty, especially if they rely on subsistence farming which seems to be the case for a considerable share of SCW households. Factors like this affect girls at key times during the school year, such as at the start of term, when school fees and costs must be paid, with implications for enrolment and attendance during the rest of the year.

Negative attitudes towards girls’ education have not been shown to be widespread across the SCW but where they exist they prevent girls from being enrolled and learning at school. The qualitative research conducted by the EM suggests that negative attitudes are often linked to beliefs whereby marriage should take priority over education. These views are not necessarily based on prejudice but rather on an understanding of pathways available to girls that are consistent with local circumstances and realities of life. For example, families may consider that being educated will either become irrelevant once a girl is married, or will benefit her new relatives but not her own family. In addition, some families have doubts about the relative benefit of education, compared with the possibility of girls working either at home or abroad, and girls providing their families with a dowry through marriage. Overall our data shows that attitudes relate to cultural beliefs about the role of women, common societal arrangements, and to economic considerations and pressures. It is important to recognise and address such structural drivers in order to enable a fundamental change in attitudes where projects consider this necessary.

There is a variety of school-based barriers, many of which seem to be relatively common across the SCW – and many of these interrelated factors work together to shape the learning environment in school. The household survey and the school-based assessment showed that: three quarters of the assessed schools reported a lack of teachers; nine out of ten classrooms did not have electric lighting; one in four schools reported problems with teacher absenteeism; and one in four teachers did not have a teaching certificate. Both qualitative and quantitative findings highlight the negative effects of overcrowded classrooms, poor facilities, and an unfriendly school environment on girls’ learning. Many of these factors stem from structural problems such as: a general under-resourcing of schools; the irregular payment of teachers; and the lack of funds to maintain school facilities and teacher salaries, especially in areas where schools depend on fee payments that many parents cannot afford on a regular basis. Rather than being gender-specific barriers, school-based factors appear to affect all children enrolled in disadvantaged schools. However, it is likely that they affect some groups of the population more than others, namely children living in remote and poor communities with few resources to maintain the quality of education at local schools.

Early pregnancy and early or forced marriage were often mentioned in our in-depth interviews as salient barriers’ to girls’ education, especially for older girls. Our discussion of these barriers has shown that they cannot be understood as isolated phenomena. They affect girls in ways that are shaped by social norms, cultural values and economic pressures and considerations. Girls who become pregnant may drop out from school because they are being socially stigmatised and actively excluded. However, leaving school prematurely may not be viewed as drop-out but as a natural step in a young girl’s progression through life. Early marriage is associated with views whereby more advanced education is irrelevant to girls whose role is defined by marriage. In addition, early marriage emerges as one way to alleviate economic pressures as it provides the girl with a livelihood, and her family with a dowry. Projects addressing these social issues need to understand what structural factors drive them; how exactly they affect girls’ education outcomes; what change can be achieved and how.

Some issues emerge as important barriers in the qualitative research but did not feature significantly in the quantitative analysis. This may be due to their sensitivity as a topic for discussion, or due to the fact that they may be more salient in communities as a whole than in individual families, which is where the data was collected. The household survey found a relatively low incidence of reported **violence** across the SCW, but the IDIs suggests that violence can have severe effects on girls’ education when it occurs. Our in-depth interviews (IDIs) further indicate that **sexual violence** occurs in all project areas with detrimental effects on girls’ attendance and learning. **Early pregnancy** and **early marriage**, as discussed above, were emphasised by IDI respondents but they were not covered in the household survey due to their sensitive nature. Finally we found little clear evidence (both in the qualitative and quantitative research) that **disability** makes it difficult for girls to attend school and learn. This seems counterintuitive given the barriers faced by all children in attending school and may be due to under-reporting of the difficulties attached to living with a disability. These issues merit further in-depth research that allows for the use of specific methods and approaches tailored to researching sensitive and difficult topics. The

GEC thematic research undertaken by the EM will offer an opportunity for such additional research to help us better understand how these barriers affect girls' education.

A key area that merits further investigation is **the role of prior educational experiences** in interacting with some of the barriers identified in shaping outcomes. Analysis of outcomes shows clearly that learning progress is often relatively slow for those in the school system. As we have seen from analysis of the school-based assessments, there are a number of plausible explanations for this in terms of school-based factors. Some of these may be universal, but others may vary by context requiring further investigation. It's also clear from the qualitative evidence how families are often acutely aware of the lack of progress made by children in school and may go to extreme lengths to seek out schools that are more challenging for their children. This lack of prior progress in learning is likely to impact on attitudes to learning, motivation, and retention and make further learning more difficult as girls and their peers fall further behind. These issues are likely to interact with the variety of barriers analysed in this report. For example, if families are poor, then losing time in an education system that does not bring any tangible benefits or marketable skills while incurring opportunity costs may be viewed as a poor investment. Conversely, when schooling is effective the decision-making process may be quite different. The role of prior progress may also make it more challenging to isolate the effect of barriers quantitatively as these are known from the qualitative evidence to fluctuate over time (in particular for example poverty or economic circumstances). For these reasons, a more detailed analysis of pathways, both between barriers to outcomes and across time through school-careers will be an important next step for analysis and this should be built into the planning of the longitudinal research.

Finally, many of the barriers discussed above are interrelated and driven by key structural problems, notably a lack of resources in households, communities, schools and government; and social norms, beliefs and attitudes that de-prioritise education (especially for older girls) compared to other options such as employment and marriage. It is important that projects **distinguish the symptoms and the drivers** of the barriers that they aim to address to **ensure that their interventions have a sustainable impact**. Projects need to understand how and why families adapt to the barriers they face as well as when they are overcome by them. Unless projects are able to **develop a reasonably holistic and comprehensive view of the barriers to education provision and take-up among their target communities**, then there is a risk that interventions will be confounded by barriers that projects are either unaware of or are unable to mitigate against in a strategic manner.

It is understood that some structural barriers such as seasonal poverty or lack of government resources may not be within the projects' control and are impossible to address through quick solutions. Nevertheless, projects need to have a clear understanding of these structural factors in order to understand where and how they can best intervene to achieve feasible and lasting change within the given structural constraints. In addition, projects may want to keep these structural issues in mind when trying to influence policy agendas.

Does the evidence support project targeting and project design?

Conclusion 3 – The ways in which projects have defined their target groups and the baseline evidence reported about them does not consistently demonstrate a sufficiently granular understanding of the complex inter-relationships between the different types of barriers that particular sub-groups face and how these affect their educational outcomes. For some projects, this potentially means that interventions will not be as effective as they could be, which may affect the type and amount of changes anticipated by their theories of change. Related to this, there is a need for greater understanding and evidence across the whole SCW about the extent to which the effects of projects' interventions on complex and dynamic problems will be sustained beyond the life of the programme.

Projects were encouraged to collect data from a population that is sufficiently large and representative of their target population(s) so that results can be disaggregated to the level of relevant sub-groups or contexts later on. It is critical at later stages of the evaluation process to measure and understand the different type and scale of effects on different types of marginalised groups. Our baseline analysis shows a **tendency across the SCW for definitions of barriers and sub-groups within a target population to overlap**. For example, we have identified different dimensions of poverty that act as barriers to girls' education in differing ways and to differing extents. However, a number of projects have simply defined 'the poor' as their target group. Similarly, girls with disabilities have been identified as a key target group by several projects, but girls affected by disabilities can also be part of other sub-groups and facing other barriers, such as those experiencing intense poverty and hunger that also affect their educational outcomes and would need to be taken into account.

Our analysis demonstrates the importance of understanding, as far as possible, the differences and relationships between, on the one hand social barriers to education and on the other hand being marginalised from education in terms of the GEC's outcomes relating to being in school and learning. These relationships are complex and dynamic and analysis will need to continue throughout the GEC as more evidence becomes available. Generally, projects do not sufficiently understand the effect(s) of a specific barrier on a particular educational outcome, relative to other barriers that also affect the same educational outcome. For those projects with a relatively narrow or overly simple definition of marginalisation for their sub-groups, it is possible that the **design of the interventions will not be as effective as they could be because of a lack of capacity to address the complex nature of the base problem.**

A key part of understanding the complex relationships between barriers and educational outcomes is developing an understanding of the coping strategies that households, teachers and children use to overcome the barriers that they face. For example, our analysis of coping strategies relating to poverty shows that while poverty-related factors are an evident barrier to girls being in school and learning that typically families find ways of overcoming these at sometimes a significant opportunity cost. **It is not clear that projects have paid enough attention to the effects of coping strategies employed by target groups and communities** in response to the barriers to education that they have reported. This is important both in terms of understanding why impacts may be less than anticipated (since many families cope already) but also for thinking through ways to help more people adapt their coping strategies and make them both more effective and less of a strain on their families. Understanding the interactions between coping strategies and intervention innovations are likely to be an important element of GEC learning gains throughout the programme life-cycle.

Finally, leverage and sustainability is a key outcome area for the GEC. There is currently **very little baseline evidence relating to the sustainability of project interventions** and project baseline reports rarely discussed the implications of baseline findings in terms of sustainability. Arguably, a sustainable intervention is one that intervenes to address (either directly or indirectly) key causal factors that result in a particular educational outcome. If causal factors or barriers are not sufficiently understood and considered as part of the intervention design strategy then **it is less likely that changes resulting from a focus on single barriers or symptomatic effects will be sustained beyond the life of the project.**

Conclusion 4 – The designs of project interventions and targeting strategies were influenced to a reasonable extent by the baseline evidence that projects themselves collected and the analysis they undertook. This flexibility was considered appropriate in the context of the GEC objectives for the SCW, which involved quickly establishing a large and diverse population of target groups. However, it is clear from the EM's baseline research and analysis that further adjustments and corrections to delivery may be identifiable and relevant for some projects prior to the midline stage.

Projects have generally adapted their project designs in response to the findings in their own baseline reports. There were some instances where projects do not appear to have responded as would be expected to their own baseline evidence – four projects found evidence that challenged their original assumptions about their project designs but did not make any adjustments. As a result, these projects may find it difficult to generate the required changes in the levels of outcomes among their target groups. They may also find at midline and endline that the type and size of the changes experienced by their target groups may be difficult to measure and report.

Our reanalysis of the project data that was available and in a suitable state for reanalysis, together with our analysis of the primary quantitative and qualitative data that we collected, suggests that **further adjustments to the design of project interventions are probably merited.** However, in the context of DFID's ambitions for the SCW, in particular to establish large, diverse populations in a relatively short time and the nature of longitudinal evaluation, it is inevitable that more refined lessons about the interplay and 'design fit' between beneficiary needs, desired programme outcomes and project interventions will continue to emerge from analysis at all stages of the programme. The documentation, harmonisation and standardisation of data sources remains a high priority to enable the GEC to understand how different factors, pathways of change and effects relate to one another.

Does the evidence support effective project evaluation?

Conclusion 5 – The baseline evidence collected by projects and the EM and the level of rigour in the design of project and programme evaluation strategies are expected to reasonably support effective project evaluation in the majority of contexts. However, some projects have experienced challenges in the collection, collation and reporting

of their data and analysis, which can be mitigated against through on-going collaboration and discussion between the FM, projects and the EM. However, significant evaluation design and implementation issues will persist for several projects given the challenging nature of their project environments and the types of barriers that their target groups and communities face.

The baseline evidence collected by SCW projects and the EM will generally support effective project evaluation and counterfactual analysis of the impacts of SCW projects. The level of rigour of the projects' evaluation designs means that the collection of longitudinal data from intervention and control samples of sufficient sizes, supported by complementary good quality qualitative research should be able to support the impact evidence and learning requirements of the GEC.

It is clear though that in some project areas designing and implementing a counterfactual evaluation design has been challenging and that some issues still persist. The precision of counterfactual analysis is always subject to individual circumstances of data collection and local contextual variations. Some issues were raised during the reviews of project baseline reports in terms of a lack of sufficiently detailed data analysis or of a failure to make use of qualitative data to support analysis. These issues, combined with the incomplete documentation of project data and the variety of sampling approaches make it more **difficult to determine whether the evidence base for midline and endline is likely to be robust for all projects**. Some projects experienced challenges in identifying and achieving a representative and reliable sample suitable for supporting longitudinal research and impact evaluation at midline and endline.

For a few projects, significant problems with the design and implementation of their M&E frameworks persist due to high levels of mobility among target populations (e.g. those living in refugee camps in Kenya and pastoralist communities in Ethiopia) and concerns about security and safety. In six project areas, such challenges have resulted in projects discontinuing the use of control groups following consultation with DFID and the FM. This will have a significant effect on the GEC's capacity to robustly attribute observed changes to the project interventions, to identify the impact made by these projects over and above changes that would have happened anyway and also to learn what works in different contexts.

6.2 Recommendations

Recommendations for DFID and the Evaluation Manager

1. There is sufficient variation across the SCW project areas in education outcomes relating to enrolment, attendance and retention to suggest that for some projects achieving a significant and measurable improvement in these areas may be challenging. This is potentially **an important policy consideration when reviewing approaches to targeting education programmes through a universal outcome relating to accessing education and being in school**.
2. From a policy perspective, DFID should consider the wider programme and policy **implications of significant variations in gender differences between boys and girls with regards to enrolment and learning**. It is evident that boys are often just as marginalised as girls in terms of their educational outcomes in particular contexts and as such there is no evidence of *systematic* differences across the SCW. Further research is required to understand the key drivers and identifiers of real gender differences between boys and girls in specific conditions.
3. The Evaluation Manager work with projects to help them to **clarify the content of the data that they have documented to produce a more robust baseline for the SCW**. This will facilitate more detailed analysis of the relationship between barriers, sub-groups and contexts that will significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the evaluation process at midline and endline.
4. **Additional thematic research** is needed to better understand sensitive issues and themes that were difficult to assess using the household survey and in-depth interviews. The GEC thematic research should focus on eliciting outstanding questions on issues such as: the extent to which **pregnancy and early marriage** cause girls to drop out of school rather than girls leaving school on purpose to have children and get married; the extent and types of **violence** affecting girls at home and in school and their effects on educational outcomes; and finally the ways in which families and children perceive and define **disability** and the extent to which disability hinders girls' education.

5. DFID and the EM could consider **including an assessment of education provision with regards to facilities, resources, materials and teachers at the midline**, given the apparent influence of these factors on learning and educational outcomes generally. Building on this point, if there is greater pressure to get girls into school, stay in school and learn but without the support for school resources to deliver learning gains girls can recognise, then adverse outcomes might be a consequence. More research is required and the findings from the baseline research that have emerged should feed into the design of thematic research with regards to these issues.

Recommendations relating to SCW projects' use of baseline findings

6. In the first instance, the FM and SCW projects should carefully review the findings and analysis presented in this baseline report. The primary purpose of this review should be to **compare these findings with the current responses by projects to their own baseline reports and to identify any further changes required** to the design of their interventions.
7. The FM and individual projects may want to discuss these with the EM to understand the full design and delivery implications of the analysis and findings presented to date. This is particularly relevant to those projects with interventions designed to improve enrolment, attendance and/or retention outcome levels but whose **baseline evidence suggest these levels are higher than were expected at the pre-baseline stage**.
8. As a priority, the FM and SCW projects should **consider the implications of their baseline findings for their project sustainability strategies**. This may require further data collection to inform changes in the way that projects intervene to bring about changes that are more sustainable by addressing factors that are beyond the control of the project, such as government education policy or government budgeting and resourcing for education.
9. Projects should **consider the implications of barriers relating to the supply of quality education as well as barriers affecting the demand for education**. This is to ensure that achievements in terms of enhancing enrolment and attendance are not being compromised by the negative effects of school-based barriers on learning; and in turn, that efforts to improve learning in school are not undermined by factors causing girls to drop out prematurely.

Recommendations relating to project M&E frameworks and data

10. It is important that **significant differences between the EM's reanalysis of key education outcome data and project's own analysis and findings** are reviewed and reconciled between now and the midline evaluation to ensure that the baseline for evaluation and PbR purposes is as reliable as possible.
11. **Evidence can be used more effectively to identify the potential causal drivers of educational marginalisation, and the population groups that are most concerned**. This should enable projects to assess how and to what extent interventions may be helped or hindered by the causalities identified. Associated with this is the need for projects to consider the ways in which girls, households and communities cope with the barriers that they face in order to understand, anticipate and measure the actual effect of barriers on education and of the remedial and mitigating decisions and actions that are taken in the different GEC contexts.



Baseline Report – Step Change Window Annexes

Final Version

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Ben Ward, Project Director

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Ward", written over a horizontal line.



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Annex A – GEC Country Level Analysis

Baseline Report – Step Change Window



GEC Country Level Analysis

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the GEC country-level analysis is to identify and explain patterns of baseline findings that are common to a particular country or region to help us understand the extent to which cultural, political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental context factors affect the baseline characteristics of the groups and communities targeted by GEC projects.

1.2 Scope

Four countries have been selected for this additional analysis: Kenya, Afghanistan, Mozambique and Sierra Leone. A mix of Innovation Window (IW) and Step Change Window (SCW) projects are currently operating in these countries:

Kenya:

- SCW: World University Service of Canada (WUSC)
- SCW: CfBT Education Trust (CfBT)
- IW: I Choose Life (ICL)
- IW: Leonard Cheshire Disability Kenya (LCDK)

Afghanistan:

- SCW: Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)
- SCW: Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)
- SCW: BRAC
- IW: ChildFund (ChFnd)

Mozambique:

- SCW: Save the Children (STC)
- IW: Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO)

Sierra Leone:

- SCW: BRAC
- SCW: Plan International (PLAN)

These countries were selected to ensure a balance in terms of geographic spread, demographic characteristics, levels of conflict, outcome and barrier levels at baseline, and an appropriate number and mix of SCW and IW projects.

1.3 Approach and Structure

The first section provides a high level country comparison against key GEC outcome variables, and includes all SCW countries. The tables in this section are based on a quantitative analysis of the GEC household surveys conducted by the Evaluation Manager.

ANNEX A - GEC COUNTRY LEVEL ANALYSIS

The section and third sections build on the quantitative and qualitative analysis conducted around outcomes and barriers at the fund level, complemented by a PESTLE¹ (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental) assessment. The PESTLE assessment provides additional contextual understanding of the educational systems in each country.

¹ The “Technological” component was not included in the analysis.

2 Comparative Analysis

This section provides a high level comparative analysis of core GEC outcomes in the different GEC Step Change Window (SCW) countries. The analysis is mostly descriptive, and the extent to which contextual factors can explain some of the differences observed is analysed in more detail for a selection of countries in Sections 3.1 (Afghanistan), 3.2 (Kenya) 3.3 (Mozambique) and 3.4 (Sierra Leone).

2.1 Enrolment

As shown in Table 1, average enrolment in the GEC countries was found to be generally around 80%. As for the focus countries, enrolment is well above the SCW average for Mozambique, close to the SCW average in Kenya and in Sierra Leone but below SCW average in Afghanistan (i.e. 72%). In Afghanistan, enrolment peaks at ages 9 to 11, coinciding with the core years of primary school, and declines thereafter. This suggests that girls may start to drop out of school before completing primary school. In Kenya enrolment peaks at ages 12 to 13 coinciding with the last two years of primary school, and declines thereafter. In Mozambique and Sierra Leone, enrolment peaks at 9 to 11. This is consistent with evidence of common late enrolment of girls and boys in these countries.

Table 1: Enrolment rates by country and age group (EM household survey data only)

EM Data	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
All	72	71	81	51	84	83	94	90	90
< 6			78	16	46	69			69
6 to 8	63	58	74	35	85	83	94	88	97
9 to 11	86	88	90	64	91	94	98	97	98
12 to 13	77	82	94	72	88	91	96	96	86
14 to 15	77	72	82	66	95	88	91	89	91
16 to 19								84	77

2.2 Attendance

Official attendance data is notoriously unreliable due to weak EMIS systems in most GEC areas so we report levels derived from carer-reported attendance. Attendance rates are reported at similar levels with little variation across the four countries of interest, with averages ranging from 86% to 89%. The GEC SCW average is 87%. There is also relatively little variation by age group. The figures below may mask some significant regional variations, as well as seasonal variations, as there is evidence that attendance can drop sharply at times of extreme weather.

Table 2: Attendance by country and age group (EM household survey data only)

EM Data	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
All	88	88	86	86	88	87	87	88	89
< 6	90	84	81	78	90	89			89
6 to 8	88	88	86	83	88	86	88	88	89
9 to 11	87	89	85	88	88	87	88	90	89
12 to 13	88	87	86	88	89	86	87	86	89
14 to 15	88	87	87	87	86	87	85	89	88
16 to 19								87	90

2.3 Retention

Reported retention rates are derived from carer reports of enrolment in the preceding year and current year. The rates from the four focus countries are all above the GEC country average of 95%. In Afghanistan they show a small decline. In Kenya, retention rates drop substantially between the 12 to 13 and 14 to 15 age bands, marking the transition from primary to secondary school. Given that secondary statistics from various sources indicate that fewer than half of students transition from primary to secondary, it is expected that GEC retention figures would

reflect this gap. In Mozambique, retention peaks at 100% at ages 9 to 11 and then declines slightly afterwards. It should be noted that these are year-on-year retention rates: a 95% retention rate over five years leads to an overall attrition of circa 23% of a cohort of girls over the five-year period.

Table 3: Year-on-year retention by country and age group (EM household survey data only)

EM Data	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
All	96	94	97	92	94	98	98	95	92
< 6	100	100	98		100	100			94
6 to 8	96	84	99	87	97	100	97		98
9 to 11	98	99	98	93	90	98	100		99
12 to 13	95	95	97	90	96	100	95	95	87
14 to 15	96	86	88	94	100	100	97	89	92
16 to 19								89	74

2.4 Literacy

Adjusted oral reading score varies considerably between countries. Literacy was measured using information derived from all EGRA subtasks, and adjusted for time remaining on subtasks for faster students so that higher levels of performance were captured. The integrated score was then rescaled to the words per minute (wpm) subtask so that the score is readily comparable. As a result of using information from all subtasks negative scores were possible to reflect differences in children's ability even among the group who score zero on the words per minute task. Among in-school students, at age 6 to 8, adjusted wpm scores ranged from -7 to 20 across the GEC countries, with Afghanistan and Kenya above average and Mozambique below average. By age 14 to 15, Mozambique was the second worst performing of the SCW countries with an adjusted score of 37 wpm, while Afghanistan and Sierra Leone were well below the SCW average adjusted wpm of 60.

EGRA reading skills scores for in-school students rose with age in all countries. Among the focus countries, gains in literacy were far greater between the ages 6 and 11 around the time of early primary school, than from 12 to 15, at later primary school and transition to secondary. On average, wpm rose about twice as much in each of these earlier stages as in the later stage.

Students in Afghanistan start from a relatively high level of literacy but do not make much progress in school. Afghan students have a higher than average EGRA score at ages 6 to 8. This may in part be due to a cultural emphasis on literacy and reading the Qur'an and in part due to some households having their mother tongue as the language of instruction, which varies according to the dominant language (Pashto, Dari, or Uzbek) in the region.

Students in Mozambique start from a low level of literacy and progress very slowly on average. Despite a recent push for enrolment, Mozambique project areas have substantial problems with teacher attendance and quality of teaching, which may explain these low levels of literacy.

Table 4: Literacy scores (in words per minute) by country and age group (EM data only)

EM Data	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
Score (in-school)	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)								
All	32	21	32	43	19	20	15	80	50
< 6		-1	-5			1			-24
6 to 8	13	7	16	20	-7	4	-3	1	-2
9 to 11	29	21	38	37	16	17	14	54	47
12 to 13	43	33	57	55	35	36	31	91	65
14 to 15	50	35	59	68	49	49	37	106	83
16 to 19								112	99
Other									

2.5 Numeracy

Numeracy scores based on EGMA data are also integrated to use information from different subtasks. They are not scaled to a comparable indicator such as “words per minute” as in the case of literacy. Instead they are plotted on a scale of 0 to 100 where 100 represents comfortable completion of early grades numeracy skills tasks and zero represents no measurable numeracy skills.

Adjusted numeracy scores also varied considerably between countries. At age 6 to 8, students in all countries, including focus countries, averaged around 30% correct responses. By age 14 to 15, students in all countries except Afghanistan and Mozambique were on average able to answer all mathematics questions correctly with time remaining. Regardless of schooling, children may develop their numeracy skills through exposure to a market economy. Afghanistan, with a high rate of unemployment and an underdeveloped market economy, may offer students less exposure to numeracy than other GEC countries.

As with EGRA, EGMA scores rose with age in all countries. Despite the fact that these are early grade skills, the averages are continuing to rise for older age groups showing that progress is still being made. Afghanistan and Mozambique were the two countries in which students in project areas on average failed to reach the expected early grade level in mathematics by age 14 to 15.

Table 5: Numeracy scores by country and age group (EM data only)

EM Data	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
Score (in-school)	EGMA score								
All	52	66	60	74	73	56	50	102	94
< 6		10	16			20			1
6 to 8	32	27	37	39	33	28	23	22	32
9 to 11	48	64	70	61	80	55	50	62	93
12 to 13	65	100	91	89	89	86	72	110	115
14 to 15	68	109	97	116	111	100	82	131	131
16 to 19								149	143
Other									

3 Case Studies

3.1 Afghanistan

This section focuses on Afghanistan, where four GEC projects are currently being implemented, which are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Overview of GEC projects in Afghanistan

Afghanistan GEC Projects	BRAC	ACTED	Aga Khan Foundation	ChildFund
Window	Step Change	Step Change	Step Change	Innovation
Areas (provinces) of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baghlan • Balkh • Hirat • Jawzjan • Kabul • Kapisa • Kunduz • Parwan • Nangarhar • Samangan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faryab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badakhshan • Baghlan • Balkh • Bamyan • Faryab • Ghazni • Kabul • Kandahar • Kapisa • Khost • Logar • Paktia • Paktika • Parwan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badakhshan • Kunduz
Brief description of project	The project operates in 10 provinces in Afghanistan. It aims to enrol and retain out-of-school girls by building community based girls' schools and maintain enrolment of girls in government schools at risk of dropping out. The project plans to provide girls schools with trained female teachers that are within the community, train teachers, conduct peer mentoring and provide conditional stipends to selected out-of-school girls.	The project aims to construct primary schools and Youth Development Centres (YDCs) and hold village literacy courses in villages across Faryab province. It will also hire professional female teachers for the YDCs, conduct teacher trainings and provide vocational training to increase female economic empowerment.	The project operates across 14 provinces of Afghanistan. It aims to transform the educational status of marginalised girls through improved access to a flexible range of quality education options, equipping girls and young women with the knowledge, skills and confidence to become future models and advocates of girls' education and contributing members of Afghan society.	The project will operate in Northern Afghanistan and will focus on providing a mentored and supported teaching cadre, providing community-based education to suit the Nomadic life style, support families, and develop a strong collaboration and alignment with the Department of Education.
Baseline results (EM data)	Enrolment: 70% Attendance: 89% Retention: 96% Literacy: 37 wpm Numeracy: 57	Enrolment: 77% Attendance: 89% Retention: 98% Literacy: 24 wpm Numeracy: 40	Enrolment: 69% Attendance: 86% Retention: 95% Literacy: 37 wpm Numeracy: 59	N/A
Baseline results (IW Project data)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Enrolment: 70% (reanalysis) Attendance: N/A Retention: N/A Literacy: 7 wpm (reanalysis) Numeracy: 25 (reanalysis)

3.1.1 Political Factors

Political conflict and context

Afghanistan, a large country with a population of about 32 million (UN), has witnessed violent conflicts and instabilities during the past few decades. The country was ruled by diverse political systems, including monarchical systems superseded by regimes dominated by Marxists and later Islamists. Political succession and transformation has been marked by violence which created chaos and instability in society and affected many aspects of life. During the civil war in the early 1990s which resulted in the establishment of the Islamic state, Afghanistan was the site of a major refugee crisis. The conflict and violence continued and its effects extended to other countries after the establishment of the Islamic state, which made even the delivery of international humanitarian aid almost impossible to some of the most vulnerable and in-need communities. The Taliban government was described by the UN and other international agencies as being inefficient, corrupt, and as contributing to the country's deteriorating situation and to worsening living standards and quality of life. In addition to the security situation and the deterioration of the socio-economic situation of the population, a number of human rights violations and crimes were committed, especially targeting women and girls. Girls and women under the Taliban rule were commonly banned from going to school, working, and leaving the house without a male chaperone as well as other cultural and economic restrictions.

In 2001 a conflict began between forces led by NATO and local Afghan alliances against Taliban forces and this led to the end of the Taliban governance of the country. However the Taliban is still an active force in Afghanistan, and is behind recent and on-going armed insurgent attacks. The Taliban conflict has affected a generation of Afghans, many of whom were deprived of education due to school closures during the conflict period and who as a consequence do not personally value education for their children. Though it is not common, the Taliban also sometimes still attack women and girls who go to school in an attempt to discourage them from attending, as was found during the GEC baseline research:

At the moment, our village is secure, however there are member of the Taliban in the village. This affects us from time to time because they [are] scared which in turn prevents them from attending school.

Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan

In January 2004, a new constitution was adopted, which was followed by presidential and parliamentary elections, and the inauguration of an era characterised as a representative democracy.

Education reform and development

The changes in 2004 led to some transformative changes in education in the country. The new constitution stipulated that nine years of education would be compulsory for both girls and boys and that education in state schools and institutions would be free up to university level. The constitution also provided a commitment to the promotion of education for women and the elimination of illiteracy. Consequently, the government committed itself to a number of objectives in its national strategic plan in 2007 focusing on eight main themes, of which key elements were enhancing access to education, improving teacher education and working conditions, developing education infrastructure and teaching and providing learning materials. The government also committed itself to long-term development goals as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2020, such as improving enrolment in basic education to 98% having at least 95% of teachers pass the national competency test; and continued support to Technical and Vocational Education programmes.²

This commitment by the national government was supported by international actors and translated into reform plans, and appears to have led to significant achievements to date. For example, in terms of access to education, the 'back to school' campaign launched by the government had a significant impact with over two million children enrolling in primary school. In 2011, the enrolment rate of primary school age children was 96% (see Table 8). The enrolment rate in secondary school rose sharply from 11% in 1999 to 49% in 2011. Since 2002 the number of schools has more than doubled and the number of teachers almost tripled.³

² National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan 2007, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Education http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/News_And_Events/pdf/2010/Afghanistan_NESP.pdf

³ UNESCO's Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14.

Table 8: Primary and secondary school enrolment trends in Afghanistan

Enrolment trends	1999	2011	% increase 1999-2011
Enrolment rate in primary schools (%)	N/A	96	N/A
Enrolment rate in secondary schools (%)	11	49	345

Source: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14

With regards to the quality of education, the Afghan government, with the help of international donors, has increased the number of teachers and built their capacity. The government has primary responsibility for running teacher training colleges, in-service regional centres, and institutes of higher education and universities. With the support of major international actors such as UNESCO and UNICEF the government has established a new unified school curriculum. Moreover, a number of textbooks for primary education were developed in several minority languages in addition to the official languages.

While these achievements are significant, baseline findings and other research stress that education in Afghanistan still does not meet the expectations of the local communities. The student/teacher ratio nationwide is still relatively high at 44:1.⁴ Schools lack facilities, equipment and furniture. This creates difficult teaching and learning environments and is likely to directly affect the enrolment and learning of students. In terms of learning, it was frequently stressed during the GEC baseline research that students have to sit on the floor or attend classes in tents, including in extreme weather conditions.

Facilities are not good and that is why our male members of the family complain about it. Some students are taught under the tent and in cold or hot weather they can become sick.

Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan

Also, while the number of schools has doubled, and many donors are contributing to the establishment of new schools, findings suggest that the distance to school still represents a challenge for many families. Baseline findings showed that this affects girls specifically as communities and caregivers tend to perceive girls as more vulnerable than boys, especially to violence and harassment on any journey.

Qualitative analysis also suggests that textbooks are not always provided by the government, and that families are not able to afford to buy textbooks when the government cannot provide them. This, in turn, affects enrolment but also learning as children are sometimes forced to share the available textbooks in the classrooms, which means some children are unable to study or prepare for their classes or tests. Baseline findings in all GEC projects' targeted areas also highlighted the issue of bureaucracy, and the lack of efficiency and professionalism of government officials. This materialised in the form of delays in delivery of goods and services to schools. It also raises questions with regards to the effectiveness of the governance structures which appear to be operationally decentralised at the provincial level but highly centralised on the policy and planning levels.

Lastly, the availability of female teachers and the lack of subject-specific teachers especially in science and math are often reported as barriers to the delivery of a quality and inclusive education. Baseline data appeared to also stress specific issues that had significant impact on education provision in schools and communities such as providing adequate salaries for teachers especially those expected to travel to remote areas to teach.

There is a school but there are no experienced teachers to teach them. The experienced teachers are not coming in this school to teach because it's a long way from here to the city, even the phone network is not working.

Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan

While gender equality with regards to enrolment in primary school has been achieved, there remains a large gender gap in secondary school enrolment. According to published figures for Afghanistan as a whole (Table 9) the enrolment rate of girls of secondary school age is half that of boys of the same age. The EM research found a smaller gap of around 10% for children aged 14 to 15 in the project areas surveyed, however these results could not be cross-checked through school visits as they had been in other SCW countries.

⁴ World Bank, 2011.

Table 9: Primary and secondary school enrolment by gender in Afghanistan

Enrolment by gender	Boys	Girls	GPI
Enrolment rate in primary schools (%)	94	98	1.04
Enrolment rate in secondary schools (%)	62	34	0.55

Source: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14

3.1.2 Economic Factors

Afghanistan is considered one of the world's least developed countries⁵. The reported percentage of the population under the national poverty line was about 36% but around half of the rest of the population are also viewed as being at high risk of falling into poverty⁶. Moreover, according to national assessments, about one-third of the population suffers from food insecurity and a further 14% are considered to be severely food-insecure.⁷ While the GDP was about \$20 billion in 2013, this figure is close to the total donor contributions made to the country that year⁸. Hence, Afghanistan relies largely on donor aid, with minor contributions from local economic activities, mainly from the informal sector.

The informal sector of the Afghan economy is based on agricultural and services activities. The International Labour Organisation describes these activities as unreliable, not sustainable and as often not providing enough income. In the case of the informal sector, the ILO notes that the sector is likely to suffer greatly when the international cash inflows starts falling as it relies on the development activities generated by donor money. On the other hand, agriculture activities are also severely affected by environmental disruptions and extreme weather conditions which hinder the potential of these activities in providing a sustainable and reliable income for households.⁹ This is evidenced by a wealth of research and also supported by GEC baseline findings. Respondents in all project areas described how relying on agriculture as the main source of living does not generate enough income to meet household needs, especially when extreme weather conditions such as flooding and hot weather occur, destroying crops and limiting income.

My husband provides for the family expenses and he is a farmer. This job does not provide a reliable income because the products will be taken at the end of year. Until then we must borrow money from relatives. Our economic situation is weak and the income from farming is not sufficient. Most of the time, we cannot cover our most basic needs.

Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan

Poverty

The literature suggests that poverty and low socio-economic status is an important reason for not sending children to school in Afghanistan, either due to costs involved in school attendance or the necessity to have children working and contributing economically to the household. Poverty, especially seasonal poverty linked to agriculture and severe weather conditions, is believed to hinder the ability of families to enrol children in schools as parents are not able to meet the cost of schools, are forced to relocate, or need children to work instead of attend school to make ends meet under such conditions.

GEC baseline findings confirm this: multidimensional poverty emerged as a fundamentally important structural and a dynamic barrier to education. The data showed direct and indirect relationships between poverty, intermediary factors such as household duties and girls' enrolment and learning in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Women, children and youth in the labour force

Despite its reputation as being a socially conservative society and the legacy of the Taliban's influence on women's rights and participation in society, women play a significant role in the Afghan economy. The ILO has estimated that the female employment-to-population rate in Afghanistan is higher than the South Asian average. Women's

⁵ Human Rights Watch (2009), Ending Child Marriage and Child Violence

⁶ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's Ministry of Economy (2010), Poverty Status in Afghanistan A Profile based on the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/08

⁷ World Food Programme, 2012.

⁸ ILO (2012), Afghanistan: Time to move to Sustainable Jobs - Study on the State of Employment in Afghanistan

⁹ ILO (2012), Afghanistan: Time to move to Sustainable Jobs - Study on the State of Employment in Afghanistan

income generating activities take place mostly at home where they have traditionally been expected to remain. This is also a finding that was reported in the GEC baseline research, as women mentioned work in tailoring, weaving carpets or rugs, embroidery or other handicrafts.

Child labour is also significant in Afghanistan. In 2007, UNICEF reported that 30% of primary school age children work in order to support their families. This proportion recorded for girls is somewhat lower in the EM baseline research, with between 5% and 15% of families reporting employment of their girl in farming or business. However, it was a recurring finding in the qualitative baseline research, with many respondents noting that children are sent to work mainly in farming in order to contribute to their families' livelihood instead of being sent to school. Girls were not widely mentioned to be involved in employment outside the home.

The economy of Afghanistan is also expected to face severe challenges in the future. Afghanistan has one of the youngest populations in the world with about 70% of its population under the age of 25. The ILO estimates that the labour force is increasing by over 400,000 each year. This means that employment opportunities are needed for both those joining the workforce each year and those who are currently unemployed or underemployed. Poor education outcomes in literacy and numeracy also suggest that the education system is limited in its ability to provide graduates equipped with the skills and the knowledge needed to make a major leap in the country's development, unless innovative solutions and greater effort are made.

3.1.3 Social Factors

General health and wellbeing

Due to continuous conflict and war, Afghan society has suffered tremendously over the last few decades. The social structure was greatly affected during these times: Many people were made refugees, and their sources of livelihood were disrupted. Women were also particularly marginalised. Findings from a piece of research conducted by the Ministry of Public Health in all provinces of Afghanistan revealed that 53% of women between 25-49 years old were married by the age of 18, and 21% were married by the age of 15.¹⁰ GEC baseline research has shown the effects of early marriage on education and the link between poverty and early marriage: Many respondents in the ACTED project area of Faryab noted that poverty caused families to arrange early marriages for their daughters in order to receive bride price.

In my idea, the girls should marry at the age of 18 to 20 but our village people sell their daughters because they are poor at the age of 10 to 14. If we did not make our daughter marry, we would send her to school.

Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan

In terms of infant and maternal mortality, Afghanistan is one of the worst countries in the world. Over half of children under five years old are reported to be physically underdeveloped and a fifth of women at child-bearing age are underweight.¹¹

Violence and education

Over thirty years of war and political instability have resulted in the destruction of the Afghan education system. The education system suffered in terms of staffing, infrastructure, curricula and student attendance, and as a result children in earlier school generations lost an average of 4.3 years of schooling¹². Literacy rates in Afghanistan are very low with only about a quarter of the population aged 15 or above are able to read and write. Perhaps surprisingly, women have higher rates of literacy than men.¹³

The impact of this legacy is significant on Afghan children today. As GEC findings suggest, parents and especially mothers who are illiterate and were denied education often do not see the value of education. General violence and violence targeting girls during the conflict were also described as barriers to girls' enrolment and attendance in schools as parents feared for their safety. Acid attacks on school girls and poisonings as a punishment for going to school and discouragement to other girls were also reported.

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch (2009), Ending Child Marriage and Child Violence

¹¹ World Food Programme, 2012.

¹² Psacharopoulos G. (2012)

¹³ DFID, 2011.

On-going conflict and violence in certain areas such as in the Faryab province was also reported to result in caregivers and families deciding not to send children, especially girls, to school.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence against women is widespread in Afghanistan. A report by Human Rights Watch stated that over 85% of women in Afghanistan reported having experienced physical, sexual, or psychological violence, or early marriage.¹⁴ GEC baseline findings also suggest that addiction to drugs such as opium, heroin, or hashish, which are quite prevalent in Afghanistan, contributes to domestic violence in addition to other problems.

3.1.4 Legislative

The new constitution obliges the government to provide free and compulsory education from Grade 1 to Grade 9 and free education to the completion of tertiary level¹⁵. Corporal punishment in schools is illegal, and according to the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) for Afghanistan, "protection officers will monitor schools and report on instances of corporal punishment of students, abuse and other rights-related issues"¹⁶.

In terms of regulating school days and attendance, a GIZ study reports¹⁷ that the Ministry of Education is responsible for determining the number of attendance days and weekly teaching hours and setting the beginning and the closing of the school year in different climatic zones. However, and according to the study, schools operate under difficult circumstances, and teacher and student absenteeism essentially interrupts and shortens learning time.

In terms of teacher qualification, the NESP also states that there is a "minimum qualification" that has been established by the National Standards of Teaching Practice, details of the standards however are not available.

3.1.5 Environment

According to 2014 Strategic Response Plan prepared by OCHA, Afghanistan is "exposed to multiple, predictable and recurrent natural hazards which are exacerbated by on-going climate change"¹⁸. The report also states that the country is ranked twelfth on the seismic risk index, twenty second on the drought risk index and twenty fourth on the flood risk index.

The occurrence of natural disasters and the extreme weather conditions in the country exacerbates the already existing challenges and problems of poverty and insecurity, and increases the vulnerability of people especially in remote areas with minimum access to services.

The effects of environmental disruptions also have a direct impact on education and especially girls' education as presented in the qualitative research findings. Seasonal weather conditions including harsh winters, spring floods, and summer droughts and hot weather in many of the projects' areas are reported to limit access to schools, city centres and markets, and sometimes force households to relocate. Natural disasters in certain provinces such as Faryab present direct barriers to girls' education by making rivers impassable during the flooding season.

Our main problem is during three months of spring, there are lots of floods and students and teachers cannot go to school, students and teachers need to cross river in order to get to school, so when there are floods they cannot go to school.

Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan

Natural disasters also present indirect barriers to girls' education by destroying crops and other livelihoods, worsening household and community poverty, and forcing households to use limited funds for basic necessities over and above the cost of girls' education and to consider marrying their daughters off early. In some schools, where classrooms are lacking or are in poor conditions, attendance can be disrupted and learning becomes extremely difficult.

¹⁴ Human Rights Watch (2009), Ending Child Marriage and Child Violence

¹⁵ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ministry of Education (2010), National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan

¹⁶ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (2011), National Risk And Vulnerability Assessment 2011 - 2012

¹⁷ Packer, Steve (2010), Education Sector Analysis Afghanistan, GIZ

¹⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2014), 2014 Strategic Response Plan

3.2 Case study: Kenya

This section focuses on Kenya, where four GEC projects are being implemented, which are summarised in Table 10.

Table 10: Overview of GEC projects in Kenya

Kenya GEC Projects	WUSC	CfBT	Leonard Cheshire Disability Kenya	I Choose Life
Window	Step Change	Step Change	Innovation	Innovation
Areas of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dadaab refugee camps Kakuma refugee camps Turkana West, Fafi/Lagdera host communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nairobi Mombasa Turkana, Samburu Marsabit Kwale Kilifi Tana River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nyanza Province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laikipia Meru Mombasa
Brief description of project	KEEP operates in northern Kenya and targets girls living in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and the Turkana West, Fafi/Lagdera host communities. It is a comprehensive intervention which focuses in three areas: (1) building girl-friendly school environments, (2) providing targeted support to female learners, and (3) generating parent and community support for girls' education.	The project works in primary schools and the communities they serve in two contexts: Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) and urban slums. The project will drive changes at four different levels: the community, the home, the school and the girl herself. It will use a holistic, integrated approach which combines interventions across the four dimensions in order to overcome the complex barriers to girls' education in these two environments.	The project operates in 5 districts in the Lake region of Kenya. The project will use a combination of practical and social solutions that will enable disabled girls to access quality mainstream primary education, and to progress to secondary education.	The project operates in three counties in Kenya and seeks to increase enrolment, attendance, and learning by addressing barriers education related to the school environment, the girls' community, as well as government policies.
Baseline results (EM data)	Enrolment: 69% Attendance: 86% Retention: 97% Literacy: 21 wpm Numeracy: 51	Enrolment: 93% Attendance: 85% Retention: 97% Literacy: 39 wpm Numeracy: 66	N/A	N/A
Baseline results (IW Project data)	N/A	N/A	Enrolment: 55% (baseline report) Attendance: N/A Retention: N/A Literacy: N/A Numeracy: N/A	Enrolment: 93% (baseline report and reanalysis) Attendance: N/A Retention: 96% (reanalysis) Literacy: Level 4 (reanalysis) Numeracy: Level 6 (reanalysis)

3.2.1 Political Factors

Political commitment and reform agenda

Under the Constitution, education in Kenya is governed and managed under a two-tier government system, the National Government and the County Governments, although the latter are mostly responsible for pre-primary education and childcare provision, which are areas that the GEC is not involved with. The Kenyan education system is relatively centralised. Everything from education policy to the management and oversight of primary schools and secondary schools, the curriculum development and the oversight of national examinations is under the remit of the National Government.

In 2012, the Ministry of Education (MoE) strategic plan stated that the "education sector is to provide Globally Competitive Quality Education and Training for Sustainable Development"¹⁹, in line with international initiatives in support of education including the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiatives. The MoE identified flagship projects including constructing and equipping 560 secondary schools, the expansion and rehabilitation of existing schools, the recruitment of 28,000 additional teachers and the establishment of a voucher programme in the five poorest districts, among others.

This follows a period of over a decade during which significant progress was made in increasing access to education: the enrolment rate in primary schools increased by a third nationally and the enrolment rate in secondary schools by nearly two thirds between 1999 and 2011 (see Table 11). While the national enrolment rate in primary schools (84%) puts Kenya on a par with other countries in the region performing well including Ghana and Ethiopia, it is still lagging behind neighbouring Rwanda and Malawi. The secondary school enrolment rate (60%), on the other hand, is one of the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa, second only to the wealthiest nations of the continent including South Africa and Botswana.

Table 11: Primary and secondary school enrolment trends in Kenya

Enrolment trends	1999	2011	% increase 1999-2011
Enrolment rate in primary schools (%)	64	84	33
Enrolment rate in secondary schools (%)	38	60	58

Source: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14

While access to education, as measured by enrolment and retention, has progressed significantly over the past decade and remains an area of focus for the Ministry of Education, the importance of learning outcomes seems to have come to the fore of the reform agenda: Kenya Vision 2030²⁰ (a national long-term development programme which provides a framework to transform Kenya into a middle-income country by 2030), recognises the need for a literate citizenry and sets targets for eliminating adult illiteracy whilst increasing learning achievements.

Political violence

Violent conflict has historically been a part of the political landscape in Kenya. This plays out largely along regional, ethnic, religious, and political party lines. Ethnic and sub-ethnic groups are engaged in disputes over a range of issues including: land, water, territorial disputes, and political control. Government officials have regularly favoured their own ethnic group for jobs and economic benefits, while neglecting other ethnic groups. As a result, fears of marginalisation and struggles for political power happen largely along ethnic lines²¹. In the violence that followed the 2008 elections, due to claims of election rigging, more than 1,200 people were killed and some 600,000 displaced.²²

Moreover, Kenya is undergoing a critical transition towards devolution. Devolution is intended to ensure more equitable service delivery and access to power and resources for all. It is enshrined in the new constitution (2010)

¹⁹ Government of Kenya (2012), A Policy Framework for Education and Training-Reforming Education and Training in Kenya. Kenya: Government of Kenya

²⁰ See <http://www.vision2030.go.ke>

²¹ Sarah Jenkins (2013). Conflict, Violence, and Insecurity in Kenya (Unpublished)

²² University of Nairobi, Department of Educational Administration and Planning, *Facts Influencing Pupils' Participation in Primary Education After 2007/2008 Post Election Violence in Kenya: The case of Maai-Mahiu Settlement Scheme.*, University of Nairobi: Kenya. <http://eap.uonbi.ac.ke/node/1429> retrieved 30 Sep 2014

and is being implemented as a result of the post-election political violence that occurred in 2008. Devolution is a complex process with mixed results to date.

These waves of political violence can cause significant disruptions in the education system: the 2008 crisis left an estimated half a million people displaced, a third of whom were children, who missed days, weeks or sometimes months of schooling as a result. Moreover, a number of teachers asked to be transferred away from highly affected areas to safer regions, which delayed reopening of schools when the unrest stopped. Even though the most recent election was generally peaceful, some children and caregivers interviewed in GEC areas did not attend school following the last election cycle, with respondents indicating fears of post-election violence as the primary reason for not attending. While mentioned less frequently, political unrest was also indicated as a hindrance for learning outcomes as children are traumatised by previous election violence and chaos:

There were some children who were coming from areas which had been affected by chaos and most of them were traumatised; and we had to do a lot of counselling before they stabilised, when they are traumatised they cannot learn or concentrate.

School official, Nairobi, Kenya

3.2.2 Economic Factors

Poverty and unemployment

There are substantial inequalities in incomes and economic opportunities in Kenya, linked to former centralised governance and political patronage systems. According to UNDP 43% of Kenyans currently live on less than \$1.25 per day²³. The unemployment rate in Kenya stands at 40%, and 70% of those unemployed are between the ages of 15 and 35²⁴. While unemployment is generally very high, there are some significant differences between regions: unemployment rates are low in Nyanza and Central, high in the Coast and in Nairobi, and very high in the North Eastern province. The largest numbers of unemployed people live in the Rift Valley, Nairobi and the Eastern Province.

Poverty in Kenya affects access to education. Challenges faced by the poor differ by regional areas and between urban and rural settings, but common issues remain. The poor face a range of structural barriers to upward mobility, including a lack of employment, inadequate housing, and inefficient or non-existing government service provision, including in education. Indeed, poverty appears to be viewed as the primary barrier to the education of girls and boys in discussions with respondents in several Kenya-based GEC project areas. Poverty appeared to also have a similar effect across the GEC targeted areas in terms of the ability for families to afford the costs of schooling (fees, uniforms, books, etc.), and in terms of influencing the household's decision of sending girls, or boys, to school, particularly when reaching secondary school age when they can engage in income generating activities instead.

However, some particularities can be found in each project, for example, in CfBT's urban communities, poverty leads children to interrupt their attendance on a weekly basis and head to the dump sites to look for items that can be sold. Poverty also appeared to be a cause of early marriage and the favouring of boy's education over girls especially in secondary education, which is analysed in more detail in the next section on social factors.

Poverty in Kenya also affects learning outcomes. In 2011, Kenya reached its highest rate of malnutrition in a decade²⁵, due to droughts, increase in food prices, political crises and large influx of refugees. An estimated one third of children in Kenya are stunted in terms of their physical growth. The devastating effects of malnutrition on learning outcomes are well documented, and were regularly reported in GEC project areas. Food availability was widely reported as one of the most notable challenges. Although respondents did not always explicitly link food availability to education outcomes, a few did note that food availability impacted on educational outcomes.

Sometimes, because of poverty, the children come home after a long day and find that there is nothing to eat and that child loses interest in school; and instead drops out to go into the streets looking for money.

Community Leader, Nairobi, Kenya

²³ UNDP (2014), Human Development Indicators.

²⁴ UNDP (2013), Kenya's Youth Employment Challenge, discussion paper .USA: 2013

²⁵OCHA (2014), The Highest Malnutrition in a Decade, Crisis Continue well into 2012. OCHA <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/kenya-highest-malnutrition-decade-crisis-continue-well-2012> retrieved 30 Sep 2014

3.2.3 Social Factors

Education in Kenya does not seem, at first sight, to favour boys over girls when simply looking at the Gender Parity Index (GPI) with regards to enrolment and retention. According to UNESCO (2014 – Table 12), the primary school enrolment rate was the same for boys and girls in 2011, although enrolment in secondary school seems higher for boys by 6 percentage points. Moreover, retention as measured by the school life expectancy²⁶ does not seem to suggest a significant marginalisation of girls compared with boys: while girls were expected in 2011 to complete 10.7 years of schooling on average, the figure for boys was 11.4, which is marginally higher.

Table 12: Primary and secondary school enrolment by gender in Kenya

Enrolment by gender	Boys	Girls	GPI
Enrolment rate in primary schools (%)	84	85	1.01
Enrolment rate in secondary schools (%)	63	57	0.90

Source: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14

Violence

Urban violence is prevalent in all of Kenya's major cities. Sometimes urban violence mirrors the ethnic conflict at communal levels. Other urban conflict drivers include youth unemployment; concentrated poverty in small areas; and closer proximity of various ethnic groups. Urban violence is therefore tied to inter-communal violence and poverty. Deterioration of public security provision has increased the division between the urban poor and the rich; with the former not having access to private security. The poorest and most vulnerable face increasing threats to their safety and security whilst a security response is limited at best; and at worst security providers are part of the problem. Urban violence has a direct impact on the education prospects of girls and boys alike. In a national survey 75% of men aged 18 to 24 reported experiencing physical violence prior to the age of 18.²⁷ Indeed, violence, insecurity and chaos were often reported as barriers to education in the Kenya-based GEC household surveys. This was reported mainly in the form of political conflict and theft of cattle. The reported impact of theft varied; it affected the resources of the family therefore the ability to afford schooling; it led children especially boys to join the men in protecting animals; it also resulted in the temporary closing down of schools.

There is constant stealing of animals, cattle raiding which normally happens in these communities surrounding the camps... Children are not able to go to school, and sometimes schools are closed.

School Official, Turkana, Kenya

In-school violence (non-sexual) is also common in various parts of Kenya, although it is not generally seen as preventing children from attending school. Physical and verbal altercations between students are relatively common in the Kenya project areas. This can involve students from the same school fighting each other as well as students from different schools fighting on occasion. Some of these altercations mirror local ethnic or clan tensions: in such cases access to education can be hindered for children coming from one or several of the clans involved.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is prevalent throughout Kenya. Countrywide, 39% of women aged 15 to 49 have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.²⁸ The most significant threat for women and girls in Kenya today is domestic and sexual violence: 21% of women aged 15 to 49 in Kenya have experienced sexual violence.²⁹

Widespread tolerance and acceptance of GBV has been reported and some forms of GBV in some communities are said to be sanctioned from a cultural perspective. Women and girls are often not aware of their rights and if they are aware they do not know how to claim them, or are unable to. GBV is frequently linked to inter-communal

²⁶ UNESCO measure this as the number of years a newly enrolled child can be expected to stay in school, on average

²⁷ UNICEF/Centres for Disease Control and Prevention/Government of Kenya (2012) Violence against children in Kenya: Findings from a 2010 survey. Summary report on the prevalence of sexual, physical and emotional violence, context of sexual violence, and health and behavioural consequences of violence experienced in childhood. Nairobi: UNICEF Country Office, page 12

²⁸ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and ICF Macro (KNBS and ICF Macro) (2010) Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2008–09. Calverton, Maryland: KNBS, page 247

²⁹ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and ICF Macro (KNBS and ICF Macro) (2010) Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2008–09. Calverton, Maryland: KNBS, page 250

violence and urban violence – there is an increase of GBV during inter-communal conflicts as well as in areas that suffer high levels of urban crime.

Unlike other forms of violence that usually affect boys and girls equally, GBV is particularly detrimental to the education prospects of girls in Kenya. Sexual assault was identified as a major concern by parents, school staff members, and community leaders in the GEC project areas, and while some boys are affected by sexual violence, the vast majority of victims are girls. Assaults take place on the way to school, in the nearby vicinity of the school, as well as in the school itself. They can also occur during raids of rival clans. They are a primary reason for parents not to send their girls to school. Enrolment, retention and attendance of girls are therefore directly impacted by GBV. The psychological trauma caused by sexual assaults is also known to impact on the concentration, and the learning of girls, even if this effect was less commonly reported among research participants in Kenya.

When a girl is a victim of sexual assaults, she becomes affected psychologically which means she cannot concentrate in her studies. Moreover, girls victim of rape often give birth while they are very young and this is a cause for dropping out of school.

Household, Turkana, Kenya

Widespread tolerance and acceptance of GBV, apathy, complacency and a “culture of silence” prevail in most parts of Kenya. A study published in 2014,³⁰ commissioned by the Irish NGO Trocaire, found that stigma and social norms surrounding GBV negatively impact on women’s ability to seek help, take up essential services, and disclose the identity of perpetrators. Some forms of GBV are said to be sanctioned by cultural norms. Others cite the splintering of extended family structures and the reduced social control and authority of elders as a driver. Often it seems that a “blind eye” is turned to even the most extreme cases involving the sexual abuse of children. Despite its prevalence, many Kenyans lack knowledge about the magnitude and long-term socio-economic impact of GBV, and the degree to which women and girls are targeted (as compared to men and boys).³¹

Knowledge, attitudes and perceptions

Perceptions of women’s role in society and attitudes towards girls’ education in Kenya harm the educational prospects of girls. GEC baseline findings suggest that many households in Kenya perceive girls’ education as unnecessary or even harmful, because after marriage these girls will become part of another household, and therefore that the investment made in her education would be lost, benefiting another family. This was especially frequent in households that were described as perceiving girls’ primary function as to get married and take care of the household. This belief was described as common among many, mostly rural, households in project areas.

The parent might think that he will educate her and she will end up married elsewhere and the parent will not benefit in anything

School official, Kilifi, Kenya

3.2.4 Legal Factors

The legal framework in Kenya is generally supportive of education, including girls’ education. It is compulsory for girls and boys between the ages of 6 to 13 (primary school age in Kenya) to attend school. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) holds that every child has a right to free basic education; and access to affordable tertiary education, training and skills development. The introduction of the Free Primary Education (FPE) and Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) programmes in 2003 and 2008 made basic education officially free in Kenya. Basic education covers two years of pre-school, eight years of primary education and four years of secondary education. Moreover, the new constitution protects every person from corporal punishment, making Kenya the 29th country worldwide to legally protect children from all corporal punishment in all settings, including the home.³² While the extent to which this legislation is enforced is a matter of debate, the legal framework exists.

³⁰ Maticka-Tyndale, E. and J. Barnett. 2014. Exploratory Study of GBV Stigma and Help-Seeking: Research Results. University of Windsor, prepared for Trocaire, Kenya.

³¹ (IRC) International Rescue Committee. 2013. A report on the Status of GBV in Kenya. Nairobi: IRC/Peace Initiative Kenya Project.

³² Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment (2010), Kenya’s New Constitution Prohibits All Corporal Punishment. Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment <http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/pages/news/kenya-prohibits.html> retrieved 30 Sep 2014

Legislation was also enacted, and governance structures set up, to improve the quality of education. The government announced it would increase the average teaching employment pattern from 18 hours to 20 hours per week while progressively increasing it to 25 hours per week³³.

There was recognition of the fact that while the Ministry of Education had a Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards mandated by the Education Act of the Laws of Kenya Cap 211 to control quality and standards through independent inspection, such measures were not functioning adequately. Minimum quality standards were not being achieved, nor were schools being regularly inspected. Moreover, school management committees existed, but they had insufficient authority to enable the efficient management of institutions³⁴.

While the Government has set objectives to improve the quality of teaching by overcoming these issues, GEC baseline findings suggest that the lack of qualified teachers remains a significant obstacle to educational performance. A frequently cited issue was the lack of teachers in the classroom. Respondents noted that some schools had over 100 students for every teacher (Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya). This barrier was described as operating in many different ways: follow up on weaker students is neglected; maintaining attendance becomes difficult and teachers are forced to teach subjects they are not equipped to teach.

3.2.5 Environmental Factors

The common hazards in parts of Kenya include floods, droughts and strong winds, among others. The disasters frequently affecting the people of Kenya include famine, disease outbreaks and droughts. While natural disasters are more frequent in certain parts of the country than others, environmental factors were reported in a number of GEC areas. Respondents in GEC project areas frequently referred to the effects of environmental disruptions, including droughts and floods, primarily in terms of the destruction of homes and schools. Access to school can be severely constrained in times of flood for affected communities. Even in the capital Nairobi, seasonal flooding and rains can disrupt school, forcing teachers to stop classes until the flood waters recede. Moreover, during dry seasons children are sometimes responsible for fetching water for their family, potentially negatively reducing attendance at school and time for study.

Water enters in the houses and usually it is a mixture of water and the sewage, since the drainage and sewerage systems are very poor or non-existent.

Household, Nairobi, Kenya

3.3 Case Study: Mozambique

This section focuses on Mozambique, where two GEC projects are being implemented, which are summarised in Table 13.

³³ Department of Education Republic of Kenya, 2012, A Policy Framework for Education. Kenya: Republic of Kenya

³⁴ Department of Education Republic of Kenya, 2012, A Policy Framework for Education. Kenya: Republic of Kenya

Table 13: Overview of GEC projects in Mozambique

Mozambique GEC Projects	Save the Children	VSO
Window	Step Change	Innovation
Areas of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaza Province (Chicualacuala, Chigubo, Guijá, Mabalane, and Mandlakaze Districts) • Manica Province (Bárue, Gondola and Guro Districts) • Tete Province (Angonia and Macanga Districts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manica Province
Brief description of project	The project plans to reach marginalised girls in three provinces and ten districts in Mozambique, enabling them to access education, to learn effectively, and to be supported to remain in school through key transition points including into secondary school.	The project is operating in seven districts of the Manica Province of Mozambique. The project will create gender responsive classrooms, communities, and home environments that support the empowerment of marginalised girls, resulting in broader livelihood outcomes and choices for marginalised girls.
Baseline results (EM data)	Enrolment: 94% Attendance: 87% Retention: 98% Literacy: 115 wpm Numeracy: 50	N/A
Baseline results (IW Project data)	N/A	Enrolment: 75% (reanalysis) Attendance: N/A Retention: 87% (reanalysis) Literacy: Level 3 (baseline report and reanalysis) Numeracy: Level 4 (reanalysis)

3.3.1 Political Factors

Political conflict and context

Mozambique gained independence in 1975 and almost immediately descended into civil war, which lasted until the mid-1990s, resulting in internal migration and a mass exodus of Portuguese residents. The anti-colonial movement Frelimo became established as the central government and espoused Marxism until the late 1980s, before transitioning to a free market economy. Areas outside the central government's zone of control were unable to receive public services, including healthcare, during the civil war,³⁵ and schools in particular were targeted by the anti-government Renamo faction because they were viewed as government infrastructure.³⁶

A peace agreement was reached in 1992, with a constitution enshrining free elections. The government faction Frelimo has won all subsequent elections and is currently in power, with Renamo the largest opposition party. Tension with Renamo guerrillas has persisted and low-level conflict against the government started up again in 2012.³⁷ Support for Frelimo and Renamo varies across different parts of Mozambique, with Renamo currently headquartered in Gorongosa.

³⁵ Pfeiffer, J (2003), "International NGOs and primary health care in Mozambique: The need for a new model of collaboration". *Social science & medicine* (1982) 56 (4): 725-38

³⁶ Newitt, Malyn (1995), *A History of Mozambique*. London: Hurst.

³⁷ BBC (2014). Mozambique profile. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13890416>

Educational Policy

Mozambique has a national education plan and department, but much of the actual administration of the education system is carried out at the Provincial Educational Directorate level. The National Education System (SNE) identifies three sub-systems of education, with Portuguese being the language of instruction in school-based education.³⁸

Mozambique has focused its educational policy on achieving universal access to primary education. The Ministry of Education launched an 'Education for All' enrolment initiative which has been on-going for at least a decade,³⁹ and abolished primary school fees in 2005.⁴⁰ Over this period, primary enrolment has increased from 69% in 2003 to 100% at present.⁴¹ However, Mozambique still lags behind other Sub-Saharan countries in terms of primary completion rates and secondary enrolment, particularly for girls.⁴²

Table 14: Primary and secondary school enrolment trends in Mozambique

Enrolment trends	1999	2011	% increase 1999-2011
Enrolment rate in primary schools (%)	52	91	75
Enrolment rate in secondary schools (%)	5	26	420

Source: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14

Despite the abolition of primary school fees, GEC baseline analysis shows that families still face financial barriers in supporting primary girls' education. Additional costs include buying uniforms, textbooks, and the opportunity cost of not having the child help with domestic chores or income generating activities.

Secondary school is not free, and many respondents also noted a significant drop-off after primary school as families cannot afford secondary school. In addition, respondents mentioned that secondary schools are often located in communities further away, which adds extra costs of commuting or accommodation.

Here the school [is primary]. It ends at 7th grade/class, so for those who finish it and move to [secondary level] 8th grade is a problem, because the secondary school is far away from here.

Community Leader, Gaza, Mozambique

Qualitative baseline research identified issues with the quality of facilities and classrooms. Some respondents linked poor quality facilities to the government's education policy and limited available resources.

The Ministry of Education introduced the Apoio Directo às Escolas (ADE) programme in 2003, with the aim of helping primary schools with small additional expenditures, including learning materials such as pencils, pens, notebooks, and readers, sports equipment and small repairs. In 2004-05, the Ministry introduced a separate support programme for HIV/AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children.⁴³

However, according to GEC baseline research, funds offered through the ADE are often not enough. Many schools faced problems with multi-grade classes, poorly maintained buildings and limited classroom capacity. Several cases reported poorly maintained facilities built of materials that are not weather resistant, with leaking roofs and increased wear and tear on the facilities.

Our buildings are old. They were built long time ago and until today there was no rehabilitation. Some ceilings are broken; also there are no windows [there are no glasses in windows]. [...] Those other classrooms built with local materials also present their problems. [...] Now when it rains the floor stay wet [...]

School staff, Gaza, Mozambique

³⁸ Ministério da Educação, Moçambique (MdE) (Feb. 2014). Programa Apoio Directo às Escolas 2014: Manual de Procedimentos, Ensino Primário.

³⁹ Open Society Initiative (2014). Mozambique. <http://www.osisa.org/mozambique/osisa-mozambique>

⁴⁰ Unicef.org. (2014). Mozambique Education [profile]. http://www.unicef.org/mozambique/education_2935.html

⁴¹ Unicef.org 2014.

⁴² DFID Mozambique.

⁴³ MdE 2014.

Respondents also mentioned lack of desks and other furniture, with children having to sit on the floor. This position was noted as being particularly uncomfortable for writing tasks. In addition, some students faced a lack of basic learning materials and stationary.

That amount [from ADE] is not enough, as we have 1,700 students and we have so many things to be done. We have to rebuild the school, buy desks and chairs, pencils, pens, exercise books. There is shortage of funds for school materials that we have to buy.

School staff, Manica, Mozambique

Some respondents noted that this led to discouraged learning leading to poor literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Teacher training and teaching quality

The quality of teaching in Mozambique is poor and learning outcomes are by some measures declining. Poor quality teaching may in part be linked to a widespread lack of qualified teachers. In 2005, some 42% of lower primary and 31% of upper primary school staff had no formal qualifications.⁴⁴ Qualified primary teachers must generally have completed grades 6 to 10 plus 2-3 years of teacher training.⁴⁵ The Ministry of Education reports that less than half of the population finishes primary school, and of those who do finish, only 8% transition to secondary school.⁴⁶

An evaluation of the levels of reading and mathematics of Mozambique's primary school pupils by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) (2012) found that Mozambique was the only country reviewed to have shown a substantial deterioration in both reading and mathematics between 2007 and 2011.⁴⁷

The emphasis on access or enrolment has also led to widening student-teacher ratios. In lower primary schools, there is an average of one teacher for 74 children, and schools often work double or triple shifts to accommodate all pupils.⁴⁸

3.3.2 Economic Factors

Mozambique has one of the fastest growing economies in the world, but the majority of its population still lives in poverty. In 1987 the government embarked on a series of macroeconomic reforms which, combined with donor assistance, has pushed Mozambique to one of the world's highest GDP growth rates over the last 15 years. Coal, titanium, and untapped oil and gas reserves make up much of the export market and attract foreign investment. Mozambique is geographically positioned to offer access to international shipping to five landlocked countries in Southern Africa.⁴⁹

Still, Mozambique is a fragile economy. Although the government has increased its revenue collection from 10% to 20% of GDP over the last decade, as of 2012, foreign assistance made up 40% of its annual budget, and Mozambique is still heavily reliant on donor countries.⁵⁰ Economic gains are concentrated in the industrial hubs of Maputo, Xai Xai, Inhambane, and other coastal cities, with rural communities seeing little improvement.⁵¹ No gains have been made in rural areas on the Millennium Development Goal to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty since 2002.⁵² More than 50% of Mozambicans live below the poverty line,⁵³ with female-headed households disproportionately experiencing poverty.⁵⁴

The proportion of economically active men and women in Mozambique is relatively equal. The high rate of female economic participation is a reflection of their de facto responsibility for the well-being of their households, which leaves no room for inactivity even if the returns to labour are low. Both rural and urban women are

⁴⁴ Open Society Initiative.

⁴⁵ Open Society Initiative.

⁴⁶ USAID (2014). Mozambique education [profile]. <http://www.usaid.gov/mozambique/education>

⁴⁷ SACMEQ.

⁴⁸ UNICEF (2014). Mozambique education [profile]. http://www.unicef.org/mozambique/education_2935.html

⁴⁹ DFID Mozambique (June 2012). Operational Plan 2011-2015.

⁵⁰ CIA World Factbook (2014). DFID Mozambique.

⁵¹ Open Society Initiative.

⁵² DFID Mozambique.

⁵³ CIA World Factbook.

⁵⁴ DFID Mozambique.

disproportionately involved in cooking, fetching water, washing, cleaning, and food processing, with rural women disproportionately involved in collecting firewood and involved as much as rural men in agriculture.⁵⁵

In the GEC SCW project baseline, 74% of respondents indicated that girls were involved in household work. Several respondents noted that most families were engaged in farming and shared the widespread attitude that it is more use for a child to work on the farm than attend school.

Most people here are farmers and think that cannot leave children to go to school because if they could allow them to attend school they would not go farming. They prefer more the agrarian work and do not value school. They do not let children to enrol at school.

Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique

Subsistence farming and unskilled labour

Formal employment in Mozambique is extremely low, and accounts for approximately 10% of the economically active population.⁵⁶ Population growth outstrips job creation, so this number is likely to fall over time. Around 80% of the population are engaged in small-scale cultivation or subsistence agriculture, although only around 12% of Mozambique's arable land is currently in use.⁵⁷ The unemployment rate is estimated at around 17%.⁵⁸ The prevalence of child labour was estimated to be around 22% in 2008.⁵⁹

GEC baseline research indicated low cultural awareness and support for girls' education, and some respondents linked this to negative perceptions of the relevance of schooling in an economy based mostly on unskilled labour.

There are so many people who did not go to school but have so much money due to tobacco so they end up under-valuing education. They see that my son has been studying for so many years but does not have anything while the other does. The parent who did not go to school thinks that school is nothing and shuns school. Digging gold is often perceived as more lucrative than going to school.

School staff, Tete, Mozambique

3.3.3 Social Factors

Mozambique is one of the least developed countries in the world, placed 185 out of 186 countries on the 2013 Human Development Index.⁶⁰

Gender parity

Despite important progress being made in areas such as political representation, education, and health, the socio-economic position of women in Mozambique remains weak, with large variations between different parts of the country in key areas such as employment, agricultural productivity, income, sexual and other types of abuse.⁶¹ In education, the gap between men and women is closing, although a substantial gap still exists in the population as a whole. Illiteracy decreased from 60% in 2001 to 48% in 2008⁶², and female illiteracy has dropped from 74% in 1997 to 56% in 2009, driven largely by female participation in adult literacy classes.⁶³ UNDP's 2013 Gender Development Index notes that men received on average 1.7 years of schooling over their lifetime, and women 0.8 years. Moreover only 1.5% of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 6% of their male counterparts.⁶⁴

GEC baseline evidence highlighted the cost of secondary education, distance to secondary schools, and early marriage for girls as barriers to girls transitioning to secondary education. Responses did not indicate that the cost of secondary education and distance to secondary schools had a disproportionate effect on girls, but reasons for

⁵⁵ Tvedten, I. (2011). Mozambique Country Case Study: Gender Equality and Development. World Development Report 2012 background paper.

⁵⁶ DFID Mozambique.

⁵⁷ DFID Mozambique.

⁵⁸ CIA World Factbook.

⁵⁹ CIA World Factbook.

⁶⁰ UNDP.

⁶¹ Tvedten / World Development Report.

⁶² Fonte (2008). Inquérito de Indicadores Múltiplos (MICS).

⁶³ Ministry of Planning and Development (2010). Poverty and Wellbeing in Mozambique: Third National Poverty Assessment. Maputo: National Directorate of Studies and Policy Analysis.

⁶⁴ UNDP (2014). Human Development Report 2014: Mozambique.

this including preference for boys' education and concerns about girls' safety when travelling long distances may be inferred from the responses.

Current statistics suggest that girls are now nearly at parity with boys in both primary and secondary enrolment as shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Primary and secondary school enrolment by gender in Mozambique

Enrolment by gender	Boys	Girls	GPI
Enrolment rate in primary schools (%)	93	88	0.95
Enrolment rate in secondary schools (%)	27	25	0.93

Source: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14

Population distribution

According to the 2007 census, about 70% of the population in Mozambique lives in rural areas. Mozambique has poor infrastructure, which combined with a relatively low population density has a particular effect on rural areas. Mozambique is the 14th least internally connected country in the world.

Mozambique has a relatively high population growth rate, at 2.6% annually, and a young population, with over 50% aged 18 or under.⁶⁵ Given the lack of formal employment, these demographic trends mean that more young people are entering into the job market than there are jobs, so informal employment and unemployment is projected to increase. However, levels of enrolment and mean years of schooling will also increase as the younger generation matures.

Sexual harassment and sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is widespread in Mozambique, particularly in schools. According to the Ministry of Education, (quoted in UNICEF 2011), 80% of girls recognise that sexual abuse occurs in schools and communities, 70% report that teachers use sexual intercourse as a condition for promotion between grades, and 50% state that not only teachers abuse them but also boys in their peer group. At the same time, 22% of the girls interviewed did not recognise forced intercourse as abuse and as many as 35% did not consider that verbal harassment constituted abuse.⁶⁶

Qualitative baseline work revealed that caregivers and community leaders commonly mentioned concerns about consensual and non-consensual sex as barriers to girls' school attendance. Girls living further away from school were seen to be at greater risk of sexual harassment or sexual assault while travelling to school. These concerns were sometimes cited as reasons for keeping girls out of school. However, some respondents also mentioned that teachers had consensual and forced relationships with underage students.

There was a teacher that had to abandon the community only with the clothes that he was wearing (luggage left behind) because he had got involved with students.

Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique

Respondents noted that households in rural communities had less access to police in these situations and tended to solve issues of sexual assault through community means.

Food security

Natural disasters have exacerbated poverty levels in Mozambique and food security is a widespread problem. One third of the population is chronically food insecure, and half a million children aged 6 to 23 months are under-nourished. 43% of children under five are malnourished.

GEC qualitative research revealed that hunger and food shortages were the most common worries for caregivers. The link between food shortage and educational outcomes was not often made, but some respondents noted that provision of food at schools had a significant impact on enrolment:

⁶⁵ Ministério de Educação (MdE), Plano Estratégico da Educação, 2012-16.

⁶⁶ UNICEF (2011). Child Poverty and Disparities in Mozambique 2010. Maputo: UNICEF. Quoted in Tvedten, I. (2011). Mozambique Country Case Study: Gender Equality and Development. World Development Report 2012 background paper.

In this community, a few years ago [schools provided] food like rice for girls so that they would not drop out of school and they ended up finishing [upper primary]. That programme ended and now we have poor attendance of girls at school.

School staff, Manica, Mozambique

Pregnancy and early marriage

In 2014, 21% of women aged 20 to 24 in Mozambique were married by the age of 15, and 56% were married by the age of 18.⁶⁷ GEC baseline findings revealed that caregivers and community leaders commonly mentioned concerns about consensual and non-consensual sex as barriers to girls' school attendance. Unplanned pregnancy, often coupled with early marriage, also caused girls to stop going to school, due to taunting and teasing from other children during pregnancy, and cultural attitudes towards women during marriage. The IW project baseline report mentioned unwanted pregnancy caused by teachers as one of the barriers to attendance.

Respondents mentioned early marriage as a barrier to girls' education within project communities. Girls who are finishing primary school, or who have started menstruation, are seen as eligible for marriage, and often their communities do not value their continuing education. Most respondents reported that once girls were married, they would not be likely to return to school.

There are many girls who after finishing this school went to secondary school but ended up dropping out to marry. Most young girls here are married. Few study. They end up thinking that even if you study you are unlikely to see it through.

School Staff, Tete, Mozambique

3.3.4 Legal Factors

The constitution of Mozambique describes education as both a 'right and duty of every citizen', and it is intended to be equally accessible to all. The education policy of the most recent government aims to eradicate illiteracy, guarantee basic education, provide access to vocational training and to provide professional training to teachers. Mozambique has ratified a number of international instruments that prioritise education, including the Jomtien Declaration, CONFINTEA V and VI, the Millennium Development Goals, the Dakar Framework for Action and the World Declaration on Population and Development.⁶⁸ Education is compulsory for the first seven years.⁶⁹

The official language of Mozambique is Portuguese, but according to the 2007 census only 11% of the population speaks it as a first language. 50% of the population aged 5 and older speak Portuguese, and the remainder speak a mix of local languages, which vary by region. The education reforms of 2004-05 included a provision for Primary Grades 1 to 2 to be taught in local language, transitioning to Portuguese as the language of instruction thereafter.

The Ministry of Education and Culture launched the 'Education for All' initiative in 2004-05, which abolished primary tuition fees and aimed to provide free textbooks, provide additional funds through the 'Direct Support to Schools' (ADE) programme, and introduced a new curriculum, including provision for teaching in mother tongue for Grades 1 and 2. These reforms also introduced automatic promotion to the next grade within primary and secondary blocks.⁷⁰ *Education for All* has been criticised for not matching its intentions with proportionate investment and funding in school materials, school infrastructure, and qualified and motivated teachers.⁷¹ One school respondent noted:

The school is located in a poor community. We receive children that cannot afford to buy exercise books. Some come with no pencil. The [ADE] fund that we have is not enough to cover the needs of all children.

School staff, Gaza, Mozambique

⁶⁷ UNICEF (2013), State of the World's Children 2013.

⁶⁸ Luis, R. (2012). Youth and Adult Learning and Education in Mozambique. Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

⁶⁹ Mozambican Ministry of Education, <http://www.mec.gov.mz/EDUCA/>

⁷⁰ Fox et al. (2012). Education Reform in Mozambique: Lessons and Challenges. World Bank. Directions in Development Working paper 68361.

⁷¹ Luis / OSI 2012.

3.3.5 Environmental Factors

Mozambique is prone to recurrent cycles of drought, floods, and cyclones, and more than 60% of the population lives in coastal areas which are vulnerable to rapid onset natural disasters.⁷² In 2000–2001 Mozambique was hit by floods which destroyed much of its already under-developed infrastructure. In 2002 a severe drought affected crop yields and flood-stricken areas in the central and southern parts of the country.⁷³ In 2013 persistent seasonal rains caused severe flooding of the Limpopo and Zambeze rivers.⁷⁴

GEC baseline findings showed that environmental disruptions can impact family assets and damage or destroy school buildings. One respondent noted that a severe storm had destroyed their local school building in 2012, and the community was still working to repair the damages a year and a half later.

3.4 Case Study: Sierra Leone

This section focuses on Sierra Leone, where two GEC projects are being implemented which are summarised in Table 16.

Table 16: Overview of GEC projects in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone GEC Projects	BRAC	PLAN
Window	Step Change	Step Change
Areas of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tonkolili, • Kono, • Bombali, • Kenema, • Bo, • Kambia, • Port Loko, • Koinadugu, • Kailahun, • Pujehun, • Moyamba and • Western Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kailahan, • Kenema, • Kono, • Moyamba and • Port Loko
Brief description of project	<p>The project operates two sets of interventions that respectively target out-of-school girls and girls enrolled in government primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>The first involves the establishment of single-teacher Community Girls Schools (CGS) in remote villages, in addition to a series of community workshops. The goal is to deliver a cycle of lower primary education to girls aged 8–12 in a way that facilitates subsequent enrolment to formal government schools.</p> <p>The second combines teacher training and peer-mentoring modules in order to improve the provision of quality education in government schools. Taken together, the ultimate objective of the programmes is to generate significant and sustainable gains in school attendance, literacy and numeracy skills, social and emotional learning, and positive attitudes towards girls' education in Sierra Leone.</p>	<p>The project seeks to improve life chances for marginalised girls by increasing access and retention in Primary School and Junior Secondary School (JSS). It also seeks to strengthen girls' learning in Primary School and JSS by making sure that girls are learning in an inclusive environment and protected from harm. The project also aims to make sure girls' voices and needs are listened to and responded to, and that girls are able to participate in decision-making concerning their education.</p>

⁷² UN World Food Programme (2014). Mozambique Overview. www.wfp.org/countries/mozambique/overview

⁷³ BBC. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13890416>

⁷⁴ UN World Food Programme 2014.

Sierra Leone GEC Projects	BRAC	PLAN
Window	Step Change	Step Change
Baseline results (EM data)	Enrolment: 83% Attendance: 86% Retention: 99% Literacy: 23 wpm Numeracy: 59	Enrolment: 82% Attendance: 87% Retention: 98% Literacy: 17 wpm Numeracy: 53

3.4.1 Political Factors

Sierra Leone is a small country lying on the West coast of Africa, with a population of about 5 million people and a large amount of natural resources. The two main ethnic groups in the country are the Temne and the Mendes, each making up about a third of the population.⁷⁵ While the official language is English, there are over a dozen distinct languages spoken. The share of the urban population is about 40% of the total population.

Sierra Leone witnessed a devastating civil war that lasted over a decade. The war, which ended with a peace declaration in 2002, resulted in about 50,000 people killed and two million people displaced, and the destruction of major infrastructure such as school buildings and homes⁷⁶.

GEC baseline findings concluded that the legacy of the civil war is present until now. This manifested itself in multiple ways, including the inability of parents to send their children to school due to poverty and a loss of resources during the war, and the destruction of schools themselves.

Education development

The education system in Sierra Leone received much attention from the early 1990s, before the eruption of the civil war. The breakthrough came in the 1991 constitution which stated that the government should strive to develop policies that will provide free and compulsory education at primary and junior secondary school levels as well as senior secondary level “as and when practical”⁷⁷. Since those commitments were made by the government, a number of policies and education programmes were launched. In 1995 and during the civil war, the government declared a new education policy establishing a new school education system and a decade long plan of action aiming to increase education opportunities to all children, youth and adults⁷⁸. In 2001, the government abolished fees for primary school education⁷⁹.

The administration of the government’s new education programmes and policies have been undergoing a decentralization process, as is the case with many African countries. The 2004 Local Government Act (Decentralization Act) transferred the management and supervision of basic education from central to local governments. According to a World Bank report, these functions which included recruitment and payment of teachers, constructions of schools and others should have been devolved by 2008. However, the findings of the report stated that the process is far from complete⁸⁰.

The government’s current ‘Education Sector Plan’ runs from 2007 to 2015, and aims “to provide basic education of quality for all in a phased manner, starting with the realisation of the right of all children to quality primary education, whilst at the same time providing marketable skills training and the relevant and appropriate tertiary education needed for advancement of the society and poverty reduction”⁸¹. The plan focuses on crucial issues such as building infrastructure, qualifying teachers, reviewing national curriculum and addressing gender disparities.

⁷⁵ Minority Rights, Sierra Leone Overview. <http://www.minorityrights.org/4807/sierra-leone/sierra-leone-overview.html>, retrieved on 01 Oct. 2014

⁷⁶ WB (2007), Education in Sierra Leone, Present Challenges, Future Opportunities.: Washington: WB

⁷⁷ Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991) <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/constitution1991.pdf>. retrieved

⁷⁸ UNESCO (2008), Status Report on Youth and Adult Education Issues, Trends, Challenges. Nairobi: UNESCO

⁷⁹ Open Society Foundation (2014). Sierra Leone Effective Delivery of Public Education Services

⁸⁰ WB (2007). Education in Sierra Leone, Present Challenges, Future Opportunities.: Washington: WB

⁸¹ IBIS (2011). Education for Change Programme 2009-2014. Sierra Leone: IBIS

In 2010, the government announced a new policy calling for the abolishment of the two-shift system at school and created an additional year in secondary level education⁸².

Despite government commitment, education has been allocated a small share of the government's budget, which has undermined its ability to meet those commitments. Education expenditure in 2011 reached 3.5% of GDP⁸³. The education system in Sierra Leone is also often described as inefficient, suffering from "corrupt and inappropriate practices, and weak management capacity"⁸⁴. GEC baseline findings confirm this perception, with many respondents expressing deep disappointment with the government's slow response to requests made by communities and schools. One community leader for example noted that:

Trained and qualified teachers wait a very long time to get approval from the government, often to no avail.

Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone

Delivery of education services

The delivery of education services for children in Sierra Leone is predominantly provided by the public sector. In addition to the government schools run by local councils, they also include religious missions and communities which receive public funds in the form of subsidies and staff salaries⁸⁵.

Access to school remains a problem in Sierra Leone. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's Education Country Status Report shows that while gross enrolment rate in primary level school is high, gross enrolment rate in junior secondary and senior secondary school stands at 62% and 32% respectively⁸⁶.

Availability of qualified teachers is also problematic in Sierra Leone. While the responsibility for hiring teachers lies with the school and the School Management Committee, teachers need to go through a lengthy government approval process in order to be added to the government's payroll. It is reported that only 60% of primary school teachers are qualified and only 25% of primary teachers are female⁸⁷.

3.4.2 Economic Factors

Poverty and unemployment

Despite its natural resources, Sierra Leone remains one of the world's poorest countries ranking 180th out of 187 countries and territories in the Human Development Index in 2011⁸⁸. About 50% of the population is reported to be below the national poverty line⁸⁹ living with less than \$1.24 a day. Unemployment is also very high, with about 70% of young people between the ages of 15 and 35 reported to be unemployed or underemployed⁹⁰. The agricultural sector is the largest employer and absorbs 70% of the labour force.

Although the country's economic growth has picked up in recent years, Sierra Leone's economic prospects are still considered very fragile. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB) the public sector is heavily reliant on foreign donors, corruption is high, institutional capacity is weak and the country's governance systems are poor⁹¹.

Poverty and education

Poverty in Sierra Leone is a main barrier to enrolment and attendance at school. A recent Open Society Foundation study (2014) showed that attendance rates are higher by about 40% for children in the highest wealth quintile as compared to the lowest quintile.

GEC baseline findings suggest that poverty in Sierra Leone affects the ability of caregivers to send children to school in multiple ways. As in Mozambique, GEC baseline findings revealed that hunger and food shortages were the most common worries for caregivers, and affect decisions about sending children to school. The inability to

⁸² Open Society Foundation (2014). Sierra Leone Effective Delivery of Public Education Services

⁸³ Government of Sierra Leone Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST) (2013). Education Country Status Report. Sierra Leone: MEST

⁸⁴ WB (2007), Education in Sierra Leone, Present Challenges, Future Opportunities.: Washington: WB

⁸⁵ Open Society Foundation (2014). Sierra Leone Effective Delivery of Public Education Services

⁸⁶ MEST (2013). Education Country Status Report. Sierra Leone: MEST

⁸⁷ World Bank (2007). Education in Sierra Leone, Present Challenges, Future Opportunities.: Washington: WB

⁸⁸ UNDP <http://www.sl.undp.org/content/sierraleone/en/home/countryinfo/> retrieved 1 Oct 2014

⁸⁹ World Bank <http://data.worldbank.org/country/sierra-leone> retrieved 1 Oct 2014

⁹⁰ UNDP <http://www.sl.undp.org/content/sierraleone/en/home/countryinfo/> retrieved 1 Oct 2014

⁹¹ African Development Bank Group (ADB) (2013). Sierra Leone Country Strategy Paper 2013-2017. ADBG

afford the costs of schooling was also often reported and while primary and junior secondary schools are free, many schools still charge a fee⁹².

I don't like the fact that there is no free education. I would like things to change and see free education for primary schools.

Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone

Other costs related to schooling including the cost of textbooks and uniforms also act as a deterrent for poor households. This was reported as a major obstacle for enrolment and attendance in school in the GEC qualitative research.

3.4.3 Social Factors

Education

While progress in the education system reform and development has been slow, significant achievements have been made with regards to school enrolment. Enrolments in primary education in Sierra Leone have surged over the last decade, doubling between 2001/02 and 2004/05⁹³. This is attributed to the end of violence as well as the free primary education policy adopted in 2001. However, the World Bank estimates that about 25% to 30% of primary school-aged children are not enrolled in school⁹⁴. Moreover, the World Bank found that about 40% of first grade entrants are aged seven or more, which indicates late enrolment⁹⁵. Secondary school participation also appears very low, with only about a third of secondary school-aged girls attending school and about 40% of boys attending school.

Literacy rates in Sierra Leone are low. Just 43% of adults and 29% of women and girls aged 15 and above are literate.⁹⁶

GEC baseline findings suggest several underlying factors to explain low attendance in schools. In addition to poverty, other factors such as girls' housework duties, community violence and negative attitude towards education especially for girls also hinder enrolment and attendance in school, and in particular, in secondary schools.

In terms of attitude, respondents in the targeted communities indicated that there still exist a perception among community members that education is not useful for girls as they will get married and therefore, have a specific role to play as a housewife. Sending girls to school was also perceived as providing them with an opportunity to mingle with boys, engage in sexual relationships and get pregnant.

[some think that] even if a girl went to school the later part [secondary school] she will get pregnant; so they do not pay much attention to girl child education.

School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone

Respondents also noted acts of violence and violations specifically targeting girls. More specifically, they mentioned sexual harassment and assault. This was sometimes reported to be taking place in school and by school staff and teachers.

Health and wellbeing

Over a third of children under five are stunted in their physical growth in Sierra Leone, and one in four infants are born with low birth weights⁹⁷. UNICEF reports also reveal that a majority of females (88%) have been subject to the traditional practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) or female cutting; 43% of women are married by the time they are 18 and 17% by the time they are 15. Over a third of females giving birth are school-age girls⁹⁸.

These facts have also appeared to be strongly linked to girls' educational marginalisation in GEC baseline findings.

They would be going to school, and then they become pregnant.... That will be the end of the girl's education, because after giving birth even if we tell them to return to school they will refuse to go to school. This is destroying girls' education in this community.

⁹² World Bank (2007). Education in Sierra Leone, Present Challenges, Future Opportunities.: Washington: WB

⁹³ MEST (2007). Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan: A Road Map to a Better Future (2007-2015): Sierra Leone: MEST

⁹⁴ WB (2007). Education in Sierra Leone, Present Challenges, Future Opportunities.: Washington: WB

⁹⁵ MEST (2013). Education Country Status Report. Sierra Leone: MEST

⁹⁶ WB (2011). Reproductive Health at a Glance Sierra Leone. WB

⁹⁷ WB (2011) Nutrition at a Glance Sierra Leone. WB: 77195

⁹⁸ UNICEF. Sierra Leone at a Glance http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone_statistics.html retrieved 1 Oct 2014

Community leader, Kailahun, Sierra Leone

Gender equality in Sierra Leone scores poorly. The country is rated the 9th worst out of a total of 146 countries in the Gender Inequality Index with a score of 0.662⁹⁹.

Child labour

About a quarter of children in the 5 to 14 age group in Sierra Leone are involved in child labour activities with girls and boys almost equally involved¹⁰⁰. Children from poor families and in rural areas are more likely to engage in economic activities and child labour. A study by the US Department of Labour concluded that these activities are generally agricultural activities, diamond mining, rock crushing, as well as working on the streets¹⁰¹. Half of child miners in Kono district (the hub of diamond mining) work 8 to 10 hours a day, and more than half work at least six days a week.

In addition to mining, engaging in agriculture activities for children is also common in Sierra Leone, and considered as an obstacle to education. GEC qualitative findings have suggested that children especially poor or orphaned children or children of illiterate parents are engaged in agricultural activities, which affects their educational prospects.

Illiterate parents, usually farmers, would rather see their children work in the farm with them. They are more likely to remove their children from school than any other group.

School official, Kono, Sierra Leone

3.4.4 Legal Factors

The constitution of 1991 recognizes education as a fundamental human right. It commits the government to direct its policies towards “ensuring that there are equal rights and adequate educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels”¹⁰². It also specifies that the government should strive to eradicate illiteracy.

In terms of legislation, the government issued important legislations especially after the war in order to reform and develop the education sector. The most important Act was the Education Act 2004 which sets out the structure, management and control of the education system. The Act also stipulated six years of primary school and three years of junior secondary as compulsory for all children¹⁰³.

While Sierra Leone’s legal framework is generally supportive of education, enforcement of specific standards and policies is lacking. For instance, corporal punishment in schools, care settings and homes is considered lawful¹⁰⁴ in Sierra Leone.

3.3.5 Environmental Factors

Sierra Leone has two main seasons, with a rainy season between May and November. The country has nine major rivers, which often overflow during the rainy season causing annual flooding and damage to their surroundings¹⁰⁵. GEC baseline findings showed that flooding regularly cause damage to people’s houses and properties, and sometimes even lead to temporary displacement.

Well some people took their belongings and left their house to move to a place where no water can reach, some houses were destroyed and some were not. After the flooding has taken place, they returned and rebuilt their houses.

Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone

GEC baseline findings also showed that during the dry season, droughts occur which make it harder for people to make ends meet, especially for families relying on agriculture as the main source of income.

⁹⁹ UNDP <http://www.sl.undp.org/content/sierraleone/en/home/countryinfo/> retrieved 1 Oct 2014

¹⁰⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) (2014), The Twin Challenge of Child Labour and Educational Marginalisation in the ECOWAS region.

¹⁰¹ US Department of Labour Bureau of International Labor Affairs (2012) Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. USA: US DOL

¹⁰² Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991) <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/constitution1991.pdf>. retrieved

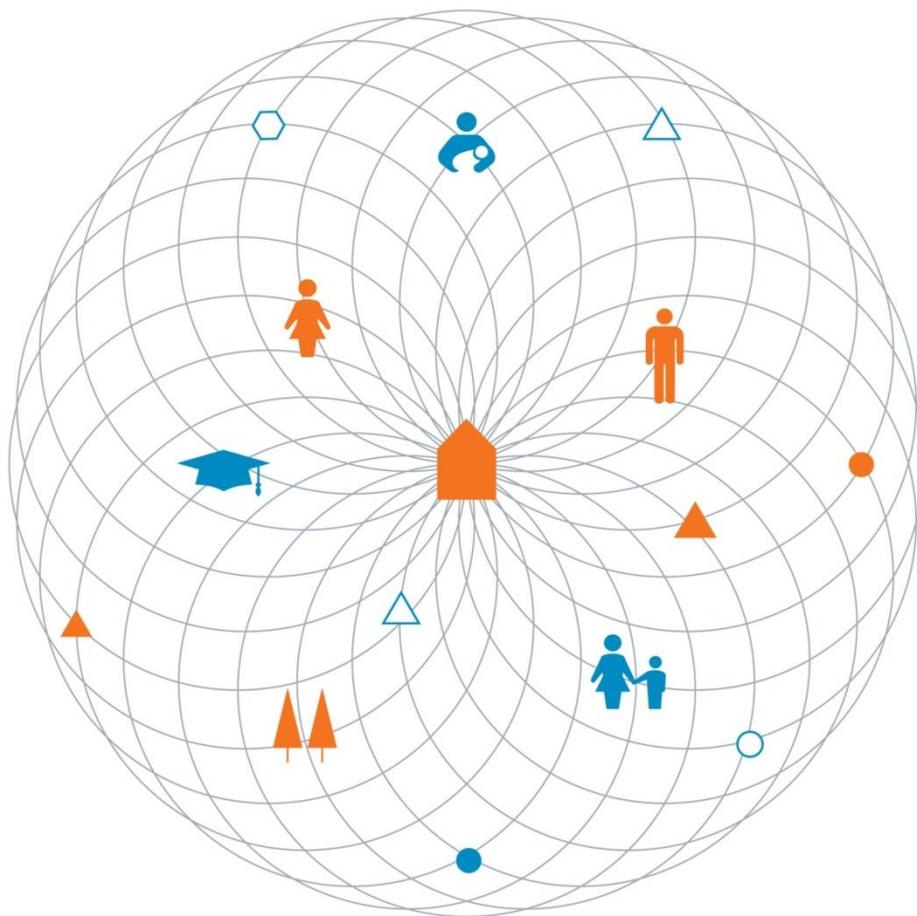
¹⁰³ <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/2004-2p.pdf> retrieved 1 Oct 2014

¹⁰⁴ Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment of Children (2013). Briefing on the Sierra Leone for the committee on the elimination of discrimination against women. OHCHR: 2013

¹⁰⁵ International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) (2012). International Disaster Response Laws (IDRL) in Sierra Leone. Geneva: IFRC

Annex B – Methodological Note

Baseline Report – Step Change Window



Annex B - Methodological Note

In this methodological note we describe the data collection and analysis underpinning the findings presented in the main report. [Section 1](#) describes our approach to the review and analysis of project documents and data. [Section 2](#) describes the EM fieldwork, covering sampling design, field work processes, data processing, quality controls and limitations. In [Section 3](#) we describe our approach analysing the EM's qualitative In-Depth-Interviews (IDIs). Finally, [Section 4](#) describes the quantitative data analysis.

1 Review of Project Documents and Data

In preparation of the SCW baseline report we reviewed a range of project-level documents to build up the evidence base about outcome levels, barriers, targeting and project design at baseline (refer to [Annex I](#) for a list of documents consulted). The main documents consulted include the following:

- Project baseline reports;
- Payment by Results (PbR) returns (Outcomes spreadsheets) documents for attendance and learning indicators.

Where required, we also consulted the following documents:

- Logframes;
- Final Design Submission (FDS);
- The EM's review of baseline reports; and
- Full Project Proposals.

Where possible, we used the final versions of these documents, and where the final versions were not available we used the most recent version. At the time of writing, baseline reports had been submitted by all 15 SCW projects.

We also reanalysed project datasets where available and possible.

1.1 Baseline Report and Design Documents

For each of the 15 projects, we systematically extracted any information that can help us answer the GEC research questions. This generally included extracting information about the following issues:

- each project's general profile and baseline activities;
- the project's definition of marginalisation and of its target group(s);
- the sample sizes that were achieved through project-level surveys for each target group;
- the project's initial expectations and actual findings related to baseline outcomes;
- the project's initial expectations and actual findings related to barriers to girls' education;
- any information related to intervention activities (pathways);
- any methodological or logistical challenges faced by the project during baseline research;
- any changes made to the project design, or M&E design as a result of baseline findings; and
- any additional data collected related to disability, marriage, boys' attendance and learning.

We ensured the consistency and reliability of the data extraction process across personnel involved by using a specific extraction template, and by reviewing a sample of four project extractions.

1.2 Project's Outcome Spreadsheets

We supplemented the information extracted from the project baseline reports with data from the projects' outcome spreadsheets that they submitted to the Fund Manager. The outcome spreadsheets identify baseline levels of attendance, literacy and numeracy, using standard reporting formats across all projects that allow for

disaggregation by age group. In the outcome spreadsheets, projects reported outcomes by grade rather than age. To convert this information, we used the official school starting age as a reference point to translate grades into the equivalent ages (i.e. the age that girls would have in a given grade, assuming that they had started at the official school starting age and not repeated any grades). We then averaged outcomes to obtain mean outcome levels for aggregate age groups (i.e. 9-11 or 14-15 year olds).

In several cases, projects did not provide data on all of the age groups targeted by their intervention. Where at least two points of measurement were available, we extrapolated the missing values, using simple linear regression. This has allowed us to estimate reasonable averages for age groups, where data had originally only been reported for one specific year/age.

1.3 Reanalysis of Project Data

At the time of writing 14 out of 15 projects had submitted project level datasets to the EM. We carried out an independent “reanalysis” of this data for a selected number of key outcomes where the relevant information was available, documented and comparable. This “reanalysis” aimed to cross-check and verify the figures and findings presented by the projects in their baseline reports; and to fill gaps where projects have not commented on all outcomes in their baseline reports even though they have collected the relevant data.

[Table 1](#) below provides an overview of the outcomes that we were able to reanalyse within each project dataset.

Table 1: Overview of project data available for reanalysis (by September 2014)

			Datasets	Enrolment	Attendance	Retention	Literacy	Numeracy	Being-in-school outcomes	Learning outcomes	General comments
5063	BRAC	Sie	6	✓	✓	✓				See note 1.	
5085	BRAC	Afg	4	✓	✓		✓	✓	Selected girl always enrolled so impossible to compute retention rate.	Oral reading subtask has no time remaining. See note 1.	
5096	Plan	Sie	5	✓	✓		✓	✓	Previous year enrolment variable possibly miscoded.		
5097	IRC	DRC	4				✓	✓	In-school survey only so impossible to compute enrolment and retention. Attendance variable missing.		Age variable missing in the OOS survey.
5098	STC	Eth	8	✓					Previous year enrolment and attendance variables missing.	See note 1.	
5099	STC	Moz	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
5101	Camfd	Z-T	2				✓	✓	In-school survey only so impossible to compute enrolment and retention.	See note 1.	
5136	WUSC	Ken	1	✓					Previous year enrolment variable missing.		
5147	AKF	Afg	0							See note 1.	No data received from project at the time of writing.
5170	ChHpe	Eth	3	✓	✓		✓	✓	Previous year enrolment variable missing. ²		
5224	Acted	Afg	1	✓	✓		✓	✓	Previous year enrolment variable possibly miscoded.		
5243	WV	Zim	12	✓	✓		✓	✓	Previous year enrolment variable missing. ²		
5252	CfBT	Ken	6	✓	✓		✓	✓	Previous year enrolment variable missing.		
5253	RI	Som	7		✓				Questions to enrolled girls only so impossible to compute enrolment and retention.	See note 1.	Age variable missing.
5274	CARE	Som	2	✓			✓	✓	Previous year enrolment is mostly missing. Attendance variables missing.		Value labels missing.

Notes:

1. In most projects we lack contextual information on learning assessments. Subtask features are missing that are necessary to compute consistent literacy and numeracy scores: their type (e.g. writing, reading, addition, number identification), the time given to complete them, their score scale, their location in the overall test scoring and timing when an aggregate score can be computed, etc. Due to missing or incomplete learning assessment variable and value labelling, we are often unable to even relate subtask to specific dataset variables.

2. Previous year enrolment in the same school only.

2 EM Fieldwork

2.1 Introduction

As the GEC Evaluation Manager we have undertaken quantitative and qualitative baseline data collection in nine countries. The fieldwork was managed and led by our consortium partner ORB International, and delivered by local research partners in each country. In this section, we outline our approach to sampling, training interviewers, collecting data, and processing data. It also provides details on quality control procedures.

The SCW baseline report considers all the qualitative and quantitative baseline data that the EM and ORB International have collected between May 2013 and July 2014 from SCW project areas in nine countries, namely Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Zimbabwe. [Table 2](#) provides an overview of the number of **quantitative household surveys** and qualitative **In-Depth-Interviews** completed and used for analysis in the SCW baseline report.

Table 2: Number of EM household surveys and qualitative In-Depth-Interviews completed and included the SCW baseline report

EM fieldwork	Quantitative Household Surveys			Qualitative In-Depth-Interviews
	Before analytical review		After analytical review	IDs completed and used in barriers analysis
Country	Completed household surveys	Camfed special target group samples	Used in outcomes analysis	
Afghanistan	1200		1199	161
DRC	402		384	49
Ethiopia	760		740	104
Kenya	913		904	110
Mozambique	412		410	54
Sierra Leone	778		771	106
Somalia	831		821	108
Tanzania	241	136	241	18
Zimbabwe	893	235	854	90
Total	6430	371	6324	800

2.2 Permissions Process

To obtain research permissions, ORB's local partners used standard country-specific protocols in most countries. In many cases this meant obtaining permission from the National Bureau of Statistics. As some of the research (i.e. school visits; school-based assessments) took place in schools, we also had to seek permission from the various Ministries of Education. In most countries, the permissions process was straightforward. However, we did encounter issues in some contexts. The permission processes in each country are described below:

- **Afghanistan** – ORB's local partner maintains general survey permission, allowing them to conduct household interviews in all provinces. As the sample did not include a school component, no special permissions to work in schools were required.

- **DRC** – ORB’s local partner obtained general research permission. In order to obtain permission from the Ministry of Education, support was required from Coffey, DFID, and the International Relief Committee.
- **Ethiopia** – ORB’s local partner managed the permissions process. They obtained general survey permission as well as permission from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women.
- **Kenya** – ORB’s local partner managed the permissions process. To gain access to the refugee camps, they obtained permits from the Department of Refugee Affairs and Windle Trust.
- **Mozambique** – ORB’s local partner obtained written permission from the National Institute of Statistics and the Ministry of Education.
- **Sierra Leone** – ORB’s local partner obtained general survey permissions. They attempted to obtain Ministry of Education permission but withdrew their request on the understanding that a permissions letter would not be required to undertake the survey. However, after in-country enumerator training, we were told that we must have Ministry of Education permission to proceed. ORB and the local partner then proceeded to obtain written permissions. DFID was also involved in the process.
- **Somalia** – ORB’s local partner, with support from the implementing projects, obtained survey permission for all regions of Somalia: Somaliland, Puntland, and South Central. More on the permissions process can be found in Section 2.8, “Issues during Fieldwork.”
- **Tanzania** – ORB’s local partner in Tanzania managed the permissions process. We were not required to obtain any special permission from the Ministry of Education because the Tanzania sample did not include a school component.
- **Zimbabwe** – ORB’s local partner was initially unsuccessful in obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education. Coffey and the local DFID office assisted in connecting ORB and ORB’s local partner to the correct individuals. Through them, we obtained research permissions first at the national level and then at the provincial levels. We also worked with the projects to facilitate the permissions process. In two Camfed locations - Chikomba West and Nyanga districts – ORB and our local partner needed direct support from Camfed. Provincial authorities in these districts refused to give permission without a letter from Camfed introducing our partner, as an independent research agency.

2.3 Description of Sampling Design and Procedure

2.3.1 Quantitative Household Sample

To complete the quantitative household sample, ORB’s local teams completed three-part surveys in randomly selected households. Surveys were completed with a first informant; a randomly selected girl aged 5-15¹; and the primary caregiver for this girl. Only surveys that included all three of these parts were included in the final sample. Households that did not include a girl eligible for selection (households with no children and households with no girls in the required age range) were given a short version of the survey.

Sample universe

The sample universe consisted of the list of project intervention and control locations supplied to the EM by the SCW projects. The EM received these lists between April 2013 and September 2013, with some modifications and revisions thereafter. Additional lists of locations arising from boosts carried out in the light of baseline research were not included. The locations consisted generally of villages or demarcated zones within a town or city. In some instances the locations were defined only in terms of schools, in which case the sample location was defined as the catchment area of the school. Project 5101 (Camfed) did not provide a community-based listing as its intervention population was located within schools. The EM asked for a listing of the home communities of girls due to receive bursaries through the project intervention and used this as a sampling frame. In these communities, a mixture of randomly selected households and purposive sampling of girls who resembled (and included) the target population in terms of receiving bursaries was used.

¹ In Tanzania and Zimbabwe, a portion of the sample included girls aged 13-17 (general) and girls aged 13-17 who had received a bursary.

Sample preparation

The projects supplied sampling frames based on a template developed by the EM. In most cases, these were not fully completed as information about issues such as geo-locations or the local population size was often missing. Some projects supplied separate sampling frames for school and community interventions, requiring additional processing to integrate into clusters for randomisation and subsequent sampling where appropriate. Samples for some contexts such as refugee camps were indicative and a full listing of sub locations was developed from available information such as maps. Some projects provided separate listings for activity to be carried out by partner NGOs and these were treated as extensions of the list and sampled accordingly.

Sample design

The design of the sample involved a selection of 40 locations per project area within each of which 10 households would be selected and surveyed giving a target sample of 400 interviews per project. The sampling points selected were not clustered geographically and the forty points were often widespread geographically. In this way the GEC sample as a whole is representative of the underlying GEC populations albeit on the basis of giving equal weight to each project context. Half of the sampling points were assigned to intervention locations and half to control locations. Where intervention and control locations were randomised, sampling from them was carried out in a systematic manner so as to provide control locations that were representative of the whole. In some projects control locations were identified by the project on an ad hoc or informal matching basis and in relatively small numbers. In these instances the control samples were selected around the requirements of the project.

In a small number of project contexts there were fewer than twenty control locations available for sampling and the number of interviews per location was increased accordingly.

Sample selection procedure

We typically drew the sample using a fixed interval and random starting point across the list of locations that we had been provided. Intervention and control locations were treated as distinct listings. This approach gives a reasonably proportional sample by region and district relative to the number of project locations and an appropriate geographical spread. We pre-sorted districts within regions or sampling points within districts where this appeared advantageous. Population information was not generally available for each location so we used selection based on equal probabilities as our default approach.

With the exception of project 5101 (Camfed) the sample selection for the EM data collection used the same sampling frame as that used for drawing the project sample. Where appropriate (i.e. where populations were relatively small) the two samples were drawn together so as to reduce overlap and maximise overall coverage. For larger population lists the two samples were drawn independently. In some instances projects gave specific instructions for their sample such as selecting locations with probability proportional to size, and in some instances sample selection was combined with the randomisation of intervention and control status.

ORB conducted all fieldwork face-to-face, using local, trained interviewers who were familiar with the territory. [Table 3](#) lists the final allocation of interviews for each country. One area, Ethiopia yielded fewer household interviews than the target set.

Table 3: Required and achieved EM household survey samples per SCW country

Country	Sample required	Sample achieved
Afghanistan	1200	1200
DRC	400	402
Ethiopia	800	760
Kenya	800	913
Mozambique	400	412
Sierra Leone	800	778 (84 refield)

Somalia	800	831
Tanzania	200	241
Zimbabwe	800	893
Total	6200	6430

Household and respondent selection

- **Stage 1: Meet with local administrators** – Upon arrival in a new sampling point, teams first met with the local administrator/area chief to discuss the purpose of the survey and receive permission to continue. During this meeting, they received a list of major landmarks and community groups in the area.
- **Stage 2: Select starting points within sampling units** – Team supervisors used the list of landmarks provided by the local administrator/area chief to sketch a rough map of the enumeration area, including at least five landmarks in urban areas and at least three in rural areas. Any semi-permanent structure such as clinics, chief's homes, boreholes, community centres, markets, and wireless network towers (with the exception of schools) could serve as a landmark. Teams used the sampling point ID to select the starting point for household interviews. If the last digit of the sampling point was even, the supervisor chose the most central landmark as the starting point. If the digit was odd, the supervisor chose the most remote landmark as the starting point.
- **Stage 3: Select dwelling** – Interviewers and their supervisor gathered at the selected starting point, and headed in different directions to start their walking pattern. Using the day code (adding the digits of the day's date together, until arriving at a single digit) the interviewer skipped the appropriate number of houses and started his/her assignment at the next house number, counting from the left. Using the appropriate sampling interval (every three in rural areas and every five in urban areas), the interviewer randomly selected additional other houses on this street to interview.

Example:

If the interview was being conducted on May 23, the interviewer would have added (2+3= 5), thereby skipping 5 dwellings, and would have started on the 6th dwelling on the left side of the street. In an urban area, after the first dwelling they would have stopped at every 5th dwelling for an interview; in a rural area, at every 3rd dwelling. If there were multiple households within the selected dwelling, the interviewers continued the skip pattern within the dwelling to determine the specific household for interview.

- **Stage 4: Respondent selection:** Once a household or dwelling was identified, the interviewer surveyed the first available adult that could accurately speak about the composition of the household. The interviewer completed the "first informant" survey with this individual. As part of this survey, all girls aged 5-15² were listed and the tablet randomly selected one. If an interviewer needed to use paper to complete the survey due to tablet malfunction, a Kish grid was used to randomly select a girl. If the household did not include any girls within the age range, a short survey was conducted and the interview terminated. In households with eligible girls, after completing the "first informant" survey, the tablet identified a randomly selected girl aged 5-15 and the interviewer completed a "caregiver" survey with the primary caregiver of the selected girl and then, if the caregiver gave consent, completed a "girl" survey and a set of reading and maths assessment with the randomly selected girl herself.

Alternate sampling procedures – Camfed sample in Tanzania and Zimbabwe

Unlike in other countries, the Camfed samples in Tanzania and Zimbabwe targeted girls aged 5-17. Interviewers completed three different walk types, as follows:

1. Walk A: Same methodology used in all other GEC countries targeting girls aged 5-15.
2. Walk B: Same household selection methodology as in other GEC countries but targeting girls aged 13-17 who had completed primary school through at least P4.

² In Tanzania and Zimbabwe, a portion of the sample included girls aged 13-17 (general) and girls aged 13-17 who had completed primary school through P4 and had received a bursary.

3. Walk C: Purposive selection of girls aged 13-17 who had completed primary school through at least P4 and had recently received or are currently receiving a bursary.
 - **Stage 1: Meet with local administrators** – Upon arrival in a new sampling point, teams first met with the local administrator/area chief to discuss the purpose of the survey and receive permission to continue. During this meeting, they received a list of major landmarks and community groups in the area. Teams also received names and contact details for administrators of area schools.
 - **Stage 2: Visit area primary schools** – Team supervisors visited each named area primary school to obtain contact details and locations for families in the area who have girls aged 13-17 who completed primary school at least through P4 and had recently or were currently receiving a bursary. In some sampling points, teams needed to select 3 girls to survey. In other sampling points they needed to select five girls. If more than 3/5 girls were eligible in a given sampling point, supervisors used the day code to select among them.
 - **Stage 3: Complete walk C interviews** – To ensure that selected walk C girls were not randomly selected for another walk type survey, teams completed the walk C interviews first. If an interviewer could not contact the family after three call-backs or if the family/selected girl did not consent to the survey, a substitute girl was selected from the original list.
 - **Stage 4: Select dwellings for walk A and walk B interviews** – Once walk C interviews were complete, teams completed the required number of walk A and walk B interviews using the standard GEC selection methodology described in the previous section. Teams selected starting points using the sampling point ID, gathered at the selected starting point, and headed in different directions to start their walking pattern. Using the day code (adding the digits of the day's date together, until arriving at a single digit) the interviewer skipped the appropriate number of houses and started his/her assignment at the next house number, counting from the left. Using the appropriate sampling interval (every 3 in rural areas and every 5 in urban areas), the interviewer randomly selected additional other houses on this street to interview.
 - **Stage 5: Selection of walk A/walk B respondents** – Once a household or dwelling was identified, the interviewer surveyed the first available adult that could accurately speak about the composition of the household. The interviewer completed the "first informant" survey with this individual. For walk A surveys, all girls aged 5-15 were listed and the tablet randomly selected one. For walk B surveys, all girls aged 13-17 who had completed primary school through at least P4 were listed and the tablet randomly selected one. If an interviewer needed to use paper to complete the survey due to tablet malfunction, a Kish grid was used to randomly select a girl. If the household did not include any girls within the age range, a short survey was selected and the interview terminated. In households with eligible girls, after completing the "first informant" survey, the interviewer completed a "caregiver" survey with the primary caregiver of the randomly selected girl and then, if the caregiver gave consent, the interviewer completed a "girl" survey and a set of reading and maths assessment with the randomly selected girl herself.

Kenya household boost sample

In Kenya, initial baseline research included four locations in Nairobi and Mombasa that were subsequently rejected as ineligible. A team returned to the field in January 2014 to complete a small boost sample of 50 households across 5 locations. These boost surveys were completed using the standard GEC selection methodology described above.

Exclusions from the sample

No population was excluded from the sample. Households that did not include at least one eligible girl aged 5-15 received a short version of the survey.

2.3.2 Quantitative School Visit Sample

Interviewers visited all schools identified as being attended by the girls selected at the household level. They completed a survey with the school's administrator and with each individual girl's teacher.

Sample universe

The sample universe is here defined in relation to the sample universe of the household survey described above. It does not represent a distinct sample universe relating to schools, but essentially adds information about the

educational experiences and circumstances of a random sample of girls with the project areas to the data collected from the households of interest.

Table 4 lists the final allocation of interviews for each country. The Camfed samples in Tanzania and Zimbabwe did not require interviewers to complete school surveys for randomly selected girls.

Table 4: Achieved distribution of school visit Interviews

Country	Number of school visit interviews achieved
Afghanistan	N/A
DRC	106
Ethiopia	539
Kenya	723
Mozambique	362
Sierra Leone	488 (75 refield)
Somalia	361
Zimbabwe (World Vision sample only)	408
Total	2981

School selection

- Stage 1: School selection** – Throughout completion of the household surveys, interviewers collected the names of schools attended by all selected girls. In each household, if the girl's primary caregiver said the girl was enrolled in school, interviewers recorded the name of the school, the name of the girl's teacher, and obtained consent to visit the school and collect attendance and grade information for her. This data was compiled in the field by team supervisors, and teams were sent to each school after the household interviews had been completed. A school survey was completed for all enrolled girls for whom the interviewer received consent from the caregiver.
- Stage 2: Respondent selection** – Upon arrival at the school, interviewers surveyed the school administrator and each of the randomly selected girl's teachers. In some cases, interviewers arrived at the school to find that the randomly selected girl was not actually enrolled. Interviewers recorded this data and proceeded to complete surveys with the teachers of all girls who were listed as being enrolled.

Exclusions from the sample

If a randomly selected girl was enrolled in a boarding school that was located outside of the sampling point area, interviewers did not visit the school or complete interviews with the schools' administrator and teachers. Additionally, any local schools not attended by one of the girls randomly selected at the household level were excluded. No school visits were carried out in Afghanistan in order to avoid any tensions that may have arisen in the run up to the national elections.

2.3.3 Qualitative Sample

Qualitative In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were completed in about 14% of the sampling points chosen for the quantitative sample. Local teams completed qualitative interviews with household, schools, and community groups.

Sample universe – The sample universe for the IDIs is defined in relation to the sample universe of the household survey described above. All sample locations that were selected for the household survey (and thus all project locations) were eligible for selection for qualitative sampling.

Sample preparation – The preparation consisted of selecting the household survey sampling locations.

Sample design and selection – The design was for nine locations in each project drawn from the forty sample household survey locations in three groups of three with some geographical clustering. These were grouped in three sets of three locations with some geographical clustering. This facilitated training and logistical arrangements and the supervision and quality assurance of qualitative sampling and provided some geographical relatedness within each group so that regional issues could be explored without being dominated by a specific (outlier) village. Two of the three locations selected in each group were intervention and one control. Within each location a number of households from the household survey were interviewed along with a sample of teachers and community leaders as described below

Sample selection – Three initial locations were chosen from the forty at random spread across the household survey sample listing thus obtaining broad regional representation mirroring that of the household survey. Then for each of these three locations two other “nearby” locations within the household survey sample were selected. Hence each location in the household survey and the underlying project sample frame had an equal chance of selection. Because of the dispersion of the underlying household sample, in projects with very large sampling universes, the three locations in a group were still relatively distant from one another.

ORB conducted all fieldwork face-to-face, using local, trained interviewers who were familiar with the territory in which they worked. [Table 5](#) lists the final allocation of IDIs for each country, and the number of IDIs that were actually achieved.

Table 5: Number of qualitative In-Depth-Interviews achieved in each country

Country	EM Qualitative In-Depth-Interviews	
	Intended distribution of interviews	Sample achieved
Afghanistan	162	161
DRC	54	49
Ethiopia	108	104
Kenya	108	110
Mozambique	54	54
Sierra Leone	108	106
Somalia	108	108
Tanzania	18	18
Zimbabwe	90	90
Total	810	800

Respondent selection

- **Household level:** During the quantitative household survey, if the area was a designated qualitative interviewing location, interviewers asked caregivers if they consented to participating in a second interview. Supervisors compiled the names of all who consented and randomly selected among them. Qualitative interviewers returned to these selected household and completed IDIs with the primary caregiver and randomly selected girl.
- **School level:** Upon completion of the quantitative household survey, team supervisors randomly selected 1-2 schools from the list of local schools attended by the randomly selected girls. Interviewers completed

an IDI with either the school administrator or head teacher at these schools. In cases where the administrator chose not to participate, an IDI was completed with another randomly selected teacher in the school. In such cases, teams listed all available teachers and used the day code to select one for the interview.

- **Community leader level:** Team supervisors used the list of local community groups provided by the local administrator/area chief to select a respondent for the community leader IDI. Supervisors listed all groups/individuals that dealt with gender, youth, women's, or education issues and used the day code to select 1-2 groups from the list. Once a group was selected, a randomly selected member of this group was interviewed. In many cases, if local groups did not exist or if participants could not be found, the local administrator/area chief him/herself was interviewed.

Exclusions from the sample

Households and schools that were not selected for the quantitative survey were excluded. Community leaders/groups that were politically or religiously affiliated were also excluded.

Special methodology used in Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, ORB's local partner completed the majority of In-Depth Interviews using voice recorders, which allowed for the interviews to be transcribed word-for-word afterwards. However, in some cases, interviewers were not able to record the interviews and instead relied on note taking to capture the respondents' answers.

2.3.4 School-Based Assessment Sample

In four countries, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sierra Leone, ORB completed school assessments at selected schools. Either one or two schools were selected per sampling point in each country. At each school, local teams completed one observation of the school facilities, two classroom observations, two teacher surveys, and 32 Early Grade Reading (EGRA) and Early Grade Maths (EGMA) assessments³ with boys and girls in primary 2 (P2) and primary 4 (P4) grades.

Sample Universe – The sample universe for the school assessment sample is related to that for the household survey, but not exactly the same. The intention is for the universe to reflect the universe of primary schools operating and potentially supported by the project in the project areas along with that of control schools in control locations. This meant that some locations selected for household interviews would not be eligible for the schools assessment sample. However rather than resample from the list of locations (not all of which would have a school) the sample for the household survey (as a random sample) was used as a core sample with additional selection as required. Since this was a survey of school populations rather than of household populations, in all locations schools would be selected based on their relevance to the project activity or at random in control areas without regard to any schools identified during the household visits. The net effect being to generate a random sample of the defined universe, but with maximal overlap and comparability with the household survey sample.

Sample preparation – The EM drew this sample based on the household survey sampling frame.

Sample design – The design called for forty schools across each project area representing the population of schools in the project that were either classified as intervention schools or control schools (for projects areas where there were existing schools). By default the forty sampled locations for the household survey formed the basis of the sample. Within that set of locations the schools to be assessed were, where possible, those schools identified by the project as being an intervention school. In some intervention locations and in all control locations a school was not identified by the project and in those locations a school was chosen at random if more than one school was present in the location. In some contexts, there had been fewer than forty locations sampled or locations had been substituted by the time the sample was drawn or it was known from prior household surveys that no school was present in the location. In these instances new locations were drawn from the original project sampling frame using a random approach equivalent to the original sampling for the household survey.

Sample selection procedure – The sample was developed by the Evaluation Manager from the household survey sampling frame.

ORB conducted all fieldwork face-to-face, using local, trained interviewers who were familiar with the territory in which they worked. [Table 6](#) lists the final allocation of interviews for each country.

³ In some schools in Sierra Leone, teams completed 40 assessments instead of 32.

Table 6: Achieved samples in the school-based assessment

Achieved samples (SBA)	School-based assessment – samples achieved		
	Classroom and facility observations	Teacher surveys	EGRA/EGMA assessments
DRC	62	60	1203
Ethiopia	138	146	2321
Kenya	68	67	1327
Sierra Leone	138	154	2386
Total	406	427	7237

Respondent selection

- **Stage 1: Classroom observation selection** – Where possible, interviewers completed one classroom observation per targeted grade year. Upon arrival at the selected school, interviewers listed all P2 and P4 classes and randomly selected one using the day code. If the same teacher taught P2 and P4 classes in the same room, two interviewers worked together. One interviewer recorded information on all P2 aged students and the other recorded information on all P4 aged students. If the school did not include a P4 class, interviewers completed the observation in a P3 classroom.
- **Stage 2: Teacher survey selection** – Interviewers surveyed the teachers of the P2 and P4 classes selected for the classroom observation. If a teacher refused the survey, interviewers attempted to survey another randomly selected teacher for the same grade year. If P2 and P4 classes were taught by the same teacher, another teacher from the same school was selected at random using the day code.
- **Stage 3: Student selection for EGRA/EGMA** – Interviewers recorded the names of all boys and all girls present in each P2 and P4 classroom selected for the classroom observation. From these lists, 16 students – 8 boys and 8 girls – were selected for each grade year using the day code⁴.

Exclusions from the sample

Schools were purposively selected for assessments. Any school not selected was excluded from the sample.

2.4 Details of Field Interviewing

Fieldwork took place between April 2013 and June 2014. In each individual country, all quantitative and qualitative fieldwork took about six weeks to complete. School assessments were completed at the same time as all other fieldwork in DRC, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone. In Kenya, the school assessments started about six months after the household survey fieldwork ended.

2.4.1 Field Dates

Table 7 lists the dates for field interviewing by country.

⁴ In some schools, there were not enough girl/boy students to complete 8 with each gender in each grade year. In these cases, interviewers were allowed to slightly oversample (up to two additional assessments) if there were enough available students of a particular gender. If the required number of girl/boy students were still not available, interviewers completed the additional assessments with P3 students. If the required number of girl/boy students were still not available after including P3 students, a boost school was randomly selected to provide the additional assessments while maintaining the gender balance.

Table 7: Timescales for field research by country

Country	Dates	Number of Interviews	% of the total sample
Afghanistan	Apr 2014 – May 2014	1200	19%
DRC	Nov 2013 – Dec 2013	402	6%
Ethiopia	Dec 2013 – Jan 2014	760	12%
Kenya	May 2013 – Sep 2013; May 2014 ¹	913	14%
Mozambique	Jun 2013 – Jul 2013	412	6%
Sierra Leone	Mar 2014 – Jun 2014	778	12%
Somalia	April 2014 – Jun 2014	806	13%
Tanzania	Jul 2013– Aug 2013	241	4%
Zimbabwe	Nov 2013 – Jan 2014 ²	893	14%

2.4.2 Fieldwork Governance and Selection of Interviewers

In each individual country, ORB worked with local partners that specialise in market, social, and opinion research. Our local partners were responsible for recruiting quantitative and qualitative interviewers and supervisors and overseeing fieldwork. In all countries, interviewers were recruited based on previous research experience, completion of (at least) secondary school, local language abilities, and familiarity with the areas in which they worked. In general, supervisors were selected based on previous experience as interviewers.

2.4.3 Training of Interviewers

ORB worked with RTI to conduct interviewer and supervisor training in the administration of the survey questionnaire, and the EGRA/EGMA tests over a two-week period in each country's capital city. Sessions covered a range of subjects including field methodology, questionnaire review, quality control, and pilot test review.

RTI training lasted five days and covered all aspects of administering the EGRA/EGMA assessments. Three full days focused on introducing the team to the EGRA/EGMA tools and learning how to administer them in the field. Over the course of these three days, at least two inter-rater reliability (IRR) assessments were performed to ensure that all interviewers administered the assessments accurately. On the fourth day of RTI training all interviewers participated in a school-based pilot. Each interviewer was tasked with completing at least three full EGRA/EGMA assessments with primary school aged children. The fifth day of RTI training included a review of the pilot, an additional IRR, and final questions and comments.

ORB's portion of the training typically lasted between seven and eight days, depending on the country. The first day of training focused on field methodology, the ethics of working with children and interview techniques. Quality control issues were also strongly emphasised. The following topics were covered:

- Field organisation reminders for supervisors, managers, interviews;
- Proper interviewing techniques;
- Household selection procedure;
- Respondent selection procedure and use of the Kish grid;
- Call-backs and non-response;

- Tracking refusals;
- Importance of probing, interview techniques and interviewer etiquette;
- General rules for working with children; and
- The importance of obtaining consent for all survey portions.

Training continued with a question-by-question explanation of the household and school surveys. We addressed questions on the intent of certain questions, ways to probe for answers, and routing/filtering. All questionnaires were reviewed on paper first to ensure full comprehension of the different survey possibilities. After review of the paper questionnaires, the surveys were reviewed on the tablets. All teams then practiced all surveys on the tablets through mock interviews. Interviewers paired up and practiced the questionnaire with each other. This was a time consuming process, as individuals played the alternating role of interviewer/interviewee, but it helped to further familiarise them with the questionnaire and its implementation. Local staff performed spot checks throughout the mock interviews to identify any issues with performance or comprehension. Several questions were flagged as problematic for interviewers – these questions were reviewed in-depth after mock interviews were complete.

Qualitative interviewers received specialist training on the IDI instruments. This generally happened while the quantitative team was reviewing the quantitative surveys on tablets. Each IDI guide was discussed in depth to ensure comprehension. The qualitative team then completed a group exercise in which two interviewers performed a mock interview in front of the rest of the group. After completing a section of the guide, those not participating in the public mock interview provided feedback on what they thought the team did well and what they thought needed improvement. Each interviewer was given the opportunity to participate as interviewer. This exercise often took considerable time but feedback from the qualitative groups in all countries indicates that this was the most useful training tool for them as they were able to learn important interviewing techniques and methods of probing for information from each other. Once the group mock was finished, interviewers worked in pairs and completed additional mock interviews of each of the three guides.

School assessment training

Fieldwork in four countries – Kenya, DRC, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone – included school assessments. In these four countries, ORB completed an additional three days of training. The first day introduced local teams to the methodology for completing the assessment. All survey instruments were reviewed line-by-line on paper and then (where applicable) on tablets. Particular emphasis was placed on the difference between the school assessments and the school survey portion of the household fieldwork. On the second day of training, all interviewers participated in a pilot of all instruments. Each interviewer completed one classroom observation, one facilities observation, one teacher survey, and at least two EGRA/EGMA assessments. ORB reviewed the uploaded data after the pilot and reviewed the results with the teams on the third day of school assessment training.

2.4.4 Pilot Testing

Teams completed two full days of piloting in each country. Both quantitative and qualitative teams participated in the pilot. In all countries, teams travelled to a rural/semi-rural/peri-urban area to complete pilot interviews of all survey instruments. On the first day of piloting, the quantitative team completed two full household surveys each. Qualitative interviewers completed group IDIs with community leaders and individual IDIs with households. For the group IDIs, several qualitative interviewers worked together to complete one interview with a single respondent. Each interviewer had the opportunity to ask a subset of the questions in the guide.

On the second day of piloting, quantitative interviewers completed group interviews of school administrators and teachers. Due to the large number of interviewers participating in the pilot, they worked in small groups to complete one interview with a single respondent. Each interviewer had the opportunity to ask a subset of the questions. All interviewers recorded all survey data in their individual tablets. Quantitative interviewers also completed one additional household survey. Qualitative interviewers completed a group IDI with a school administrator/head teacher and an additional household IDI.

ORB checked all quantitative data obtained during the pilot. This data and the piloting experience were discussed during a pilot review session. We discussed what went well and identified areas for improvement. All problematic questions were reviewed.

2.5 Refusals

Respondent substitution

If selected respondents were not able or willing to be interviewed, interviewers moved to the next house for recruitment. Family members – including eligible girls aged 5 to 15 - were not substituted. Efforts were made if the selected individual was not in the house to contact them by phone or to locate them nearby. If when reached, they said they were willing to accept an appointment, then another time was arranged for them for the interview.

If the selected respondent was at home but refused to cooperate, the interview was regarded as an ineffective call, recorded as such, and the interviewer proceeded to the next household in the skip pattern.

To allow for the calculation of non-response rates, interviewers recorded each ineffective attempt to carry out an interview, specifying one of the following reasons:

- No interview - No one at home
- No interview - No adult at home
- No interview - Adult requests reschedule
- No interview - Respondent couldn't speak any language in common with the interviewer
- No interview – Other reason
- Refusal - Adults not able to interview (illness / infirmity)
- Refusal - Adults say reschedule is not possible
- Refusal - Direct refusal
- Refusal - other reason
- Refusal - illness of the child (data collected only if this response was given spontaneously)

Ineligible households and refusals

If a randomly selected household did not include at least one girl aged 5-15, the household was ineligible for the survey. In these cases, the “first informant” survey terminated and interviewers completed a short, two-question survey with the adult first information before continuing to the next household in the skip pattern. Data for these “short surveys,” as well data collected for all household refusals was collated and delivered separately from the full household survey cases.

No teams in any of the nine countries experienced high rates of ineligible households or household refusals. The total number of each is listed by country in [Table 8](#) below.

Table 8: Refusals by country

Number and percentage of refusals by country		Full Household surveys	Short Household Surveys	Refusals	Total Contacts
Afghanistan	Number achieved	1200	6	24	1230
	Percentage of total contacts	98%	<1%	2%	100%
DRC	Number achieved	402	4	8	414
	Percentage of total contacts	97%	1%	2%	100%
Ethiopia	Number achieved	760	308	5	1073
	Percentage of total contacts	71%	29%	0%	100%
Kenya	Number achieved	854	203	36	1093
	Percentage of total contacts	78%	19%	3%	100%
Mozambique	Number achieved	412	57	29	498
	Percentage of total contacts	83%	11%	6%	100%
Sierra Leone	Number achieved	778	29	6	813
	Percentage of total contacts	96%	4%	<1%	100%
Somalia	Number achieved	806	16	4	826
	Percentage of total contacts	98%	2%	<1%	100%
Tanzania	Number achieved	241	22	5	268
	Percentage of total contacts	90%	8%	2%	100%
Zimbabwe	Number achieved	893	301	49	1243
	Percentage of total contacts	72%	24%	4%	100%

Of the 166 total refusals received across the nine countries, the majority were classified as “direct refusals.” The second highest reason for refusal was due to the inability of teams to find any family member at the selected home during four attempted visits (initial contact plus three call-backs). A breakdown of refusal types by country is listed below in [Table 9](#).

Table 9: Reasons for refusal of interviews by Country

Reason for refusal		Country									
		Afg.	DRC	Eth.	Ken.	Moz.	SL	Som.	Tan.	Zim.	Total
No Interview	Nobody at home	0	0	0	3	12	1	1	2	21	40
	No adult at home	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	1	16	25
	Adult requests reschedule	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
	Language / communication issues ¹	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Other reason	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	8
Refusal	Adults unable to interview (e.g. illness)	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	4
	Adults say reschedule not possible	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Direct refusal	20	4	2	25	2	3	2	0	7	65
	Other reason	0	2	0	7	2	1	0	2	3	17
Other	Illness of child	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total		24	8	5	36	29	6	4	5	49	166

Note 1: Respondent couldn't speak any language in common with the interviewer.

2.6 Enforcement of Quality Controls

The EM implements rigorous standards during fieldwork to ensure quality control. Quality control was a high priority during the completion of fieldwork and numerous quality control measures were implemented.

To ensure that no interviewer has the ability to bias the results of the survey by producing false results, no individual interviewer was allowed to conduct more than five per cent of the total number of interviews. To ensure proper completion, the team supervisors checked all of the questionnaires. This was done each evening of fieldwork to identify and correct any potential issues as they occurred. Team members met every evening to discuss their experiences and any problems they faced during that particular day, and worked together to build strategies to overcome future problems.

Team supervisors were required to accompany a minimum of 10 per cent of the interviews conducted by each interviewer, checking that the correct instructions and procedures were being followed and the interviewing was of a high standard. Interviewer accompaniment took place predominantly at the beginning of fieldwork so that problems could be identified early on, and learning could be shared with the rest of the team.

Team supervisors were also required to back-check approximately 20 per cent of all interviews conducted by each interviewer. Back checking includes contacting the respondent directly in-person to ensure that the interview was done and checking the length of interview, as well as a selection of fact-based questions. Interviewers used paper

cover sheets to record information such as name of the randomly selected girl, school enrolment status, and school name during the household interview. This data was confirmed during the back check process.

2.7 Data Processing

ORB worked with the local teams to ensure that the data delivered is of high quality. Below we provide an overview of the data entry process.

2.7.1 Data Entry

Teams in all countries except Afghanistan used Nexus 7 tablets for quantitative data collection. Use of the tablets removed the need for data entry as all data was captured electronically during each interview. Data was collated in Tangerine and exported into SPSS.

2.7.2 Data Merging

Both the household and school surveys were completed in pieces. A full household survey was composed of three parts (first informant, caregiver, and girl) and a full school survey was composed of two parts (school administrator and school girl). The survey pieces were linked using a unique ID – household ID for household surveys and school ID for school surveys. Upon completion of fieldwork, ORB created full cases using Stata syntax that merged survey pieces using these unique identifiers.

2.7.3 Data Cleaning

ORB worked with the local teams to clean the household dataset. Data cleaning included recoding several administrative variables, creating some new variables to display data not captured by the PDAs, and disaggregating data for multiple-response questions.

2.7.4 Weighting

The data is not weighted prior to analysis. Since non-response averages three per cent and less than seven per cent for all projects no non-response weighting has been developed, nor is data weighted to local population totals since these are generally not known and regional totals do not correspond to project locations areas. Analytical weights would instead be developed as required for specific analytical purposes.

2.8 Issues During Fieldwork

No major obstacles significantly affected the course of fieldwork. However, several issues emerged that affected field progress. [Table 10](#) provides an overview of the general challenges faced by field teams in several countries throughout the survey.

Table 10: General issues that arose during fieldwork

Countries	Issue	Action taken
Ethiopia , Kenya, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe	Tablets were held by customs agents upon arrival in the country causing delays in training.	ORB paid customs fees to have the tablets released.
All countries	Network coverage in many areas was poor making it hard for assessors and supervisors to communicate in case of need or for follow up or supervision purposes.	Teams often used local guides who would keep an eye on the households that were interviewed in to aid supervisors should they need to find their teams.
All countries	Network coverage in many areas was poor, making uploading of data challenging. The Tangerine software used to collect survey data required constant, strong, 3G-network access, which is non-existent in many areas.	Teams often waited until they were in urban areas/areas with strong network connectivity before uploading, which increased the risk of losing data and made checking the data difficult.
All countries	In many areas, teams lacked access to electricity to charge tablets and Wi-Fi routers.	<p>All teams were given car chargers to use, which helped but did not fully resolve the problem. In areas with no electricity, teams charged devices when they could and used paper copies of the survey when they could not. All data from paper copies was transferred to the tablets as soon as they were charged.</p> <p>In Zimbabwe, one team purchased diesel to give to an individual with a generator and worked from that for two days.</p>
All countries	Unavailable/busy school personnel	When trying to complete the school portion of the survey (school administrator and school teacher surveys), teams often found that schools did not have good records (or any written records at all) and many school personnel did not have the time to sit for long periods of time to complete the surveys. This resulted in fieldwork delays as teams waited for school personnel to collect whatever information was available.
All countries	Misreporting school enrolment. As might be expected, in all countries, teams found that some caregivers said that their girls were enrolled in school. Upon arriving at the named schools however, teams found that the girls were not actually enrolled. This made it difficult to confirm completion of the school surveys.	Teams had to work to ensure that the schools had been properly identified and that the girls were correctly defined. Care had been taken to provide this information in the questionnaire but some additional diligence was required

Table 11 provides an overview of more specific issues and incidences encountered during the fieldwork in particular countries.

Table 11: Specific incidences during fieldwork

Country	Issue	Action
Afghanistan	Military operations – Field team was en route to Khwaja Sabz Posh District to conduct fieldwork, but was informed that a government military operation was going on in this district to remove Taliban and other insurgents from this district.	The team immediately turned back to the provincial centre and the sampling point was substituted.
Afghanistan	Insecurity – Insecurity disrupted fieldwork in numerous areas. In some cases, field teams attempting to survey were chased away by unidentified people.	If sampling points were inaccessible due to insecurity, they were replaced.
DRC	Road accident – Two tablets were broken during a motorcycle accident. The interviewers involved were unharmed but several days' worth of data was lost.	ORB and Coffey put additional focus on duty of care in all GEC countries.
Sierra Leone	Ebola – Due to the outbreak of the Ebola virus, one sampling point was inaccessible.	Inaccessible areas were replaced immediately.
Somalia	Permission in South Central – After obtaining research permission from each regional government, ORB learned that the permission letter for South Central was fraudulent.	All fieldwork stopped until the matter was resolved. Our local partner who had employed the man who generated the fraudulent letter was removed from the project and ORB moved forward with a new local partner, who worked to obtain their own, authentic permission letter.
Somalia	Permission in Puntland – A government official accused ORB's local partner of producing a fraudulent permission letter.	ORB investigated the issue and found that the letter obtained had not been fraudulent but that leadership of the Ministry of Education had changed and the new Minister was unaware of the project work. ORB worked closely with the Ministry, obtained an updated letter, and allowed them to accompany a portion of the fieldwork.
Somalia	School closures – In several sampling clusters, schools were closed indefinitely. As a result, interviewers could not complete surveys with school administrators or teachers.	Teams completed the household portion of the survey only.
Somalia	Insecurity – Several sampling clusters were inaccessible due to insecurity.	In all cases, teams maintained contact with local authorities. If the security situation changed, teams visited the clusters to complete survey work. If the situation did not improve, these clusters were removed from the sample (not substituted).

Country	Issue	Action
Tanzania	Loss of material – In one of the regions, an interviewer lost a tablet which caused some delays and disruption of work.	The matter was reported to the police and the assessors involved with the loss were asked to leave the field team.
Zimbabwe	Road accident – A car accident resulted in the fatality of one interviewer and left two others severely injured. The accident was not caused by any requirement to undertake hazardous activity for GEC.	<p>The project management team notified DFID immediately of the incident and worked through ORB International to determine the causes of the event and whether additional safety precautions would have prevented the event.</p> <p>There were no mitigation actions that could have been taken to prevent the event, but the use of seatbelts by the occupants of the vehicle may have reduced injuries.</p> <p>Fieldwork was suspended in the district and recommenced within the following two weeks.</p> <p>ORB was instructed that local research companies and all enumerators would be informed during training that seatbelts must be worn by team members during travel.</p>
Zimbabwe	Environmental disruptions – Flooding/bad roads in Nyanga, Lupane, Umguza, Binga, Beitbridge, Gokwe, Mberengwa	The larger part of the survey was carried out during rainy season. The country received unusually high rainfall including in the sampled areas, and most streams and rivers were flooded. These rains made transport difficult and delayed fieldwork progress as vehicles often got stuck in the mud in some cases.

In addition to the above, in four countries the local projects themselves raised specific concerns regarding the actions of our local teams. These are listed in [Table 12](#).

Table 12: Concerns raised by projects about fieldwork

Project	Issue	Action taken
WUSC (Kenya) 1/6/2013	<p>WUSC were concerned that our local partner paid guides to lead them to specific sampling points within the camps.</p> <p>Although WUSC understood that B/T were paying for a service, they felt that this may raise an expectation within the camps that WUSC researchers should also be paying guides.</p>	<p>Coffey investigated the purpose of the payments and amount and communicated to WUSC the reason and genesis of the payments.</p> <p>This issue is likely to arise again during the midline and we will engage in discussions with WUSC and Breakthrough at that time to attempt to find an alternative approach that doesn't influence how WUSC delivers the project or its research.</p>
International Rescue Committee (IRC) (DRC)	<p>We were notified that IRC staff had been informed by their local teams that EM enumerators were representing themselves as being affiliated with the IRC project VAS-Y-Fille</p>	<p>Upon receiving notification, we suspended on-going field research in DRC and investigated the issue with ORB International and the local research company.</p> <p>Investigation revealed that the research permission letters provided by the DRC MoE listed the name of the project and that Alma staff had included the name of the project on their name badges.</p> <p>ORB instructed Alma Research to redact the name of the project from the name badges, although it was not possible to do this for the research permission letter.</p> <p>Alma were also instructed upon presenting the research permission letter to verbally make clear that they are acting in an independent capacity and are not affiliated with the VAS-Y-Fille project.</p> <p>Enumerator training now includes greater emphasis on protocols for enumerators verbally and visually identifying themselves in the field.</p>
WUSC (Kenya)	<p>WUSC expressed concern that there had been a lack of communication with the EM and were concerned about parallel baseline data collection in the Somali refugee camps in northeast Kenya.</p> <p>WUSC's concern was that tensions within the camps would be raised during data collection and might result in impaired relationships for WUSC with local communities.</p>	<p>EM data collection had not yet begun and the EM attempted to develop a research approach that would allow both organisations to collect data in parallel fashion.</p> <p>No option expressed to WUSC satisfied their concerns and the issue was raised to DFID for further discussion and ultimate decision-making.</p> <p>DFID believed the concerns justified a delay in the EM data collection, which we agreed would take place following the completion of all WUSC baseline research.</p> <p>For future research the EM will notify SCW Grantees approximately one month in advance of the timings of our research and request that any Grantee with concerns about the upcoming research please notify the EM immediately.</p> <p>Locations for research for control communities can be provided upon request.</p>

Project	Issue	Action taken
Camfed (Zimbabwe)	<p>Camfed expressed concerns that our local research partner had used Camfed’s name with district officials in order to obtain research permissions.</p> <p>Camfed also expressed concerns that the local partner did not follow appropriate protocols when visiting schools. Specifically, that interviewers were not accompanied by District Education Officers (DEOs) during fieldwork; that enumerators requested to speak to “Camfed girls” when visiting schools and that enumerators had removed girls from class to take them to their homes for interview.</p>	<p>In Camfed districts we were unable to obtain research permissions without a letter of introduction from Camfed. Coffey, PwC and Camfed discussed this and Camfed provided us with a letter of introduction. This letter was provided to local officials along with our national research permissions. At midline and endline we will work closely with Camfed to ensure they are satisfied their independence from the work of the EM is clearly understood.</p> <p>ORB undertook an investigation into the concerns raised by Camfed and have not uncovered evidence that our local partner (Target Research) did not follow appropriate protocols. Target were not instructed at any stage by any government entity to have an official accompany them.</p> <p>Target required lists of girls who received bursaries in order to identify girls for “Walk C” interviews. In certain schools there were girls on BEAM and Camfed scholarships. In these cases, team supervisors who received only the BEAM lists specifically asked school administrators for Camfed (and other NGO) lists to ensure that their random selection of Walk C girls came from the full sample of girls who had received bursaries. Supervisors never purposively selected these girls over BEAM girls but did need all bursary lists in order to ensure representation by all bursary providers.</p> <p>ORB have investigated the concern raised that enumerators had removed girls from class to take them to their homes for interview. In the Nyanga and Chikomba districts, in order to identify households the school provided a teacher who accompanied them to the girl’s home. In some cases the girl came with the teacher. No girl accompanied an enumerator without the presence of a responsible adult.</p>
CARE/RI (Somalia)	<p>CARE and RI expressed joint concerns about the research permissions of the EM in addition to concern that their independence from the work of the EM be clearly emphasised to ministries.</p>	<p>ORB’s local partner, DARS, managed the initial research permissions process across the regions in Somalia. However, subsequently Coffey were informed that one of the research permission letters was not authentic.</p> <p>Coffey took the decision to appoint a new local research partner, NMC, and instructed ORB to manage the research permissions process directly.</p> <p>As part of this process Coffey coordinated closely with CARE and RI to ensure they were satisfied with the EM approach to obtaining permissions and that they were provided with the opportunity to explain to the ministries their separation from the work of the EM.</p>

2.8.1 Sample Point Substitutions

In some instances in several countries, teams required substitutes for originally selected sampling points. Reasons for the need to substitute varied by country and location.

Table 13 below lists all substitutions and includes the originally selected sampling point, the replacement sample point surveyed, and the reason for replacement.

Table 13: Overview of sampling point substitutions

County	Region	Original Primary Sampling Unit (PSU)	Replacement Primary Sampling Unit (PSU)	Reason for Replacement
Afghanistan	Badakhshan	Sabz Dara	Ghazalew	Heavy snowfalls
	Badakhshan	Wargh	Shabar	Heavy snowfalls
	Baghlan	Naw Abad Shaikh Jalal	Sayad	Extreme insecurity
	Balkh	Mirza Ali	Masjid Zia Khan	Extreme insecurity
	Bamyan	Band Hidarak	Shah Neshin Darazqol	Heavy snowfall
	Bamyan	Waras	Tagab Bark	Heavy snowfall
	Faryab	Akhond Baba	Qarya Haji Sharif	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Chaghatak	Qarya Haji Baba	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Khudaimat	Buri	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Noghaily Payan	Yangi Tashqul	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Shekh Ha	Chahar Shanghoo	High presence and activities of Taliban and other insurgent groups.
	Faryab	Ghol Bian	Begham_Ali abad	High presence and activities of Taliban and other insurgent groups.
	Faryab	Badghisy	Lab Shore	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Haidar Abad	Qala Payen	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Khuja Qoshri Payan	Neshar Kalan	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Pakhal Toghee	Qush Guzar	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Qizil Qishlaq	Charmgar Khana	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Shobakhtoo Uzbekia	Angirak	Extreme insecurity

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	Faryab	Mirhai Jar	Shahqasemi	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Mola Arify	Jamshidi Bala	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Sardeh	Bolack Qeshlaq	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Salmalik	Shah Folad	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Sofi, Qalgha	Zarshoy Payen	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Qoroqul	Uzbekgy	Extreme insecurity
	Faryab	Sawr Onbigi	Kohi	Extreme insecurity
	Ghor	Ghahari	Kharmorda	Heavy snowfall
	Ghor	Naw Abad Qezel	Paiwand Morda	Heavy snowfall
	Herat	Astanan Poin	Mahal Park	Insecurity
DRC	Province Orientale	Makayanga	Mwangaza, Komanda	The team experienced hostility from the local population. The original sampling point is a remote location where armed groups have been operating and the presence of tablets created suspicion.
Ethiopia	Afar	Gewane_Adebaro	Gewane_Geleleadora	The original sampling point could not be reached via road. Access on foot required about a six-hour walk.
	Amhara	Farta District South Gondar_Addis Betekirstian	South Gondar_Minnet	The team was arrested and held for the day. A child had gone missing the day before and since the survey deals with children, the entire team was held as suspects in the disappearance. They were released after intervention from local authorities but were asked to leave and not return.
Kenya	Nairobi	Mt. Kenya Preparatory Learning Centre	Maranatha Korogocho Church	The original school could not be located. In Kibera, many schools operate out of households.
	Nairobi	Samaritan Care Foundation	Kibera Primary	The original school could not be located. In Kibera, many schools operate out of households.
Mozambique	Guro	Catondo	Bunga (Bunga 1)	Original sampling point not accessible due to flooding, which washed out the roads.
Sierra Leone	Kambia	Mafindor_Kaardu	Lei Chiefdom Siama Village	The original sampling point was inaccessible due to the outbreak of Ebola.

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	Kambia	Kambia_Rohupr roba	Fonkoya (only for the school NOT the Household survey)	School assigned for assessments could not be located.
	Kambia	Kambia_Farma Town	Tissor Old site	SP could not be located.
Somalia	Puntland	Karin Primary	In Somalia, inaccessible clusters were not replaced	Al Shabaab activity
	Puntland	Alula Primary		Refusal by local administrator
	Somaliland	Sool_Widhwidh		Removed from sample by Coffey / implementing project.
	Puntland	Ayn_Widhwidh		Removed from sample by Coffey / implementing project.
Zimbabwe	Hurungwe	Magunje High school	Kebvunde	The original sampling point was inaccessible because it was clustered around a military barracks school.

3 Qualitative Data Analysis

3.1 Design of Data Collection Instruments

Development of the quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments began in mid-December, 2012. The qualitative and quantitative instruments were developed concurrently, to ensure that key themes were triangulated between them, over several iterations as new information about project barriers became available.

The first reference point for the qualitative survey instruments (household, school official/teacher, and community leader surveys) was the evaluation framework, developed by the Evaluation Manager in 2012. The evaluation framework listed key evaluation questions as well as indicators to assess those questions. For the purposes of developing a basic structure for the qualitative survey instruments, these key questions and indicators were listed and then categorised by theme (e.g. poverty, gender equality, violence) along with the types of data required to assess and answer them and the types of respondents best placed to comment (households, teachers, and/or community leaders). A literature review of research on girls' education in Step Change Window target countries conducted by the University of East Anglia (Rao and Aikman, 2012) was also consulted, to help develop themes and highlight key areas of possible interest. Based on these sources, an initial set of questions was drafted for each of the qualitative survey instruments (household, community and school official/teacher).

In late January 2013, the Evaluation Manager received brief project profiles for each Step Change Window project, which listed key barriers each project believed prevent girls in their targeted areas from attending school and learning:

Table 13 - Project hypotheses on barriers (gathered from January 2013 project profiles)

Project	Hypotheses on barriers
Camfed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of quality education for rural students • Economic barriers • Disparities in resource allocations and general under-resourcing • Decline in standards at secondary level • Socio cultural issues
World Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient household income to meet girls' education expenses. • Cultural and attitudinal perceptions which place little or no value on girls' education and prefer boys' education. • Low self-esteem of girls. • Limited knowledge and understanding of education policy regarding girls' right to education • Lack of adequate school sanitation and hygiene infrastructure to cater for girls. • Treatment (harassment and abuse) of girls in school and on their way to school. • Limited presence of women (girls) in traditional community leadership structures.
Save the Children Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to education for rural households (relating to poverty) • Social barriers to retention, including parent attitudes towards girls' education and early marriage. • School environment, inadequate school infrastructure including toilets. • Poor teaching quality and teachers who discriminate against girls. • Education management, inadequate training and mentoring for teachers
IRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited economic means • Socio-cultural norms which devalue girls' school enrolment, retention and completion • Educational barriers (such as low quality teaching and inadequate learning materials) • Insecurity and sexual violence in and around schools
WUSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate community support for and ownership of education, particularly for girls' education • Families cannot afford high cost of uniforms, schooling materials and sanitary products • Lack of girls privacy and protection in school • Families often value boys over girls

Project	Hypotheses on barriers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGM/early marriage/early pregnancy challenges • Poor supply of quality education • Inequitable access and opportunity to learn
CfBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value attributed to girls' learning is low • Gender disparities in enrolment and learning outcomes • Safety and long distances to school • Financial issues • Untrained teachers • Girls' low aspirations • Poor health
Save the Children Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access: Lack of educational facilities across the region within safe walking distance from homes • Quality: Teachers lack adequate skills and materials • Language: Afar children in formal primary schools do not learn in their mother tongue • Flexibility and relevance: More flexible educational delivery conducive to pastoral mobility and girl-child work responsibilities is needed. Communities view the curriculum as irrelevant • Transition opportunities: Transitions from first cycle to second cycle primary school are limited by issues of available facilities, distance and poor academic preparation • Gender appropriate school facilities • Social and cultural norms • Domestic responsibilities • Community participation • Government capacity: Limited funding and capacity to deliver flexible and gender responsive education services to remote and mobile communities
ChildHope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low value attached to girls' education • Extreme poverty • Unfriendly, unsafe, unstimulating and poorly-resourced school • Teachers lack the motivation and skills to support girls to acquire an education which is empowering and appropriate • Weak coordination between schools, education bureaus, and local community and child protection structures to assure entry and retention of marginalised girls into good quality education
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unqualified teachers and teacher absenteeism • Lack of female teachers • Low expectations • Lack of teaching and learning resources • School-based gender-based violence (GBV) • Community attitudes and behaviour • Early pregnancy and marriage • Domestic chores • Marginalisation of females from decision-making • Weak reporting and disciplinary systems
BRAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Early pregnancies and child marriages • Sexual abuses • Orphan hood • Disability • HIV • Safety: Distance from home to school • Lack of functional latrines • Lack of adequately qualified teachers • Lack of girl friendly school environments

These barriers were organised into the categories developed for the evaluation questions and indicators, and in any cases where there were gaps in the survey not covering a given barrier, questions were added. The only exceptions to this were cases where collecting data on a given barrier would go against the Evaluation Manager ethical and child protection protocols (e.g. HIV status or histories of sexual abuse) or where in-depth interviews were not an appropriate method for gathering a particular type of data (e.g. assessing the level of coordination between schools, education bureaus, and local community, as that would require longer-term and more extensive investigation and assessment to determine). Based on these barriers, the qualitative survey instruments were updated and re-drafted, to ensure they probe for information which not only answers the evaluation questions, but also assesses the barriers put forward by the Step Change Window projects. The team also referenced surveys from the World Bank (2004), Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (2011) and UNICEF (Lippman, 2009) as examples of best practice.

Finally, the qualitative data collection instruments were piloted within the team, edited for length and duplication, so that they could be administered in approximately one hour, as respondent fatigue can greatly affect the quality of responses, and each household responding to the qualitative survey would have been administered a day or two after respondents had completed the quantitative household survey. The qualitative survey instruments were also shared with Nitya Rao and Sheila Aikman from the University of East Anglia at several points in their development, as part of a quality assurance process.

The qualitative survey instruments were piloted in the field in April, 2013. They were administered to a small number of households on April 15, 2013 in a peri-rural neighbourhood (similar to the Nairobi GEC project areas) in Nairobi, Kenya. Based on the feedback received, the survey was further edited for content, clarity and length. The survey instruments were finalised at the end of April 2013.

3.2 Themes Explored in the Qualitative Data Collection:

A review of literature undertaken by the University of East Anglia (Rao and Aikman, 2012) specifically focused on countries targeted by GEC and informed the design of the survey (for households, teachers or school officials, and community leaders) for the projects within the Step Change Window. Other documents consulted include the Step Change Window project proposals. The survey conducted using in-depth interviews was designed to gather information about the following broad thematic areas and aspects of girls' lives which may impact their ability to attend school or respond to other ways in which they are marginalised from education.

- **Female empowerment/gender equality:** Women's participation in community decision making, ability to express opinions about decisions being made within the community, as well as the presence of female role models within the community.
- **Girls' personal aspirations/motivation:** Girls' own aspirations for their future as well as their academic self-esteem. Household aspirations for their daughter's education were also probed.
- **Female autonomy/decision making:** Women's agency within the household in terms of making decisions around education, marriage and pregnancy.
- **Social exclusion:** Probing social stigma, discrimination and harassment experienced by members of the household as well as within the groups within community more generally. This probed aspects of social marginalisation, stigmatisation and exclusion, indicatively including (although specific groups were not prompted) disability, religion, politics, ethnic groups, linguistic differences, pregnancy and perceived sexual promiscuity, street involvement, albinism and households accused of practicing witchcraft.
- **Attitudes towards Girls' Education:** Attitudes towards girls' education within the household, school and community, both for girls generally as well as marginalised girls.
- **Violence and insecurity:** Incidences of violence and conflict within the household, school and community, from minor to severe. Reports of harassment and insecurity, as well as the impact of trauma or fear of attack.
- **Poverty/money and Resources:** The way the household supports itself throughout the year (including seasonal variations) and information on household commitments of children within the household.

- **Personal/family factors:** This includes health concerns, disability, use of drugs or alcohol (only as related to household expenditures and expenses), seasonal migrations, evictions and environmental concerns (resilience to natural disasters and disruptions).
- **Discussing aspects of school:** Individual and institutional aspects of education, including costs, teaching, facilities and social interactions (student/student, and student/teacher).

The design of the qualitative survey also took several other key factors into consideration:

- Gathering data to complement the quantitative household survey, to enable triangulation of findings from quantitative and qualitative analysis;
- Triangulation of views between groups in the community (household respondents, teachers or school officials, and community leaders);
- Ethical and child protection protocols;
- Respondent fatigue (as respondents completed the qualitative interview a day or two after completing the quantitative household survey); and
- The diversity of countries the survey would be administered in, as well as the differing levels of experience and exposure to qualitative methods of the local research teams.

For these reasons, the qualitative survey was designed to be a structured interview, which included unstructured follow-up questions and prompts as deemed necessary by the data collectors, lasting approximately 1 hour. While violence and insecurity were probed with adult respondents, sexual violence and assault were not directly addressed. Furthermore, children were always interviewed in the presence of their parents, child-headed households were not included in the sample (households without an adult to provide consent for the survey), respondents were advised that they were not obliged to answer any questions they didn't feel comfortable addressing and surveyors were strictly trained not to push respondents to answer.

3.3 Hybrid Deductive- Inductive Analysis

The qualitative analysis was conducted between February 17 and May 20, 2014, using 397 in-depth interview transcripts from Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and DRC. It consisted of a two stage thematic analysis process designed to ascertain the extent to which project proposed barriers and definitions of marginalisation existed in the intervention areas and then to assess the contextual factors of 'why' and 'how' these barriers operate. The former was undertaken using deductive thematic analysis while for the latter inductive coding was used. A two stage hybrid deductive- inductive approach was used, similar to the one used by Fereday and Cochrane, 2006, to allow for the hypotheses and theories put forward by GEC projects to be integral to the deductive, thematic analysis while also allowing for data-driven insights to emerge from the transcripts through inductive coding. Deductive coding was conducted as part of the first stage of analysis, followed by a second stage of inductive coding.

This hybrid deductive-inductive process was the approach best suited to the particular requirements for the GEC qualitative analysis, as it needed to respond to the key design factors described below, test barriers put forward by projects and maintain an openness picking up to unanticipated themes and outcomes (Boyatzis, 1998).

The qualitative analysis fits into a mixed methods data collection process, where quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed concurrently, rather than one leading to the other. As such, it was critical to conduct deductive analysis before inductive, to ensure that the qualitative research not only tested the barriers put forward by GEC projects but also triangulated and contextualised findings from the quantitative analysis, which was also structured around the same key barriers and themes (Wheeldon and Alhberg, 2012).

The computer-assisted qualitative coding software Atlas Ti was used for both stages, to facilitate coding and analysis. The analysis was conducted by a team of six trained coders for the first stage of analysis and then three trained coders for the second stage.

This two stage process was designed to fulfil the four key design requirements for the qualitative analysis:

- To efficiently examine barriers identified by Step Change Window projects, to assess the extent to which they are supported in the data.

- To triangulate and contextualise findings obtained from the quantitative analysis.
- To identify and further probe into possible unanticipated barriers and types of marginalisation.
- To assess contextual factors, ‘why’ and ‘how’ possible barriers and types of marginalisation operate.

The process followed for undertaking both deductive and inductive analysis is described below.

3.4 Deductive Thematic Analysis

Deductive, theory-based coding began with the development of a coding framework to assess the existence of project proposed barriers and types of social marginalisation facing girls, both of which may affect their ability to attend school and learn. The deductive, theory-based coding process resembled the approach put forward by Crabtree and Miller (1999), where an initial coding framework was developed, codes were tested for reliability, initial themes were identified and then the coding framework was applied.

To develop a list of hypothesised barriers, project M&E frameworks and project profiles were consulted (see the list of project barriers in the ‘design of data collection instruments’ section of this methodology).

The deductive coding framework that was developed included three levels:

- **Overarching themes, which were used to categorise the text within the interview transcripts.** This ensured that all data related to a particular theme, was identified irrespective of whether it was related to the project proposed barriers or not. This then enabled inductive coding of the data at the second stage allowing for identification of any unanticipated barriers that may emerge.
- **Specific barriers and aspects of social marginalisation** (e.g. being an orphan, disability) testing specific project hypotheses. These codes were directional, e.g. ‘inability to pay school fees ‘[...is a barrier to attending school or learning], so that they could test specific barriers put forward by project as to why girls don’t attend school or learn.
- **Codes that mark instances of causal attribution**, when respondents specifically indicate that a given issue is a barrier to girls going to school or learning (for example saying that a girl doesn’t attend school *because* her mother is unwell). Codes were also included to note cases where respondents specifically indicated that a particular issue was *not* a barrier (e.g. cases where a given barrier or issue is present, but girls still attend school despite that) or cases where respondents reported a barrier not included in the coding framework. These codes help flag unanticipated barriers or other contextual issues of interest.

This coding framework also included a code to capture ‘other’ barriers mentioned by respondents, which were not included in the initial set of proposed barriers.

Coding Framework:

Overarching themes:

- Female empowerment / gender equality;
- Personal Aspiration/ Motivation;
- Female autonomy/decision making;
- Social Exclusion;
- Attitudes towards Girls Education;
- Attitudes towards Role of Women;
- Violence and insecurity;
- Poverty / Money and Resources;
- Personal/family factors;
- Discussing aspects of schools other/general;

Specific barriers:

- Girls low self-esteem;
- Girls high self-esteem;
- Girls high aspirations;
- Girls low aspirations;
- Have local women of Influence / role models;
- No local women of influence/ role models;
- Lack of family support for education;
- Don’t have ability to make decisions (Marriage & pregnancy);
- Don’t have ability to make decisions (education);
- Don’t have ability to make decisions (community);

- Doesn't practice family planning;
- Problems in terms of social integration;
- Negative perception of disability;
- Problems in terms of physical isolation;
- Problems in terms of language isolation;
- Negative perception of marginalised girls;
- Negative attitudes towards minorities;
- Negative attitudes towards girls education;
- Low community support for girls education;
- Girls education seen as uncommon;
- Negative perceptions of relevance of schooling;
- Religious Concerns;
- Families value boys over girls;
- Low awareness of education system;
- Reports of violence;
- Reports of fears of violence;
- Reports of harassment and insecurity;
- Report that poverty is an issue;
- Employment issues in household;
- Low household educational background;
- Significant housework commitments of Girl;
- Issues in terms of health;
- Issues in terms of disability;
- Orphan status /family bereavement;
- Recent migration / mobility;
- Presence of drugs/alcohol;
- Presence of natural / environmental disruptions;
- Negative girl/boy relationships at school;
- Negative girl/girl relationships at school;
- Negative teacher-student relationship;
- Lack of female teachers;
- Have special help at school for girls;
- Lack of proper toilets at school;
- Long distance from home to school;
- Lack of local schools/ low school availability;
- Issues with quality of local schools;
- Lack of teaching resources/ learning materials;
- Issues with quality of school facilities;
- Issues with paying school fees/ cost of school;
- Issues with quality of teaching;
- Lack of teachers/ unqualified/ absenteeism;
- School isn't taught in mother tongue;
- School isn't supporting special needs / disability;
- Low government capacity to support schools;
- Lack of basic infrastructure / poor social service delivery.

Other key codes:

- Other (not categorised) barriers to education;
- Reasons for not being in school;
- Not a reason for not being in school;
- Reasons for being in school;
- Reasons for not learning;
- !!!! (relationship is not as expected);
- **** (other interesting content) ;
- Male respondent.

3.5 Inductive Thematic Analysis

The second phase of qualitative analysis consisted of inductive coding of specific barriers from the first phase, to identify 'how', 'why' and 'for whom' these barriers function, for each project and the fund as a whole.

Codes were assigned inductively, but were generally grouped into categories around:

- Impact of barrier
- How this barrier functions
- On whom/ groups specifically affected
- Unanticipated issues

A set of templates were developed to standardise analysis between coders, to ensure consistency and that the analysis using the codes is according to the research questions addressed within the baseline report both at the project and fund/programme level. These templates consisted of a set of questions, which were answered (to the extent possible, given the data) for each barrier being inductively coded.

The key questions which were addressed through the inductive coding were:

At the project and fund levels:

- To what extent, how and why does this barrier affect girls' ability to go to school? What contextual factors affect its operation?
- To what extent, how and why does this barrier affect girls' ability to learn at school? What contextual factors affect its operation?

At the project level:

- To what extent does [the groups being targeted by the project, or being defined as 'marginalised'] appear to be marginalised in terms of education outcomes?
- Are there any other groups which appear marginalised in terms of education outcomes?

3.6 Quality Assurance and Reliability of Analysis

Deductive coding

A coding team of six was given a half-day training session on the coding framework and deductive coding approach on January 21, 2014, to ensure consistency between coders. The team also met weekly to discuss challenges and interpretations. Additionally, a sample of transcripts from each coder was checked by the qualitative research lead, to again ensure quality and consistency within the team. During the course of the first stage of analysis some inconsistencies between team members were noted, for example differences in the interpretation of some of the school-related codes, such as some coders coding lack of textbooks as 'issues with quality of schools' while others were coding this as 'lack of teaching materials'. Another example was differences in whether some kinds of conflict were being coded as 'reports of violence' or 'reports of harassment and insecurity.' The inconsistencies were flagged in two ways: a portion of coding completed by each member of the team was reviewed weekly by the qualitative research lead, to check for quality and flag any areas which may require discussion within the team. Also, coders were encouraged to highlight any passages where they had difficulty assigning codes, and these passages were discussed at the weekly meeting. Early in the analysis process, gaps in the coding manual were also noted, and so codes were added for 'girls' high self-esteem', 'girls' high aspirations', and 'lack of teachers' (previously there had only been 'lack of female teachers').

Inductive coding

A small coding team of three coders (plus the qualitative research lead) were given one-day training on the inductive coding process and approach. The team worked collaboratively to inductively re-code each hypothesis from the first phase of deductive coding. Similar to the quality assurance process from the first phase, the team met twice a week to discuss emerging findings, technical issues and interpretation. The qualitative research lead also regularly reviewed a portion of the coding and analysis being completed by each team member, to flag any inconsistencies in approach within the team. The coding team also used standardised templates to structure their analysis, to help ensure greater consistency and quality. The template was revised after a pilot hypothesis was analysed, to further refine and develop it as an effective quality assurance tool. A sample of analysed hypotheses from each coder was also checked by the qualitative research lead, to verify for quality and consistency.

The analysis produced by the second phase of inductive coding has been compiled and presented as the Qualitative Analysis Technical Annexes D1 and E.

It is also anticipated that the set of thematic codes captured through the first level of coding will also be inductively coded, which will allow the analysis to further capture unintended barriers and contextual factors, but also capture 'pull' factors (dynamics which attract and motivate girls to attend school) in addition to the barriers (or 'push' factors) which drive girls away from school.

3.7 Limitations and Bias

Gaps and quality issues of evidence base

As the qualitative data has been gathered across six countries, different local research companies and enumerators were needed to conduct the research in each country, to ensure that enumerators were, to the extent possible, from the location they were surveying and spoke the same local language as respondents. This led to inevitable gaps and differences in experience and expertise between local research organisations, in terms of capacity to undertake high quality qualitative research. This issue was recognised early and measures were taken to mitigate it, including selecting the most qualified local research companies available (the selection process is described in detail above). In addition, specialised training on conducting qualitative research was provided to the research teams in each country, the quality of research and transcripts still varied. Primarily, differences were seen between local research companies which regularly undertake qualitative research (and correspondingly, are based in countries where a high volume of local research is commissioned and a large pool of experienced researchers exists, like Kenya), and less experienced companies based in places where less local research is commissioned and fewer experienced researchers are available (for example DRC).

Translation

In most cases, the qualitative interviews were not conducted in English and so had to be translated. All interviews were transcribed verbatim from the interviews. Translation was generally conducted by the interviewers themselves soon after the interview had been conducted, as they were best placed to represent the nuance of the conversation and accurately portray the meaning of what the respondent was trying to say. In some cases, primarily in DRC and Ethiopia, interviews were conducted in a local language which interviewers were unable to directly translate into English (as the teams were unable to find anyone who spoke both the local language and English fluently enough to translate). In these cases, two translations were required – local language, French, English, or local language, Amharic, English, which correspondingly reduces the quality of the final translation.

Biases inherent in respondent transcripts

Given the sometimes sensitive nature of the material being probed through the qualitative interviews, the most significant biases which may be present are social desirability or social acceptability bias, and sensitivity bias.

Social desirability bias

Social desirability bias comes into effect in cases where respondents wish to portray a more socially acceptable or positive view of their families and communities to the outside world, thus playing down any concerns or issues which they feel would undermine that image. This bias may have affected responses across the survey; one issue where it appears particularly strong is around disability. Very few respondents directly reported stigma against people with a disability, and only in some cases was it reported indirectly that others in the community hide disabled family members or discriminate against them. While it may be the case that discrimination against people with a disability is relatively uncommon, it may also be the case that respondents are sufficiently aware of the sensitivities around disability to want to omit cases of discrimination in order to present themselves in a seemingly more positive light.

Sensitivity bias

In some cases, particularly in countries or regions only recently emerging from conflict like DRC or the Afar region, respondents did not report issues like sexual assault or rape as often as might be expected. It is difficult to know whether to attribute this to lower prevalence of sexual assault or to sensitivity bias, where respondents (quite understandably) feel uncomfortable speaking about past trauma or about issues which are stigmatised in their family or community. This bias has been flagged and addressed through the analysis to the extent possible. Topics where this bias may be in effect have been flagged within the analysis and caveated as such.

Significance of findings

The qualitative data collection and analysis was not been designed to assess the absolute significance of particular issues or barriers within a population or across the fund, as this is a more appropriate task for the quantitative research. Rather, the qualitative analysis has been designed to assess the comparative significance of different barriers at the project and fund levels, as well as why and how these barriers function and under what contextual conditions. In this way, it has been designed to complement the analysis and findings emerging from the quantitative research, which are able to comment on absolute significance at the fund level.

4 Quantitative Data Analysis

4.1 Overview

In this section we describe the processes that we used to generate the analysis, tables and graphs included in this report, but also a broader set of processes designed to support further analysis and long term evaluation and archival purposes.

4.2 The Design of Data Collection Instruments

The development of the quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments (i.e. structured survey questionnaires and qualitative topic guides) began in mid-December 2012. Qualitative and quantitative instruments were developed in parallel so that they were fit to collect complementary evidence for the purpose of triangulation.

The first reference point for the development of these data collection instruments was the GEC evaluation framework. This was developed by the EM in 2012 as part of developing the GEC evaluation strategy. It lists key evaluation questions as well as indicators and judgement criteria to assess those questions. We developed survey questions that addressed the core evaluation questions in terms of outcomes, risk factors (barriers) and contextual information. An assumption was made that the focus of the baseline survey would be on measuring key outcomes (such as learning), key risk factors (barriers), family background circumstances and a limited review of previous exposure to different types of interventions from sources other than the GEC. In order not to overload the baseline questionnaire we refrained from including questions about characteristics and issues that are unlikely to change over time and that can be investigated later on by including relevant survey questions at the midline or the endline. In order to avoid doing harm to respondents we did not cover particularly sensitive risk issues such as sexual harassment or female genital cutting.

The structured household survey questionnaire consisted of the following components:

- a first section addressed to the first informant that collects basic demographic information about the household and the children living there;
- the random selection of a girl to be the subject of detailed questioning;
- an interview with that girls' primary caregiver about the household, family, herself; the girl and a male sibling; and
- a short interview with the selected girl, followed by the EGRA and EGMA assessment with the girl.

The household survey was designed to lead to a follow-up visit at the school where the selected girl was reportedly enrolled at the time of the interview. The school visit was designed to gather information confirming the girl's enrolment, details about her attendance and information on averages for attendance and learning that would allow her to be located in the attendance and learning context of her peers which could then be analysed with respect to later exposure and targeting success.

The questionnaire was subject to extensive discussion and review, drawing on the experience of the consortium. The quantitative survey instruments were piloted in the field in April, 2013. As part of the pilot, they were administered to households in Kenya. Based on the feedback received, the survey was further edited for content, clarity and length. The survey instruments were finalised at the end of April 2013.

4.2.1 Topics and Question Forms for Quantitative Data Collection

When designing the questionnaire, we had to make a number of strategic decisions. Firstly it was acknowledged that for the benefit of covering all thematic areas relevant to the GEC the questionnaire would need to summarise circumstances in many areas rather than looking into gradations of barriers with a high degree of precision. Since projects were free to adapt and extend the questionnaire to suit their specific evaluation purposes and contextual issues, we tried to keep default questions rather simple (i.e. to capture merely whether a barrier is absent or present). We generally avoided the use of Likert scales (e.g. five-step scales ranging from "very satisfied to very unsatisfied) in favour of simple yes-no answers, sometimes arranged with one or two alternate forms or with questions asked of both caregiver and child. While Likert scales allow capturing gradations in responses, such granular levels of difference were not likely to be relevant to the GEC evaluation. Moreover, since the questionnaire

covers a range of different topics and is rather long, respondents would have needed to comply with multiple forms of repetitive response patterns. This would have required more guidance from the interviewer and been potentially tiresome for the respondent. We also did not ask questions that would have triggered hearsay responses but focused on topics that respondents would have immediate knowledge about. The questionnaire is designed to be a reliable and intuitive guide to a range of facts and broad opinions rather than an extended psychometric tool or a series of indices on every topic.

4.3 Data Analysis

The quantitative analysis was conducted between February and October 2014, using a large amount of quantitative data, including: around 6400 **EM household survey** questionnaire records from Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe; data from **school visits** in all countries except Afghanistan and Tanzania; and data from **school-based assessments** in DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sierra Leone. The data analysis involved three broad stages: preparation, analysis and reporting.

During the **preparation phase** we prepared the data for analysis and for subsequent reporting. This phase included a number of steps such as harmonising the data; establishing linkages between different data sources; preparing specific variables for data analysis and carrying out preliminary analysis. The exact steps are described in more detail in [Section 4.3.1](#).

At the **analysis stage** we assessed the data from household surveys, school visits and the school-based assessment with regards to outcome levels (being in school and learning); various barriers to education and their relationship with outcomes (and each other); and the analysis of evidence patterns across and within countries.

At the **reporting stage** we prepared tables and graphs for the main report that present findings from descriptive statistical analysis and multivariate regression; triangulated and compared findings across different data sources (including qualitative data from In-Depth-Interviews); and discussed quantitative findings in response to the GEC evaluation questions.

In the following sections we describe each of these three phases and the associated sub-tasks in more detail.

4.3.1 The Preparation Phase

Harmonisation of the data

The first step in the preparation of the [EM household survey data](#) was the harmonisation of variables. Once the collection of EM household survey data was complete in a country, the data was cleaned by our consortium partners ORB and RTI (in discussion with the fieldwork partner organisation where appropriate) and then passed on to the EM. The EM received a separate dataset for each of the nine countries, which then passed through an initial process of harmonisation.

Even though the GEC questionnaire was administered in a largely consistent format (with some modifications to the school visit survey) there were some inconsistencies between data sets from different countries due to some technical issues that arose during the recording and transmission of responses. As a consequence, each dataset required some harmonisation with respect to the format of certain variables before it could be integrated into an aggregated dataset combining household survey data across all countries. For this step, we developed a system that is intended to support the later integration of project data with the EM data should that be possible.

For data from the [school-based assessment](#), variables were harmonised across the four countries in which the assessment took place (DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone) in order to generate three multi-country datasets, each compiling data from one of the three components of the school-based assessment (i.e. Classroom & Facilities Observations; Teacher Survey; and EGRA/EGMA assessments with boys and girls).

These datasets were then merged together based on the school identification number, resulting in a multi-project, multi-country and multi-level dataset (including school-level, teacher-level, classroom-level and student-level). We distinguished three subsets of this dataset in our analysis:

- A first subset for general school-level analysis. For this purpose, we restricted data to Grade 2 and Grade 4 students who represent the target population of the school-based assessment.

- A second subset for school-level analysis that requires information about the number of teaching staff at a given school. For this purpose we kept only observations that were linkable to data from the school visit survey.
- A third subset for classroom-level analysis. For this purpose we used a further restricted sample to ensure that student-level data was properly linked to the related classroom observation and teacher survey data.

For a more in-depth discussion of the harmonisation and preparation of data from the school-based assessment, refer to [Section 4.5](#).

Establishing data linkages

Once all the data had been harmonised and compiled into one multi-country dataset, we were able to proceed to the step of data linkage. The first stage of data linkage involved linking the household survey data to listing files, such as lists of sample locations and lists developed to contain information from external sources. To date these include a coding of population density at the 5km grid level from a Landscan reference projection for 2015. This is in part to offset a lack of consistent coding of location type in project sampling frames.

The harmonised data was also linked with school visit survey data for the purposes of assessing the completeness of the latter.

Preparing basic analytical variables

In order to prepare the data for the analysis of educational outcomes and barriers we performed a number of tasks such as deriving a range of primarily binary variables from the original variables; and coding open responses (e.g. about the ethnicity of the selected girl).

Developing indicators to measure learning outcomes

More complex transformations were required to develop variables for the analysis of **learning outcomes**. We developed an integrated literacy and numeracy scoring system to measure the results of the EGRA and EGMA assessments across their different subtasks. For details, please refer to the separate Discussion Note on the analysis of GEC EGRA and EGMA data in [Section 4.4](#).

Our objective was to develop a single indicator for literacy and a single indicator for numeracy, which capture the full range of information from the different subtasks performed by the children as part of the learning assessment. This indicator is to provide a maximum amount of information about the children's underlying ability in literacy and numeracy. In order to generate these indicators we analysed the responses for all subtasks and generated within each project area a series of difficulty ratings based on the ratio of correct answers (in the full version these ratios are optimised through an item-response theory optimisation model so as to account for individual abilities). The resulting difficulty ratings were used to weight the scores of students across all subtasks that they attempted, providing a single unified score for literacy (or numeracy).

These two scores for each student, one for numeracy and one for literacy were generated using within-project analysis because subtasks were constructed to function within a given context and language environment. Moreover, some language groups and teaching systems place different emphasis on the different subtasks for learning. However the score generated gives a meaningful indication of unified ability in the competency that captures more information and should also embody lower error than any single subtask result. By using results from all subtasks the approach responds to information which can discriminate beyond the upper or lower thresholds of any single subtask (which by design may each discriminate better at different levels of ability).

The scores generated at the project level can be used to evaluate differences within the project context. However these differences are scored on an essentially arbitrary scale representing the distribution of ability within the project. It is possible to rescale this information in a way that retain the global shape of these within-project relative distributions but allows for some additional between-project comparisons. This was achieved in two steps.

Firstly the literacy ability scores for each project were rescaled so that their scale reflected as closely as possible the scores of each girl on the oral reading fluency task. This means that they can be compared across projects on the same basis that words per minute comparisons might be made for the reading subtask. Although these comparisons are subject to interpretation they do provide a useful insight into cross-project variation. As the harmonised literacy scores is scaled to words per minute but contains information from other subtasks that discriminate below that level, its scores can be negative. This is a desirable property in that it removes some of the floor-effect observed for the reading subtask (i.e. where a large number of girls would score zero), and allows for a

more fine-grained assessment of differences, change and impact at this low level of ability. The equivalent rescaling was carried out on numeracy ability scores such that they were scaled to align to an average of the number identification and addition subtask scores, rescaled to the standard EGMA scaling of 0-100. Again this aimed to allow for comparison between contexts.

After harmonising the literacy ability tasks across project contexts, the harmonised continuous scores were then used to derive additional indicators. We used adapted US benchmarks of oral reading fluency to express girls' literacy ability as the equivalent years above or behind the norm represented by these benchmarks. This measure is useful because it is adjusted for age, and gives a sense of whether populations fall behind expectations as they progress through the school system.

Approach to developing analytical variables for the analysis of educational barriers

Some analysis of barriers and contextual factors is well supported by analysis of individual variables or sets of variables independently considered. However for some barrier concepts we sought a single **index** variable, which would capture several dimension of interest to support the analysis.

When preparing the data for further analysis we identified bundles of simple questions (sometimes answered by multiple respondents) that could be aggregated to serve as an indicator measuring a specific concept. For example the girls answered several questions with slight variations of tone and subject which taken together aimed to reflect her experience of schooling. Where appropriate, we then combined these variables into a single index variable.

We performed diagnostic statistical analysis on any relevant indicator variable to explore missing values and to recode response categories so that all scales would point into the same direction, with higher values consistently representing an increase in the intensity or prevalence of a given barrier. Most indicator variables were dichotomous and we recoded a number of categorical variables into dichotomous ones.

Statistical analysis (Principal Components Analysis⁵) supported the identification of a number of variables that jointly identified a common concept of interest. On this we selected combinations of indicator variables that had high loadings on the same component (we defined "high" loadings as those greater than or equal to 0.50) and performed additional reliability tests on these combinations to generate an index with the highest possible internal validity⁶. To compute an index, we added up component variables without weighting.

In addition to indices we developed a number of **profiling variables to identify population subgroups** that projects had identified as target groups. Some profiling variables were directly derived from a single variable. Others could not be captured by responses to a single question. For example, identifying pastoralist girls in the data required combining information about the context, household occupations and mobility of the family. Some subgroups such as young mothers could not be identified on the basis of direct questions as sensitive and personal topics were avoided in the baseline survey. In these cases, the analysis used other available information about the household and its members as proxies (either individually or in combination).

In addition to the steps described above (e.g. recoding of variables; aggregation of variables into indices) data from the **school-based assessment** required some additional transformations as certain classroom dynamics observed during the Classroom & Facilities Observation required specific coding. In some cases the data showed the absolute number of incidences of interest (e.g. incidences of teasing) observed in a classroom which neither captured the intensity of these dynamics (as experienced by each student) nor allowed for comparison across classrooms. We therefore calculated the frequency of an incidence per-student per-hour. More details on the preparation of variables in the school-based assessment data are provided in [Section 4.5](#).

Preliminary Analysis

The first phase of analysis of the [household survey data](#) involved the development of the learning indicators, indices and other variables described above. These allowed for exploring the distribution of key demographic variables, along with key outcomes and barriers and their relationship. This phase of analysis was able to identify a

⁵ Principal component analysis (using a polychoric correlation matrix that treats discrete variables as truncated versions of underlying continuous variables)

⁶ For sets of dichotomous variables we used the Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 and for sets including both dichotomous and ordinal variables we used Cronbach's Alpha. As a rule of thumb, indices are considered to have an acceptable level of internal reliability if they yield a coefficient of at least 0.7 on any of these tests⁶. However, for the purpose of exploratory analyses, coefficients of at least 0.4 are considered tolerable under certain circumstances. We accepted an index for further analysis if it reached a minimum reliability coefficient of 0.5.

small number of data records which were corrupted or misaligned in ways that would not have been obvious prior to detailed analysis. Where possible these errors were corrected and in a small number of instances (around 2% of the household survey sample) removed from the analytical household survey data. This is consistent with the fact that fieldwork was in some cases carried out in phases governed by external factors such as flooding and that data had to be processed in batches.

Initial analysis led to the specification of further relevant variables; in particular variables identifying girls in particular parts of the distribution on certain variables, such as remoteness or levels of learning.

Data quality review

At this stage in the processing, the data was reviewed for consistency and any cases marked for removal were deleted. Variables were cross-checked and labelled.

4.3.2 Analysis

For the baseline report, analysis was structured around the core baseline evaluation questions, with a focus on testing project and GEC-relevant assumptions about outcomes and barriers.

Outcomes

As described above, we derived two core analytical indicators for literacy and numeracy. These were used to analyse the outcome levels of girls in different age groups, project contexts and population subgroups. We used information reported by the caregivers of the selected girls in the household, to analyse levels of enrolment, attendance and year-on-year retention in school of girls in the EM sample.

Wherever possible we analysed education trajectories by age and grade. However, the grade that the selected girl was in at the time of the interview was captured in a question grid covering the enrolment status of all children in the household. In some cases, analysis could not re-establish the link between the selected girl and the information provided through the grid. When school visit survey data was available and linkable to the selected girl, we were able to complement the grade variable with grade information from the school. As a consequence, information about the girl's grade is missing in about 20% of the household survey sample (of girls enrolled in school).

The same age categories were used for the analysis of EM data, the review of project baseline reports, the assessment of outcome spreadsheets, and the reanalysis of project data. Where the evidence showed grades rather than ages, this involved re-coding and translating grades into equivalent ages, based on the age that the girl would have if she had started school at the official school starting age and not repeated any years. The coding accounted for differences in the official school starting age across contexts. Presenting data by age group allows comparing outcome levels and trajectories of girls across SCW project areas.

Analysis of barriers

The analysis of barriers involved assessing the prevalence of a barrier, which broadly followed the approach outlined for core outcomes, and the analysis of associations between barriers and outcomes. Our intention was to test the assumptions of projects whereby a barrier is (a) present and (b) has a potentially causal relationship with the outcome of interest. The potential effect of the barrier was assessed through a bivariate linear regression of the outcome on the barrier dummy or index, with clustering defined at the sampling point level. The beta and standard error of the barrier variable were recovered for significance testing. As barriers could be expected to vary in intensity with age, age was added to the model as a control variable to avoid estimation of spurious associations. The same approach was applied to any special contextual circumstances that might confound the relationship between a barrier and an outcome. We thus ran a second bivariate regression adding country dummies to account for specific country contextual effects.

In addition to bivariate regressions, we built multivariate regression models on enrolment, attendance and literacy outcomes at the fund level. Three separate models were created for each of these three outcomes based on household survey data. A fourth model was created for literacy based on school-based assessment data in order to test specific barriers relating to schooling and teaching environments. Models were built using an iterative and systematic process. We first picked up candidate barriers on the basis of the previous results of bivariate regressions. We then integrated all the variables that had significant associations with the outcome of interest into the same model. Additional control variables for age and country dummies were also included. We then successively removed those variables that were not significant at the 0.1 level. This procedure was iterated until all variables' coefficients of the model have a p-value below the 0.1 threshold. The total variance explained by the

resulting multivariate model was reported in the tables along with the proportion of variance explained by each barrier separately (computed as the absolute difference of the variance explained when the barrier is withdrawn from the model, all other things being equal). As the total variance explained by the models (i.e. by control variables and potential barrier variables altogether) never exceeds 50%, we cannot consider our final multivariate models as being *fully-fitted*. This implies that the beta coefficient of explanatory variables needs to be interpreted cautiously since part of the relationship could still be accounted for by other factors. For this reason, even where multivariate analysis identifies a significant relationship between potential barriers and outcomes, this should be interpreted as provisional and as part of a network of potential drivers for the outcome.

4.3.3 Reporting Stage

Generating descriptive tables and graphs

In the main report, we present findings from our analysis of outcomes and barriers in the form of tables that show results by data source and project or context (i.e. country). We have developed a tabulation system in Excel to support the consistent presentation of results, including from descriptive and associational statistical testing. In addition, we present graphical outputs to illustrate the variation of outcome levels across project areas and across the available data sources within each project area.

All data-related processes are being developed using a combination of Stata and Excel. As far as possible Stata syntax is used to direct processes and exchange of information with Excel to facilitate reproducibility and documentation of processes.

4.3.4 Issues and Limitations

The quantitative data gathering process has been intensive and challenging. Some issues have been referenced in preceding sections of this report. We propose to share learning on these aspects of the research process after baseline, especially where these can help to support analysis for future waves and other windows of GEC, and to assist in the learning aspects of GEC.

The EM has undertaken some reanalysis of project data according to availability and documentation of variable content. The focus was on outcomes and the results of this analysis feature in the main report. A marked constraint was on the ability to identify variables and values with the labelling and documentation available. This constrained our ability to reanalyse project data with a view to exploring barriers and context in addition to outcomes. This more complex reanalysis would have required additional clarification of the data and metadata in the projects data, which could not be obtained from projects in the time available.

4.3.5 Possible Next Steps and Additional Research

Prospective evaluability analysis

Our ambition is to say as far as possible using baseline data what the expected evaluative scope for future waves of research would be. This may make use of EM data and project data. Developing and supplying support and advice to projects would be an integral aspect of this work.

Geospatial analysis

The majority of GEC EM data is geo-coded (an important exception being Afghanistan data) and this provides opportunities for spatial and spatially informed analysis. This may involve mapping or analysis of relationships and risk factors such as those around access and availability.

Learning assessments

We hope to be able to build on work with learning assessments to prepare for midline and endline evaluation requirements and also to share approaches developed for EM baseline analysis with other GEC stakeholders including projects and the Fund Manager.

Thematic research

Beyond the preparation of the GWC baseline report, we expect that the baseline evidence and analysis will inform the thematic research to be carried out by our consortium partner, the University of East Anglia, in order to explore issues of interest in more depth. This will provide an opportunity to make even more extensive use of the available baseline data.

4.4 Discussion Note on the Scoring of EGRA/EGMA in EM Data

4.4.1 Introduction

Our aim is to provide a tool for comparing literacy and numeracy ability at various levels across data as a whole, maximising comparability both across subtasks within a same test and across contexts. More precisely, we want to be able to create aggregated scores that are approximations of underlying abilities and to compare these scores with those generated at the lower subtask level. An effective way of achieving this is to implement an item-response theory model. These models help assessing the relative difficulties of items within a same test while assuming a fixed sample distribution of ability.

The first section of this note describes the data and briefly explains the method we used for handling outliers and the standard EGRA / EGMA derivation of aggregated scores adjusted for time. The second section details the rationale for using an item-response theory model based on previous diagnostics and explains how we applied it to our data. The third section describes the methodology used for generating aggregated scores based on difficulties computed by the model. Finally we provide details of some sensitivity tests and discuss likely uses of the scoring developed.

4.4.2 Data

EM data for EGRA/EGMA

The EGRA is divided into 4 subtasks: letter sound (“lett1”), invented word (“invw1”), oral reading (“orar1”) and reading comprehension (“rcom1”). For the Evaluation Manager’s baseline GEC activity they are made of respectively 100, 50, 74 and 5 binary items that can be either correct or incorrect. The first three subtasks, lett1, invw1 and orar1 are timed and students have a fixed time of 60 seconds to complete them. When completed before one minute, the time remaining is recorded. This can arise if students completed all the subtask items, if they gave up, or if they were auto-stopped. Auto-stop is the discontinuation of testing by the assessor and happens when students attempted and failed the first k items, with k equal to 10% of the number of items for lett1 and invw1 (respectively 10 and 5 items) and varying from 6 to 10 items across projects for orar1.

The GEC EGMA is made of 5 core subtasks:

- number identification (“numi1”) with 20 items,
- quantitative comparison (“qcom1”) with 10 items,
- missing number (“mism1”) with 10 items,
- addition (“addi1”) with 20 items, and
- subtraction (“subt1”) with 20 items.

These are assigned to all students and numi1, addi1 and subt1 are timed. There is an autostop after 4 items for qcom1 and mism1 and an autostop which varies by context from 5 to 7 items for addi1 and subt1. Next paragraph should follow directly. In addition to these core EGMA subtasks are 4 additional EGMA subtasks:

- advanced addition (“addi2”),
- advanced subtraction (“subt2”),
- multiplication (“mult1”), and
- division (“divi1”).

The additional subtasks are given only to students who perform to a certain level on the core subtasks. All additional subtasks are made of 4 items, are not timed and do not have autostops.

Handling of outliers and possible data discrepancies

Timed subtasks are designed to have a uniform (randomly varying) difficulty across the items that form the subtask. There is slight variation of the autostop barrier k across contexts in three subtasks but this does not contradict the assumptions of the autostop procedure, namely that slight variation in the number of items presented does not strongly affect the information that can be derived about average difficulty for students getting all the first k items incorrect – the error involved in assuming that they would probably get the remaining items incorrect too is outweighed by the desirability of not forcing them to complete the sub-task.

However, some discrepancies that could reduce comparability across projects do need to be addressed before manipulating scores analytically. For instance, the maximum number of items attempted in the oral reading (“orar1”) subtask by students who were not auto-stopped varies across contexts. In some of them, students have been presented with a maximum of 48 items, when in other they have been given 56, 61, 62 or 74 items. This variation is normal to EGRA/EGMA tests that are adapted to each context (where norms for completion speed vary) and is intended to be compensated for by subsequent adjustment of the achieved scores. The time unused by the student in the available minute is used to adjust for this by scaling up the number of correct responses by a factor related to the proportion of the available 60 seconds used by the student. Doing this is equivalent to making available a larger pool of items that requires every student to use up the full minute. Time remaining is recorded by the interviewer at the end of each subtask and is therefore subject to possible errors of reporting. Because it is being used as a multiplicative coefficient for adjusted scores its consistency of use is important. We would expect one or two recording errors (for example recording time used rather than remaining) to be present in a large multi-context dataset. We therefore seek a method for identifying possible such errors.

Our assumption for the analysis of the EGRA (or EGMA) test is that performance on the multiple subtask of the test reflects a common underlying ability in literacy (numeracy). If the tasks reliably capture different skills at varying locations in the progression of literacy skills the individual should find some subtasks harder than others. Similarly some students will perform better overall than others. However we expect the differences between subtask difficulties to be relatively consistent across students. In other words we do not expect a student to have high scores (relative to peers) in one subtask if s/he has low scores (relative to peers) in others. To observe this to an extreme in one subtask may be indicative of measurement error. Where the error arises because the timing data is incorrect and has abnormally affected the “time-adjusted score” for that subtask we may be able to detect the error through that discrepancy.

The error detection approach for removing outliers consists in regressing each time-adjusted score on the other subtask unadjusted scores. The studentised residuals of each regression (residuals computed while removing the observation of interest from the calculation of the standard deviation) are calculated along with their sum-of-squares. This gives an individual measure of the outcome heterogeneity across subtasks, and is a way of spotting inconsistent remaining times across subtasks. If one or a small number of students have outstanding heterogeneity, we look back to each subtask residual, identify the highest one and where appropriate change the student’s time remaining to 30 seconds for this subtask (on the basis that 30 seconds minimises the expectation of assumed error).

Why using an item response theory model instead of simply summing scores?

Once data is cleaned and outliers removed, we need to find a way of aggregating item results so as to create relevant approximations of underlying skills across subtasks. The easiest way to aggregate items would be to count the number of correct answers across all items of a same subtask –adjusting by time if necessary– so as to obtain a single subtask score for each student. This score would be equal to the number of correct items, per minute for timed subtests. We could then generate test-level scores by simply summing each subtask score or summing them whilst weighting the contribution of each subtask by their number of items.

This approach may be appropriate for some evaluation activities, but we would like to create alternate analytical measures and review the relationship of these to the summed scores. The main reason is that we know that by design the probability of having an item correct is not homogeneous, whether across or within subtasks. Subtasks are designed to have different levels of difficulty as are items within the untimed tests. This means that scoring each item as a one (and then weighting subtasks by number of items) loses some information about the relative ability required to answer it correctly. Item-response models allow us to avoid this assumption by informing about the relative difficulties of items. They link these item difficulties to an underlying person-level ability assumed to be normally distributed across the sample. The item difficulties are constructed to incorporate information about both the proportion of people getting them correct and the (modelled) ability of the people getting them right or wrong. We will use them to weigh items and create ability-like scores that could then be aggregated into test-level scores. The method we used for that purpose is described in the next section.

4.4.3 An Item Response Theory Model for Generating EGRA & EGMA Scores

Theory of item response theory models

Item response theory (IRT) models are based on the hypothesis that a given subset of items reflects a single trait, each item being a different way of measuring the same underlying variable. In our case, the trait can be described

as the ability in literacy/numeracy. We thus advance the following hypotheses before applying the IRT model to EGRA/EGMA data: all EGRA subtasks give partial information about students' literacy ability, while EGMA subtasks do the same with numeracy ability. Our aim is to try to retrieve this ability as faithfully as possible.

The general idea of IRT models is that the probability of a student's correct response to a particular item is a function of both his/her underlying ability and the item difficulty. Given a classical table of results *student per item* and a range of hypotheses, algorithms based on this model are able to compute simultaneously and on the same scale an ability function (across students) and a difficulty function (across items). Different specifications of IRT models do exist, corresponding to different formats of item responses. In our data, they are binary, either correct or incorrect. The problem of binary variables –and categorical variables in general– is that they are not normally distributed. This implies that trying to regress them directly on a set of predictors with a common method such as ordinary least squares would lead to biased estimates with not normally distributed residuals. The most common IRT model for binary variables is called the Rasch model. Under this specification, the probabilities of student n getting item i correct depends on his/her own ability θ_n and the item difficulty δ_i through a logit function: $\text{logit } P_i(\theta_n) = \theta_n - \delta_i$. This equation states that the probability of a correct response increases with the student ability and decreases with the item difficulty, other things being equal. Ability and difficulty are also placed on a common scale. In particular, the probability of a specific student getting a specific item correct is equal to 0.5 when the student ability is equal to the item difficulty. An item having more (or less) correct than incorrect responses across all students is assigned a positive (or negative) difficulty. Students' ability is usually assumed to follow a standard normal distribution.

Application to GEC data - getting item difficulties through the IRT Rasch model

We used Stata to implement the Rasch model on our data. The command most appropriate for IRT models is called *gllamm* and needs to be installed to Stata. The relevant package and further details are available on the command dedicated website that can be found at the following address: <http://www.gllamm.org>.

Implementing the IRT model

Ideally, we would like to include all EGRA items into one model and all EGMA items into another. This is challenging in practice as the computing time of *gllamm* increases exponentially with the number of items included in the model and the timed tests typically have a large number of items. Another limitation is that timed subtest items have not been completed by everybody: only the quickest students have answered all items and in some subtasks, the highest items have been answered only by a few students. *gllamm* calculations cannot be run on missing values so the only option would be to recode them as incorrect answers, but including these “almost constant” items may hinder the maximisation process by creating non-convex regions.

The two previous considerations (the difficulty both to include a large number of items and to include items with missing values) suggest an approach to handling timed test items of including in our initial IRT model only items before auto-stop. Indeed, these items should be representative of difficulty in the relevant population having been answered by almost everybody (cf. 1.a.) and also representative of the remaining timed items (being randomly sequenced for uniform difficulty). This choice is consistent with *gllamm* logic: computing students' ability to answer an item correctly conditionally on having tried to answer it and computing item difficulties conditionally to them have been given to all students. In addition, we do not want to take time into account in the calculation of item difficulties so we do not wish to include items which are answered by some or to adjust for differential time taken to complete.

Running the IRT model

Before running the model, we dropped the few students that did not answer any item. Data is then aggregated so that one (weighted) observation is created for each unique response combination. The *gllamm* command is run on these combinations for all items selected, item and student parameters being estimated through a two-step likelihood maximisation process:

- First, the adaptive quadrature algorithm gives an estimation of item parameters assuming the latent ability distribution is standard normal.
- Then, the Newton-Raphson algorithm computes an ability distribution for each response combination given the item parameter values. The logit function being not defined for 0 and 1, the N-R algorithm uses the latent ability standard normal distribution to extrapolate abilities for students having got correct or incorrect to all items.

This implies that the reliability of the trait distribution is different for each response combination, and lower for students with all correct or incorrect responses. For this reason we have not directly used the IRT-calculated trait-ability scores but instead used the item difficulties for generating ability-like aggregated scores.

Light approach for retrieving item difficulties

As explained above, the process of computing item difficulties δ is particularly complex and time-consuming due both to limitations inherent to the EGRA/EGMA assessments and heavy calculations involved in the process of optimisation. For this reason we developed a light approach for computing item difficulties that do not involve running the *gllamm* command. The idea is to use as proxy of an item difficulty the simple ratio of correct over total answers to this item. The *gllamm* command uses this ratio as a starting value of the optimisation process so this is equivalent to not running the algorithm and therefore not taking into account the differences in the abilities of students having answered each item correctly. This light method significantly improved the efficiency of our approach by reducing the time of calculation by more than 100 while increasing the error by no more than 1/100 in the cases we assessed.

4.4.4 Using Difficulties to Generate Aggregated Scores

Generating within-context ability scores

The approach adopted is to replicate the methodology of IRT so as to generate “trait-like” subtask scores that would eventually be aggregated into a single test-level score. In the Rasch model, the logit probability of each student n to answer item i correctly is equal to the difference between her own ability θ_n and the item difficulty δ_i . A trait-like score is thus the sum of the student’s probability of answering the item correctly and its difficulty. Based on this model, we can write the following formula for a given subtask j and a student n : $S_{jn} = \text{logit } P_{jn} + \delta_j$.

This form is similar to the one stated in the previous section except that j now describes subtasks instead of items. But subtasks are not binary so we need to adapt the former definitions. P_{jn} will now be defined as the *proportion of correct answers in subtask j*. δ_j should be a measure of the subtask overall difficulty. For the sake of consistency, we will use the difficulties computed by the IRT model at the item level. We extrapolated subtask difficulties from these item difficulties following a different process for timed and untimed subtests.

Timed tests items are assumed to have homogeneous difficulties so we use their simple average as a proxy of the overall subtest difficulty. For untimed subtest (reading comprehension), we need to take into account the heterogeneity of difficulties across items. Fortunately we included all of the five reading comprehension subtasks in the model so we know all their respective difficulties. The idea is then to compute an ability-like score for each of them by adding the logit of the subtask-level proportion P_{jn} to each individual item difficulty within the subtask. We then average these five scores so as to get a single reading comprehension score.

Difficulties are computed at the project level, by means of a separate IRT model generating a set of difficulties for each project. This takes into account the possibility of varying distribution of item difficulties by sub-task between projects. Subtasks that seem easier in one project might seem harder in another due to different educational contexts/backgrounds or because of the way the task has been normed. The ability-like scores generated through this method can be compared absolutely within projects but not across. Proposals for creating comparisons between projects are detailed in a later section.

The next question is to determine an accurate and consistent measure of P_{jn} , the ratio of correct answers. For untimed subtasks it is straightforwardly the proportion correct (treating missings as incorrects). However, our final goal is to be able to compare across subtasks, some of which are timed and some untimed while taking into account the fact that some students finished the timed subtests with remaining time, which means that they could have scored more in the same time if they had been given more items to attempt. The approach adopted to address this is to use as a denominator the “rapidity” of the best-performing student. Thus we define P_{jn} as the proportion of the correct answers for a given student over the number of questions that would have been attempted during a full minute by the quickest student (if an infinite number of items had been presented to fill up the minute) within each subtask.

In that case, all subtask scores depend on the rapidity of the quickest student, so we need to ensure that outliers are adjusted before computing this proportion, especially those extremely fast at one subtask relative to others. Specifically, it is necessary to cap this denominator as a safeguard of comparability across subtasks, as we do not want all values of P_{jn} , (and derived scores) to be driven lower because of an outlier adjusted score remaining in our data. For this reason we defined an upper bound for the number of items that could have been attempted that is

equal to twice the actual number of items in the test. This assumes that subtasks are more or less designed so that a student could not realistically complete all the available items more than twice as quickly as was expected.

The next difficulty is that the logit function is only defined between 0 and 1. In particular it is not defined *for* 0 and 1, so we cannot generate a score for students that got wrong or right answers to all questions in 30 seconds. The solution adopted is to avoid the use of the logit function and difficulty scores and to impute the relevant trait score (by extrapolation) from “adjacent” trait scores. We give these “all-wrong/all-right” students the score extrapolated from the second-worst/second-best scores and the third-worst/third-best scores. This is saying that the difference in ability between students having 0 and 1 question right is the same as the difference in ability between those having 1 and 2 questions right (and equivalently for the best performing). This is an approximation but is probably the most “neutral” procedure available given that we have no precise information on the true ability of students having got all wrong (or all-right): we just have a lower (or upper) bound of their ability that is the ability of second-worst (or second-best) students. A benefit of the approach is that this adjustment ensures continuity of the score distribution.

P_{jn} and δ_j being defined for all subtasks (or an extrapolated version), we can then generate an aggregated EGRA/EGMA score by simply averaging all subtask scores. Before, we just need to ensure that the ability-like subtask scores reflect the same underlying ability by computing Cronbach’s alpha. With our methodology, we usually get $\alpha > 0.95$.

Allowing for cross-context comparisons

The approach adopted here is intended to create a scoring for literacy and numeracy that is consistent across project contexts (testing context is usually a country). The norms of the tests may vary depending on circumstances as the test is adapted for use. Different languages and alphabets may have different inherent relative difficulties. This is why our score is constructed to support understanding of the relationship between subtasks within the context and create a unified scoring system to support evaluation within that context at baseline and over time.

However, it may also be useful to carry out informal comparisons between countries. When evaluating impact at baseline it will probably be justifiable to compare distributional impacts across the separate scoring systems. However this will be sensitive to the width of the distribution (the homogeneity of the sample population) within the context. Also, at baseline there is an interest in informally comparing relative disadvantage to be able to describe out the targeting at the Fund level. In addition it may be useful to have ways to relate the results from project testing and across different testing systems.

For that reason we have developed an additional rescaling of all context-specific ability scores. For literacy we adjusted context-specific scores to one another according to their internal relationship with adjusted oral fluency (words read per minute) as an absolute point of reference. This assumes that reading a certain number of words per minute can be considered as having some universal comparability.

Potential advantages of using this subtask as a benchmark are as follows:

- Oral reading fluency expressed in words per minute (wpm) is identified as an indicator for GEC Payment-by-Result calculations
- Reading fluency is a relatively transparent indicator being derived from typical corpus of reading materials, so judgments about comparability can be discussed explicitly.
- Oral fluency as a subtask is located developmentally between letter recognition and reading comprehensions which means that it has a reasonable chance of being related to a range of levels of ability. We tested this assumption by regressing computed ability-like scores on oral reading scores. R-squared are equal to about 70 to 90% across projects. The consistency of the rescaling of ability-like score between contexts is likely to be related to these (depending on the specific pairs of contexts reviewed) as well as to the assumptions about the direct comparability of the subtask.

Hence we propose to use the reading scores to rescale the literacy ability scores across contexts. This retains their internal consistency but also allows them to be analysed informally across contexts. We will present approximate “reliabilities” for these conversions between contexts.

For numeracy ability, in the absence of a single subtask that we can be used as an absolute benchmark for cross-project comparisons, we used the sum of the number identification (“numi1”) and addition (“addi1”) subtask scores

as a point of reference. These two subtasks are those exhibiting the highest R-squared when regressed on the ability-like numeracy score and are located at the two ends of developmental progression of numeracy. They should thus allow for discriminating a wide range of the ability spectrum. The obtained numeracy ability score was then rescaled to give students having all items incorrect a score of 0 and students having all core (i.e. non additional) items correct a score of 100. This 0-100 scale transformation implies that students cannot get negative scores as opposed to our literacy score that allows for negative wpm. But some “all-correct” students might have numeracy scores higher than 100 in one or both of the following situations: they have had a time remaining higher than 0 at the end of one or several subtasks; or they have answered at least one additional item right.

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4.5 Discussion Note on the Harmonisation and Preparation of Data from the School-Based Assessment.

Merging of datasets and harmonisation of the data

For the [school-based data](#), variables were first harmonised across the four countries in which the assessment took place (DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone) in order to yield twelve datasets (i.e. three per country) consisting of: Classroom & Facilities Observations, Teacher Survey, and EGRA EGMA Assessments. The resulting sets contained variable names and possible values that were homogenous across countries within each of the three survey types. In a next step, the four country-specific datasets for the Classroom & Facilities Observations were merged to create one multi-country dataset. A similar process was carried out for the Teacher Surveys and the EGRA EGMA assessments, resulting in three multi-country datasets. The resulting multi-project, multi-country, multi-level dataset was structured as follows:

- All of the classroom observations and teacher surveys were grouped together based on the school identification number, creating lines of data that contained all of the classroom & facility observations and teacher surveys conducted at a particular school.
- Then, the assessment scores of each student were matched with the relevant observation and teacher information from their school, based on the school identification number.

The resulting data contained variables on multiple levels: the school, the teachers, the classrooms, and the students.

- School-level variables include factors that are homogenous across a particular school, for example, school opening hours and the quality of facilities.
- Teacher-level variables included factors that were specific to the teacher interviewed, such as their attitudes, opinions, and qualifications.

- Classroom-level variables cover factors that are specific to a particular classroom at the sub-school level. This includes the dynamics of the particular class session observed (e.g. the frequency at which boys and girls interact with the teacher) and the state of the classroom room (e.g. number of desks and chairs; whether or not the room has a window).
- Finally, the student-level data includes information on how a boys and girls performed on the EGRA/EGMA learning assessment, as well as basic demographic characteristics such as age, parental education and occupation, and their opinions and attitudes about education.

Aggregation of the school-based assessment data and restrictions to the sample

In order to be able to analyse barriers at the relevant level of analysis (see further down) we prepared analytical variables at two levels of the school-based data: the school-level; and the classroom-level.

To assess barriers at the school-level, we generated aggregate school-level variables capturing the average results of the Classroom & Facilities Observation and the Teacher Survey for a given school. Variables concerning physical features and attributes of the school were treated as fixed entities. After averaging all of the responses to a particular question (included in the Classroom & Facilities Observation or Teacher Survey data) for a given school, the result was rounded to the nearest whole number (as it would not make sense for there to be 1.5 toilets, for example). For responses of a more subjective nature, or responses that may be issue to response error, we calculated a simple average.

In some schools, learning assessments were conducted in other grades than P2 and P4 in order to achieve the required sample. Recognising that this may cause bias in average EGRA/EGMA scores we dropped observations for students in any other grade level than P2 and P4 from the sample to prepare for the analysis of school-level barriers (see [Table 14](#))

Certain school-level factors (e.g. the rate of teacher dismissal; or school staff turnover rates) required a measure of the total number of teachers working at a given school, which was not captured by any component of the school-based assessment. To retrieve this information, we linked the data from the School-based Assessment with the data from school visit (SV) from the same schools. While these two samples are very similar, they are not exactly identical. As a consequence of keeping only those schools that were present in both datasets, the number of observations decreased by approximately 65% of the full sample and 70% of the grade-level restricted sample. This smaller dataset was used for the analysis of school-level barriers that were dependent on the number of teaching staff.

The classroom-context barriers were associated with variables at the student, classroom, and teacher level, as pathways connected concepts at many different levels. For example, low levels of participation by girls is projected to be a proximal barrier of learning outcomes, and one its secondary drivers is identified as the child having a negative opinion about the importance of schooling for girls, finally, a tertiary driver was further identified as the teacher having a negative opinion about the importance of schooling for girls. Within this one pathway alone we must integrate data from all three different datasets, with the participation being measured from the classroom observation study, the girl's opinion being measured by the EGRA EGMA pre-assessment questionnaire, and the teacher's opinion being measured by the teacher survey.

In order to prepare for an accurate analysis of the relationship between barriers and education outcomes, it was important to ensure that data collected from an individual child was correctly linked with data from the observation of this child's particular classroom and the survey with his or her actual teacher. The data does not include a classroom identifier that would allow linking a student to the right classroom and teacher, if multiple classes were surveyed at the same grade level. This introduced a further restriction to the data. As the School-based assessment did not measure how many classes or students exist within the same grade, we used the School Visit data to establish the size of year group. Again, this led to a restriction of the sample to only those schools for which SV data was also available. Then, within each school, year groups for which there was more than one Classroom & Facilities Observation were dropped. To be sure that the tested student was in the classroom that was observed for their year group at their school, we compared the size of the observed class and the total size of the year group in the school. Observations were dropped if the observed classroom did not comprise at least 75% of the recorded year group size. This dataset was used for analysis of the barriers at the classroom level analysis of the full set of barriers at both the school and classroom level in order to ensure robustness of results.

Table 14: Restrictions to the number of observations available from the school-based assessment

	Subset	Restriction(s)	% of schools remaining	Sample size
(1)	All boys and girls	None	100%	8731
(2)	Subset of (1)	Grades 2 and 4 only	95%	7898
(3)	Subset of (2)	Linked to School Visit Survey (SVS) data	69%	5546
(4)	Subset of (3)	SVS data shows that class is >75% year Only one observation session per year group Class ID does not show >1 distinct class names	30%	2108

Preparing analytical variables from the school-based assessment for the analysis of barriers

To prepare variables in the [school-based assessment](#) data for the analysis of barriers we used a variety of processes, including the following:

- Simple recoding of variables;
- Averaging of several variables;
- Combining several variables to create a frequency; and
- Several iterations of relevance weighting and informed value restrictions.

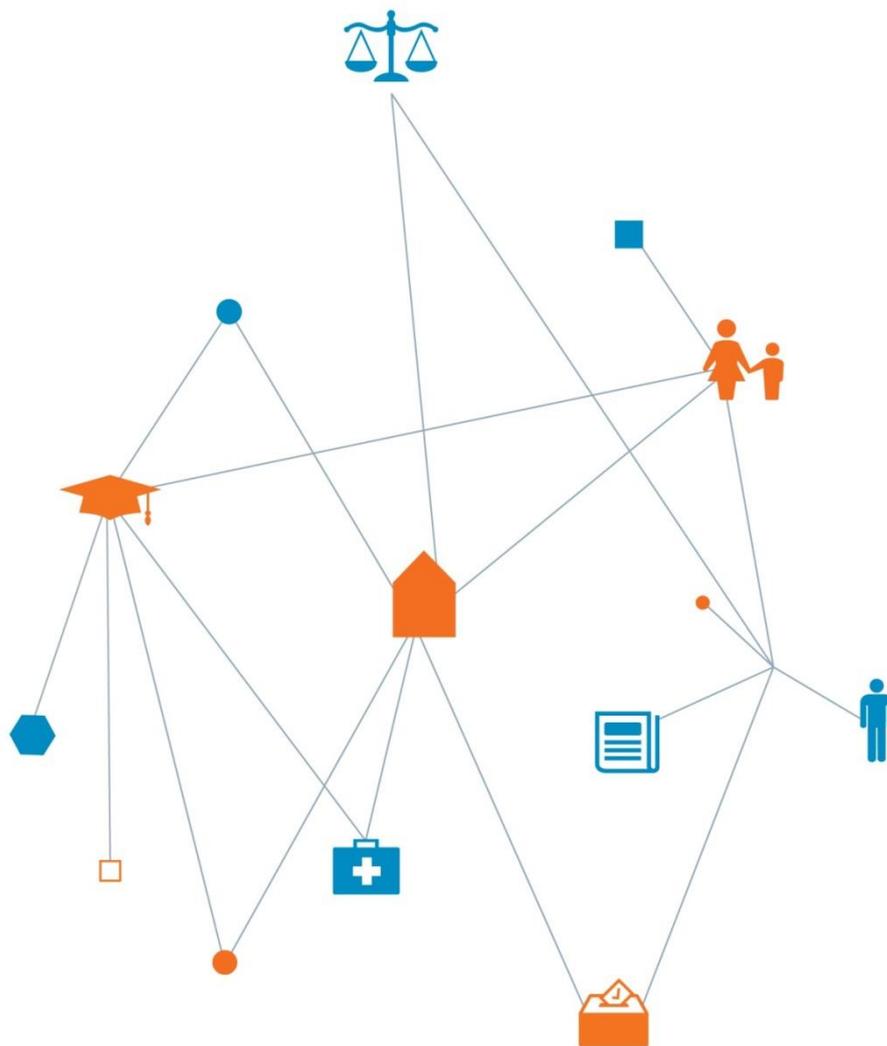
All variables were coded so that there is a positive relationship between the variable and the degree to which the barrier to education is present (e.g. the shorter the school day, the higher the value on the relevant variable).

Where several variables were associated with a barrier, we considered creating a single variable on a case-by-case basis. When the variables were measuring the same phenomenon, we took the average of the variables for each observation. When the multiple variables were all binary and measured different aspects of the same thing (e.g. the school having a roof and having a hard, dry floor) we created an index based on the un-weighted sum of the variable values (e.g. classroom would achieve an index score of two if it had neither a roof, nor a hard, dry floor; and zero if it had both).

Certain classroom dynamics observed during the Classroom & Facilities Observation required specific coding. In some cases the data showed the absolute number of incidences of interest (e.g. incidences of teasing) observed in a classroom which did not allow for comparison across classrooms and did not provide any sense of the intensity of these dynamics. We therefore calculated the frequency of an incidence per-student per-hour. To this end, we divided the total number of occurrences, by the number of students in the class, and then divided this frequency by two to get a frequency per-student per-hour.

Annex C – Quantitative Analysis and Results

Baseline Report – Step Change Window



Annex C – Quantitative Analysis and Results

1 Breakdown of Sample Sizes

Table 1: Sample size per project, age group and educational status (EM household survey data)

Sample distributions	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM HH survey	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Age	Number of girls (all)														
All	376	400	395	384	377	410	681	423	399	363	400	414	481	404	417
< 6	33	25	34	26	52	18	26	48	17	31	22	37	67	33	36
6 to 8	107	111	134	82	129	112	84	134	89	87	117	105	168	128	121
9 to 11	71	98	88	107	96	148	105	95	120	109	131	126	124	88	83
12 to 13	57	90	57	57	46	77	128	68	98	87	68	75	56	66	63
14 to 15	59	76	37	59	54	54	217	59	75	49	62	71	53	58	80
16 to 19							120								
Age	Number of girls (in school)														
All	312	280	325	321	226	384	600	290	277	296	308	385	445	214	208
< 6	21	1	25	12	26	11	14	29	1	6	2	27	61	7	4
6 to 8	86	75	113	70	67	105	77	72	50	59	74	104	151	49	39
9 to 11	66	80	84	97	74	145	103	77	101	107	120	124	120	61	48
12 to 13	51	69	53	50	29	73	111	62	70	80	59	69	55	45	48
14 to 15	55	55	29	56	30	49	199	46	55	44	53	61	46	34	57
16 to 19							95								
Age	Number of girls (out of school)														
All	64	120	70	62	151	25	81	132	122	67	92	29	36	190	209
< 6	12	24	9	14	26	7	12	19	16	25	20	10	6	26	32
6 to 8	21	36	21	12	62	7	7	62	39	28	43	1	17	79	82
9 to 11	5	18	4	10	22	3	2	17	19	2	11	2	4	27	35
12 to 13	6	21	4	7	17	3	17	6	28	7	9	6	1	21	15
14 to 15	4	21	8	3	24	5	18	13	20	5	9	10	7	24	23
16 to 19							25								
Age	Number of girls (never enrolled)														
All	51	103	54	36	122	11	18	120	109	52	88	10	19	158	188
< 6	11	24	8	13	26	6	11	19	16	22	20	9	5	25	32
6 to 8	19	36	18	8	53	5	5	59	39	26	43	1	11	74	76
9 to 11	4	17	3	2	16		1	16	16	1	11		1	19	30
12 to 13	3	15	1	2	12			4	24	3	7		1	17	11
14 to 15	1	11	3		15			8	14		7			14	17
16 to 19							1								

Table 2: Sample size per project and grade (EM household survey data – in-school girls only)

Sample distributions	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM HH survey	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
School phase	Number of girls (in school)														
Grade 0	8						22	51				36	102		
Grade 1	36		54	39	97	66	38	56		54		38	62	39	41
Grade 2	42		48	36	39	73	31	53		51		48	50	38	39
Grade 3	40		44	32	39	55	29	34		38		43	56	26	31
Grade 4	32		40	37	24	45	31	40		40		36	39	22	25
Grade 5	31		21	36	12	55	46	18		28		54	39	13	20
Grade 6	16		26	30		32	55	18		25		32	36	11	13
Grade 7	18		10	19		32	61			29		41	19	11	11
Grade 8	10			11		11	91			17		26	16		
Grade 9							80					12			
Grade 10							42					10			
Grade 11							11								
Grade 12							10								

Table 3: Sample size per project and age (reanalysis of project data)

Sample distributions	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Reanalysis	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Age	Number of girls														
All	2801	3200	1727	3434	1350	2430	3566	1727		1950	893	2632	2750	1897	3110
< 6	71		7		80	124		7			294	162	159		202
6 to 8	1200	433	121	235	388	720	13	121		291	170	619	496		699
9 to 11	919	654	456	1455	321	743	3	456		652	168	636	504		792
12 to 13	424	647	212	1164	193	509	287	212		553	120	517	325		464
14 to 15	151	569	170	480	150	332	1951	170		322	141	405	189		465
16 to 19		897	27	66	117		1204	27		129			17		115

Table 4: Sample size of learning assessments per project (outcome spreadsheets)

Sample distributions	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Outcome Spreadsheet	Learning assessment - N														
Intervention	1803		4246	1813	1723	638	3100			974	328	1600	1400	1257	
Control	1933		1246	1773	1200	631	2000			975	146	1000	550	609	
I+C	3736		5492	3586	2923	1269	5100			1949	474	2600	1950	1866	

Table 5: Sample size per country, age group and educational status (EM household survey data)

Sample distributions	Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	DRC	Sierra Leone	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
EM HH survey	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Age	Number of girls (all)								
All	1199	740	904	821	384	771	410	241	854
< 6	64	83	115	69	26	67	18	5	58
6 to 8	317	216	302	249	82	241	112	33	156
9 to 11	349	205	219	171	107	159	148	38	193
12 to 13	256	133	124	129	57	114	77	52	151
14 to 15	213	103	112	138	59	96	54	75	213
16 to 19								38	82
Age	Number of girls (in school)								
All	865	522	735	422	321	637	384	216	769
< 6	4	32	90	11	12	46	11	1	40
6 to 8	199	126	223	88	70	199	105	29	152
9 to 11	301	181	197	109	97	150	145	37	190
12 to 13	198	109	117	93	50	104	73	50	130
14 to 15	163	74	92	91	56	84	49	67	193
16 to 19								32	63
Age	Number of girls (out of school)								
All	334	218	168	399	62	134	25	25	85
< 6	60	51	25	58	14	21	7	4	18
6 to 8	118	90	79	161	12	42	7	4	4
9 to 11	48	24	21	62	10	9	3	1	3
12 to 13	58	24	7	36	7	10	3	2	21
14 to 15	50	29	20	47	3	12	5	8	20
16 to 19								6	19
Age	Number of girls (never enrolled)								
All	300	174	139	346	36	105	11	10	18
< 6	60	48	24	57	13	19	6	4	16
6 to 8	118	79	70	150	8	37	5	4	2
9 to 11	44	17	17	49	2	7		1	
12 to 13	46	15	5	28	2	4			
14 to 15	32	15	8	31		4			
16 to 19								1	

Table 6: Number of girls and boys living in the surveyed household for whom enrolment data is available, by age group and project area

Sample distributions	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	
	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
EM HH survey	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Total sample	Number of girls															
All	662	743	591	669	578	683	901	712	845	500	802	656	716	699	751	
< 6	79	49	64	75	67	45	38	88	54	34	57	59	95	49	79	
6 to 8	192	188	231	178	197	199	121	207	210	128	222	162	251	232	240	
9 to 11	145	176	144	175	150	204	140	174	226	151	260	191	188	160	157	
12 to 13	115	153	88	130	87	140	180	133	197	108	141	131	104	136	127	
14 to 15	131	177	64	111	77	95	274	110	158	79	122	113	78	122	148	
16 to 19							148									
Total sample	Number of boys															
All	446	548	373	475	466	502	779	635	642	400	535	571	760	567	563	
< 6	63	47	61	38	50	59	61	77	41	28	70	53	76	52	55	
6 to 8	126	158	112	147	159	149	195	187	163	137	162	168	237	185	176	
9 to 11	92	135	88	122	119	115	218	152	167	91	134	155	189	172	142	
12 to 13	78	112	55	99	79	87	167	109	132	82	93	110	135	92	98	
14 to 15	87	96	57	69	59	92	138	110	139	62	76	85	123	66	92	
16 to 19																

2 Analysis of Education Outcomes

The following tables present evidence on baseline levels of GEC outcomes:

- Enrolment rate
- Attendance rate
- Retention rate
- Literacy score
- Numeracy score

We show evidence from all available sources of data and disaggregated (where appropriate) by project area, age group, grade, country, gender or enrolment status. These data sources include: Project Baseline Reports; Outcome Spreadsheets; Project datasets (Reanalysis) and EM data.

Table 7 provides an overview of how each of the following outcomes has been measured in the EM data. When not specified, EM data comes from the Household Survey. The School Visit survey has been used for validation of enrolment and attendance calculations primarily based on primary caregiver responses in the Household survey, and for grade calculations.

Indicators are first presented by age group. Rows corresponding to age groups “9 to 11” (9-11 year old girls) and “14 to 15” (14-15 year old girls) are those reported in the outcome summary tables shown in [Section 3 Educational Outcomes at Baseline](#).

For Baseline Reports and Outcome Spreadsheets, outcomes have usually been reported by grade by the projects. In this case, the official age-grade equivalence was used (refer to [Section 2.5](#) and beginning of [Section 3](#)). When a fewer number of grades than the number of years in the age group was available (for instance if one or two years were available for the age groups “6 to 8” or “9 to 11” that contain three years), figure was reported in [light orange](#).

Indicators are then presented by grade. For Baseline Reports and Outcome Spreadsheets, these tables correspond to the original figures as directly harvested from the projects’ reporting. For Project Datasets the EM performed a second round of analysis where grade was available and exploitable. It is therefore possible that for one project we show data for Reanalysis by age group but no data for Reanalysis by grade – or conversely if age is not available but grade is.

Outcome Spreadsheets contain enrolment data for intervention and control groups which is not disaggregated by age. We present this data in the enrolment section.

Table 7: Overview of how key education outcomes are measured in the EM data

Outcome	Indicator Name	Eligible	Measures at individual level	Indicator (sample level)
Being enrolled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolment Rate Gender differences in enrolment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All girls All children living in surveyed household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether enrolled Whether enrolled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion enrolled Number enrolled
Attending school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of time in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of individual rate
Staying in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention Rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled 1 year ago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether still enrolled now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion retained
Literacy ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Scores Years Behind-Lit Poor Literacy Gender differences in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All girls Children assessed through school-based assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy score (scaled: wpm) Years behind in literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mean score Mean years behind
Numeracy ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeracy Scores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All girls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeracy score (scaled %) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mean score
Basic Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender differences in basic literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children living in surveyed households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether can read and write a letter (reported) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion able to read and write a letter Number able to read and write a letter

2.1.1 Enrolment

Enrolment rates show the proportion of girls in the overall population who are enrolled in school.

Table 8: Enrolment rates by project area, age group and data source

Enrolment (%)	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All			86	86	47			81		86			90		53
< 6												84			
6 to 8												96		41	40
9 to 11												99		66	62
12 to 13												95		67	69
14 to 15												88		67	61
16 to 19															
Outcome S.	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Intervention				88		85					87	70		86	56
Control				86		87					90	60		86	58
All				87		86					89	67		86	57
Reanalysis	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	46	50	86		48	86		74		89	47	94	90		50
< 6	44				39	30		63			1	80	80		16
6 to 8	38	40	89		43	84		74		86	59	95	89		43
9 to 11	48	47	87		50	93		84		86	82	98	95		67
12 to 13	57	52	86		59	93		83		94	80	95	94		71
14 to 15	51	53	78		49	85		84		83	58	87	90		66
16 to 19		54	70		55	100		100		55					16
EM – HH survey	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	83	70	82	84	60	94	88	69	69	82	77	93	93	53	50
< 6	64	4	74	46	50		54	60		19	9	73	91	21	11
6 to 8	80	68	84	85	52	94	92	54	56	68	63	99	90	38	32
9 to 11	93	82	95	91	77	98	98	82	84	98	92	98	97	69	58
12 to 13	89	77	93	88	63	96	87	91	71	92	87	92	98	68	76
14 to 15	93	72	78	95	56	91	92	78	73	90	85	86	87	59	71
16 to 19							79								
EM – school visit	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Checked – not enrolled	1	0	0	2	0	13	0	14	0	0	0	10	13	0	0
	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	2	3	0	0
Checked - enrolled	216	0	211	106	189	361	0	270	0	278	0	367	372	171	173
	57	0	53	28	50	88	0	64	0	77	0	89	77	42	41
Not enrolled (not checked)	63	0	67	63	151	26	0	132	0	67	0	29	34	174	204
	17	0	17	16	40	6	0	31	0	18	0	7	7	43	49
No school visit	96	400	117	213	37	10	681	7	399	18	400	8	62	59	40
	26	100	30	55	10	2	100	2	100	5	100	2	13	15	10
Total	376	400	395	384	377	410	681	423	399	363	400	414	481	404	417
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Notes: Cells in light blue indicate that data was reported as age group. Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups.

We show aggregated enrolment data by intervention and control area as reported by some projects in their outcome spreadsheets.

Table 9: Enrolment rates by project area, grade and data source

Enrolment (%)	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
P1														41	31
P2														41	43
P3												99		41	47
P4												98		66	59
P5												99		66	59
P6												98		66	69
P7												92		67	68
P8															
S1												92		67	70
S2												83		67	62
S3														67	60
S4															
S5															
S6															
S7															
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Lower	73				44		61	57		23		78	91	35	11
P1	72		83	70	55	83	86	65		58		95	90	36	36
P2	86		86	88	65	95	92	75		86		99	92	61	55
P3	81		90	90	65	97	97	79		94		100	94	63	56
P4	92		93	91	66	98	95	84		96		99	96	65	63
P5	95		81	89	61	97	96	82		95		97	98	62	73
P6	89		93	91	53	96	90	80		94		93	95	63	72
P7							89								
P8															
S1	93		87	86	41	93	90	84		90		90	93	58	76
S2	93			95	57	93	86	70		91		89	92	56	74
S3			96	95		96	89			91		86	87	62	
S4	92			93		92	82			87		85	89	60	
S5							79					85			69
Higher	92			80			82					88			

2.1.2 Gender Differences in Enrolment

Table 10: Number and percentage of girls and boys living in the surveyed household who are enrolled in school, by age group and project area

Gender differences	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - HH survey	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Enrolled (%)	Girls														
All	84	70	82	84	62	88	87	67	69	81	70	91	91	53	52
< 6	56	22	63	49	42	36	55	39	24	15	12	64	83	16	14
6 to 8	81	65	80	84	62	90	85	56	63	69	59	98	91	36	38
9 to 11	94	86	91	89	72	97	99	79	77	95	84	97	95	66	62
12 to 13	91	75	94	92	60	91	91	86	74	93	82	93	94	68	68
14 to 15	89	69	75	92	66	85	89	71	71	85	75	84	90	64	73
16 to 19							79								
Enrolled (%)	Boys														
All	81	80	84	88	65	78	83	72	76	72	65	87	87	54	55
< 6	51	11	62	37	38	15	34	30	12	32	16	43	71	15	11
6 to 8	84	73	83	89	60	79	86	63	66	57	59	92	86	38	39
9 to 11	93	92	92	96	72	91	96	82	84	84	80	99	93	60	73
12 to 13	87	96	91	92	84	90	90	88	86	90	81	91	88	76	64
14 to 15	82	90	91	97	63	89	70	87	85	82	76	81	86	80	71
16 to 19															
Enrolled (%)	Difference between girls and boys														
All	3	-10	-2	-4	-3	10	5	-5	-7	9	6	4	5	-1	-2
< 6	5	12	0	12	4	20	21	9	12	-17	-3	21	12	1	3
6 to 8	-3	-9	-3	-5	2	11	-1	-7	-3	12	0	6	5	-3	-2
9 to 11	0	-6	-1	-7	0	5	3	-3	-7	12	4	-1	3	5	-11
12 to 13	4	-21	3	0	-24	2	1	-2	-12	2	1	2	6	-8	3
14 to 15	7	-20	-16	-5	4	-4	19	-16	-14	3	-1	3	4	-16	2
16 to 19															

*includes boy-only households

Note: Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups.

2.1.3 Attendance

Attendance rates show the proportion of school days on which enrolled girls attend schools. They differ from global attendance rates because they do not account for girls who are not enrolled in school.

Table 11: Attendance rates by project area, age group and data source

Attendance (%)	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All				80				85					84		
< 6												88			
6 to 8	87			81	57							91			
9 to 11	90		59	83	69							93			
12 to 13	98		58									91			
14 to 15	100		50				96					90			
16 to 19							95								
Outcome S.	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All															
< 6															
6 to 8				76	20		88			82			81		
9 to 11				79	94					87			84		
12 to 13					59					86					
14 to 15										83					
16 to 19															
Reanalysis	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	87	89	82			87				90	88	88	84	86	
< 6	79		82			88					90	88	82		
6 to 8	86	89	83			87				90	88	88	86		
9 to 11	88	89	80			87				90	89	88	85		
12 to 13	87	89	81			87				90	89	88	83		
14 to 15	88	89	83			88				90	88	89	83		
16 to 19		89	87							90			86		
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	86	89	88	88	87	87	89	86	86	88	89	88	85	86	88
< 6	88		90	90	85		90	81		79	90	88	82	79	77
6 to 8	85	88	87	88	87	88	89	85	88	88	89	88	87	84	83
9 to 11	85	88	88	88	88	88	89	87	83	89	89	90	84	87	90
12 to 13	87	89	86	89	85	87	88	86	86	87	89	89	86	87	89
14 to 15	86	90	88	86	85	85	89	89	89	89	87	85	86	85	88
16 to 19							89								

Notes: Cells in light blue indicate that data was reported as age group. Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups.

Table 12: Attendance rates by project area, grade and data source

BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
P1	87				66							91			
P2	87				49							90			
P3	86				79							91			
P4	90				58							92			
P5	87		63									92			
P6	93		55									93			
P7												95			
P8							96								
S1	97		59				95					90			
S2	99		56				95					90			
S3	100		50				95								
S4															
S5															
S6															
S7															

PBR Sheet	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
P1					20					80			78		
P2							88			84			79		
P3				76	94					86			85		
P4				78						86			83		
P5				78						88			80		
P6				80									90		
P7															
P8															
S1					59					83					
S2										89					
S3										83					
S4															
S5															
S6															
S7															

Table 13: Attendance rates from EM school visit survey (SV) by project area, age group (EM data only)

Attendance (%)	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data – school visit	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	83		80	96	79	91		79		81		90	83	93	87
< 6	56		59	94	73			87		87		88	77	86	
6 to 8	82		83	99	82	89		80		76		89	81	91	94
9 to 11	89		78	96	75	92		76		77		92	85	93	81
12 to 13	87		87	94	87	92		78		85		90	87	95	85
14 to 15	81		74	97	81	90		85		92		91	88	95	93
16 to 19															
EM Data - HH survey¹	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	87		86	88	88	88		86		89		88	85	87	86
< 6	90		90	90	83			89		90		88	80	90	
6 to 8	89		86	89	87	89		85		90		88	86	83	81
9 to 11	85		87	88	89	89		86		89		90	84	90	89
12 to 13	88		84	90	87	90		83		87		89	86	88	87
14 to 15	83		84	77	90	80		89		90		84	86	80	87
16 to 19															

Notes: 1- Only girls for which school visit attendance is available - for accurate comparison across same population

2.1.4 Retention (year on year)

Year-on-year retention rates reflect the proportion of girls who were enrolled in a preceding year and re-enrol in the following school year.

Table 8: Retention rates by project area, age group and data source

Retention (%)	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All							90								
< 6															
6 to 8															
9 to 11			63												
12 to 13			59												
14 to 15			52												
16 to 19															
Reanalysis	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	92					94									
< 6	100					88									
6 to 8	85					93									
9 to 11	92					96									
12 to 13	95					95									
14 to 15	95					91									
16 to 19															
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	99	96	98	94	90	98	90	97	95	96	98	96	97	94	88
< 6	100		100	100	100		90	100			100	100	97		
6 to 8	100	99	100	97	79	97	96	94	92	98	95	100	100	86	88
9 to 11	100	98	97	90	97	100	98	100	99	100	98	98	98	100	100
12 to 13	100	92	100	96	95	95	88	93	95	95	100	92	100	100	73
14 to 15	100	98		100	83	97	92	100	91	90	100	87	83	90	100
16 to 19							78								

Note: Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups.

Table 9: Retention rates by project area, age and data source

Retention (%)	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
P1															
P2															
P3															
P4			65												
P5			66												
P6			58												
P7															
P8															
S1															
S2			59												
S3			52												
S4															
S5															
S6															
S7															
Reanalysis	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	92					94									
5	100					88									
6	90					85									
7	78					95									
8	88					98									
9	90					98									
10	92					96									
11	93					93									
12	93					95									
13	97					95									
14	95					95									
15	95					87									
16															
17															
18															
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
All	99	96	98	94	90	98	90	97	95	96	98	96	97	94	88
5	100		100	100	100		90	100			100	100	97		
6		100	100	100	50	100	87	83	100	100		100	100	83	83
7	100	100	100	92	100	96	100	100	82	100	90	100	100	75	80
8	100	97	100	100	87	94	100	100	95	94	100	100	100	100	100
9	100	100	100	88	100	100	100		100	100	97	100	100	100	
10	100	96	92	95	92	100	95	100	97	100	100	100	94	100	100
11	100		100	86	100	100	100	100	100	100	98	95	100		
12	100	97	100	93	90	94	93	100	89	93	100	92	100	100	67
13	100	88	100	100	100	95	83	86	100	97	100	93		100	80
14	100	96		100	100	95	93	100	92	89	100	94	83	100	100
15	100	100		100	67	100	92	100	90	91	100	80	83	80	100
16							93								
17							64								
18															

2.1.5 Literacy

The project baseline reports, PBR Returns and project datasets (that have been subject to Reanalysis conducted by the EM) report literacy scores as a measure of the ability to read. Projects used different types of reading assessment tools. Most projects, as well as the EM, used the EGRA tool.

Table 16: Literacy scores by age group, project area and data source (girls enrolled in school and out-of-school girls)

Literacy	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Test used by project	EGRA	EGRA	ASER	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	National	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	ASER	EGRA	UWEZO	UWEZO	UWEZO
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	total/100	wpm	total/100	unspec	wpm	wpm	unspec	unspec	wpm		levels	wpm	levels	total/100	levels
All															2.0
< 6											0.3	1			0.1
6 to 8	14	18	0.4	13	2	1			11		0.9	8	2.0	62	0.6
9 to 11	48	66	1.4	47	12	13		8	37		1.5	39	3.5	92	2.0
12 to 13	83	73	3.6			47		12	55		2.1	62			2.6
14 to 15		73	5.0			75	23	17	68		1.8	96			2.5
16 to 19		72					23	26	83						
Score (out-of-school)	total/100		total/100	unspec	wpm						levels		levels	total/100	levels
All	6		0.3	18	2						0.6		0.2	13	0
Outcome S.	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	total/100		total/100	unspec	wpm	total/100	total/100			wpm	levels	wpm	levels	total/100	
All															
< 6															
6 to 8				13	2	17	24			14	1.0	12	2.2	62	
9 to 11	45		1.4	47	10	50	34			49	2.0	50	4.1	91	
12 to 13	83		4.2			63				63	2.6	76			
14 to 15			5.9							54					
16 to 19															
Score (out-of-school)	total/100			unspec	wpm	total/100				wpm	levels		levels	total/100	
All	6			18	2	27				19	0.7		0.6	13	
Reanalysis	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)		wpm	levels	wpm		wpm	unspec			wpm	levels	wpm	levels		levels
All		72	1.8	9		15	19			49	1.9	34	3.9		2.0
< 6												1	2.3		0.1
6 to 8		50	0.9	2		3				16	1.2	9	3.1		0.6
9 to 11		71	1.2	7		15				46	1.7	39	4.0		1.9
12 to 13		72	1.8	11		25	15			59	2.3	61	4.5		2.6
14 to 15		74	2.4	15		24	18			62	2.7	95	4.6		2.6
16 to 19		74	2.9	13			20			60					
Score (out-of-school)		wpm	levels	wpm		wpm				wpm	levels		levels		
All		52	0.3	4		18				27	0.6		1.5		
< 6													1.1		
6 to 8		49				6					0.4		1.3		
9 to 11		50	0.3			17				14			1.8		
12 to 13		50	0.1							46			1.4		
14 to 15		53	0.3			46				37	0.8		2.0		
16 to 19		58								42					

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Score (never enrol.)										wpm			levels		
All										52			1.7		
< 6													1.2		
6 to 8										0			1.5		
9 to 11										26			2.5		
12 to 13										66					
14 to 15										72					
16 to 19										74					
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
All	23	37	17	19	2	15	65	21	37	35	24	43	39	42	44
< 6	-3		4	-16	-1	-7	-44	-3				-14	-6		
6 to 8	7	13	1	-7	1	-3	-11	4	19	13	8	5	22	16	24
9 to 11	22	29	13	16	2	14	42	13	32	34	26	54	53	36	38
12 to 13	30	52	42	35	5	31	77	43	48	43	29	64	74	56	55
14 to 15	50	63	47	49	5	37	89	44	51	55	34	87	73	83	58
Score (out-of-school)	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
All	-4	3	6	-13	-1	1	35	-3	-1	-3	-10	14	-11	3	2
< 6	-8	-11		-21	-1		-52	-6	-12	-9	-13	-15		-5	-5
6 to 8	-7	-7	-3	-20	-1			-6	-3	-9	-13		-22	-8	-5
9 to 11		1		-6	-1			4	-4		-10			12	1
12 to 13		14			1		77		-1					14	17
14 to 15		25			-1		48	10	14			50		26	30
Score (never enrol.)	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
All	-8	-4	-2	-21	-1	-9	-42	-4	-4	-9	-10	-15	-25	-3	-3
< 6	-8	-11		-21	-1		-51	-6	-12	-9	-13			-5	-5
6 to 8	-8	-7	-4		-1			-6	-3	-9	-13		-24	-9	-6
9 to 11		-2			-1			4	-3		-10			7	-4
12 to 13		6			-1				-2					11	9
14 to 15		8			-1				-1					-4	13

Notes: Cells in light blue indicate that data was reported by age instead of grade. Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups into the same age category.

Table 17: Literacy scores by grade, project area and data source (girls enrolled in school)

Literacy	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Test used by project	EGRA	EGRA	ASER	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	National	EGRA	EGRA	EGRA	ASER	EGRA	UWEZO	UWEZO	UWEZO
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	total/100	wpm	total/100	unspec	wpm	wpm	unspec	unspec	wpm		levels	wpm	levels	total/100	unspec
P1	14	18	0.3		1	1			4		0.9	3		44	0.7
P2			0.4		3	1			18		1.1	10	1.7	65	1.8
P3			0.6	13	3	3			32		0.9	22	2.3	77	2.9
P4	45	66	1.0	26	16	7			36		1.7	36		89	4.0
P5	46	66	1.3	45	17	9		9	43		1.8	46	3.3	93	4.4
P6	54	72	2.0	70		25		8	50		1.9	54	3.7		
P7		74				31		9	59			73			
P8		73				64									
S1		73	3.6			75	23	14	71		2.4	95			
S2	83	72	3.6				21		66		1.6	114			
S3			5.0				25	17	76		2.1	108			
S4								26	86		1.5				
S5									86						
S6															
S7															
Outcome S.	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	total/100		total/100	unspec	wpm	total/100	total/100			wpm	levels	wpm	levels	total/100	
P1					1	8				6	0.8	4	1.2	44	
P2					3	16				22	1.3	9	2.2	65	
P3				13	3	28				38	1.7	22	3.2	77	
P4	45		1.0	26	13	38				52	1.8	38	3.8	89	
P5			1.3	45	15	47				58	2.6	50	4.0	93	
P6			2.0	70		66					2.6	63	4.5		
P7						63						76			
P8															
S1			3.6				24			80					
S2	83		4.9				31			45					
S3			5.9				38			54					
S4															
S5															
S6															
S7															

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EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
Grade 0	18						-48	-3				-15	-11		
Grade 1	-5		1	-13	0	-7	-19	1		-1		-8	17	9	16
Grade 2	9		6	1	1	-2	9	18		19		11	38	26	33
Grade 3	12		8	6	5	5	28	9		42		27	36	44	50
Grade 4	16		20	9	1	11	50	35		41		57	66	58	56
Grade 5	20		29	27	7	35	51	69		49		64	84	70	61
Grade 6	50		43	36		36	71	64		55		64	82	63	71
Grade 7	63		67	56		33	83			57		76	97	84	76
Grade 8	67			52		57	97			63		87	98		
Grade 9							93					91			
Grade 10							103					83			
Grade 11							103								
Grade 12							112								

Table 18: Literacy as years behind international benchmarks, by age group and yearly age, project area and enrolment status (EM household survey data)

Note: The years behind (literacy) indicator represents the number of years that students are behind international benchmarks of oral reading fluency. See [Section 2](#) of main report for details of our methodology and exact words per minute benchmarks.

Literacy - Years behind	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - HH survey	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Years behind (is)	based on EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
All	-4.1	-3.0	-3.8	-4.4	-3.7	-4.5	-3.5	-4.1	-3.2	-3.1	-3.5	-2.7	-1.8	-3.4	-4.2
< 6	0		0	0	1	0	0	0				0	0		
6 to 8	-2	-1	-2	-2	-1	-2	-1	-2	0	-1	-1	-2	-1	-1	-1
9 to 11	-4	-2	-5	-4	-4	-4	-2	-4	-2	-2	-3	-2	-2	-3	-3
12 to 13	-6	-4	-5	-6	-7	-6	-3	-5	-4	-5	-5	-4	-3	-5	-5
14 to 15	-7	-6	-7	-7	-8	-8	-4	-7	-6	-6	-7	-5	-6	-5	-7
16 to 19							-6								
Other															
Years behind (oos)	based on EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
All	-3.3	-3.2	-3.2	-3.6	-3.4	-3.7	-4.9	-3.4	-3.7	-1.6	-2.4	-4.5	-3.4	-3.6	-3.3
< 6	-1	1	-1	-1	1		0	-1	1	1	1	-1		0	0
6 to 8	-2	-1	-2	-2	-1			-2	-1	-1	-1		-2	-2	-2
9 to 11		-4		-5	-5			-5	-4		-4			-4	-5
12 to 13		-6			-7		-4		-7					-7	-7
14 to 15		-7			-9		-7	-9	-8			-7		-8	-8
16 to 19							-8								
Other															
Years behind (never)	based on EGRA - augmented and harmonised oral reading score (in wpm)														
All	-2.6	-2.7	-3.0	-2.0	-3.0	-1.2	-0.9	-3.1	-3.5	-0.8	-2.2	-0.6	-2.2	-3.5	-3.2
< 6	-1	1	-1	-1	1		0	-1	1	1	1			0	0
6 to 8	-2	-1	-3	-2	-2			-2	-1	-1	-1		-2	-2	-2
9 to 11		-4			-5			-5	-4		-4			-4	-5
12 to 13		-6			-7				-7					-7	-7
14 to 15		-8			-9				-9					-10	-9
16 to 19															
Other															
Years behind (is)	ACROSS AGE - based on EGRA (augmented and harmonised oral reading score in wpm)														
5 year old	0		0	0	1	0	0	0				0	0		
6 year old	-1		-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1		0	0	-1	-1	-1	0
7 year old	-2	-1	-2	-2	-1	-2	-1	-2	-1	0	-1	-2	-1	-1	-1
8 year old	-2	-1	-3	-3	-2	-3	-1	-3	-1	-1	-1	-2	-1	-2	-2
9 year old	-4	-2	-3	-4	-3	-4	-2	-3	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	
10 year old	-4	-3	-5	-5	-4	-4	-2	-5	-2	-3	-3	-2	-2	-4	-3
11 year old	-4	-3	-6	-4	-5	-5	-3	-5	-3	-3	-4	-3	-2	-4	-4
12 year old	-6	-4	-5	-5	-6	-6	-3	-5	-4	-4	-5	-4	-3	-5	-4
13 year old	-6	-4	-6	-6	-7	-6	-3	-6	-5	-5	-5	-4	-4	-5	-6
14 year old	-6	-5	-7	-7	-8	-8	-4	-7	-6	-5	-7	-5	-4	-5	-6
15 year old	-7	-6	-8	-7	-9	-8	-5	-8	-6	-6	-7	-6	-7	-6	-7
16 year old							-6								
17 year old							-6								

Table 19: Literacy as years behind international benchmarks by project area and grade (girls enrolled in school; based on EM household survey data)

Literacy - Years behind	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Years behind (is)	ACROSS GRADE - based on EGRA (augmented and harmonised oral reading score in wpm)														
Grade 0	1						-1	0				-1	0		
Grade 1	-1		-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1		-1		-1	0	-1	0
Grade 2	-2		-2	-2	-2	-2	-1	-1		-1		-1	0	-1	-1
Grade 3	-3		-3	-3	-3	-3	-1	-3		-1		-2	-1	-1	-1
Grade 4	-3		-3	-4	-4	-4	-1	-2		-2		-1	-1	-1	-1
Grade 5	-4		-4	-4	-5	-3	-2	-1		-3		-2	-1	-2	-2
Grade 6	-3		-4	-4		-4	-2	-3		-3		-3	-2	-3	-3
Grade 7	-4		-4	-4		-5	-2			-4		-3	-2	-3	-3
Grade 8	-4			-5		-5	-3			-5		-4	-3		
Grade 9							-4					-4			
Grade 10							-5					-6			
Grade 11							-6								
Grade 12							-6								

2.1.6 Numeracy

Table 102: Numeracy scores by age group, project area and data source (girls enrolled in school and out-of-school girls)

Numeracy	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE	
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som	
Test used by project	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	National	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA	UWEZO	UWEZO	UWEZO	
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	
Score (in-school)	total/100	total/100	total/22	unspec	total/100	total/100	unspec	unspec	unspec		levels	total/100	levels	total/100	levels	
All																
< 6											0.8	8				0.5
6 to 8	18	36	3	31	17	14			22		1.1	21	4.3	48		1.0
9 to 11	31	78	9	48	37	35		17	41		2.0	51	5.3	80		3.0
12 to 13	36	86	10			57		26	53		2.4	65				3.3
14 to 15		89	11			65	7	35	65		2.3	77				3.5
16 to 19		92					12	51	84		2.3					
Score (out-of-school)	total/100		total/22	unspec											total/100	
All	12		2	23											11	
Outcome S.	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	
Score (in-school)	total/100		total/100	unspec	total/100	total/100	total/100			total/100	levels	total/100	levels	total/100		
All																
< 6																
6 to 8				31	17	31				23	1.2	30	4.4	48		
9 to 11	31		9	48	39	65				59	2.4	62	5.5	79		
12 to 13	36		12			76				74	2.5	72				
14 to 15			14				11			78		75				
16 to 19							15									
Score (out-of-school)	total/100			unspec	total/100	total/100				total/100	levels		levels	total/100		
All	12			23	9	31				30	0.9		1.0	11		
Reanalysis	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274	
Score (in-school)		total/100	levels	total		total	unspec			total/100	levels	total/100	levels		levels	
All		72	8.8	48		32	9			77	2.4	30	5.1		2.8	
< 6												3	2.5		0.5	
6 to 8		30	7.2	30		18				29	1.6	23	4.2		1.1	
9 to 11		66	7.7	43		33				72	2.2	51	5.5		3.0	
12 to 13		73	9.2	53		42				90	2.7	41	5.7		3.3	
14 to 15		78	9.8	60		44	8			96	3.1	35	5.8		3.6	
16 to 19		79	10.2	56			9			94						
Score (out-of-school)		total/100	levels	total		total				total/100	levels	total/100	levels			
All		28	1.9	24		23				48	0.8	2	3.4			
< 6																
6 to 8		17				16				12	0.4		2.9			
9 to 11		25	2.1			24				30						
12 to 13		28	0.9							53	1.2					
14 to 15		36	1.4			46				53						
16 to 19		33								72						

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Score (never enrol.)											total/100					levels		
All											72					3.4		
< 6																		
6 to 8											11							
9 to 11											53							
12 to 13											87							
14 to 15											88							
16 to 19											88							
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274			
Score (in-school)	EGMA - augmented and harmonised numeracy score (scaled from 0 to 100)																	
All	59	57	53	73	25	50	108	51	59	97	40	76	66	75	73			
< 6	13		26	4	8	9	-6	15				4	17					
6 to 8	29	34	27	33	16	23	30	26	38	39	25	31	42	37	41			
9 to 11	61	49	50	80	27	50	86	47	52	91	44	90	85	60	62			
12 to 13	83	74	90	89	41	72	118	76	73	122	44	107	108	97	82			
14 to 15	95	80	110	111	40	82	134	87	76	157	47	124	107	141	102			
16 to 19							145											
Score (out-of-school)	EGMA - augmented and harmonised numeracy score (scaled from 0 to 100)																	
All	15	16	29	28	7	25	82	16	11	13	5	45	27	21	22			
< 6	4	-1		7	7		-9	7	-2	0	2	2		8	7			
6 to 8	6	6	11	5	6			9	7	-1	2		13	6	12			
9 to 11		15		43	7			23	9		1			33	22			
12 to 13		24			9		130		14					38	52			
14 to 15		46			9		88	44	26			91		57	62			
16 to 19							120											
Score (never enrol.)	EGMA - augmented and harmonised numeracy score (scaled from 0 to 100)																	
All	9	8	12	6	6	8	-1	14	6	-1	5	3	3	13	16			
< 6	4	-1		4	7		-9	7	-2	0	2			7	7			
6 to 8	5	6	6		6			9	7	-2	2		3	5	12			
9 to 11		10			6			24	8		1			26	15			
12 to 13		13			7				10					32	42			
14 to 15		23			6				7					23	39			
16 to 19																		

Notes: Cells in light blue indicate that data was reported as age group. Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups.

Table 113: Numeracy scores by grade, project area and data source (girls enrolled in school)

Numeracy	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
Test used by project	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	National	EGMA	EGMA	EGMA	ASER	EGMA	UWEZO	UWEZO	UWEZO
BL Report	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	total/100	total/100	total/100	unspec	total/100	total/100	unspec	unspec	unspec			total/100	levels	total/100	unspec
P1	18	36	1		16	8			16			12		32	1
P2			3		17	11			28			33	3.9	48	3
P3			5	31	16	22			41			46	4.7	63	4
P4	31	77	8	41	45	25			39			57		79	5
P5	28	78	9	49	50	33		12	45			63	5.0	80	5
P6	35	83	10	55		49		21	50			69	5.6		
P7		89				50		20	57			72			
P8		87				65									
S1		90	11			65	7	31	63			79			
S2	36	92	10				12		66			81			
S3			11				12	35	78			72			
S4								51	99						
S5									75						
S6															
S7															
Outcome S.	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	total/100		total/100	unspec	total/100	total/100	total/100			total/100	levels	total/100	levels	total/100	
P1					16	18				12	1.1	12	3.2	32	
P2					18	28				33	1.3	33	4.6	48	
P3				31	17	47				50	2.3	45	5.4	63	
P4	31		8	41	48	55				62	2.2	58	5.9	78	
P5			9	49	53	60				66	2.8	63	5.3	80	
P6			10	55		78					2.5	64	5.5		
P7						76						70			
P8															
S1			11				11			72		73			
S2	36		13				13			76		75			
S3			14				17			78					
S4															
S5															
S6															
S7															

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EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	EGMA - augmented and harmonised numeracy score (scaled from 0 to 100)														
Grade 0	29						-9	17				3	16		
Grade 1	22		21	12	15	11	20	24		16		17	37	21	31
Grade 2	26		33	39	19	30	37	50		59		40	55	51	59
Grade 3	38		49	62	32	42	65	50		99		64	72	66	71
Grade 4	58		62	78	28	48	87	78		118		94	96	92	93
Grade 5	80		79	96	64	76	105	99		131		98	118	100	103
Grade 6	101		90	98		77	116	107		135		107	114	130	111
Grade 7	109		142	116		76	125			162		114	119	146	120
Grade 8	101			111		98	140			184		129	126		
Grade 9							142					128			
Grade 10							143					128			
Grade 11							154								
Grade 12							154								
Grade 13															
Grade 14															

2.1.7 Gender Differences in Learning

Table 124: Number and percentage of boys and girls living in the surveyed households with basic literacy (i.e. who are reportedly able to read and write a letter), by age group and project area

Gender differences	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - HH survey	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Basic literacy* (%)	Girls														
All	55	46	52	31	21	29	67	43	45	61	30	48	56	46	45
< 6	11		17	5	1		3	7	4		4		15	2	3
6 to 8	36	11	36	13	8	8	16	18	16	22	3	18	35	22	18
9 to 11	63	60	61	30	25	27	54	50	55	75	36	57	72	58	55
12 to 13	74	65	86	45	38	46	79	70	58	85	49	68	87	67	71
14 to 15	86	64	81	64	47	67	85	75	69	92	57	81	94	73	80
16 to 19							89								
Basic literacy* (%)	Boys														
All	57	52	53	35	26	30	36	44	50	45	27	32	52	43	48
< 6	19	6	13	5		3	3	5	5		3		7	2	4
6 to 8	38	9	32	13	12	3	11	18	10	16	4	8	32	22	26
9 to 11	67	69	65	37	29	23	29	54	53	47	40	38	57	47	59
12 to 13	74	83	82	53	47	56	60	74	74	78	46	53	80	70	69
14 to 15	86	88	89	68	53	73	70	71	85	79	53	60	82	85	77
16 to 19															
Basic literacy* (%)	Difference between girls and boys														
All	-2	-6	0	-3	-5	0	30	-1	-5	17	3	17	4	4	-3
< 6	-8	-6	4	0	1	-3	-1	2	-1		1		8	0	-1
6 to 8	-2	2	4	0	-4	4	4	0	6	6	-1	10	3	0	-8
9 to 11	-5	-9	-4	-7	-4	5	25	-4	3	28	-4	19	16	11	-4
12 to 13	0	-18	5	-7	-9	-10	18	-4	-16	7	3	15	7	-3	1
14 to 15	0	-23	-8	-4	-6	-5	15	5	-16	13	5	21	11	-12	3
16 to 19															

*can read or write a letter in language of instruction

Note: Cells in light orange indicate a difference significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 2513: Literacy scores (in wpm) by gender, project area, age group and grade (data from the EM school-based assessment)

Gender differences	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - SBA	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Literacy score (wpm)	Girls - P2														
All	6		12	-2	2			14		18			24		
< 6															
6 to 8	3		4	-4	5			16		23			35		
9 to 11	1		3	0	2			9		17			9		
12 to 13			33		0			20		14					
14 to 15			63		0			18							
16 to 19															
Literacy score (wpm)	Boys - P2														
All	8		12	0	4			31		18			24		
< 6															
6 to 8	3		0	0	8			33		23			40		
9 to 11	5		4	1	1			26		18			8		
12 to 13			33		4			39		14			-3		
14 to 15			61		3			26							
16 to 19															
Literacy score (wpm)	Difference between girls and boys														
All	2		0	2	2			17		1			0		
< 6															
6 to 8	0		-3	4	3			18		1			6		
9 to 11	4		2	1	-1			17		1			-1		
12 to 13			0		5			19		0					
14 to 15			-1		3			8							
16 to 19															
Literacy score (wpm)	Girls – P4														
All	23		24	13	16			46		34			55		
< 6															
6 to 8													73		
9 to 11	19		18	14	18			41		38			59		
12 to 13	17		25	12				51		27			34		
14 to 15			39					44							
16 to 19															
Literacy score (wpm)	Boys – P4														
All	28		31	20	23			71		33			50		
< 6															
6 to 8															
9 to 11	24		27	20	27			70		35			55		
12 to 13	27		32	21	22			69		35			43		
14 to 15			45		21			72		20			26		
16 to 19															

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Literacy score (wpm)	Difference between girls and boys														
All	6		7	7	8			25		-1			-4		
< 6															
6 to 8															
9 to 11	5		8	5	8			29		-4			-4		
12 to 13	10		6	9				18		7			9		
14 to 15			5					29							
16 to 19															

Source: EM school-based assessment.

Note: Cells in light orange indicate a significant difference at the 0.05 level.

Table 2614: Numeracy scores by gender, project area, age group and grade (data from the EM school-based assessment)

Gender differences	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - SBA	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Numeracy score	Girls - P2														
All	49		54	45	29			73		65			60		
< 6															
6 to 8	45		42	37	30			59		66			64		
9 to 11	42		37	52	25			64		66			53		
12 to 13			85		29			84		64					
14 to 15			134		39			93							
16 to 19															
Numeracy score	Boys - P2														
All	51		53	52	43			92		83			63		
< 6															
6 to 8	44		38	48	38			74		77			68		
9 to 11	48		41	56	33			85		79			58		
12 to 13			87		51			101		103			56		
14 to 15			124		66			101							
16 to 19															
Numeracy score	Difference between girls and boys														
All	2		0	7	14			19		18			3		
< 6															
6 to 8	0		-4	11	8			16		11			4		
9 to 11	6		4	3	8			20		13			4		
12 to 13			1		22			17		38					
14 to 15			-10		27			8							
16 to 19															
Numeracy score	Girls – P4														
All	80		83	94	85			115		130			110		
< 6															
6 to 8													117		
9 to 11	74		73	93	89			100		132			112		
12 to 13	80		87	101				115		130			100		
14 to 15			106					122							
16 to 19															
Numeracy score	Boys – P4														
All	95		92	105	112			141		144			107		
< 6															
6 to 8															
9 to 11	91		85	100	110			126		143			108		
12 to 13	94		93	116	111			141		147			105		
14 to 15			111		116			147		146			100		
16 to 19															

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Numeracy score	Difference between girls and boys														
All	16		9	12	27			26		14			-2		
< 6															
6 to 8															
9 to 11	17		12	8	21			26		11			-4		
12 to 13	14		6	15				26		17			5		
14 to 15			5					25							
16 to 19															

Source: EM school-based assessment.

Note: Cells in light orange indicate when the outcome was extrapolated across different adjacent age groups.

Table 15: Literacy as years behind international benchmarks by gender, project area, age group and grade (data from the EM school-based assessment)

Gender differences	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - SBA	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Years behind (lit)	Girls - P2														
All	-4		-4	-4	-6			-6		-4			-3		
< 6															
6 to 8	-3		-3	-3	-2			-2		-2			-1		
9 to 11	-5		-5	-5	-5			-5		-4			-4		
12 to 13			-6		-8			-7		-7					
14 to 15			-8		-10			-9							
16 to 19															
Years behind (lit)	Girls – P4														
All	-5		-6	-6	-6			-7		-5			-4		
< 6															
6 to 8													-1		
9 to 11	-5		-5	-5	-4			-4		-4			-3		
12 to 13	-7		-7	-7				-6		-6			-6		
14 to 15			-8					-8							
16 to 19															
Years behind (lit)	Boys – P2														
All	-4		-4	-4	-6			-5		-4			-3		
< 6															
6 to 8	-3		-3	-3	-2			-1		-2			-1		
9 to 11	-5		-5	-5	-5			-4		-4			-5		
12 to 13			-7		-7			-6		-7			-7		
14 to 15			-7		-10			-9							
16 to 19															
Years behind (lit)	Boys – P4														
All	-5		-6	-5	-7			-6		-6			-4		
< 6															
6 to 8															
9 to 11	-4		-5	-5	-4			-3		-4			-3		
12 to 13	-6		-6	-7	-7			-5		-6			-6		
14 to 15			-8		-9			-7		-9			-9		
16 to 19															

Source: EM school-based assessment.

2.1.8 Age-In-Grade Distribution

Table 28: Grade/age distribution by age group, gender and project area, EM school-based assessment (girls and boys enrolled in school)

Age-in-grade distribution	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CfBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data - SBA	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Grade/Age distrib.	Girls - P2														
All	272		266	266	188			342		324			341		
< 6	1							1		2			2		
6 to 8	165		109	124	47			38		105			203		
9 to 11	80		104	122	76			159		172			122		
12 to 13	15		28	19	41			101		36			13		
14 to 15	11		25	1	24			41		9			1		
16 to 19								2							
Grade/Age distrib.	Girls – P4														
All	273		278	358	82			295		325			325		
< 6															
6 to 8	17		8	18	2					1			38		
9 to 11	179		143	199	49			64		201			213		
12 to 13	59		78	127	19			107		107			70		
14 to 15	18		49	14	12			120		16			4		
16 to 19								4							
Grade/Age distrib.	Boys - P2														
All	276		294	240	183			354		318			344		
< 6	1		1	1											
6 to 8	145		123	121	40			39		77			179		
9 to 11	103		107	107	73			136		178			142		
12 to 13	15		35	11	43			116		47			21		
14 to 15	12		28		27			63		16			2		
16 to 19															
Grade/Age distrib.	Boys – P4														
All	277		270	325	100			339		321			322		
< 6															
6 to 8	16		7	9	2			1		2			19		
9 to 11	171		124	199	38			66		172			184		
12 to 13	71		90	101	20			103		112			93		
14 to 15	19		49	16	40			153		35			26		
16 to 19								13							

Source: EM school-based assessment.

2.1.9 Language of Instruction

Table 30: Language of instruction and differences between speakers and non-speakers of language of instruction at home, by age group and project area, EM data (girls enrolled in school)

Language of instruction	BRAC	BRAC	Plan	IRC	STC	STC	Camfd	WUSC	AKF	ChHpe	Acted	WV	CBT	RI	CARE
	Sie	Afg	Sie	DRC	Eth	Moz	Z-T	Ken	Afg	Eth	Afg	Zim	Ken	Som	Som
EM Data	5063	5085	5096	5097	5098	5099	5101	5136	5147	5170	5224	5243	5252	5253	5274
Score (in-school)	Speaks language of instruction at home														
All		37		11	3	20	60	29	35	34	21	40	40	38	47
< 6												-13			
6 to 8		14			0		-6		20	13	6	8	34	12	27
9 to 11		29		11	3		44		33	35	21	49		35	39
12 to 13		53					79		44	44	29	59		53	56
14 to 15		65					84		40	53	33	89		78	61
16 to 19							108								
Score (in-school)	Does NOT speak language of instruction at home														
All	21	35	14	21	2	15	72	20	48		26	49	40	55	33
< 6								-2					-6		
6 to 8	3		1	-7	1	-2		3			11	-1	18		
9 to 11	21	29	9	18	2	15	37	11	33		31	66	54		
12 to 13	26		40	35	3	30	71	42			28	69	76		
14 to 15	51		41	50		35	92	43			36	84	73		
16 to 19							102								
Score (in-school)	Difference between speakers and non-speakers of language of instruction at home														
All		-2		10	-1	-5	12	-10	13		5	9	0	17	-14
< 6															
6 to 8					1						5	-8	-15		
9 to 11		-1		7	-1		-7		0		9	17			
12 to 13							-8				-1	10			
14 to 15							8				3	-4			
16 to 19							-5								

Color code for significance

	If both p-values are strictly below 0.05
	Only p-value from linear regression (left hand side table) strictly below 0.05
	Only p-value from logistic regression/ Wilcoxon rank-test (right hand side tables) is strictly below 0.05

Table 316: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Afghanistan) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Afg)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
Description of Variable		In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	21%			4%			2%*	9.30***	1.13	11.66***
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	0%			0%			0%			0.00
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-0.45			-3% †			0%	-1.91 †	0.23	-2.76**
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.23			5%	-3%**	2.49	-2%**			2.52
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	1.91			-3%	-2%**	0.66	-1%**			-7.44**
Material deprivation	[0,5]	2.06			1%			0%			-2.88**
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.15	-18%*	0.68	-13%			5%**			-12.64**
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.70			0%			1% †	-1.62*	0.46	-2.39**
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	5.52			0%			0%	2.82*	0.76	1.94
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	31%			-5%			2%	-5.15 †	0.45	-7.49*
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	33%	-8%*	0.78	-10%*	2% †	0.47	0%			-2.21
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	29%			-7%			0%			-2.27
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	34%	10%***	1.04	7% †			-1%			-7.14*
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	40%			6%	-4%*	2.37	-2%			-1.14
Attitudes and support in family and community											

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Afg)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.34			-11%*	3%*	1.15	1%*			-3.93
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	72%	-19%***	1.35	-27%**			-5%**			2.73
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	28%	-10%*	0.97	-26%***			-3% †			-9.23**
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	1.02	-3% †	0.30	-4% †			-1%			-3.44*
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.52	-11%***	4.80	-13%***	-2% †	1.61	-3%*	-6.09***	2.17	-7.85***
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	0.60	-4%*	0.49	-6%*	-1% †	0.62	-2% †			-0.88
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	27%			-15%**	-4% †	1.50	-4%*			-5.50
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.06	7%*	0.25	5%*	3% †	0.70	-3%	7.11*	0.51	7.18*
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.58			-3%			-2%*			1.26
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.02			-1%	-17%*	4.24	-18%**	-15.83 †	0.37	-18.35*
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	1%			-9%	6% †	0.15	2%**			5.52
Low level of family education	[0,1]	89%			-19%*	6%*	1.00	4%	-22.01***	1.67	-33.27***
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.04			1%			0%	5.40 †	0.21	3.70
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	16%			6% †	2% †	0.31	1%			3.72

Table 317: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (DRC) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (DRC)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	69%			-3%			-1%			-0.15
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	9%	-23%*	2.80	-25%**			1%			8.22
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-0.04			-2%			-1%			0.30
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.14			0%			-1%			8.65 †
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	1.24			-4%			0%	-5.69*	1.08	-3.30
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.37	-4%**	2.17	-6%***			-1%			-1.20
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.11	-40%*	1.85	-31% †			2%			-13.92
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	1.00			0%			0%			-1.06
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	5.56			3%			-1%	-4.65 †	0.69	0.45
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	21%			-3%			-1%	13.27 †	1.41	15.55 †
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	79%			-4%			1%			5.18
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	95%			-8% †	6% †	2.52	6% †			-22.96
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	26%	-4% †	0.19	-2%			-1%	-13.77**	1.72	-12.00*
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	47%	8%*	0.84	0%			0%			-13.13*
Attitudes and support in family and community											

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (DRC)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.08			3%			0%	27.88**	3.13	21.11**
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	87%			-18%			-1%			-14.60
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	18%			1%			0%			-5.18
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	0.17			1%			0%			-0.91
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.25			-5%			0%			0.50
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.64			-2%			0%			-1.30
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	22%			-2%	2%*	0.82	2%*			-4.96
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.07			-3%			-1%			1.20
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.84			0%			-1%			-3.22
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.08			6%			-4%			-18.84**
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	6%	-24%*	2.09	-16% †			-3%			-9.53
Low level of family education	[0,1]	24%	-29%***	5.08	-30%***			1%	-18.00*	1.52	-22.54**
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.38			0%			0%	-3.72 †	0.49	-1.98
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	10%			-1%			-1%			0.80

Table 318: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Ethiopia) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Eth)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	24%	6%*	0.22	16%***			0%			13.64**
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	41%			-18%***			-2%			-12.95***
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	0.01			-2%			0%			1.75 †
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.39			3%			0%	3.31 †	0.55	11.33***
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	1.54			-17%***			-1%	-5.09 †	0.52	-19.26***
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.47	-2%*	0.40	-8%***	-1%*	1.03	-1%*	-4.30***	3.03	-8.25***
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.16	-58%***	4.90	-80%***			-8%	-16.97**	1.10	-35.88***
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.67			-3%*			-1%			-1.52*
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	4.28			5%*			1%*			6.15***
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	20%	-10%**	0.68	-14%**			-1%			-3.12
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	31%	7% †	0.40	-1%			-2%	-6.26*	0.73	-16.49***
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	100%			0%			0%			0.00
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	35%			-9%	-3%*	1.31	-4%*			-5.12
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	39%	7%*	0.47	0%			-1%			-10.81**
Attitudes and support in family and community											
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.55	-6%**	0.76	-15%***			0%			-4.93*
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	85%			-45%**			-1%			-13.17
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	14%	-22%**	2.36	-39%***			-6% †	-4.79*	0.30	-14.82***
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	0.02			-3%			-1%*	-2.14*	0.43	-5.53***

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Eth)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
Description of Variable		In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.56	-10%***	2.70	-18%***			-1%	-2.53*	0.54	-7.47***
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	0.73	-6%**	1.05	-5%*			0%			0.54
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	23%			4%			-1%			2.69
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.03			6%**			0%	7.22**	0.46	11.57***
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.42			-6%*			-1%			-3.86**
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.03			-26%*	3%***	0.12	3%***			-13.31
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	2%	-59%***	2.32	-42%***	-62%***	12.46	-41%*			-7.64
Low level of family education	[0,1]	85%			-22%**			-2%			-23.18***
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.30			4% †			0%			3.39*
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	3%			-23% †	3%**	0.13	3%***	-21.92***	1.39	-23.03***

Table 319: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Kenya) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Ken)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	65%			14%***			1%			24.75***
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	21%			-7% †			2%			-21.92***
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	0.26	-3%*	0.37	-9%***	-1% †	0.49	-1%			-12.20***
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.46			-11%***			0%	-8.65***	1.11	-23.08***
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	1.04			-6%***			1%	-7.05***	0.84	-21.00***
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.42			-6%***	1% †	0.43	0%	-3.06*	0.44	-13.04***
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.09	-67%***	4.04	-70%***			3%	-33.47**	0.61	-47.33***
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	1.25			-2% †			0%			-3.65***
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	6.68			3%***			0%	4.58***	2.29	10.20***
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	17%	-5% †	0.21	-1%			-2%			2.12
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	81%	-6%**	0.37	-15%***			0%			-18.84***
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	96%			-12%***			-1%			-19.77 †
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	35%			-1%	-3%*	0.67	-3% †			-15.09***
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	37%			0%			0%			-4.25
Attitudes and support in family and community											
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.20	-10%*	1.11	-16%***	2% †	0.28	1%			-16.43***
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	87%			5%			0%			11.16
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	12%			-7%			-3%			-14.01**
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	-0.24			2%			0%			0.36
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.28			-15%***			-2%			-15.83***

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Ken)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
Description of Variable		In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	2.16	-4%***	1.86	-8%***			0%			-7.65***
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	19%			9%**			-2%	7.01*	0.30	19.00***
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.09			1%			-2%			-3.94
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.59			-3% †	-1% †	0.49	-1% †			-6.98***
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.03	-31%*	1.22	-30%*			-3%	-23.37*	0.46	-36.29***
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	7%			-23%***			-2%			-12.79**
Low level of family education	[0,1]	59%	-8%*	0.66	-26%***			1%	-17.40***	1.11	-49.38***
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.45			-1%			-1%			-2.98 †
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	7%	-12% †	0.63	-17%**			0%			-14.60**

Table 320: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Mozambique) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Moz)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	41%			-2%			0%			5.17 †
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	22%			1%			-2%			-1.31
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-0.18			-1%			1%			-0.44
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.15			-1%			-1%			-3.35
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	1.26			-1%			-1%	-4.73**	1.68	-5.72**
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.13			-1% †			0%			-0.98
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.09			-7%			-8%			26.82
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.61			-1%			0%	-2.12*	0.93	-2.19*
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	4.97			-1%	3% †	1.85	3% †			2.79
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	15%			-3%			-1%	8.57 †	0.92	7.50 †
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	94%			-1%			3%			-3.01
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	100%			0%			0%			0.00
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	14%			-1%			0%			-6.00
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	42%			0%			1%			0.14
Attitudes and support in family and community											

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Moz)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.31			-2%			0%			0.60
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	84%			-13%*			2%	-27.48 †	1.62	-17.80
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	9%	6%***	0.58	6%***	3%**	0.44	3%***			3.52
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	-0.21			1%			0%			1.27
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.49			-4%			0%			-4.76*
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.25	-6%**	2.75	-6%*	-2%*	1.63	-3%*			1.69
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	18%			2%			0%			-1.61
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.11			1%			-1%	-3.53**	0.45	-4.31***
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.46			-1%	-2%*	1.72	-2%*			-4.09 †
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.05			-3%			-3%			-2.83
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	14%			1%			-2%			-3.31
Low level of family education	[0,1]	49%			-4%			0%			-8.36 †
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.37			0%			0%			1.49
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	22%			1%			0%			-2.30

Table 321: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Sierra Leone) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Sie)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	65%			4%	3%*	1.47	2%*			0.42
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	9%			1%			-1%			1.12
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-0.39	-5%*	1.47	-6%*			0%			0.03
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.23			1%			0%	-2.11 †	0.63	-2.81 †
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	0.64			-3%			0%	-4.13 †	0.72	-4.49*
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.48			-6%***			1%			-2.64
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.09	-61%***	3.45	-46%**			2%			-2.56
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.98			2%	-1%**	1.17	-1%*	-3.15**	2.18	-3.05**
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	6.09			3%			1%			0.78
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	21%			-8% †			-1%			4.36
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	95%			-10%*	-2% †	0.09	-2%*			4.42
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	96%			4%			3%			-0.79
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	14%			8%**			1%			-5.05
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	22%			4%			1%			0.63
Attitudes and support in family and community											
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.13			3%			-11%***			13.82***
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	73%	-29%***	3.16	-20%*			-3%			-15.13*

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Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Sie)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
Description of Variable		In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	14%			-1%			1%			-1.61
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	-0.46			2%			0%			-0.99
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.32	-7%*	1.14	-11%**			0%			-5.98*
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	0.77			2%	-1%*	0.53	0%			4.23*
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	23%	-6% †	0.52	-5%			1%			-3.55
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.04			2%*	1%*	0.17	1%			-0.87
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	1.13	3%*	0.54	2%			0%			-1.06
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.00			-2%	4%***	0.06	3%***			-14.97
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	5%			-5%			1%			-4.40
Low level of family education	[0,1]	75%	-11%***	1.23	-10%**	-4%**	1.59	-3%**	-9.92*	1.17	-8.73*
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.52			-4%*			0%			-2.30
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	35%			6%*			1%			2.10

Table 322: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Somalia) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Som)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment				Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Economic factors												
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	39%			-3%			0%			5.58 †	
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	11%			-8%			1%			-12.23**	
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	0.09	-5%**	0.99	-7%***			0%			-2.74*	
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.72	7%*	0.62	1%	2% †	0.92	2% †	5.22**	0.56	4.76*	
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	0.89			4% †			1%			-1.82	
Material deprivation	[0,5]	2.70	3%*	0.74	1%			0%	-1.79*	0.59	-1.65*	
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.19	-45%***	3.59	-42%***			4%	-15.82*	0.80	-19.55**	
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.60			-1%			-1%			-1.72 †	
School based factors												
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	4.77			-2%			1%			-2.40	
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	10%			-1%			2% †			-5.73	
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	24%			-18%**			-1%			-4.81	
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	97%			15% †			5%			-8.37	
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	11%	-10% †	0.22	-10%			-2%			-6.74	
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	19%			-8%			2%			-3.04	
Attitudes and support in family and community												
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.53			-6% †			1%	-5.17**	0.73	-5.26*	

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Som)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	82%	-43%**	1.59	-41%*	-6% †	0.52	-4%	-20.16*	0.63	-10.94
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	12%	-17%**	1.05	-22%***			0%			-10.77**
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	-0.56			-3%			-1%			-2.12
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.30	-12%***	2.01	-14%***	2%***	0.65	2%***	-6.43*	1.02	-6.96**
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.78			-4%**			0%	-3.54***	1.35	-4.32***
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	7%	12%*	0.37	15%**			-4%			0.37
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.04			-19%			0%			-10.68
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.34			4%			1%			-3.33
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.05			-20%			-2%	-14.44 †	0.45	-20.71***
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	3%			-12%			-3%			-6.35
Low level of family education	[0,1]	73%			-3%			1%			-8.31*
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.37			-4% †			1%*			-0.74
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	13%	-14%**	0.79	-8%			0%			0.06

Table 323: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Tanzania) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Tan)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	79%			1%			-1%			7.97
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	2%			12%**			2%*			21.61
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-0.61			2%			-1%			1.12
Housing conditions	[0,2]	-0.04			-13%			0%			2.75
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	1.14			-1%			0%	-9.19*	1.39	-11.34**
Material deprivation	[0,5]	2.89			-4% †			0%			-6.04*
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.09	-45%*	2.56	-65%**			-1%			-43.03 †
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	0.26			0%			-1%			-0.22
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	7.12			-2%			1%			3.76
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	25%			-7%			0%			-4.39
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	23%	-13%*	2.58	-11%*	3% †	1.00	2%			1.34
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	100%			0%			0%			0.00
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	34%			3%			0%			4.07
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	50%			7% †			-1%			5.96
Attitudes and support in family and community											
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.02	-39%*	2.91	-43%*			2%**			-63.89*

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Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Tan)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Description of Variable		In unit of variable									
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	90%			-2%			-10%	87.06*	0.80	66.58 †
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	3%	8% †	0.18	10%**			2%**			16.71
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	0.23			2%			0%			3.69
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.15			-15% †			0%	-21.29*	2.07	-25.56***
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	1.05			1%	2%**	1.42	2%*			-3.34
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	26%			1%			-3%			5.11
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.10			1%			-2%			-0.60
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.23			0%			-1%	-14.64*	2.26	-13.26*
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.02			8%*	2% †	0.06	2% †			-22.54
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	2%			-14%			-25%			25.29
Low level of family education	[0,1]	31%	-13% †	2.39	-14% †			1%	-19.68 †	1.48	-21.50*
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	0.98			0%			0%			3.38
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	14%			-16%			-4%			-12.94

Table 324: Prevalence, multivariate and bivariate associations at country level (Zimbabwe) – EM household survey data

Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Zim)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment			Attendance			Learning		
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
			In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained
Economic factors											
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	85%	-4%**	0.24	-4%*			-1%			0.51
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	9%			0%	1%**	0.34	1%**			-0.89
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	0.24			-1%	-1%*	0.65	-1%*			-2.69
Housing conditions	[0,2]	0.15			6%			0%			8.30
Household income after housing costs (reversed)	SD	0.99			-1%			0%	-3.34*	0.27	-5.49**
Material deprivation	[0,5]	3.73			-1%			0%			-3.92**
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	0.08			-25%			-2%			-15.42
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	1.56			0%			0%	-3.46***	0.83	-3.77***
School based factors											
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	7.17			1%			0%	6.22***	1.46	6.30***
Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	58%			0%	-1% †	0.41	-1%*			-6.03
Lang. of instr. different from language spoken at home	Yes/No	50%			0%			1%			-0.52
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	100%			0%			0%			0.00
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	28%			1%			0%			-2.75
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	24%			-3%			0%			-2.36
Attitudes and support in family and community											
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0.00			-25%			1%***			28.17
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	92%	-26%*	0.58	-23%*			-1%			-7.64
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	8%			-1%			-1%	-11.89*	0.32	-12.35*

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Barriers to enrolment, attendance & learning (Zim)	Unit / Range	Prevalence	Enrolment		Attendance			Learning			
			Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate	Multivariate model		Bivariate
Description of Variable		In unit of variable	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	Variance explained	Beta coefficient
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	-0.29	2%*	0.36	2%*			0%			2.55
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	0.16	-8%*	1.03	-9%*	-3%*	2.17	-3%*	-13.23***	0.81	-15.21***
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	0.84	2% †	0.38	3% †			0%			0.77
Violence											
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	47%			0%			0%			-0.18
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	0.08	2% †	0.05	2%			0%			-1.26
Personal factors											
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	0.30			0%	-1%*	1.13	-1%*	-5.41**	0.39	-7.21***
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	0.02			-3%			-1%			-8.59
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	5%	-13%*	0.76	-14%*			0%	-17.44**	0.39	-22.69***
Low level of family education	[0,1]	29%			-3%			-1%			-16.95***
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	1.32			0%			0%			0.17
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	6%	-11% †	0.74	-9% †			1%			-8.00

Table 25: Prevalence and multivariate associations – EM school based assessment data

Description of Variable	Unit / Range	Multivariate model (left: coefficient; right: variance explained) ⁽¹⁾			Prevalence				
		Eth	Ken	Sie	DRC	Eth	Ken	Sie	
Control variables									
Dummy for P2 grade (= 0 if P4 grade)	Yes/No	-28.00***				38%	42%	54%	55%
Age in years	Years	-0.10				10.65	10.89	9.85	9.80
Barrier variables									
Proportion of students who do cleaning/tidying	[0,1]					5%	0%	3%	13%
Proportion of students victim of aggression	[0,1]					1%	2%	5%	2%
Proportion of students who participate in distracting behaviour	[0,1]					11%	14%	28%	16%
Proportion of students reprimanded/punished by teacher	[0,1]			69.10***	5.3%				
Teacher's number of years of experience	Years	0.68***	2.1%			19	8	8	13
Teacher is a female	Yes/No			19.67*	3.5%				
Teacher does not have a teaching certificate	Yes/No					0%	15%	8%	51%
Teacher thinks corporal punishment in schools is appropriate	Yes/No					-12.74**	3.4%		
Problems with teachers not turning up to work	[0,1]					12.86*	3.6%		
Shortage of teachers in the school	Yes/No	-15.89***	4.2%					0%	63%
No mid-day meal served at school	Yes/No	-24.74***	4.3%					88%	84%
School does not have electricity	Yes/No	-17.33***	6.7%					100%	63%
Classroom does not have electric lighting	Yes/No			-25.14*	3.5%			35%	97%
Classroom does not have a floor	Yes/No							100%	74%
Proportion of students that do not have writing material	[0,1]					57%	46%	8%	16%
Proportion of students that do not have textbook	[0,1]					18%	6%	3%	10%
Proportion of students that do not have chair/mat	[0,1]					60%	30%	15%	55%
Proportion of students that do not have bench/desk	[0,1]					44%	12%	8%	15%
						45%	7%	10%	13%

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Description of Variable	Unit / Range	Multivariate model (left: coefficient; right: variance explained) ⁽¹⁾						Prevalence			
		Eth		Ken		Sie		DRC	Eth	Ken	Sie
School does not have separate girls toilet	Yes/No							67%	68%	8%	35%
Toilet is not private and cannot be locked	Yes/No	19.16***	8.8%					67%	67%	21%	44%
School has no boundary wall taller than an adult	Yes/No							83%	84%	58%	100%
Unreliable payment of teachers in last 3 months	Yes/No	-29.23***	13.1%					100%	35%	26%	33%
Teacher has no other village activities outside school	Yes/No	36.14***	19.8%					50%	38%	51%	25%
Teacher never gets involved in political activity or elections	Yes/No	-16.80***	5.3%					100%	50%	83%	65%
No active union for teachers in the area	Yes/No			27.82*	0.0%			25%	38%	6%	19%
Class size	Nb. students	0.48***	9.5%					72	45	40	41
Proportion of girls in the class	[0,1]					-96.61***	7.4%	54%	49%	47%	51%
Girl thinks education is less important for girls	Yes/No	-6.96*	0.2%			-16.50**	0.9%	2%	4%	2%	4%
Child has no attended this school since first grade	Yes/No					-11.94*	1.6%	15%	17%	16%	14%
Mother has low education ⁽²⁾	Yes/No							81%	90%	77%	87%
Father has low education ⁽²⁾	Yes/No					-15.84***		50%	80%	76%	78%
<i>Constant term</i>		31.40**		87.17**		-59.11***					
Total of variance explained by the fully fitted model		79%		49%		35%					
Sample for multivariate model [total population of girls]		143 [166]		323 [359]		370 [435]					

Notes: (1) No multivariate model was run for DRC due to the insufficient number of observations in this country (55 girls only in the subset).
 (2) These two variables have a significant proportion of missing values in DRC, Ethiopia and Kenya of about 20-25%. They have therefore been excluded from the fully-fitted model of these countries. They have been included only in Sierra Leone where the proportion of missing values is lower, about 10%.

Table 26: Summary of EM household survey variables used in the barrier analysis

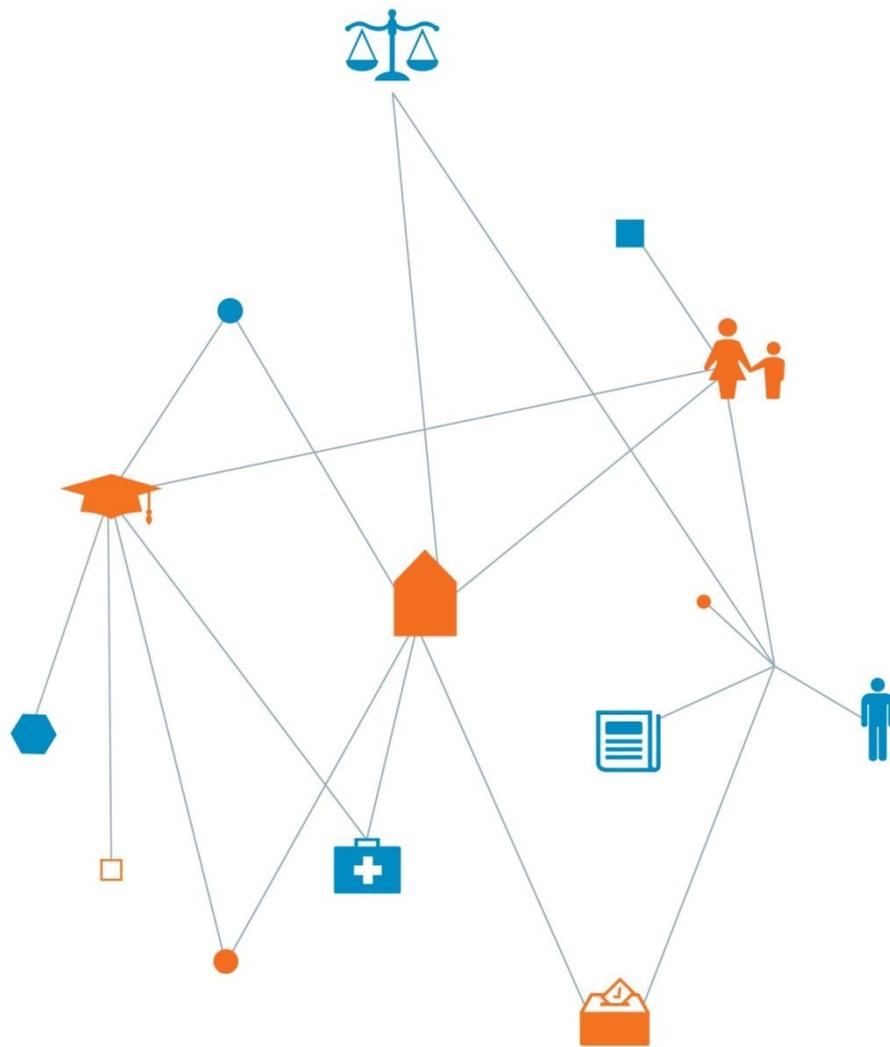
Name of Variable	Unit / Range	Derivation / Description
Economic factors		
Costs associated with schooling	Yes/No	Yes if anything to pay for girl's school in the past year.
No source of lighting or firelight only at home	Yes/No	Yes if home lighted with fire or no light.
Employment situation in the household	[-1,1]	-1 if head of household or primary caregiver has a medium or high occupation. 0 if head of household or primary caregiver has a low occupation. 1 if head of household and primary caregiver are unemployed.
Housing conditions	[0,2]	Add 1 if roof is : - Tin/Iron sheets - Cement/concrete - Roofing tiles - Asbestos Add 1 if floor is: - Tin/Iron sheets - Cement/concrete
Household income after housing costs (reversed and standardised within country)	SD	Reversed monthly income, standardised within country.
Material deprivation	[0,5]	Add 1 if no electricity at home Add 1 if electricity usually not available at all times of the day Add 1 if household has no radio or tv - DRC /Kenya/Mozambique /Sierra Leone/Tanzania: Add 1 if household has no bicycle, scooter, motorcycle or car Add 1 if household has no phone (any kind) - Afghanistan: Add 1 if main source of drinking water is unprotected well, rain water, river, lake pond, vendor or truck Add 1 if mainly uses fire to cook - Ethiopia/Somalia: Add 1 if main source of drinking water is unprotected well, rain water, river, lake pond, vendor or truck Add 1 if toilet is shared with other dwellings, open-air or no fixed toilet - Zimbabwe: Add 1 if mainly uses fire to cook Add 1 if toilet is shared with other dwellings, open-air or no fixed toilet
Proportion of time spent on duties	[0,1]	Duties include: - Caring for younger or older family members - Doing housework - Helping with growing crops - Helping with a family business or working outside the home (non-agricultural).
Subjective poverty	[-3,3]	-3 if household has plenty of disposable income -2 if household is able to purchase most non-essential goods and have enough -1 if : - Household is able to meet basic needs with some non-essential goods - Household is able to purchase most non-essential goods but head of household thinks it needs a little or a lot more 0 if household is able to meet basic needs 1 if household is unable to meet basic needs but head of household thinks it has enough 2 if household is unable to meet basic needs and head of household thinks it needs a little more 3 if household is unable to meet basic needs and head of household thinks it needs a lot more
School based factors		
Girl doesn't like school	[0,4]	Add 1 if girl does not like school or only sometimes Add 1 if girl does not think school is a nice place to be, or only sometimes Add 1 if girl does not think going to school is fun, or only sometimes Add 1 if girl never feels happy at school, or only sometimes
Hours of schooling per day (not reversed)	[0,10]	Number of hours of school girl usually has per day.

ANNEX C – QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Journeys to schools take more than 30 mins	Yes/No	Yes if it takes more than 30mn to girl to go to school.
Language of instruction different from girls	Yes/No	Yes if language of instruction at school is not the same as the language spoken at home.
Schools attended are not girls only (mixed)	Yes/No	Yes if girl's school is a school for boys and girls
Teaching not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	Yes if teaching is not satisfactory at girl's school
Toilets not satisfactory at attended schools	Yes/No	Yes if toilets are not satisfactory at girl's school
Attitudes and support in family and community		
Carer low aspirations for girl's education	[0,2]	0 if when girl was young, primary caregiver wanted her to have a secondary or higher level of schooling 1 if when girl was young, primary caregiver wanted her to have a primary level of schooling 2 if when girl was young, primary caregiver wanted her to have a primary level of schooling
Families not engaged with education	Yes/No	Yes if there is no member of household involved in school committees or groups that are trying to improve education or school in the household area.
Girls' education unusual in community	Yes/No	Yes if most people in the village do not send girls to school
Low level of female autonomy in household	SD	Standardised within country.
Negative attitudes to girls' education	[0,3]	Add 1 if primary caregiver thinks that girls usually learn less than boys when they go to school Add 1 if primary caregiver thinks that when girl is aged 18 it would be better if she is working OR Add 2 if primary caregiver thinks that when girl is aged 18 it would be better if she is married
Social exclusion index	[0,7]	Add 1 if primary caregiver is not born in the country of the household Add 1 if girl is not born in the country of the household Add 1 if girl does not speak the same language as most children in the village Add 1 if girl has no good (close) friends in the village Add 1 if household was not living in the same village one year ago Add 1 if household has ever moved Add 1 if family does not know people in the village who would help if needed
Violence		
Local journeys dangerous	Yes/No	Yes if any of the journeys to girl's school is dangerous
Reports of violence at girl's school	[0,4]	Add 1 if there has been any violence at girl's school in the past year Add 1 if girl has already seen violence against girls at her school Add 1 if, in mixed school, girl has already seen violence against boys Add 1 if, if witnessed violence, this made girl afraid to go to school
Personal factors		
Girl doesn't try to do well at school	[0,3]	Add 1 if girl wants to do well at school Add 1 if girl usually pays attention in class Add 1 if girl usually tries her best at school
Girls has difficulties relating to disability	Yes/No	- For enrolment: Yes if girl has difficulties with self care - For attendance: Yes if girl has difficulties with walking or climbing - For learning: Yes if girl has difficulty remembering or concentrating, or if she has difficulty communicating
Low level of family education	[0,1]	Add 1/5 if head of household did not complete more than primary school grade OR Add 2/5 if head of household did not complete any school grade Add 1/5 if primary caregiver did not complete more than primary school grade OR Add 2/5 if primary caregiver did not complete any school grade Add 1/5 if primary caregiver is unable to read and write a letter in language of instruction
Parents absent or deceased	[0,4]	Add 1 if girl's mother is not a member of the household Add 1 if respondent mentioned that girl's mother is not alive Add 1 if girl's father is not a member of the household Add 1 if respondent mentioned that girl's father is not alive
Young mothers in household	Yes/No	Yes if there is any mother aged under 20 in the household

Annex D – Project Profiles

Baseline Report – Step Change Window



Realising Educational Potential for Marginalised Girls in Sierra Leone

Education Focus: Upper primary and lower secondary

Lead Organisation: BRAC Sierra Leone

Country: Sierra Leone

GEC Funding: £8,015,227

Target Reach: 19,577 girls

Overview of Project

The project “Realising Educational Potential for Marginalised Girls in Sierra Leone” operates in Sierra Leone. BRAC is implementing two sets of large-scale programs that respectively target out-of-school girls and girls enrolled in government primary and secondary schools.

The first intervention involves the establishment of single-teacher Community Girls Schools (CGS) in remote villages, in addition to a series of community workshops. The goal is to deliver a cycle of lower primary education to girls aged 8-12 in a way that facilitates subsequent enrolment to formal government schools.

The second intervention combines teacher training and peer-mentoring modules in order to improve the provision of quality education in government schools. Taken together, the ultimate objective of the programs is to generate significant and sustainable gains in school attendance, literacy and numeracy skills, social and emotional learning, and positive attitudes towards girls’ education in Sierra Leone.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move to baseline data collection in April 2013. BRAC Research and Evaluation Division along with a team from Njala University designed the evaluation of the project as a randomised control trial. Quantitative data was collected using household surveys, school surveys administered to head teachers, teacher surveys, girls’ surveys including EGRA/EGMA tests and an adapted version of TIMSS in case of ceiling effects. Qualitative data was collected using community-level focus group discussions.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project is seeking to help girls:

- who are out of school;
- who have low levels of educational attainment and social/emotional skills; and
- who live in an environment where girls’ education is under-valued.

The project will specifically work with two groups of girls: those who are out of school by providing them with Community Schooling and girls who are in-school by enhancing the quality of teaching.

Following baseline data collection, the project found that over a fifth of girls aged 8-12 in their sample have never been enrolled in school.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – BRAC Sierra Leone (5063)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5063	82%	-0.6	200	37%	-2.4	132

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – BRAC Sierra Leone (5063)

5063	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance			Retention			
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	376		46	83			87	86		92	99
< 6	33		44	64			79	88		100	100
6 to 8	107		38	80	87		86	85		85	100
9 to 11	71		48	93	90		88	85		92	100
12 to 13	57		57	89	98		87	87		95	100
14 to 15	59		51	93	100		88	86		95	100
16 to 19	0										

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – BRAC Sierra Leone (5063)

5063	Literacy					Numeracy				
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+	
Unit	total / 100	total / 100		wpm+	yr behind	total / 100	total / 100		total / 100	
All				23	-4				59	
< 6				-3	0				13	
6 to 8	14			7	-2	18			29	
9 to 11	48	45		22	-4	31	31		61	
12 to 13	83	83		30	-6	36	36		83	
14 to 15				50	-7				95	
16 to 19										
OOS	6	6		-4	-3	12			15	

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (93%) and 14-15 year olds (93%) is higher in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas (85%-86%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas (that is 100% among 9-11 year olds and 100% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is slightly above the average found in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas (that is 22 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 50 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas are on average 4 years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks.

- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is slightly above the average found in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas (that is 61 for girls aged 9-11 and 95 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, we found that enrolment and retention were relatively high in BRAC Sierra Leone project areas, compared with the SCW average, but that attendance was slightly lower. Reading fluency scores of 9-11 and 14-15 year olds were slightly below the SCW average, and indicated that girls in these age groups were on average four and seven years, respectively, behind international benchmarks of oral reading fluency.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Cost of school
- Inadequately trained teachers
- Teacher absenteeism
- Poor classroom facilities
- Intimidating environment at school
- Poverty
- Disability
- Child Pregnancy
- Poor health
- Long distances and unsafe commutes

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Cost	Cost of school	Cannot borrow cash to pay	●	●			30%					
Teaching (girls' teacher)	Inadequately trained teachers	No evidence available										
	Teacher absenteeism	No evidence available										
	Lack of mitigating measures to address the decreased amount of time available for girls to study		●									
Supply	Long distance to school	Feel safe walking		●						50%		
Governance	Poor coordination as education not well-funded or prioritised	No evidence available										
Poverty	Poverty	No evidence available										
Violence	Weak coordination between schools and education bureau/local community and child protection structures	No evidence available										
Safety	Intimidating environment at school	Feel safe at school	●							70-80%		
		Bullied	●							40%		

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions. It also shows any changes made to project interventions after baseline. Limited evidence was presented in this version of the report.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build / fund alternative schools (community girl schools)	Average EGRA score: 0.22 for in-school girls , 0.06 for out-of-school girls Average EGMA score: 0.29 for in-school girls and 0.12 for out-of-school girls	
Community	Community intervention / mobilisation Peer / female mentors	Heads of households containing out of school girls have very different attitudes toward education compared to other household heads, providing evidence to support an intervention at community level in order to change local attitudes towards girls' education.	
Governance			
Learning			
Materials	Stipends funding	NR	
Safe Spaces			
Teaching	Train/fund general teachers	No baseline evidence was presented as part of the first version of the baseline report with regards to poor quality of teaching and the need for teacher training	
Voice			

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After a review of the project's first baseline report, the EM rated the quantitative evidence as "fair", as the project did not explain about any data verification procedures, tools piloting and quality assurance. Data had been analysed only for the purpose of demonstrating the comparability of control and treatment groups. The project did not provide details about qualitative data collection. Qualitative evidence was not included in the baseline report

The comparability of control and treatment areas was rated as "good", as the randomisation procedure was accurate, providing a necessary foundation for the evaluation.

Revisions to M&E

No recommendations for change in M&E were presented in the project baseline report. No changes to M&E have been agreed between the Fund Manager and the project as of end of May 2014.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The project has not reported any challenges during data collection.

List of References

- BRAC Sierra Leone (2013), Step Change Window, Final Stage - Logframe template, Sierra Leone: BRAC Sierra Leone.
- BRAC Sierra Leone (2014), BRAC Sierra Leone, GEC Baseline Report, Sierra Leone: BRAC Sierra Leone.
- BRAC Sierra Leone (2012), Full Application for the Step Change Window – Ref # 5063, Sierra Leone: BRAC Sierra Leone.
- BRAC Sierra Leone (2014), Annex 1: Special Conditions, Sierra Leone: BRAC Sierra Leone.
- BRAC Sierra Leone (2013), BRAC Sierra Leone, Project Number: 5063, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, Sierra Leone: BRAC Sierra Leone.
- BRAC Sierra Leone (2014), Activity Milestone Template SCW Year 2, Sierra Leone: BRAC Sierra Leone.
- Coffey International Development (2014), Step Change Window Baseline review (Baseline review 5063 BRAC SL EM comments), 5063 BRAC Sierra Leone, London: Coffey International Development.
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.

Community Based Education for Marginalised Girls in Afghanistan

Education Focus: Primary, lower secondary and upper secondary

Lead Organisation: BRAC

Country: Afghanistan

GEC Funding: £14,468,601

Target Reach: 66,150 girls

Overview of Project

The project “Community Based Education for Marginalised Girls in Afghanistan” operates in 10 provinces in Afghanistan. It aims to enrol and retain out-of-school girls by constructing community based girls’ schools and maintain enrolment of girls in government schools at risk of dropping out. The project plans to provide girls schools with trained female teachers that are within the community, train teachers, conduct peer mentoring and provide conditional stipends to selected out-of-school girls.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move to baseline data collection in November 2013. The baseline was conducted in November and December 2013 by Opinion Research Centre in Afghanistan (ORCA). It also conducted a pre-baseline survey to develop its sampling frame and select eligible locations. The project is conducting a randomised control trial (RCT). The project collected quantitative data using household surveys, EGRA/EGMA and a school survey in government schools. The project also collected qualitative data through FGDs with community leaders and members, in-depth interviews with parents and head teachers, and case studies of marginalised girls both out of school and in-school.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The main beneficiaries of the project are marginalised girls who either have never been to school or dropped out from primary/lower secondary school, and out-of-school, irregular, or prone-to-drop-out girls in selected government schools, in ten provinces identified as having low boy-to-girl enrolment ratios. The project does not define marginalisation socially.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1 and Table 2 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in BRAC Afghanistan project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – BRAC Afghanistan (5085)

5085	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	400		50	70			89	89			96
< 6	25			4							
6 to 8	111		40	68			89	88			99
9 to 11	98		47	82			89	88			98
12 to 13	90		52	77			89	89			92
14 to 15	76		53	72			89	90			98
16 to 19	0		54				89				

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – BRAC Afghanistan (5085)

5085	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	wpm		wpm	wpm+	yr behind	total / 100		total / 100	total / 100
All			72	37	-3			72	57
< 6									
6 to 8	18		50	13	-1	36		30	34
9 to 11	66		71	29	-2	78		66	49
12 to 13	73		72	52	-4	86		73	74
14 to 15	73		74	63	-6	89		78	80
16 to 19	72		74			92		79	
OOS			52	3	-3			28	16

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in BRAC Afghanistan project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (82%) and 14-15 year olds (72%) is lower in BRAC Afghanistan project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is similar in BRAC Afghanistan project areas (88%-90%) compared to all SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in BRAC Afghanistan project areas (that is 98% for both age groups).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is slightly below the average found in BRAC Afghanistan project areas (that is 29 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 63 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in BRAC Afghanistan project areas are on average two years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while 14-15 year olds are on average six years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly above the average found in BRAC Afghanistan project areas (that is 49 for girls aged 9-11 and 80 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, we found that enrolment was relatively low in BRAC Afghanistan project areas, compared with the SCW average, but that year-on-year retention was slightly higher. While literacy scores of 9-11 and 14-15 year olds were slightly above the SCW average, they still indicated that girls were on average four years (9-11 year olds) and six years (14-15 year olds) behind international benchmarks of oral reading fluency.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Family does not allow going to school
- Distance to school
- Poverty
- Early/forced marriage
- Insecurity
- Lack of family support
- Harassment
- Lack of community support
- Shortages of classrooms
- Lack of trained teachers (female)
- Poor quality of education
- Not having girls' schools

Table 3 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 3: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Teaching	Lack of trained teachers	Shortages of female teachers									24 female/23 male	
	Poor quality education	No evidence available										
Supply	Distance to school	No evidence available										
	Not having girls' schools	Lack of schools (pre-baseline)									76%	
	Lack of classrooms	No evidence available										
Poverty	Poverty	Rely on charity		●	54%	53%						
Attitudes	Lack of family support	Families support girls' education		●								●●
	Lack of community support	No evidence available										
Personal	Early/forced marriage	Parent discuss marriage (age 10-15)		●								●
Violence	Traditional cultural values that limit girls' mobility											
Other	Poorly resourced school environment	No evidence available										
Safety	Insecurity	Parent talk about insecurity		●								●●

Source: Baseline Report (2014), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

Based on baseline findings, the project has not made any changes to its interventions.

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline.

Table 4: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build/fund alternative schools: Building 1670 Community-Based Girls' Schools (CBGSEs) in identified communities	76% of communities in pre-baseline were identified as having no CBGSEs and therefore eligible for BRAC intervention.	
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation and Peer/female mentors: Community workshops aimed at increasing communities' support for girls' education. Providing peer mentoring in government schools.	Qualitative evidence as to family and community support of girls' education was mixed but showed general support for girls' education	
Governance			
Learning			
Materials	Stipends funding: Providing conditional stipends to selected out-of-school/irregular/prone to drop-out girls in government schools, which will help them purchase stationary and other school materials.	Baseline gives some evidence of poverty, in reporting that 54% of treatment households are unable to meet basic needs without some sort of charity	
Safe Spaces			
Teaching	Train/fund (general) teachers: Hiring of professional female teachers and regular teacher trainings.	From the school survey, existing government schools in intervention areas have on average 24 female teachers versus 23 male teachers, while those in control areas have on average 20 female teachers versus 15 male teachers	

Voice			
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Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After reviewing the first version of the project’s baseline report, the EM has noted that quantitative demographic and learning outcomes data from the household survey have been presented and described but not analysed. The qualitative excerpts provided in the baseline are of acceptable quality and give insight into the causal factors regarding girls’ education. There were minimal differences in demographic information between control and treatment groups and few of these were statistically significant. Randomisation seems to be worked well in the sense that almost all of the outcome indicators and contextual variables are balanced across the treatment and control communities at baseline.

Revisions to M&E

Attendance information was not collected at baseline and will need to be collected through ongoing monitoring. The project wants to include a scale for rating quality of teaching and a module for mentors to collect information. The project will ensure that unique IDs are used to merge different parts of the data collection.

BRAC Afghanistan along with the other projects in Afghanistan will no longer be using control and treatment groups. It will be revising its evaluation design to a before and after comparison model.

Research Challenges

The project reports that data collection in the field was extremely challenging due to on-going examination in the government schools and deteriorating security condition in several field locations. A limitation of the baseline survey is that it was not able to collect data on girls’ attendance both in Community Government Schools and Government schools.

List of References

- BRAC Afghanistan (2014), Annex A (Annexes draft), Afghanistan: BRAC Afghanistan.
- BRAC Afghanistan (2014), Baseline project report review template v8 AC, Afghanistan: BRAC Afghanistan.
- BRAC Afghanistan (2014), Baseline Report on BRAC Community Based Education for Marginalised Girls in Afghanistan (GEC 5085), Afghanistan: BRAC Afghanistan.
- BRAC Afghanistan (2012), Full Application Form for the Step Change Window- Ref # 5085, Kabul: BRAC Afghanistan.
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.

Supporting Marginalised Girls in Sierra Leone to Complete Basic Education with Improved Learning Outcomes

Education Focus: Upper primary and lower secondary education

Lead Organisation: Plan International UK

Country: Sierra Leone

GEC Funding: £6,417,465

Target Reach: 15,669 girls

Overview of Project

“Supporting Marginalised Girls in Sierra Leone to Complete Basic Education with Improved Learning Outcomes” operates in Sierra Leone. It seeks to improve life chances for marginalised girls by increasing access and retention in Primary School and Junior Secondary School (JSS). It also seeks to strengthen girls’ learning in Primary School and JSS by making sure that girls are learning in an inclusive environment and protected from harm. The project also aims to make sure girls’ voices and needs are listened to and responded to, and that girls are able to participate in decision-making concerning their education.

Baseline Research Activity

The project began baseline data collection in May 2013 and concluded in July 2013. Plan contracted GK as its external evaluator. The evaluation used a quasi-experimental design, so data collection included surveying both treatment and control groups. At baseline, Plan collected quantitative data using a household survey, a girls’ survey, school surveys and administered ASER learning assessments. It collected qualitative data using focus discussion groups with girls in and out of school, boys in and out of school and adults. Plan also conducted key informant interviews with teachers, school administrators, members of parent-teacher groups, community heads and children with a disability.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project is targeting girls in five rural districts of Sierra Leone who are at risk of dropping out of school or out of school. It has defined marginalisation as girls who are poor, living in rural areas and/or have a physical disability. The project has used an index to identify its marginalised girls

The project found that 3 % (76 children) of its sample of children enrolled in school are disabled. This number includes both boys and girls. Overall, Plan found 224 girls with disabilities in their sample, of which 81 had physical disabilities and 171 had learning disabilities. The project is only including girls with physical disabilities in its target. Using its definition of marginalisation, the project has found that 651 girls in its target areas are marginalised. It has identified 206 out of school girls and 4,803 in-school girls who will be included in the project target group.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in PLAN project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

PLAN used the ASER test tool to assess the learning outcomes of girls in its project areas. Results are reported as competency levels, while the analysis of EM learning assessment data reports EGRA scores as words per minute, and EGMA scores.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – Plan Sierra Leone (5096)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5096	83%	-0.8	245	19%	-2.8	100

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – Plan Sierra Leone (5096)

5096	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	395	86	86	82			82	88			98
< 6	34			74			82	90			100
6 to 8	134		89	84			83	87			100
9 to 11	88		87	95	59		80	88	63		97
12 to 13	57		86	93	58		81	86	59		100
14 to 15	37		78	78	50		83	88	52		
16 to 19	0		70				87				

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – Plan Sierra Leone (5096)

5096	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	ASER			EGRA+		ASER			EGMA+
Unit	total / 10	total / 100	levels	wpm+	yr behind	total / 22	total / 100	levels	total / 100
All			1.8	17	-4			8.8	53
< 6				4	0				26
6 to 8	0.4		0.9	1	-2	3.4		7.2	27
9 to 11	1.4	1.4	1.2	13	-5	8.9	8.9	7.7	50
12 to 13	3.6	4.2	1.8	42	-5	10.3	11.9	9.2	90
14 to 15	5.0	5.9	2.4	47	-7	11.0	14.0	9.8	110
16 to 19			2.9					10.2	
OOS	0.3		0.3	6	-3	2.0		1.9	29

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in PLAN project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (95%) is higher in PLAN project areas than across the SCW while enrolment among the 14-15 year olds (78%) is slightly lower.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is similar in PLAN project areas (88%).
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is slightly higher than the average year-on-year retention rate found in PLAN project areas (that is 97% among 9-11 year olds).

- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is markedly above the average found in PLAN project areas (that is 13 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 47 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in PLAN project areas are on average five years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average seven years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly above the average found in PLAN project areas for girls aged 9-11 (50) and below the average found for girls aged 14-15 (110).

In summary, we found that enrolment was higher among 9-11 year olds in PLAN project areas (according to the analysis of EM data) than on the SCW average, while it was lower among girls aged 14-15. Attendance was shown to be around 88% which corresponds to the SCW average. Finally, we found that girls in PLAN project areas had relatively low literacy scores, in comparison with other SCW project areas, but that numeracy scores tended to be relatively high among girls aged 14-15.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Weak reporting and disciplinary systems
- Can't afford school fees
- Unqualified teachers
- Lack of female teachers
- Teachers have limited capacity to respond to needs of students
- Teachers treat boys and girls differently
- Lack of teaching and learning resources
- Lack of learning time
- Sexual harassment of students by teachers
- Women and girls don't have ability to make decisions in the community and in the education system
- Lack of confidence
- Early marriage
- Early pregnancy
- Gender based violence and transactional sex, sexual harassment, corporal punishment
- Girls lack knowledge on their SRHR
- Domestic chores for girls
- More value is placed on boys' education
- Girls with disabilities face discrimination and stigmatisation
- Poverty

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Duties	Domestic chores for girls	OOS over 3 hours spent on housework	●					34%	36%	35%		
Motivation	Lack of confidence	Confidence to ask questions at school	●					36%	32%	36%		
Autonomy	Women and girls don't have ability to make decisions in the community and in the education system	Don't have ability to make decision about education	NS	NS				40%	37%	40%		
Teaching	Teachers treat boys and girls differently	Perceive teacher treat them the same most of the time	●					50%	48%	50%		
	Lack of female teachers	% in schools from 2011 data collection	NS	NS							16% Primary 8% Secondary	
	Lack of learning time	% of day spent on studying	●					24%	24%	24%		
	Lack of teaching and learning resources	No evidence available										

ANNEX D3 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5096 – PLAN

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
	Teachers have limited capacity to respond to needs of students	No evidence available										
Health	Girls lack knowledge on their SRHR	No correct answers on SRHR questions	NS	NS				33%	42%	34%		
Sexual Violence	Sexual harassment of students by teachers	Sexual harassment noted in FGDs and KIIs	NS	NS								●●●
Supply	Unqualified teachers	Reported by school administrators	●									●●●
Disability	Lack of support for girls' education in the school system	Disabled girls attending special learning or tutoring activities	●					24%	25%	24%		
	Disabled and enrolled compared to not disabled and enrolled		●				74% to 85%	69% to 86%	74% to 85%			Disabled and enrolled compared to not disabled and enrolled
	Girls agree that it's ok for girls who have disabilities not to go to school		●				43%	47%	44%			Girls agree that it's ok for girls who have disabilities not to go to school

ANNEX D3 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5096 – PLAN

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Pregnancy	Pregnancy	Girls in HH have children	●				0.01%					
	Pregnancy	Stopped school due to pregnancy		●						8%		●●●
Costs	Families cannot afford lighting facilities	No evidence available										
	Can't afford school fees	Report difficult to afford to send girl to school		●	75%	64%	73%					
		Mention financial reasons for girl stopping school		●	54%	81%						
Attitudes	Parents do not see benefits of education	See education as important	NS	NS			93%					
Personal	Early marriage	No evidence available										
	Early pregnancy	Will not be able to decide when they first become pregnant	NS	NS						59%		

ANNEX D3 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5096 – PLAN

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
		Adults express young ages for first pregnancy	NS	NS								●●●
Governance	Weak disciplinary systems	No evidence available										
Violence	Traditional community gender norms which do not promote gender equality	Bush societies disrupt girls' education for up to 2 years (FGM)										●●●

Source: Baseline Report (2014), Full Application, (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions. Plan International mostly found evidence that supports its interventions. It has not made any changes to its interventions after baseline.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access	Individual access disability	194 (C = 30) girls with disabilities 20% of parents feel that it is somewhat/not important to invest in children with disabilities [hh] 43% (47%) feel that it is ok for girls with disabilities not to go to school	
Capacity			
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation Peer/female mentors	57% (C= 55%)% reported that they had a women that they could confide in at school [gs] 48% (C= 50%)% reported that they had a women that they could confide in in the community [gs]	
Governance	Train school governments SMC on girls education best practices (code of conduct training, use of scorecard to monitor school)	81% (C=84%) report corporal punishment, qual findings show that parents thing it's good Qual findings show marginalised find it hard to engage with the board	
Learning			
Materials	Stipends funding	75% (C= 64%) had difficulty affording school fees/uniforms. Qual- also supports difficulty of affording school fees/uniforms	
Safe Spaces	Anti-gender based violence Girl/boy friendly school (code of conduct) Girls study group Clubs (child/parent)- include	71% (C=76%) feel that there is not enough support for girls to succeed in school 21% (C=27%) attend study groups 20% of parents feel that it is	

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
	men, talk about gender norms, (address attitudes, violence, gender equality)	<p>somewhat/not important to invest in children with disabilities [hh]</p> <p>43% (C=47%) feel that it is ok for girls with disabilities not to go to school [gs]</p> <p>90% (C= 90%) feel that the community and caregivers support their education</p> <p>34% of girls got no correct answers on SRH, qual findings show limited knowledge</p> <p>21% (C=43%) and 43% (C=43%) never or sometimes feel confident to ask questions in school</p>	
Teaching	<p>Train/fund general teachers</p> <p>Train/fund local teachers</p> <p>(Training on gender responsive pedagogy)</p>	50% of girls did not feel that teachers treated boys and girls the same	
Voice	Child-led advocacy (address attitudes, violence, gender equality)	<p>38%(C=30%) have been abused, Of girls abused, 85% (C=88%) report it being mistreated by a teacher), 26% (C=25%) by a male student</p> <p>48% (C=44%) feel that the frequency of violence reported by those who believe there has been violence has increased or stayed the same</p> <p>20% (C=25%) have ever complained to the school [gs]</p> <p>77% (C=73%) of girls who have complained have seen action</p>	

Source: Baseline Report (2014)

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After reviewing the first version of the project baseline report, the EM commented that the analysis and interpretation could be clearer. Also, qualitative data is used for triangulation purposes, but structure could be improved. It also recommended for marginalisation that analysis be made much clearer to indicate who the target group is, why they are marginalised with regards to achieving the project's educational outcomes of improved attendance and learning and in comparison to whom - if the analysis is showing that all girls in the target area are marginalised compared to boys then it should clearly state that. The treatment and control groups were well matched.

Revisions to M&E

In later versions of the project's baseline report, new indicators have been added and a few have been removed altogether. Some of the changes were to recognise the fact that at primary levels, girls' and boys' enrolment rates are very similar – something the project was not expecting to see. Other changes were to recognise the fact that parents' and communities' perceptions about boys' and girls' education were comparable – something else the project was not expecting to see. The latter suggested not that girls are not as marginalised as boys, as was considered when this issue first arose during the baseline, but rather that a sizable amount of work has been done over recent years in the project's target districts on sensitising communities to the value of girls education, as seen in responses such as the commonly quoted UNICEF slogan '*Educate a Girl, Educate a Nation*'. The project hopes that changes made to its indicators now better reflect and respond to the changing scene of girls' education in Sierra Leone that the baseline uncovered.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The project has listed one of the main challenges as a lack of available girls for household surveys, which led to a lower response rate for household surveys (1400), girls' surveys (1400) and full learning assessments (1333) than it had targeted (1440 for each). Also, a lack of available girls for school-based learning assessments meant a lower response rate (4803) than targeted (6800).

Other challenges that the project has listed include a lengthy questionnaire for household data collection, poor quality roads in rainy season, difficulty locating sampling points and not enough time to conduct 'short' interviews in households without ineligible girls.

In the surveys, there were a lot of non-responses, so there is missing data in the full interviews from household data collection. Also, the rates of disabled girls reported in the household survey are likely much lower than they are in reality. Also, school data reported low numbers of girls who have been abused, which may not be accurate. Lastly, the project reports that some girls surveyed in the household survey may not go to intervention schools.

List of References

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Valorisation de la Scolarisation de la Fille (VAS-Y Fille!)

Education Focus: Primary and lower secondary

Lead Organisation: IRC (International Rescue Committee)

Country: Democratic Republic of Congo

GEC Funding: £22,131,437

Target Reach: 54,194 girls

Overview of Project

VA-Y Fille! operates in the 5 provinces in the DRC where enrolment, retention and attendance rates for girls are the worst -- Bandundu, Equateur, Kasai Oriental, Katanga and Oriental Provinces. IRC will provide financial support to parents, improved teacher training and more tuition hours, increased community involvement, and accelerated learning programmes for out-of-school children. VAS-Y Fille! uses a holistic approach that engages all education stakeholders to ensure girls' enrol in school, stay in school and learn while there.

Baseline Research Activity

This project was approved to move onto baseline data collection in September 2013. Its external evaluator, University of Massachusetts Amherst, designed the evaluation as a randomised control trial. Baseline data collection took place in September and October 2013. Quantitative data was collected using a school survey, a household survey, a girls' survey and learning was assessed using EGRA and EGMA. Qualitative data was collected using focus group discussions with students and in-depth interviews with out of school girls, parents with children in school and out of school, community leaders, teachers and school directors.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project from its proposal targets the most marginalised and hardest to reach girls in DRC where girls have the lowest enrolment, retention and attendance, addressing each of these areas increasingly over the life of the project.

In its baseline report, although poverty is stated as a barrier to education, and Batswa (pygmy) status is implied as a barrier, the programme does not explicitly target girls based on these factors. Although the project disaggregates EGRA/EGMA scores by in-school girls, girls taking Accelerated Learning Programme (remedial) courses, and out-of-school girls, the programme also does not target girls based on this status and has recommended discontinuing monitoring of out-of-school girls as they are a small subgroup of the overall sample.

The project is currently working with the Fund Manager to develop its definition of marginalised girls.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in IRC project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – IRC DRC (5097)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5097	85%	-0.7	213	38%	-2.3	132

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – IRC DRC (5097)

5097	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	384	86		84				88			94
< 6	26			46				90			100
6 to 8	82			85	81	76		88			97
9 to 11	107			91	83	79		88			90
12 to 13	57			88				89			96
14 to 15	59			95				86			100
16 to 19	0										

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – IRC DRC (5097)

5097	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	unspec	unspec	wpm	wpm+	yr behind	unspec	unspec	total	total / 100
All			9	19	-4			48	73
< 6				-16	0				4
6 to 8	13	13	2	-7	-2	31	31	30	33
9 to 11	47	47	7	16	-4	48	48	43	80
12 to 13			11	35	-6			53	89
14 to 15			15	49	-7			60	111
16 to 19			13					56	
OOS	18	18	4	-13	-4	23		24	28

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in IRC project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (91%) and 14-15 year olds (95%) is markedly higher in IRC project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in IRC project areas (88%-86%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is higher than the average year-on-year retention rate found in IRC project areas among 9-11 year olds (90%) lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in IRC project areas among 14-15 year olds (100%).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is above the average found in IRC project areas (that is 16 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 49 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in IRC project areas are on average four years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while 14-15 year old girls are on average seven years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly below the average found in IRC project areas (that is 80 for girls aged 9-11 and 111 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, we found that enrolment was relatively high in IRC project areas, compared with other SCW project areas (according to the analysis of EM data). Attendance was shown to be around 88% which roughly corresponds to the SCW average. On average across the SCW, enrolment and retention tend to be lower among 14-15 year old girls than among 9-11 year old girls. In IRC project areas we found this trend to be reversed with 14-15 year olds having the highest rates of enrolment and retention. Finally, with regards to learning we found that girls in IRC project areas had relatively low literacy scores, in comparison with other SCW project areas, but that numeracy scores tended to be relatively high among older girls.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Poverty
- Cost of Schooling
- Attitudes towards girls' education: Lack of parental involvement in school decision making processes
- Actual violence and fear of violence
- Negative boy-girl relationships
- Significant responsibilities of girls at home
- Illness
- Social exclusion of Batsawa people
- Teacher training/gender sensitivity
- Language of instruction is not mother tongue for some girls

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Duties	Significant responsibilities of girls at home	Report girls taking care of siblings		●			80%					●●●
		Report girls preparing meals/cleaning		●			90%					●●●
Teaching	Teacher training/gender sensitivity	Report gender sensitive pedagogy	●								40%	
	Language of instruction is not mother tongue for some girls	Language of instruction is not in mother tongue	●								65-95% depends on province	
Poverty	Poverty	Reported by girls (depends on province)	●	●				30%-63%	46%-62%			
Exclusion	Exclusion of Batsawa people	Reports of exclusion	●	●								●●
Attitudes	Attitudes to girls' education	Report majority of boys stay in school		●			73%					
		Report majority of girls stay in school		●			61%					
	Lack of parental involvement in school decision making processes	No evidence available										
Violence	Actual violence and fear of violence	Report fear of violence	●	●				13%-25%	17%-32%			

Source: Baseline Reports (2014), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions planned by the project prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for those interventions. It also shows any changes that projects report making to interventions after baseline. From their baseline data collection, the project has found that most baseline data supports their project interventions. They have not revised their project interventions after baseline data collection.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity			
Community	Champions/community facilitators Community interventions/mobilisation	65% reported that communities often or sometimes had campaigns or sensitisation efforts about the value of education for children [hh] In Equateur, 54% reported never having community campaigns about education. <10% of communities provided learning activities beyond school	
Governance			
Learning	Formative assessment (literacy/numeracy) After-school/out of school tuition Support accelerated learning program	Low learning outcomes	
Materials	Stipends funding Microfinance Kits/materials	14% report existence of saving and loans group in the communities 89% reported that they would be willing to send girls to school if they were provided with subsidisation for fees and supplies	
Safe Spaces			
Teaching	Train/fund local leaders	NR	
Voice			

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After reviewing the first version of the project's baseline report, the Evaluation Manager has reported that a good range of quantitative evidence was gathered, including detailed demographic and socio-economic characteristics. However, there was no analysis of correlations between these characteristics and learning outcomes, and no clear definition of marginalisation.

The Evaluation Manager found that IRC's baseline report presents a good analysis of the data and summary of qualitative evidence.

The Evaluation Manager has not noted meaningful disparities between control and intervention schools with respect to girl's school reported enrolment and time spent in school, girl friendliness indicators, achievement as measured by EGMA/EGRA performance, availability of and/or participation in community savings and loans programs, or community education programs. At baseline, it appears that the intervention and control groups are well matched.

Revisions to M&E

The project's external evaluators recommended that the project remove output indicator 3.2 from the logframe: the percentage of community members who report their comprehension of the importance of girls' education has improved. Also, the project is revising the definition of output indicator 3.4, the percentage of girls and parents who report the school environment as being more girl-friendly.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

In the baseline report, the project reported that it wishes to discontinue collecting data from out of school girls, due to small sample size and ethical reasons. Baseline data already indicates that there is broad community support for girls' education so this indicator has been removed. A scale of 'girl-friendliness' is being reviewed. The project's external evaluators were only able to find a small number of out of school girls.

List of References

- Coffey International Development (2014), Step Change Window Baseline review (Baseline review IRC), 5097 International Rescue Committee, London: Coffey International Development.
- International Rescue Committee (2012), Full Application for the Step Change Window - 5097, London: IRC.
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.
- University of Massachusetts (2014), Baseline report (5097 IRC Baseline Report), Amherst: Vas-Y-Filles.

Pastoralist Afar Girls' Education Support Projects (PAGES)

Education Focus: Primary

Lead Organisation: Save the Children

Country: Ethiopia

GEC Funding: £9,000,465

Target Reach: 11,095 girls

Overview of Project

PAGES operates in the Afar region in the north-east of Ethiopia. The project aims to contribute to the improvement of girls' life chances in Afar through strengthening of their right and access to education. The project will focus on primary education (Grades 1-8 and Alternative Basic Education levels 1-3), using a comprehensive regional-based approach encompassing interventions delivered at the individual, community, school and policy levels to address the many distinctive barriers faced by girls across Afar.

Baseline Research Activity

PAGES was approved to start data collection in October 2013. It collected baseline data between November and December 2013. The external evaluator, JaRco Consulting PLC, designed the evaluation using a clustered randomised control trial approach. The following quantitative tools were used during baseline data collection: a household questionnaire, girls' questionnaire, EGRA and EGMA. The project also used the following qualitative tools: in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with teachers, religious leaders, Kebele officials, and community groups (parent teacher associations and government offices).

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets girls from Afar's pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in eight rural woredas, which it claims are among the most marginalised areas in the region in terms of access and girls at high risk of dropping out.

The pastoralist dimension of the beneficiary communities figures prominently in the analysis as a key factor of educational marginalisation, and seems to suggest that the project considers all girls age 6 to 19 from these types of households in the region to be marginalised.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in STC Ethiopia project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – Save the Children Ethiopia (5098)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5098	67%	-1.6	258	0%	-5.3	29

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – Save the Children Ethiopia (5098)

5098	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	377	47	48	60				87			90
< 6	52		39	50				85			100
6 to 8	129		43	52	57	20		87			79
9 to 11	96		50	77	69	94		88			97
12 to 13	46		59	63		59		85			95
14 to 15	54		49	56				85			83
16 to 19	0		55								

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – Save the Children Ethiopia (5098)

5098	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	wpm	wpm		wpm+	yr behind	total / 100	total / 100		total / 100
All				2	-4				25
< 6				-1	1				8
6 to 8	2	2		1	-1	17	17		16
9 to 11	12	10		2	-4	37	39		27
12 to 13				5	-7				41
14 to 15				5	-8				40
16 to 19									
OOS	2	2		-1	-3				7

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in STC Ethiopia's project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (77%) and 14-15 year olds (56%) is markedly lower in STC Ethiopia's project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in STC Ethiopia's project areas among the 14-15 year olds (85%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is higher than the average year-on-year retention rate found in STC Ethiopia's project areas (that is 97% among 9-11 year olds and 83% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is markedly above the average found in STC Ethiopia's project areas (that is 2 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 5 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in STC Ethiopia's project areas are on average four years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while 14-15 year old girls are on average 8 years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly above the average found in STC Ethiopia's project areas (that is 27 for girls aged 9-11 and 40 for girls aged 14-15).

STC Ethiopia targets girls from pastoralist communities and the findings presented above suggest that this population is indeed severely marginalised in terms of its educational outcomes. Based on the analysis of EM data we found that enrolment was low in comparison with other SCW project areas even though attendance was average. This underscores a recurrent finding that girls tend to attend school relatively often, once they are enrolled. In terms of learning, STC Ethiopia project areas recorded lower EGRA and EGMA scores than any other SCW project area. The average literacy scores achieved by different age groups suggest that girls do not reach a basic level of literacy as they progress through the school system.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Lack of educational facilities within safe walking distance
- Teachers lacking adequate skills and materials
- Afar children not learning in mother tongue
- Curriculum is unfitting to the communities' needs-
- Lack of (gender) appropriate facilities- (lack of facilities in general)
- Domestic responsibilities
- Community attitudes

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)								
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative	
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty	
Duties	Domestic responsibilities	Report duties stop girl from going to school all the time		●			32%			33%		●●●	
		Report involved with domestic responsibilities		●						73%			
Teaching	Afar children not learning in mother tongue	Report language at home is different than at school	●				65%						
	Curriculum is unfitting to the communities' needs	No evidence available											
	Teachers lacking adequate skills and materials	Report teaching unsatisfactory	●				70%						
		Report lack of resources	●				75%					54%	
Inconsistent implementation of government pro gender education policies	% teachers trained in gender pedagogy										30%		
Supply	Lack of educational facilities within safe walking distance												
Facilities	Lack of facilities in general	Report sanitation (water) unsatisfactory		●			62%				18% (report lack)		
	Lack of gender appropriate facilities	No evidence available											
Pregnancy	Child pregnancy	Reported child pregnancy	NS	NS								●●●	
Attitudes	Socio-cultural issues	No evidence available											

Source: Project Baseline Report (2014), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated by the project prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline. The project has not reported making any changes to its planned interventions in light of the baseline analysis.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build/fund alternative schools (establishment and upgrading new ABE centres and schools)	During a PAGES Engineering in-depth technical assessment of the 40 sites the REB had identified, 16 of these sites were identified as being in an un-safe condition for education provision.	As a result of this finding, PAGES is planning to rehabilitate these sites by repairing existing classrooms and constructing one additional classroom so that education from ABE level I to IV can be provided
Community	Community interventions/mobilisation		
Governance	School improvement Schedule development plans (improve the quality of the entire ABE syllabus, implement Afar school curriculum)	65% say language at home is different than at school [gs] 70% report teaching unsatisfactory [hh]	
Learning	Life skills/leadership School readiness classes	64% have the confidence they would attain their respective aspired higher level of education	
Materials			
Safe Spaces	Facilities/WASH/hygiene education (gender segregated latrines, WASH training) Clubs (Child/parent) (establish girls' clubs)	89% of girls said education is equally important for girls and boys 62% report sanitation unsatisfactory [hh]	
Teaching	Train/fund (general) teachers (provision of teachers' trainings, Train/fund local teachers (training REB staff)	70% report teaching unsatisfactory [hh]	

Voice			
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Source: Project Baseline Report (2014)

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After a review of the project's first version of its baseline report, the Evaluation Manager has indicated that the quality of quantitative and qualitative evidence appears to be good.

The Evaluation Manager noted that the intervention and control groups seem roughly comparable. However, there are significant differences between the two groups in terms of living conditions and in terms of enrolment rates, and seem to suggest that the control areas are more disadvantaged than intervention areas. This will need to be taken into consideration when measuring the effects caused by PAGES intervention activities on retention and learning

Revisions to M&E after Baseline

The external evaluator has suggested some revisions to indicators to better capture the project's effects.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

Baseline data collection was conducted during the rainy season in Ethiopia, which led to problems related to flooding and made it difficult for data collectors to reach certain areas. Also, the flood displaced the population, which meant that data collectors were required to follow the initially selected participants to the new areas.

The household survey interview took about 45 minutes, which posed a challenge for younger children who had difficulty staying focused. Also, the hot weather condition and absence of shade, lack of separate and quiet places to conduct the interviews were challenging for data collectors. Enumerators conducted the interview outside of the house, as specified in the project ethical research standards. However, this attracted crowds, which may have influenced responses.

During the first round of data collection in the 8 woredas, the external evaluator reported difficulties separating the population in the control and implementation sites. During data collection, in some cases the same individuals were found in both the control and implementation sites. This made establishing a meaningful comparison problematic. In addition, there was the concern that the population in the PAGES control sites may move to access improved education in PAGES implementation sites. This may have resulted in existing schools and ABEs being abandoned and a disruption of provision of government education. To address these concerns, new control sites were selected. These newly selected control sites from outside the 8 implementation woredas are expected to reduce the spill-over effect and provide a more meaningful comparison with the treatment areas.

PAGES originally intended to collect attendance data from schools and ABEs in October, November and December 2013 and triangulate these figures with spot checks to determine the most representative attendance rates. This was not possible for a variety of reasons including the late start of the school year, delays in distributing attendance registers and training teachers in completing registers. As a result registers were collected in January and February 2014 and four spot checks took place in February and March 2014. Data collectors encountered major challenges in the collection of the attendance registers because the majority of teachers were either not completing attendance registers or those submitted were illegible. While we were out conducting attendance spot-checks, it was found that most schools and ABEs had not returned back from a two weeks mid-term break, even though the time for spot check data collection was a week after schools were scheduled to resume. In addition, there are no common agreed kebele and school names, which hampered the data entry and cleaning process considerably.

List of References

- Coffey International Development (2014), Step Change Window Baseline review (Baseline review of 5098 Save the Children) 5098 Save the Children, London: Coffey International Development.
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.

- Save the Children (2012), Full Application Form for the Step Change Window- Ref # 5098, London: Save the Children.
- Save the Children (2014), Baseline Assessment for Pastoralist Afar Girls Education Challenge Project (PAGES), Afar: Save the children.
- Save the Children (2014), Outcome Model v.PbR PAGES 06 04 14, 5098 Save the Children, London: Save the Children.

Promoting Advancement of Girls' Education in Mozambique (PAGE-M)

Education Focus: Primary and lower secondary

Lead Organisation: Save the Children

Country: Mozambique

GEC Funding: £5,731,947

Target Reach: 19,244 girls

Overview of Project

PAGE-M operates in Mozambique. The project plans to reach marginalised girls in three provinces and ten districts in Mozambique, enabling them to access education, to learn effectively, and to be supported to remain in school through key transition points including into secondary school.

Baseline Research Activity

This project was approved to move onto baseline data collection in August 2013. The project's external evaluator, Kixiquila, designed the evaluation as a cluster randomised evaluation. A first round of baseline data was collected between September and October 2013. A second round of baseline data was collected in February and March 2014. Quantitative data was collected using a household survey and school survey. Learning was assessed using EGRA and EGMA. Qualitative data was assessed using observations, focus discussion groups with community members and boys and girls, and interviews with school directors, teachers, provincial directors, district directors and representatives of teachers' associations.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets girls who are at risk of dropout, have dropped out, or have never enrolled. Some interventions will benefit all girls in target schools, while others will target girls transitioning from lower to upper primary, and upper primary to lower secondary.

PAGE-M will also directly target a group of extremely marginalised girls (6-8 years old) who are out-of-school and in critical need of first enrolment and girls from extremely marginalised and poor families who are struggling to remain in school due to a range of factors linked to extreme poverty or other vulnerability factors.

Marginalised girls are described as girls living in rural or remote areas, living far from the school, who are disabled, who are orphans, who are from the poorest 50% and from families headed by elder and children.

The project states that baseline data shows that over 62% of Mozambican girls are considered marginalised with the proportion being significantly higher in rural areas.

The findings from baseline show that there are marginalised girls in all the selected communities. The project also states that the baseline data confirms what overall national statistics indicate, which is that boys are often as marginalised as girls. Specifically, enrolment, attendance, and learning do not differ greatly between boys and girls in some areas. Furthermore, in some locations, such as Gaza and parts of Tete, employment, pastoralism and migration dynamics marginalise boys of certain ages more than girls.

Findings on Baseline Levels of Marginalisation

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence about the outcome levels of girls in STC Mozambique project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – Save the Children Mozambique (5099)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5099	96%	-1.1	298	18%	-2.6	94

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – Save the Children Mozambique (5099)

5099	Sample size	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM Data	BL Report	Reanalysis	EM Data	BL Report	PBR Sheet	Reanalysis	EM Data	BL Report	Reanalysis	EM Data
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	410		86	94			87	87		94	98
< 6	18		30				88			88	
6 to 8	112		84	94			87	88		93	97
9 to 11	148		93	98			87	88		96	100
12 to 13	77		93	96			87	87		95	95
14 to 15	54		85	91			88	85		91	97
16 to 19	0		100								

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – Save the Children Mozambique (5099)

5099	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	wpm	total / 100	wpm	wpm+	yr behind	total / 100	total / 100	total	total / 100
All			15	15	-4			32	50
< 6				-7	0				9
6 to 8	1	17	3	-3	-2	14	31	18	23
9 to 11	13	50	15	14	-4	35	65	33	50
12 to 13	47	63	25	31	-6	57	76	42	72
14 to 15	75		24	37	-8	65		44	82
16 to 19									
OOS		27	18	1	-4			23	25

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in STC Mozambique project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (98%) and 14-15 year olds (91%) is markedly higher in STC Mozambique project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in STC Mozambique project areas (88%-85%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in STC Mozambique project areas (that is 100% among 9-11 year olds and 97% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is markedly above the average found in STC Mozambique project areas (that is 14 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 37 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in STC Mozambique project areas are on average four years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while 14-15 year old girls are on average eight years behind.

- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is above the average found in STC Mozambique project areas (that is 50 for girls aged 9-11 and 82 for girls aged 14-15).

While STC Mozambique targets girls aged 6-8 in particular, analysis of the EM data suggests that enrolment in this age group is already relatively high (94%). However, the reanalysis of project data found lower enrolment rates in this age group (84%) which may indicate that the EM sample did not capture the most marginalised girls of this age. Enrolment and retention of 9-11 and 14-15 year olds was higher than on SCW average, while attendance was about average among the younger girls and slightly below average among the older girls. In terms of learning, both average literacy and numeracy scores were below the SCW average and suggest that learning outcomes are, indeed, relatively poor at baseline.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Inadequate training and mentoring of teachers
- Inadequate training and mentoring of school councils
- Long distance to school
- Poor quality of teaching
- Inadequate classrooms
- Teacher discrimination against girls
- Poor school facilities including sanitation facilities
- Risk of harassment within school
- Restricting cultural and religious perceptions towards girls education and role of women
- Lack of value of girls' education
- Forced marriage
- Schools fees (cost of uniforms, school/ enrolment fees, school contributions, cost of school materials)
- Opportunity costs of girls not working or helping in the home while in school and family costs (such as loss of a salary)

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Costs	Schools fees (cost of uniforms, school/ enrolment fees, school contributions, cost of school materials)	% of bottom 40% claiming it is hard to afford schooling for their daughter		●			31%					
Teaching	Teacher discrimination against girls	No evidence available										
	Poor quality of teaching	% satisfied with teaching	●				84%					
	Inadequate training and mentoring of teachers	No evidence available										
Supply	Long distance to school	Average distance to school	●	●			1.47 hours					
Facilities	Inadequate classrooms	Report satisfaction with classroom	●				65%					
	Poor school facilities including sanitation facilities	No evidence available										
Attitudes	Lack of value of girls' education	No evidence available										
Personal	Early marriage (forced marriage)	Report early marriage		●								●●●
Duties	Opportunity costs of girls not working or helping in the home	Report helping with work	●	●						74%		
Safety	Risk of harassment within school	Reported cases of sexual violence		●								●● (2 reported)

Source: Baseline Report (2014), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table lists the interventions that the project had originally planned in its full application.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access		Findings on distance to school and violence suggest an added focus on girls' journeys to school	
Capacity			
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation		
Governance	Policy: The project seeks to increase commitment from government stakeholders to sustain improvements to girls education		
Learning	Learning support/classes: literacy boost (reading camps and other activities with adults)		
Materials	Stipend funding Kits/materials		
Safe Spaces	Anti- gender based violence Girls' study group	5% of parents reported violence at school 12% reported children had witness violence In qual, parents explained that they do not know what happens in school.	After baseline, project found that greater emphasis is needed on violence issues at school level through advocacy and training with school councils and girls' clubs on rights, non-violent peer relationships
Teaching	Support government training: The project will train teachers and work with government structures to build capacity. Also, training for teachers on literacy skills and peer support		
Voice			

Source: Baseline Report (2014)

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

The quality assessment of this project's baseline evidence is not available at this time.

Revisions to M&E

The project has found data on attendance to be unreliable. The project plans to improve its data collection tools, as it was not able to capture all information needed. The project also wants to further explore relationships between factors identified at baseline. The project ran into several challenges during baseline due to the capacity of its external evaluator and the design of the evaluation. These challenges are explained in more detail in the follow section.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The project has reported a number of challenges during the baseline process. The following is a selection:

- Data for Output 4 was not sufficient for a full picture of the state of the education sector in relation to being able to implement and sustain interventions in favour of girls.
- The Household survey questionnaire was not well enough aligned to the Mozambican context or the project's needs. There were a number of questions that were repeated. There were a number of questions that were difficult to analyse due to ambiguity in the manner of questioning. There were some filters that mean certain useful information was missed. There were some questions that were not needed and gave no useful information. Some of these discoveries are a result of baseline findings. The projects plans to work with its new evaluator to develop a new questionnaire that can enhance the evaluation design
- The project has noted that there is a need for more thematic depth to understand the relationships between factors, both within qualitative and quantitative tools: examples include assessments of teachers' performance/quality as teachers, school-community involvement, children working and how that affects their school going. Mitigating action will be used to ensure that in preparation for midline the qualitative tools are shortened and deepened, bearing in mind saturation found on some issues at baseline, and that interviewers are not only trained but tested and mentored in the field as part of training, in order to push for depth by probing. Other topics that need more exploration: fostering within a family, early marriage, child labour.
- Data collection was a huge challenge due to households being very dispersed geographically, communities not being accustomed to the types of survey, weather and access to sites and families being unavailable due to work.
- According to the project, the independent evaluator chosen did not manage the process robustly enough, nor display the skills needed for this piece of evaluation. There may have been something of an under-estimation of the demands of the whole evaluation design and framework, and an overestimation of the capacity available. The project is now seeking to employ two renowned international consultants as the technical evaluation leads, who will supervise and work in conjunction with an in-country team to adapt the tools, train teams, collect the data rigorously, create clean and accurate databases and produce the evaluation reports to the required standard.

List of References

- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.
- Save the Children (2012), Full Application Form for the Step Change Window- Ref # 5099, London: Save the Children.

A New “Equilibrium” for Girls

Education Focus: Lower secondary

Lead Organisation: Camfed

Country: Tanzania and Zimbabwe

GEC Funding: £23,716,751

Target Reach: 132,577 girls

Overview of Project

A New Equilibrium for Girls operates in 10 rural districts in Tanzania and 24 rural districts in Zimbabwe. The project plans to improve educational outcomes for girls and boys- both academic as well as broader life skills and competencies that better prepare them for the critical transition from school to a secure and productive young adulthood. The programme is intentionally designed to capitalise on an existing community infrastructure and network of partnerships that extends to national level.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move onto baseline data collection in March 2013. Baseline data collection was conducted in three phases. The first phase was in March 2013. The second phase was in September and October 2013. Camfed has designed the evaluation using different clusters where each has a different depth of the intervention model (“embedded” or “established”) along with comparison clusters that have not received any of the project’s intervention. For learning assessments, the project originally used the national assessment tools provided by National Examinations Council for Tanzania and Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Councils. In its second phase, the project used a learning assessment designed by Cambridge University Psychometrics Centre. To collect quantitative and qualitative data, the project also interviewed parents/guardians, teachers, school committee members, local officials, female school leavers, students in school and out of school girls.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets girls in marginalised rural communities who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out. Criteria are drawn up with communities in order to identify the most marginalised girls. These criteria are refined in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, and are grounded in government definitions of ‘vulnerability’ as laid out in the National Guidelines for the Care and Support of Most Vulnerable Children in Tanzania and the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Zimbabwe. These criteria cover the social background of girls, e.g. whether she is from a child-headed household, is an orphan, is affected by disability, as well as her educational status, e.g. whether a girl has dropped out or is at risk of dropping out of school, has failed to make the transition from Grade 7 to Form 1, is attending school irregularly, or is in receipt of any welfare provision, and the causes of this status.

The project reports that it has found that 76% of target school girls in Tanzania and 80% of target school girls in Zimbabwe are marginalised.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in Camfed project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – Camfed Tanzania & Zimbabwe (5101)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5101	91%	-0.8	255	64%	-1.2	392

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – Camfed Tanzania & Zimbabwe (5101)

5101	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	681			88				89	90		90
< 6	26			54				90			90
6 to 8	84			92		88		89			96
9 to 11	105			98				89			98
12 to 13	128			87				88			88
14 to 15	217			92	96			89			92
16 to 19	120			79	95			89			78

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – Camfed Tanzania & Zimbabwe (5101)

5101	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	National			EGRA+		National			EGMA+
Unit	unspec	total / 100	unspec	wpm+	yr behind	unspec	total / 100	unspec	total / 100
All			19	65	-4			9	108
< 6				-44	0				-6
6 to 8		24		-11	-1				30
9 to 11		34		42	-2				86
12 to 13			15	77	-3				118
14 to 15	23		18	89	-4	7	11	8	134
16 to 19	23		20	104	-6	12	15	9	145
OOS				35	-5				82

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in Camfed project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (98%) and 14-15 year olds (92%) is higher in Camfed project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly higher in Camfed project areas (89%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is similar compared to the average year-on-year retention rate found in Camfed project areas (that is 98% among 9-11 year olds and 92% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is markedly below the average found in Camfed project areas (that is 42 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 89 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in Camfed project areas are on average two years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average four years behind.

- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly below the average found in Camfed project areas (that is 86 for girls aged 9-11 and 134 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data showed average enrolment rates above the SCW average for girls in Camfed project areas. Attendance and retention were close to average while learning outcomes were markedly high in comparison with the SCW average.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Lack of quality education for rural students
- Disparities in resource allocations and general under-resourcing
- Decline in standards at secondary level
- Economic barriers
- Early marriage
- Pregnancy
- Vulnerability to violence
- Tradition of migrating to work as house girls
- Presence of apostolic faith which prevents girls from attending school

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Teaching	Decline in standards at secondary level	Decline in pass rates of Form 4 exam	●									●● (Form 4 exams)
	Lack of quality education for rural students	% of teachers with a degree; graduated from Form 6	●								39%; 9%	
Supply	Disparities in resource allocations and general under-resourcing	No evidence available										
Costs	Economic barriers	Report not being able to pay school-going costs as reason they expect to drop out before completing Form 4		●						42%		
		Unpaid school costs is most common reason for being sent home school		●						24%		
Attitudes	Inequality between boys and girls	No evidence available										
	Presence of apostolic faith which prevents girls from attending school	Church or doing church activities reported as reason for not attending school		●					12%			
Personal	Early marriage	Report as reason they expect to drop out before completing Form 4							3%			
		% of OOS report being married							22% (4 were arranged)			
		% of OOS report pregnancy or marriage as reason for not being in school							27%			
Personal	Pregnancy	Report as reason they expect to drop out before completing Form 4		●					6%			
Duties	Tradition of migrating to work as house girls	Work reported as reason why girls expect to drop out of school before Form 4 (not migratory-work specific)		●					19%			
Violence	Vulnerability to violence	No evidence available										

Source: Baseline Report (2014)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline. The project has presented evidence to support some of its planned interventions.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity			
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation		
Governance			
Learning	Formative assessment (lit/num) Develop/extended curriculum English language program (LOI)	<p>The mean score achieved in the literacy assessment in Tanzania by all (Form 2) student members of the tracked cohort was 35.4%. Scores ranged between 2% and 84%. The median score was 32% and the modal score was 30%.</p> <p>The mean score achieved in the literacy assessment in Zimbabwe by all student members of the tracked Form 2 cohort was 11.0 out of a possible 50. Scores ranged between 0 and 42. The median score was 10 and the modal score was 8.</p>	
Materials	Stipends funding Other material support Kits/material	<p>33% said they had received financial support at some point in their educational career</p> <p>91% of parents report textbooks and school supplies lead to enjoyment/learning at school</p> <p>82% of students report textbooks and school supplies lead to enjoyment/learning at school</p> <p>Availability of books was the most important factor to teachers for affecting their</p>	

		performance	
Safe Spaces	Girl/boy friendly school	<p>More than 50% of students agreed that teachers embarrassed them in class.</p> <p>61% of stakeholders report boys have enough time to finish their homework, whereas 31% reported girls had enough time to finish their homework</p>	
Teaching	<p>Train/fund (general) teachers</p> <p>Support psych/health training</p> <p>Training para-educ (extend curriculum)</p>	<p>90% of students say their teacher treats them fairly (student)</p> <p>76% say that teachers respect their opinion (student)</p> <p>73% say that teachers care about students (student)</p> <p>Half of teachers had an advanced degree</p> <p>32% had a degree</p> <p>9% had finished Form 6</p>	
Voice			

Source: Baseline Report for Setting PBR Targets (2013)

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After review of the first version of the baseline report, the Evaluation Manager listed many concerns. The project has undergone many versions of its baseline report since the first version, so the quality of that report is no longer relevant. Some of challenges with sampling are covered in the section below on challenges in project data collection.

Revisions to M&E

The project has worked with the Fund Manager on revising its M&E Framework across its three waves of data collection. The most recent changes are the following. It will use Form 3 results to set midline and endline targets in Tanzania. The project has changed its sampling locations in Zimbabwe and Tanzania. It has made Chipinge the point of comparison for the evaluation and will no longer use the other two districts as comparison in Zimbabwe. In its booster sample, it was able to draw the sample of treatment schools needed to have a representative sample of all treatment schools. In Tanzania, the project has changed the districts from which it will take its sample.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

Camfed has conducted three phases of baseline data collection. In its first phase it did not conduct learning assessments and needed to re-survey. After the second phase, the Fund Manager noted the sample size may not be sufficient to demonstrate statistically significant results and that the evaluation design for Zimbabwe required revision, as Camfed would not be using multi-level modeling to demonstrate payment by results outcomes. Analysis of the data was not extensive. It focused on in-school factors, and did not fully address the kinds of barriers that marginalised girls face in learning and retention. Numbers proposed for the samples were insufficient

to meet minimum PbR requirements for both countries. It was unclear whether an external evaluator was involved in the process.

Going into the third phase, learning assessments had still not been conducted for out of school girls. For learning assessments the project is still relying on a national examination in Tanzania which has flaws and issues with internal reliability.

List of References

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- Camfed International (2014), M&E Framework: Step Change Window, Cambridge: Camfed International.
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- Camfed International (2013), Project Reference Number 5101, Zimbabwe Baseline, Cambridge: Camfed International.

Kenya Equity in Education Project (KEEP)

Education Focus: Primary and lower secondary

Lead Organisation: WUSC

Country: Kenya

GEC Funding: £ 121,635,42

Target Reach: 27,203 girls

Overview of Project

KEEP operates in northern Kenya and targets girls living in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and the Turkana West, Fafi/ Lagdera host communities. KEEP is a comprehensive intervention that hopes to quickly and effectively expand and improve education opportunities to marginalised girls in northern Kenya. KEEP's activities will be focused in three areas: (1) building girl-friendly school environments, (2) providing targeted support to female learners, and (3) generating parent and community support for girls' education.

Baseline Research Activity

KEEP received approval to move onto baseline data collection in early April 2013. Its baseline data collection and study was carried out between April 2013 and September 2013. The external evaluator, CAC International, set up the evaluation as a quasi-experimental design. Quantitative data was collected using a household survey, a school-based survey with students, EGRA and EGMA. Qualitative data was collected using FGDs with girl and boy students and interviews with supervising teachers, parents (mothers and fathers), teachers, local government officials, community and religious leaders, PTA members, head masters, district education officers and out of school girls.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets marginalised girls in northern Kenya, living in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and the Turkana West and Fafi/Lagdera host communities. Girls living in the host community of Turkana West and Fafi/Lagdera are marginalised because of the socio-economic situation in the areas where they live. The districts are in rural and remote parts of Kenya where the population is primarily nomadic, poverty is widespread, and there are limited educational opportunities which are of poor quality. These girls have been identified because their educational needs are currently not being met.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in WUSC project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – WUSC Kenya (5136)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5136	59%	-2.5	310	0%	-4.4	59

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – WUSC Kenya (5136)

5136	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	423	81	74	69	85			86			97
< 6	48		63	60				81			100
6 to 8	134		74	54				85			94
9 to 11	95		84	82				87			100
12 to 13	68		83	91				86			93
14 to 15	59		84	78				89			100
16 to 19	0		100								

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – WUSC Kenya (5136)

5136	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	unspec			wpm+	yr behind	unspec			total / 100
All				21	-4				51
< 6				-3	0				15
6 to 8				4	-2				26
9 to 11	8			13	-4	17			47
12 to 13	12			43	-5	26			76
14 to 15	17			44	-7	35			87
16 to 19	26					51			
OOS				-3	-3				16

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in WUSC project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (82%) and 14-15 year olds (78%) is slightly lower in WUSC project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is similar in WUSC project areas (87%-89%) compared to the average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in WUSC project areas (that is 100% among 9-11 year olds and 100% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is markedly above the average found in WUSC project areas (that is 6 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 7 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in WUSC project areas are on average four years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average seven years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is above the average found in WUSC project areas (that is 47 for girls aged 9-11 and 87 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from WUSC project areas showed average enrolment rates that were slightly below the SCW averages for 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls. Attendance was close to average while retention was found to be above SCW average, at 100% among 9-11 and 14-15 year olds. At the same time, learning outcomes were markedly low in comparison with the SCW average.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- High student/teacher ratio
- Inadequate teaching/learning materials
- Inadequate access to textbooks
- Inadequate number and quality of classrooms
- Poor school management
- Poor coordination as education not well-funded or prioritised
- Lack of psychosocial support for girls
- Lack of mitigating measures to address the decreased amount of time available for girls to study
- Inadequately trained teachers for girls' education
- Lack of extra-curricular activities
- High cost of uniforms, textbooks and learning materials
- Inadequate funds to employ appropriate number of teachers
- Lack of school fences
- Congested classrooms
- Creating discomfort to older girls
- Lack of privacy for girls
- Families cannot afford high cost of sanitary pads
- Families cannot afford lighting facilities
- Lack of opportunities for educated girls to increase family income

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)								
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative	
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty	
Costs	High cost of uniforms, textbooks and learning materials	Report that it is difficult to afford school		●			50%						
		For OOS, family's inability to afford sending the girl to school is a reason for her non-enrolment		●			25%						
Motivation	Lack of opportunities for educated girls to increase family income	No evidence available											
Teaching	Inadequately trained teachers for girls' education	Trained in student centred learning	●									15%	
		Trained in girl friendly learning	●									65%	
	Lack of extra-curricular activities	Attended study groups in the past year	●								10%		
Supply	Congested classrooms	Pupils/classroom	●									22.28 Dadaab 36.62 Turkana 41.46 D Refugee Camp 48.41 Kakuma Refugee Camp 38.41 Kakuma Refugee Camp (2/3)	
	High student/teacher ratio	Teacher/pupil ratio	●									28.20 Dadaab 42.12 Turkana 25.44 D Refugee Camp 39.55 Kakuma Refugee Camp 24.44 Kakuma Refugee Camp (2/3)	

ANNEX D8 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5136 – WUSC

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)								
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative	
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty	
	Inadequate funds to employ appropriate number of teachers	2011 UWEZO	●									1 in 5 teachers are employed by parents	
Facilities	Lack of privacy for girls	Report being unsatisfied with quality of sanitation facilities					53%						
		Girls/latrine ratio								6.11 Dadaab 16.41 Turkana 10.41 D Refugee Camp 12.07 Kakuma Refugee Camp 12.72 Kakuma Refugee Camp (2/3)			
	Inadequate access to textbooks	Textbook-pupil ratio	●							1.54 Dadaab 4.31 Turkana 2.22 D Refugee Camp 1.76 Kakuma Refugee Camp 1.53 Kakuma Refugee Camp (2/3)			
		Report quality of textbooks to be unsatisfactory	●					65%					
	Inadequate number and quality of classrooms	Report quality of classroom to be satisfactory	●					50%					
	Inadequate teaching/learning materials	Report being unsatisfied with quality of teaching	●					55%					
	Lack of school fences	No evidence available											

ANNEX D8 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5136 – WUSC

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Health	Families cannot afford high cost of sanitary pads	Lack of adequate sanitary wear		●								●●●
Poverty	Families cannot afford lighting facilities	Household does not have access to electricity in the home	●				87%					
Duties	Lack of mitigating measures to address the decreased amount of time available for girls to study	Report housework does not stop girl from going to school		●			62%					
		Report doing housework		●						43%		●●●
Violence	Lack of psychosocial support for girls	Report girls have seen violence on the way to school	NS	NS			15%					
Governance	Poor coordination as education not well-funded or prioritised	Schools offering remedial help	●								0 reported	
	Poor school management	Parents see PTA as channel of communication to the school	NS	NS								●●●

Source: Baseline Report (2013), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline.

The external evaluator specifically notes that the targeting of KEEP inputs – particularly those addressed to individual girls – should be an issue of some concern to project implementers. Seemingly contradictory data with regards to the generally high level of girls' comfort in and appreciation for the actual school environment on the one hand, and strong sentiments among a minority of girls of unhappiness and fear in that environment on the other hand, indicates that targeted support for girls in danger of dropping out needs to be just that: very carefully targeted. The delivery of psycho-social counselling will likely require similar finesse and judgment, as will all inputs used for the purposes of motivation, support and incentive.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build/fund classes (construct classrooms)	53% reported quality of classrooms to be satisfactory 13% reported that families could help provide education through building schools or classrooms	
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation (hire community mobilisers to engage men, build the capacity of SMC/PTA, mobilise role models)	8% report a non-family member speaking to an eligible girl 57% feel there is not enough support on community for girls to succeed at school 12% of households report girl contributing to household income	
Governance			
Learning	Learning support (remedial teaching awards for distinguished leadership/academic achievement,)	46% of girls do not speak the language of instruction 13% have difficulty communicating in their language 10% attended study groups in the past year 20% of caregivers report their daughters are less confident than other girls	
Materials	Stipend funding/solar lamps	62% reported quality of	

	(distribute sets of materials: exercise books, provide uniforms, sanitary wear, scholarships)	textbooks unsatisfactory 5% have received external assistance for books 6% reported girl had received a scholarship in the past year Qual- lack of sanitary wear causes embarrassment 70% claimed that it was difficult to afford school 13% of households have access to electricity	
Safe Spaces	Facilities / WASH / hygiene education (construct separate latrines for girls) Girl / boy friendly school (train 200 teachers in girl friendly approaches) Clubs (child / parent) (create or strengthen clubs)	Several schools have no girls' latrine 53% reported unsatisfactory toilets [hh] 75% of girls have a positive relationship with their teachers [gs] 52% of teachers had received girl-friendly training 20% of caregivers report their daughters are less confident than other girls	Program will seek out partnerships with other NGOs to tackle gender based violence
Teaching	Train/fund general teachers (employ teachers) Support psych/health training (guidance counsellors for support)	Qual- teachers would welcome help to identify at-risk girls 20% of caregivers report their daughters are less confident than other girls	
Voice			

Source: Baseline Report (2013)

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

In the first version of the baseline report, the EM reported many concerns with the data presented. The project did not present data that followed the outcome guidance for the two PbR indicators, learning and attendance. It was not clear from the household survey how the cohort is split between control and intervention groups. Throughout the report, the data is never disaggregated by intervention and control schools.

Generally, data was interpreted effectively and appropriately, but some conclusions contradicted the analysis in the main text.

Revisions to M&E

The project has made major revisions to its M&E.

Some of these revisions include funds to be allocated annually to schools to access the resources and materials needed to maintain adequate records, as well as to train staff and teachers on record keeping and data collection. Increased field visits by KEEP Nairobi staff are also planned to provide on-going M&E support to field staff and Head Teachers of KEEP schools.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The project reports that there were several significant constraints to baseline methodology and data collection. The key challenge proved to be the availability and quality of school administrative data in KEEP intervention and control schools, with regard to enrolment, attendance, retention and learning outcomes. Beyond the quality and reliability of education data, there were other constraints to baseline methodology including delays in receiving GEC evaluation and baseline guidance material, which then hampered baseline design and planning. Another challenge was sampling constraints given sample sizes, which were disproportionately large relative to the total population in certain sub-locations or represented only one ethnicity in a multi-ethnic location. Resource constraints due the household survey instrument and methodology provided by GEC, which proved to be much more lengthy and arduous to administer, along with data cleaning and analysis being much more lengthy than anticipated. Survey fatigue, particularly in the refugee camps, where local populations were reticent to participate in yet another donor data collection exercise that they felt was unlikely to result in tangible benefits for their families. Survey fatigue within the refugee settlements is well known and widely documented by other donor agencies operating in these areas. Finally, significant security concerns in the KEEP regions of intervention which hampered the movement of enumerators, increased costs and lengthened the data collection process considerably.

List of References

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- PwC (2013), Baseline Report Feedback, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.
- World University Service of Canada & Windle Trust Kenya (2012), Full Application Form for the Step Change Window - Ref # 5136, Unknown: World University Service of Canada & Windle Trust Kenya.

Steps Towards Afghan Girls' Education Stages (STAGES)

Education Focus: Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary

Lead Organisation: Aga Khan Foundation

Country: Afghanistan

GEC Funding: £28,030,000

Target Reach: 40,465 girls

Overview of Project

STAGES operates across 14 provinces of Afghanistan. It aims to transform the educational status of marginalised girls through improved access to a flexible range of quality education options, equipping girls and young women with the knowledge, skills and confidence to become future models and advocates of girls' education and contributing members of Afghan society.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move onto baseline data collection in November 2013. The external evaluator Eureka Research and Evaluation designed the evaluation as a quasi-experimental design. However, the evaluation design has been revised to a pre- and post-test approach, based on the randomised sampling of households and cohort girls in intervention communities and comparison of evaluation data at baseline, midline and endline. The first round of baseline data collection took place from December 2013 – March 2014. Due to a number of research challenges, a second round of data collection will take place in the second half of 2014.

Quantitative was collected using a household survey, which included a mini-Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey on health and hygiene and another mini-KAP on attitudes about women's participation in education, employment and other activities. The project also used a mobile and radio survey to capture household mobile phone ownership/use and consumption of educational media through radio and print. Girls' learning was assessed using EGRA and EGMA. In the first phase of baseline, 98 communities were sampled, with a total of 1078 household surveys.

The project did not conduct qualitative data collection.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets rural marginalised girls who are most likely to miss out on education, with a focus on 6-14 year-olds to ensure achievement of solid early learning outcomes and to enable girls' transition to secondary and high school when risk of drop-out is highest.

STAGES will target six-year old girls attending pre-school/ECD classes, girls in grades one to six in primary school, and girls in grades seven to nine in secondary school.

The STAGES intervention in Kabul province specifically targets refugees; however, it is impossible to identify from the household survey from where beneficiaries in Kabul or other provinces have migrated if they have lived in their community for more than one year. Hence, it is difficult to confirm whether targeted populations are accessing the intervention.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1 and Table 2 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in AKF project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – AKF Afghanistan

5147	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	399			69				86			95
< 6	17										
6 to 8	89			56				88			92
9 to 11	120			84				83			99
12 to 13	98			71				86			95
14 to 15	75			73				89			91
16 to 19	0										

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – AKF Afghanistan

5147	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	wpm			wpm+	yr behind	unspec			total / 100
All				37	-3				59
< 6									
6 to 8	11			19	0	22			38
9 to 11	37			32	-2	41			52
12 to 13	55			48	-4	53			73
14 to 15	68			51	-6	65			76
16 to 19	83					84			
OOS				-1	-4				11

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in AKF project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (84%) and 14-15 year olds (73%) is slightly lower in AKF project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in AKF project areas (83%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is similar to the average year-on-year retention rate found in AKF project areas (that is 99% among 9-11 year olds and 91% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is fairly similar to the average found in AKF project areas (that is 32 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 51 wpm for girls aged 14-

15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in AKF project areas are on average two years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average six years behind.

- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is above the average found in AKF project areas (that is 52 for girls aged 9-11 and 76 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from AKF project areas showed average enrolment rates below the SCW averages for 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls. Attendance was between 83% and 89% with 14-15 year old girls having a higher attendance than younger girls. Literacy scores were close to the SCW average, while numeracy scores were below average.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Poor access to nearby schools
- Poor quality education
- Poverty
- Traditional cultural values that limit girls' mobility
- Lack of support from families to pursue education
- Perceptions of poor security
- Attitudes to girls education
- Long distance to school

Table 3 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 3: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Teaching	Poor quality of education	Satisfied with teaching	●				88%					
Supply	Poor access to nearby schools	Average minutes to walk to primary IS/OOS		●						24 minutes/52 minutes		
		Average minutes to walk to secondary IS/OOS		●						55 minutes/52 minutes		
Poverty	Poverty*	Claim money comes from many sources	NS	NS			52% IS 76% OOS					
Attitudes	Traditional cultural values that limit girls' mobility	No evidence available										
	Lack of support from families to pursue education	Feel that there is enough support for girls to go to school		●			61%					
	Attitudes to girls' education	Feel that it is usual for girls to go to school		●			66%					
Higher proportions of IS girl carers than OOS girl carers stated that girls learn the same or more as boys when they attend school			●								●●●	
Safety	Perceptions of poor security	Report that assistance through safety and security for children was needed	NS	NS			23%					

*The literature suggests that poverty and low socio-economic status is an important reason for not sending children to school in Afghanistan, either due to costs involved in school attendance or the necessity to have children working and contributing economically to the household. The results of the baseline survey show some differing results in relation to these issues. Significantly more household members of out-of-school girls claimed to have had money coming in from any source when compared with in-school girl households. This is consistent with the finding that significantly more out-of-school girl households than in-school girl households claimed to have employed male heads of households. Furthermore, when difficulty affording sending cohort girls to school was cross tabulated with a series of questions related to household economic situation, there was no relationship between difficulty affording to send girls to school and ability or inability to meet basic needs. It appears from the data that lower household income, perceptions of being unable to meet basic needs and household male unemployment are not necessarily predictors of marginalised girls' lack of school enrolment in this sample; although it is difficult to make conclusions about monthly household income given that only half of households provided this data.

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table lists the interventions that the project had originally planned in its full application along with evidence that it found at baseline.

Another finding from the baseline results indicates that among both adult male and female respondents there is limited support for women’s participation in shuras. Given the theory of change’s assumption that sustainable change in girls’ education outcomes is reliant on active community engagement through community ownership of the project and management of decision-making bodies such as school shuras, and given that women should participate in these mechanisms, the finding that fewer community members support women’s shura participation could pose a barrier for girls’ school enrolment and retention.

Table 4: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	<p>Build/fund classes:</p> <p>Improved learning environments for children through infrastructural development projects</p> <p>Support of formal government schools</p> <p>Provision of ECD and CBE classes for children (particularly marginalised girls), in close proximity to children’s homes</p>	<p>The majority of female primary carers (81.7%) reported knowing which was the closest primary school that local girls could go to, although fewer (62.9%) reported knowing which was the closest secondary school for girls. Although knowledge of local primary and secondary schools for girls varied somewhat across the sampled provinces, it was very low among female carers in Kandahar (9.1% for both primary and secondary schools). The project notes that it is likely due to STAGES community classes being late-starting in Kandahar and not having started yet in the sampled communities at the time of baseline data collection</p> <p>89% were satisfied with classrooms [hs]</p> <p>49% of out-of-school girls’ caregivers’ perceived insufficient support compared to 18% of in-school girls’ caregivers.</p> <p>17% of families reported that the type of assistance needed was establishing more schools</p>	

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Community	<p>Community intervention/mobilisation: Establishing learning-friendly environments for children and adults through building libraries, and implementing community literacy and other education initiatives</p> <p>Community mobilisation to support children's (particularly girls') education</p> <p>Private sector</p> <p>Peer/female mentors</p>	<p>29% reported that there was not enough support in their community for girls to go to school</p> <p>68% of households do not have members currently participating in Community Development Councils or school shuras; 9% of respondents claimed these committees or groups did not exist in their communities [hs]</p> <p>Perceptions of lack of community support may impact negatively on girls' school enrolment given that significantly more carers of out-of-school girls claimed not to know people who could help them when compared with carers of in-school girls</p>	
Governance	Capacity support system: Building government capacity at the district, province and national levels, and at teacher training centres.		
Learning	Formative assessment (literacy/numeracy)		
Materials	Other material support: , provision of teaching and learning resources	<p>91% were satisfied with textbooks [hs]</p> <p>97% has not received a bursary or scholarship [hs]</p> <p>The data suggests that those girls enrolled in school are receiving more support than non-enrolled girls. For instance, all girls who received a bursary or scholarship were currently enrolled in school and the large majority of those who received support in the form of school books, special classes or study groups, special tutoring and other</p>	

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
		forms of support were currently enrolled in school. Consequently, STAGES activities should ensure that educational support activities in intervention communities (e.g. building of libraries) are not restricted only to enrolled girls	
Safe Spaces	Physical infrastructure: establishing safe, respectful and violence-free environments	Knowledge about health from mini-health survey 85% for men and women in intervention group	
Teaching	Train/fund general teachers Train/fund local teachers Teacher training and professional development, particularly for young women		
Voice	Radio	In relation to targeting households with radio and mobile messaging about health and education, only a third of female carers wanted to receive mobile text messaging although there were high refusal rates due to no mobile phone ownership. However, significantly more out-of-school girl households reported having access to a TV, radio or both, and to a mobile phone, suggesting that radio, TV and mobile phones are good sources of education and health messaging to reach out-of-school girl households. Furthermore given that almost two thirds of sampled households had at least one mobile phone (even if mostly owned by male household members), mobile messaging could still be an effective means of reaching female carers given that recent research suggests that 80% of Afghan women	

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
		have some form of access to mobile phones (USAID 2013).	

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

The EM has rated the quantitative evidence as good. However, the qualitative evidence was rated as poor, as there was no qualitative evidence available.

Revisions to M&E

The evaluation design was revised to a pre- and post-test approach, due to a number of challenges accessing control government school communities, including difficulty obtaining governmental permission to collect data in control government schools. Furthermore, some enumerators conducting the first phase of data collection encountered hostile behaviour from community members of intervention communities in which education activities had been delayed or cancelled. This led to concerns about the security of enumerators working in communities in which interventions were not taking place

After the first phase of data collection, the project identified several methodological challenges and these should be addressed in the second phase of baseline data collection and/or in subsequent midline and endline testing. These include the following:

- The school survey instrument should be revised in accordance with gaps found in the output indicators, including the addition of some additional questioning to better capture data on active shuras and school student associations, and women's participation in school shuras.
- Translation and skipping errors identified in the first phase of baseline data collection must be corrected.
- An oversampling of CBE early communities in the first phase of data collection should be addressed in the second phase by purposefully sampling late starting communities in the second year of STAGES implementation.
- The community sampling from the first phase of the baseline should be analysed to identify those provinces where winter and security challenges impeded representative sampling, and clusters within these regions should be purposefully sampled to increase province-level representative data.
- The household survey, which is divided into male head of household, female carer and cohort girl sections, should be revised in order to collect more complete and accurate data that is currently missing or limited. This includes questioning about household income and contact information that should be transferred to the male head of household survey.
- At phase 2 of baseline, fieldwork procedures need to be established to mitigate some of the challenges specific to the Afghan context that can interfere with data collection and sampling techniques. These challenges include local ethnic and tribal conflicts and gate keeping from local traditional leaders, both which can interfere with random sampling.
- At midline and endline phases, fieldwork procedures must be implemented to increase the accuracy of cohort girl tracking and identification, giving the 'sharing' of household girls and differing names given to the same cohort girl by different household members.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The evaluation design was revised to a pre- and post-test approach, due to a number of challenges accessing control government school communities, including difficulty obtaining governmental permission to collect data in control government schools.

List of References

- Aga Khan Foundation (2012), Full Application Form for the Step Change Window - Ref # 5147, Kabul: Aga Khan Foundation.
- Eureka (2014), Draft STAGES Baseline report PHASE 1 19 05 2014 Revised JC v2
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC.
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.

Securing Access and Retention into Good Quality Transformative Education

Education Focus: Primary and Lower Secondary

Lead Organisation: ChildHope

Country: Ethiopia

GEC Funding: £2,313,518

Target Reach: 9,699 girls

Overview of Project

The project “Securing Access and Retention into Good Quality Transformative Education” operates in Amhara and Oromiya regions in Ethiopia. This project builds on the work and long-standing partnership of ChildHope UK and the Organisation for Child Transformation and Development (CHADET) in Ethiopia. These organisations challenge the injustices faced by some of the poorest and most marginalised children with a strong focus on the value of education as a tool for transformation, which affects not only the children’s lives but whole communities.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move to baseline data collection in September 2013. The external evaluator has designed the evaluation of the project as a quasi-experimental design. At baseline, quantitative data was collected using a household survey with girls and their primary care givers, a school survey, EGRA, EGMA and a community survey. Qualitative data was collecting using interviews with girls, their parents, government officials and teachers. It also conducted focus discussion groups with community representatives and girls.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project predominantly focuses on girls aged 6-19 years who are either not attending school or are unable to remain in school primarily due to early and forced marriage, unpaid or low paid domestic labour, uninformed migration, street-involvement and sexual exploitation. They come from families that have very limited livelihood opportunities and extremely low income and who have low levels of knowledge about the value of education, particularly girls’ education, and often choose not to educate their daughters.

Specifically, the project is seeking to target girls who are marginalised by early marriage, migration, street involvement and domestic labour. Given the social barriers that these girls face, the barriers to education are from a household, community, school and system level. From an educational perspective, the project targets marginalised girls that are either at risk of dropping out of or are out of school in rural areas.

At baseline, the project has found 224 out of school girls and 1726 in-school girls in their sample. The project reported on the number of marginalised girls from day labour, early marriage, risky migration and street involvement in each of its project areas using census data from the government and proportional calculations.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in ChildHope project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – ChildHope Ethiopia (5170)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5170	92%	-0.9	279	22%	-2.0	23

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – ChildHope Ethiopia (5170)

5170	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance			Retention			
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	363	86	89	82			90	88			96
< 6	31			19				79			
6 to 8	87		86	68		82	90	88			98
9 to 11	109		86	98		87	90	89			100
12 to 13	87		94	92		86	90	87			95
14 to 15	49		83	90		83	90	89			90
16 to 19	0		55				90				

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – ChildHope Ethiopia (5170)

5170	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit		wpm	wpm	wpm+	yr behind		total / 100	total / 100	total / 100
All			49	35	-3			77	97
< 6									
6 to 8		14	16	13	-1		23	29	39
9 to 11		49	46	34	-2		59	72	91
12 to 13		63	59	43	-5		74	90	122
14 to 15		54	62	55	-6		78	96	157
16 to 19			60					94	
OOS		19	27	-3	-2			48	13

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in ChildHope project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (98%) and 14-15 year olds (90%) is higher in ChildHope project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is fairly similar in ChildHope project areas (89%) compared to the average found across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is fairly similar to the average year-on-year retention rate found in ChildHope project areas (that is 100% among 9-11 year olds and 90% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is similar to the average found in ChildHope project areas (that is 34 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 55 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in ChildHope project areas are on average two

years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average six years behind.

- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly below the average found in ChildHope project areas (that is 91 for girls aged 9-11 and 157 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from ChildHope project areas showed enrolment rates above the SCW averages for 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls and attendance was also slightly higher than average (89%) among these age groups. Year-on-year retention among 9-11 year olds was shown to be 100% while it was slightly below SCW average among 14-15 year olds, suggesting that girls approaching the end of the eight year primary school cycle may be at an elevated risk of dropping out. While literacy scores were close to the SCW average, numeracy scores were substantially higher. To conclude, girls surveyed in ChildHope project areas appear to be relatively less marginalised in terms of their education than girls in a number of other SCW project areas.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Unfriendly, unsafe, unstimulating school environment
- Poorly resourced school environment
- Low teachers' motivation and skills
- Weak coordination between schools and education bureau/local community and child protection structures
- Inability of parents to meet additional education related costs for their children especially books, food and uniforms
- Families and communities have low value towards education

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)								
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative	
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty	
Teaching	Low teachers' motivation and skills	Report teachers do not treat them fairly	●							98%			
		Report teachers have increased in last year	●		74%	53%	64%						
		Lack of trained teachers	●										●●●
	Unstimulating school environment	Report increase in classrooms	●		57%	42%	50%						●●●
Violence	Unfriendly, unsafe school environment	Afraid of being in school		●						8%			
		Girl has seen violence against girls	NS	NS					64%	37%			
Costs	Inability of parents to meet additional education related costs for their children especially books, food and uniforms	Report not having the right uniform (can't afford it)	NS	NS						30%			●●●
		Payment was difficult to afford		●	47%	54%							●●●
		% reason girl did not attend school was because the family could not afford to send her		●	68%	32%							
Attitudes	Negative stereotypes against girls	% of fathers who believe girls should be in education at age 18		●	86%	86%							
	Stigma and discrimination	No evidence available											

Source: Baseline Report (2014), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline. After baseline, the project has not reported any changes to its interventions.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes Based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity			
Community	Engage men boys (mentor) Community intervention / mobilisation Engage religious in promotion	86% (C = 86%) of fathers believe girls should be in education at 18 29% (C = 29%) of fathers believe that sex of a child is important when making a decision about education More than half of the caregivers do not think that there is enough support to girls' education in their village.	
Governance	Train school governance in girls education best practices School inspectors Capacity support system		
Learning	Learning support	7% (C = 11%) of the girls obtained a scholastic or bursary support during the past school year	
Materials	Microfinance Family training business	46% (C=33%) report poor or very poor	
Safe Spaces	Facilities / WASH / hygiene education Engage public sector child protection Clubs (child / parent)	69% (C=70%) have received corporal punishment	
Teaching	Train /fund (general) teachers	98% of girls find that their teachers treat them fairly and respect their opinion Limited evidence on quality of teacher education 90% of respondents feel that teaching of maths and literacy is	

		satisfactory in school	
Voice	Radio		

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of baseline evidence

After reviewing the first version of the project's baseline report, the EM has reported that generally appropriate data has been collected. However, there is a doubt on the quality of the attendance data collected from school records and historical data. This concern is not discussed at all in the methods section. The project will need to complete its outcome table in order to provide sufficient baseline evidence for learning and attendance. The project has also been asked to triangulate its data to better explain baseline findings that may be conflicting.

There are, in places, significant differences between the intervention and control groups, which may affect the project's ability to measure additionality in a straightforward manner. The control group seems relatively better off compared with the intervention group, which is expected as ChildHope targeted the most disadvantaged areas with its support. These differences appear significant on a number of variables: wealth and asset ownership of the household, the perceived importance of schooling costs as a barrier to girls' education, educational levels of households. Control group girls also displayed higher enrolment, retention and learning at baseline than their intervention counterparts. This was to be expected, but will need to be taken into account in the analysis.

Revisions to M&E

The project has not listed any changes to its M&E.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

There are significant differences between the control and treatment groups. Specifically, the control group are better off. Otherwise, no challenges in project data collection have been reported.

List of References

- Organisation for Child Development and Transformation (2014), ChildHope UK GEC Project Baseline Survey Report, Addis Abba: Organisation for Child Development and Transformation.
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Increasing the Access and Quality of Basic Education for Marginalised Girls in Faryab

Education Focus: Primary

Lead Organisation: ACTED

Country: Afghanistan

GEC Funding: £44,790,61

Target Reach: 9,432 girls

Overview of the Project

The project “Increasing the Access and Quality of Basic Education for Marginalized Girls in Faryab” operates in Faryab province in Afghanistan. The project aims to construct primary schools and Youth Development Centres (YDCs) and hold village literacy courses in villages across the province. It will also hire professional female teachers for the YDCs, conduct teacher trainings and provide vocational training to increase female economic empowerment.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move onto baseline data collection in September 2013. The baseline was conducted from late October to mid-November 2013, with a second round conducted in March 2014. Samuel Hall conducted baseline data collection for the project using quantitative instruments—household survey, literacy/numeracy tests using ASER and a teachers questionnaire, and qualitative instruments—a literature review, key informant interviews FGDs and area observations.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

ACTED has not explicitly defined its target groups. According to the baseline report, almost all girls in Faryab can be considered marginalised and at risk of dropping out. The project notes that according to secondary data, across the province, the number of out-of-school girls is very close to that of in-school girls.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1 and Table 2 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in ACTED project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – ACTED Afghanistan (5224)

5224	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance			Retention			
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	400		47	77			88	89			98
< 6	22		1	9			90	90			100
6 to 8	117		59	63			88	89			95
9 to 11	131		82	92			89	89			98
12 to 13	68		80	87			89	89			100
14 to 15	62		58	85			88	87			100
16 to 19	0										

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – ACTED Afghanistan (5224)

5224	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	ASER			EGRA+		ASER			EGMA+
Unit	levels	levels	levels	wpm+	yr behind	levels	levels	levels	total / 100
All			1.9	24	-3			2.4	40
< 6	0.3					0.8			
6 to 8	0.9	1.0	1.2	8	-1	1.1	1.2	1.6	25
9 to 11	1.5	2.0	1.7	26	-3	2.0	2.4	2.2	44
12 to 13	2.1	2.6	2.3	29	-5	2.4	2.5	2.7	44
14 to 15	1.8		2.7	34	-7	2.3		3.2	47
16 to 19						2.3			
OOS	0.6	0.7	0.6	-10	-2	0.8		0.8	5

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in ACTED project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (92%) and 14-15 year olds (85%) is slightly higher in ACTED project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is similar in ACTED project areas (89%-87%) compared to the average found across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in ACTED project areas (that is 98% among 9-11 year olds and 100% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is above the average found in ACTED project areas (that is 26 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 34 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in ACTED project areas are on average three years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 were on average seven years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly

above the average found in ACTED project areas (that is 44 for girls aged 9-11 and 47 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from ACTED project areas showed enrolment rates slightly above the SCW averages for 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls and attendance was close to the SCW average. Year-on-year retention was found to be high, especially among 14-15 year olds (i.e. 100%). However, EM findings on learning outcomes in ACTED project areas suggest that there is little increase in literacy and virtually no increase in numeracy levels as girls' progress through the school system. This indicates that girls surveyed in ACTED project areas may not be marginalised in terms of being in school but face significant barriers to learning.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Lack of separate and high-quality female education facilities
- Lack of quality teaching
- Insecurity
- Household poverty

Table 3 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 3: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Teaching	Lack of quality teaching	Report training adequate (self-reported by teachers)	●								90%	
		Report high quality of teaching (self-reported)	●									●
		% of households satisfied with teaching	●		64%	70%						
Facilities	Lack of separate high quality female education facilities	Report school is within 10-30 minutes	NS	NS			60-70%					
		Female teachers	●								23%	
		Satisfied with facilities	●									●●●
Poverty	Household poverty	No evidence available										
Safety	Insecurity	Report feeling afraid	NS	NS				22%	19%			
		Consider road dangerous	NS	NS			22%					

Source: Baseline Report (2014), Full Application, (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline. The project did not make any recommendations to its project design based on its baseline report and baseline data collection findings. The external evaluator recommended that ACTED should make the learning process more student-oriented and practical, deliver and QA teacher trainings and consider whether it is able to target the most marginalised girls in rural Faryab where cultural attitudes against girls' education are most deeply ingrained.

Table 4: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build/Fund classes: Construction of 10 girls-only primary schools and 7 female Youth Development Centres.	The key message to be taken from the baseline survey is that both test and control samples respond positively to the idea of girls' education, while the current level of educational attainment is very low. 60-70% of households are satisfied with facilities at their girls' schools	
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation: Village literacy/numeracy courses through a low-input Community-Based Education approach, community mobilization and radio programming to promote girls' education.	75% of adults interviewed were uneducated and only 3% had completed higher education studies. The percentage of those people who agree or fully agree to having girls going to school is 98% Similarly, the vast majority of respondents (92%) said that education indeed helped people make better lives for themselves but a sizeable minority (almost 20%) also mentioned that it was not usual for people in their area to send girls to school. It is a positive sign to often see a majority of villagers seeing their daughters still in school by the age of 18, most notably in Khwaja Sabz Posh, Bilchiragh and Gurziwan. The number of those seeing them married at 18 is nevertheless quite high, and survey bias might	

		explain why it is not even higher.	
Governance			
Learning	Learning support: Vocational training through YDCs in order to increase female economic empowerment (BR p.10)	<p>Almost 50% of respondents without any education do not have a job and having some sort of schooling reduces the chances of being unemployed. However, the importance of manual labour in Faryab means that the vast majority of people surveyed (71%) do have a job, often with little or no education.</p> <p>Through interviews, it appears that teacher is virtually the only profession accessible to women in the various districts. Only a few areas mention the presence of tailoring and weaving for some women.</p>	
Materials			
Safe Spaces	Girls spaces:	<p>More than a fifth (22%) of adults consider the road to school for girls dangerous. The average duration of the journey to and from school is usually 10-15 or 20-30 minutes (approximately 30% of respondents each give these times). 22% of girls feel afraid at school at least some of the time. When fathers say 'insecurity', they often do not designate any tangible dangers other than the exposure of their girls to harassment. It is insecurity in a 'cultural' sense, not only an objective statement. This information can be gleaned by witnessing the unease on men's faces when explicitly enquiring about issues surrounding harassment.</p>	
Teaching	Train/fund (general) teachers: Hiring of professional female teachers and regular teacher	<p>23% of teachers in observed control schools were female. Teachers overwhelmingly stated that they felt they</p>	

	trainings.	<p>were reaching the students with their teaching (80%) and that they had received adequate training for teaching literacy, numeracy and sciences (90%). 36% of target households stated that girls miss school due to teacher absenteeism, and 81% of those stating this said teachers missed more than once a month.</p> <p>External evaluator finds that attention towards teacher training and monitoring is crucial as it will address dissatisfaction with quality of education identified in another study in Faryab. It must be remembered that it is in the interest of the teachers to appear qualified and competent. Information has to be triangulated with student focus group discussions that appear to include both those who think the quality of education is good and those who find the professors not qualified enough.</p>	
Voice	Radio: Radio programming to promote girls' education.	<p>'Influence' and 'positions of influence' are two complex concepts to measure. Furthermore, the only women that respondents in some cases thought had an 'influence' were teachers, but these could only influence their students.</p>	

Source: Baseline Report (2014)

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After reviewing the first version of the project's baseline report, the Evaluation Manager has reported that quantitative data is strong and generally well presented. It includes disaggregation by in-school versus out-of-school girls and Uzbek- or Tajik-speakers.

The project has raised caution around school administrative data on attendance and enrolment.

The Evaluation Manager noted the good incorporation of qualitative quotes throughout the report, but qualitative analysis overstates representativeness of the sample (e.g., 70% of teachers said x, when only 10 teachers /

community leaders were interviewed). The Evaluation Manager raised caution about certain self-reported questions, e.g. teacher effectiveness as reported by teachers.

Generally, there was strong evidence of similarity between control and intervention groups, though access especially to control groups may change at midline and endline due to the difficult security situation in Faryab.

Revisions to M&E

The external evaluator recommended revising the household questionnaire and ensuring methods for tracking cohorts were workable in the conservative context in Faryab. They also recommended revising selected logframe indicators to make them more measurable or context-appropriate.

Like other projects in Afghanistan, the project will be moving to a before and after evaluation design due to security concerns.

Challenges to Baseline Data Collection

The external evaluator reported difficulties in administering the baseline survey. Only one or two areas did not have test and control locations very near to each other. The test and control locations were quite similar but security issues meant that at times, in two nearby locations, only one was accessible, highlighting the fluidity of the threat of violence in Faryab. It was essential to remain as little as possible in a location because of potential intrusions and such an issue effectively arose in Almar where the team had to quickly leave an area that was not safe. Randomly selecting households was also difficult due to the importance of first meeting the village elder and explaining the work before finding people to survey.

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Improving Girls' Access through Transforming Education (IGATE)

Education Focus: Primary and lower secondary

Lead Organisation: World Vision UK

Country: Zimbabwe

GEC Funding: £11,940,168

Target Reach: 40,481 girls

Overview of Project

The Improving Girls' Access through Transforming Education project (IGATE) operates in in the Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South and Midlands Provinces of Zimbabwe. It seeks to enhance household economic capacity to support girls in school, transform attitudes towards girls' education and strengthening family and community support systems for girls to stay in school. It also aims to increase girls' confidence, self-esteem and capacity to choose to stay in school, and to analyse issues impacting their retention and performance in school, empowering them to address these and perform better.

Baseline Research Activity

The project received approval to move onto baseline data collection in May 2013. The external evaluation, INTRAC, has designed the evaluation as a randomised control trial. Baseline data collection took place in two phases. The first round was in September and October 2013. The second phase was conducted in March 2014. Quantitative data was collected using a household survey, girls' survey, Youth Healthy Behaviour surveys, Gender Equity Index and Youth Leadership Index surveys, teachers' survey, head teachers' survey, EGRA and EGMA. Qualitative data was collected using focus group discussions with out of school girls and boy, and key informant interviews with school heads and teachers. Classroom observations were also planned, but were not permitted due to the Ministry of Education policy and directives.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

In its full application, the project did not give a specific definition of marginalisation; instead it identified target areas and target schools. It targeted the three provinces with the highest rate of school-age children not attending school. These three provinces also rank among those with the lowest net enrolment ratios. The project used baseline data collection as an opportunity to define the marginalised girls in its target communities.

Based on baseline data collection, the project defined marginalised girls using the following filters:

- Overage by a year
- Out of school
- Households where girls under 16 migrated during the previous year
- Any form of disability
- Family needs a lot more
- Girls who feel that a lot of things about school are not good
- Under 90% attendance
- Girls for whom it takes them over 30 minutes to walk to school

Specifically, based on its' baseline data collection, the project has explained that its target groups are:

- 5-7 year olds who start school late;

- 9 year olds who show a significant drop in attendance;
- overage girls and boys
- children aged 12-14; and
- children in Grade 7, who are most at-risk of dropping out on transition to secondary school.

In their baseline report, the project specified that it needs to conduct more research to understand how orphans are an at-risk group. Also, the project reported that it would like to focus on girls that are at-risk of migration. The project states that 10% of households reported migration of a girl aged <16 and 6% reported migration of a boy aged <16. In the baseline report, it notes that if they included children who have migrated and are reportedly out-of-school, this would increase the percentage of out-of-school girls to around 12-13% and boys to 14%, for the sampled households.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in World Vision project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – World Vision Zimbabwe (5243)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5243	93%	-0.6	266	46%	-1.1	111

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – World Vision Zimbabwe (5243)

5243	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance			Retention			
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	414		94	93			88	88			96
< 6	37	84	80	73	88		88	88			100
6 to 8	105	96	95	99	91		88	88			100
9 to 11	126	99	98	98	93		88	90			98
12 to 13	75	95	95	92	91		88	89			92
14 to 15	71	88	87	86	90		89	85			87
16 to 19	0										

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – World Vision Zimbabwe (5243)

5243	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	EGRA			EGRA+		EGMA			EGMA+
Unit	wpm	wpm	wpm	wpm+	yr behind	total / 100	total / 100	total / 100	total / 100
All			34	43	-3			30	76
< 6	1		1	-14	0	8		3	4
6 to 8	8	12	9	5	-2	21	30	23	31
9 to 11	39	50	39	54	-2	51	62	51	90
12 to 13	62	76	61	64	-4	65	72	41	107
14 to 15	96		95	87	-5	77	75	35	124
16 to 19									
OOS				14	-4			2	45

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in World Vision project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (98%) and 14-15 year olds (86%) is higher in World Vision project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 year olds, attendance is slightly higher in World Vision project areas (90%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is higher than the average year-on-year retention rate found in World Vision project areas among 14-15 year olds (87%).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is markedly below the average found in World Vision project areas (that is 54 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 87 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in World Vision project areas are on average two years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average five years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is markedly below the average found in World Vision project areas (that is 90 for girls aged 9-11 and 124 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from World Vision project areas showed enrolment rates above the SCW average among 9-11 and 14-15 year olds. While retention matched the SCW average for the younger girls, it was slightly below average among 14-15 year olds. In terms of learning outcomes, girls surveyed in World Vision project areas achieved considerably higher literacy and numeracy scores than the SCW average.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Availability of rural schools
- Long distances to school
- Not a girl friendly environment
- Poor quality teaching
- Early pregnancy
- Early marriage
- Negative societal attitude towards girls education
- Poverty

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Teaching	Poor quality teaching	No evidence available										
Supply	Long distances to school	Minutes to primary school	●	●						36 minutes		●●●
		Minutes to secondary school	●	●						69 minutes		●●●
	Availability of rural schools	No evidence available										
Facilities	Not a girl friendly environment	OOS report things at school are not good	●	●						19%		
Poverty	Poverty	Report can't meet basic needs without charity	●	●			51%					●●●
	Costs	Difficult to afford school fees		●			85%					
Attitudes	Negative societal attitude towards girls' education	Report gender is not important when deciding about education		●			82%					
Personal	Early marriage	OOS report being married or pregnant								0.60%		●●● (Reason for dropping out)
	Early pregnancy	Report mother in HH aged less than 20 years					6%			0.30%		●●● (Reason for dropping out)

Source: Full Project Application (2012) and Baseline Report (2014)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table captures the interventions planned by the project prior to baseline data collection, along with evidence collected by the project at baseline that supports or contradicts the rationale for their interventions and any changes made to interventions after baseline.

IGATE has made note in its baseline report that it will take care to make sure that the project targets marginalised boys as well as girls, wherever possible, and that improvements in attendance and learning outcomes for girls are not at the expense of those for boys. Project monitoring and the mid-term report will need to explicitly take this into account

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes Based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity			
Community	Champions/community facilitators Community intervention/mobilisation	48% of households said that there was not enough community support	
Governance	School improvement/schedule development plans	11% of households reported currently being involved in School Development Committees	
Learning			
Materials	Family training business	27% of households (n=1768) has been engaged in a business enterprise or IGA other than farming in the past 9 months 26% of households participated in Internal Savings/Loans programmes 79% households have difficulty accessing loans	
Safe Spaces	Facilities/WASH/Hygiene education	3% of households overall suggested creating safe spaces or facilities for girls at school (Limited understand of gender barriers) 24% girls reported negative aspects of school, though not necessarily specific to abuse, violence, unequal treatment or poor sanitation	
Teaching			

Voice	Student representative/feedback	NR	
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Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

After reviewing the baseline report, the EM has reported that a high quality of evidence appears to have been collected. However, some of the logframe indicators do not have baseline evidence against them. The data has been well analysed and presented. The control and the treatment groups are well matched.

Revisions to M&E

The project reports that 105 schools were dropped from the IGATE target areas due to an overlap with Camfed GEC project areas, which resulted in 16 sample points being lost from the original sample. A second baseline was to be conducted in Chivi and Insiza districts to cover additional schools which were subsequently added to the IGATE project, to compensate the loss of the 105 schools, and it is anticipated that the results of the second baseline will be integrated with the findings from World Vision's first round of data collection and presented in a new revised baseline report. It will be difficult for IGATE to assess significant change against some project indicators (e.g. reduction in violence in schools, change in attitudes towards girls' education) as baseline data was not collected on these issues. The external evaluators have recommended that the IGATE consortium review all indicators and targets. It was recommended that the project make changes in both its logframe (indicators and targets) and M&E plan (addressing gaps in data from the baseline) for midline.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The external evaluator reported that a number of factors delayed the start up and subsequent implementation of baseline data collection. A key reason for the delays was the run up to the Presidential elections in Zimbabwe, which took place on 31st July, 2013. Other research challenges included:

- Delays in obtaining permission for the baseline from national, provincial and local authorities in Zimbabwe;
- Halt in field work while revisions to the baseline budget were being agreed;
- Halt in field work in the pre-, during and post-election period;
- Re-sampling for six sampling points once the sixteen sampling points that overlapped with CAMFED schools were dropped; and
- Challenges with data collection instruments include lengthy questionnaires (2 hours for the HH and 40-50minutes for the girls' survey, which resulted in respondent fatigue and inability to concentrate for younger girls (which made it difficult for them to complete the learning assessment)).

The external evaluators reported difficulties in reaching 'out-of-school' girls, even for focus group discussions, and more work is needed to understand whether there is indeed a larger 'invisible' minority out of school and if so, where and how they can be reached

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Wasichana Wote Wasome (WWW- Let All Girls Read)

Education Focus: Primary

Lead Organisation: CfBT Education Trust

Country: Kenya

GEC Funding: £13,510,921

Target Reach: 59,724 girls

Overview of Project

The project “Wasichana Wote Wasome” (WWW – ‘Let All Girls Read’) operates in Kenya. The project will work in primary schools and the communities they serve in two contexts: Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASALs) and urban slums. The project will drive changes at four different levels: the community, the home, the school and the girl herself. The project will use a holistic, integrated approach which combines interventions across the four dimensions in order to overcome the complex barriers to girls’ education in these two environments.

Baseline Research Activity

The external evaluator, Women Educational Researchers of Kenya, designed the evaluation as a quasi-experimental design. Baseline data was initially collected in July 2013. However, the project did not meet its sample size, so further data was collected in January 2014. Quantitative data was collected using a household questionnaire, a girl questionnaire and a school questionnaire. An adapted version of UWEZO was used for learning assessment. For girls who had attained the maximum score on UWEZO, the project used a GEC extension test to overcome ceiling effects. Qualitative data was collected using classroom observations, teacher interviews and community leader interviews.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets two geographical areas which have lagged behind with respect to girls’ education: urban slums and ASALs. Within these marginalised populations, the project will support girls who are most marginalised: teenage mothers, girls with disabilities, girls who are carers and girls who are engaged or already married.

The project found that about 11% of their sample was out of school girls. During interviews, teachers and community leaders mentioned that the following girls were unlikely to enrol and attend school: girls with disabilities, girls who are HIV positive, girls who are breadwinners for their families and nomadic girls. Also mentioned were girls from specific ethnic groups such as Pokomo (Tana River), Maasai (Samburu), Giriama (Kilifi) and the Wardei and in Tana River.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in CfBT project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – CfBT Kenya (5252)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5252	80%	-1.1	357	11%	-2.9	54

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – CfBT Kenya (5252)

5252	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance				Retention		
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	481	90	90	93	84		84	85			97
< 6	67		80	91			82	82			97
6 to 8	168		89	90		81	86	87			100
9 to 11	124		95	97		84	85	84			98
12 to 13	56		94	98			83	86			100
14 to 15	53		90	87			83	86			83
16 to 19	0						86				

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – CfBT Kenya (5252)

5252	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	UWEZO			EGRA+		UWEZO			EGMA+
Unit	levels	levels	levels	wpm+	yr behind	levels	levels	levels	total / 100
All			3.9	39	-2			5.1	66
< 6			2.3	-6	0			2.5	17
6 to 8	2.0	2.2	3.1	22	-1	4.3	4.4	4.2	42
9 to 11	3.5	4.1	4.0	53	-2	5.3	5.5	5.5	85
12 to 13			4.5	74	-3			5.7	108
14 to 15			4.6	73	-6			5.8	107
16 to 19									
OOS	0.2	0.6	1.5	-11	-3	0.4		3.4	27

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in CfBT project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (97%) and 14-15 year olds (87%) is higher in CfBT project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in CfBT project areas (84%-86%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is slightly above the average year-on-year retention rate found in CfBT project areas (that is 98% among 9-11 year olds and 83% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is below the average found in CfBT project areas (that is 53 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 73 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in CfBT project areas are on average two years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average six years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is below the average found in CfBT project areas (that is 85 for girls aged 9-11 and 107 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from CfBT project areas showed enrolment rates above the SCW averages for 9-11 and 14-15 year old girls. Retention and attendance among 14-15 year olds were found to be low in comparison to all SCW project areas. Nevertheless, girls of both age groups achieved higher literacy and numeracy scores than the SCW average.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Lack of school materials
- Teachers lack knowledge on how to teach early grade math and literacy
- Teachers treat boys and girls differently in school
- Poor school infrastructure
- Limited ongoing support for girls
- Girls have low self-esteem, confidence and aspirations
- Girls' health issues are not adequately taken care of
- Negative attitudes towards girls' education
- Community does not support girls' education
- Poverty (can't afford school)
- Young mothers
- Households not aware of community systems to support girls with disabilities
- Households are not aware of how keep children healthy
- Households are not aware of the need to get children into school at an early age

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)								
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative	
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty	
Teaching	Teachers treat boys and girls differently in school	% of girls/% of boys in Grade 2	NS	NS							50%/50%		
		% of girls/% of boys in Grade 5	NS	NS							53.3%/46.7%		
		Share of interaction with teacher %girls/%boys (Grade 2)	NS	NS								53.3%/46.7%	
		Share of interaction with teacher %girls/%boys (Grade 5)	NS	NS								48.8%/51.2%	
		Teachers report training on gender responsive teaching	●									28%	
	Teachers lack knowledge on how to teach early grade math and literacy	Teachers report training on math	●									60%	
		Teachers report training on reading/writing	●									41%	
Facilities	Lack of school materials	% report providing back to school kits would help girls attend school		●			16%						

ANNEX D13 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5252 – CFBT

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
	Poor school infrastructure	% of girls listing bad things with school	NS	NS						11%		List: school infrastructure, lack of classrooms, lack of basic school materials, violence
Attitudes	Negative attitudes towards girls' education	Report gender matters when deciding on girls' education		●			23% Urban Slums 36% ASAL					
	Community does not support girls' education	Community leaders report nothing is being done to help girls access school		●							37%	
	Limited ongoing support for girls	Teachers report there is no support to girls from marginalised communities	●	●							59%	
	Households are not aware of the need to get children into school at an early age	No evidence available										
Pregnancy	Young mothers	Number of girls who dropped out due to pregnancy		●							5	
Disability	Households not aware of community systems to support girls with disabilities	No evidence available										

ANNEX D13 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5252 – CFBT

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Health	Households are not aware of how to keep children healthy	Report vaccinated										Majority of girls vaccinated
Costs	Poverty (can't afford school)	% report providing cash support would help make girls enrol		●			69%					
		% who had a scholarship		●			2%					

Source: Baseline Report (2014), Full Application (2012)

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The project reports that the activities proposed (other than cash transfers) will be implemented in all eight counties without differentiation of the different community backgrounds (ASALs and urban slums). Based on baseline findings, the external evaluator recommends that project target groups should be different for urban and ASAL areas.

The following table captures the interventions stated prior to baseline data collection along with evidence that supports or contradicts the rationale for the interventions, and any changes made to interventions after baseline.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access	Support transition primary-secondary	NR	
Capacity			
Community	Health visitor persuasion Integrate religious teaching into formal education Peer/female mentors	37% of community leaders said nothing was being done in community 57% of community members agree vulnerable girls can attend school	
Governance	Train school govern SMC girls education best practices Monitoring & intervention School improvement / school development plans	30% of teachers have undergone gender responsive training 98% of girls expressed positive attitude towards school	
Learning			
Materials	Stipends funding Other material support Kits/materials Deworming and vitamin	94% (C = 95%) usually share a textbook 2% have scholarships/bursaries 43% (C=41%) do not have a source of drinking water	Recommended: Cash transfers should be included for ASALS too Include intervention on water and sanitation
Safe Spaces	Girl/boy friendly school Clubs for child/parents	60% had clubs (urban slums) 55% had clubs (ASALS)—clubs did not cover CfBT material 72% of schools had separate toilets	
Teaching	Support psychological and health training	NR	

Voice			
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Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

After reviewing the project's baseline report, the Evaluation Manager has rated the quantitative and qualitative evidence as good. The project has collected appropriate evidence, data is well analysed and it is well-presented. The Evaluation Manager also reported that the project's control and treatment areas are well-matched.

Challenges to Project Baseline Data Collection

The project reports that it was necessary to change the sampling approach in urban slums. The approach of linking a school to an enumeration area (EA) based on Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) worked well in the ASALs. However, in the urban slums, there was a weak link between the EA and the schools the children attended. Urban slum schools had very wide geographical catchment areas. Most of the girls in urban EAs were not attending sampled targeted schools, which meant that a different approach was needed in selecting the sample of girls in the urban slums. As discussed and agreed with PwC, the EAs in the urban slums were therefore identified based on triangulated information from the head teachers and other key informants (such as the community leaders). Once the EA was identified through these individuals, the sampling process remained the same. Consequently, the collection of baseline data in the urban slums was partly delayed. As a result, baseline data for the ASALs and urban slums was collected at different periods.

The existing EMIS data had gaps since it was not regularly updated by schools. This was mitigated by using headcounts for Grades 2 and 5 and use of data collected at household level. The baseline team also encountered challenges with lack of co-operation and interest by some key respondents. For instance, respondents in the urban slums were suspicious and not willing to be interviewed or they had high expectations and wanted the enumerators to immediately provide them with financial support to meet direct needs. Insecurity in ASALs due to cattle rustling also caused significant challenges in logistics both in terms of costs and long journeys to avoid particular hot spots. Some areas in the urban slums were also very insecure and the team working there had to hire locals to provide security. The baseline survey did not meet the target of identifying the required cohort of girls for tracking. Consequently, there was a need to increase the sample size through an additional boost sample. This additional boost data was collected in January, 2014. Hence, data collection spread over a long period of time between July, 2013 and January, 2014.

List of References

- CfBT Education Trust (2012), Full Application Form for the Step Change Window- Ref # 5252, London: CfBT Education Trust.
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Educate Girls, End Poverty

Education Focus: Upper and lower primary, secondary

Lead Organisation: Relief International

Country: Somalia

GEC Funding: £9,925,005

Target Reach: 24,255 girls

Overview of Project

The project “Educate Girls, End Poverty” operates in Somaliland, Puntland and South Central zones of Somalia. Its purpose is to enrol more girls in school, inspire them to stay in school, and make sure they graduate school with the knowledge that enables them to break the cycle of poverty. The project will work within primary, secondary, vocational, and non-traditional schools, and family life education centres. Its main interventions are as follows: Civil works (classrooms, water/latrines), school supplies (textbooks, learning materials, ICT), teacher and CEC trainings, incentives for personnel (mentors, teachers), scholarships, awareness and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC), school feeding, deworming, school awards and solar lamps to girls in upper primary/ secondary.

Baseline Research Activity

The project received approval to move onto baseline data collection in November 2013. The external evaluator for this project is Social Impact. Baseline data was collected between January and February 2014. The project used a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection: household surveys including a school-age girl module, Uwezo learning assessments for primary and secondary level, attendance spot checks, school visit surveys, classroom observations, focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets girls who are aged 6 to 19, who hail from urban poor, rural, and internally displaced (IDP) populations. Within these populations, the project will pay special attention to vulnerable, orphaned, and disabled girls. Vulnerable is defined as survivors of rape, sexual assault, and/or conflict, and young wives and mothers.

The project reports observations with 54 girls from IDP, 207 urban girls and 127 rural girls.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in Relief International project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project’s baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – Relief International Somalia (5253)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5253	53%	-2.1	303	13%	-2.5	62

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – Relief International Somalia (5253)

5253	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance			Retention			
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	404			53			86	86			94
< 6	33			21				79			
6 to 8	128	41		38				84			86
9 to 11	88	66		69				87			100
12 to 13	66	67		68				87			100
14 to 15	58	67		59				85			90
16 to 19	0										

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – Relief International Somalia (5253)

5253	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	UWEZO			EGRA+		UWEZO			EGMA+
Unit	total / 100	total / 100		wpm+	yr behind	total / 100	total / 100		total / 100
All				42	-3				75
< 6									
6 to 8	62	62		16	-1	48	48		37
9 to 11	91	91		36	-3	80	79		60
12 to 13				56	-5				97
14 to 15				83	-5				141
16 to 19									
OOS	13	13		3	-4	11			21

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in Relief International project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (69%) and 14-15 year olds (59%) is markedly lower in Relief International project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 and 14-15 year olds, attendance is slightly lower in Relief International project areas (87%-85%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is roughly similar to the average year-on-year retention rate found in Relief International project areas (that is 100% among 9-11 year olds and 90% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is below the average found in Relief International project areas (that is 36 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 83 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in Relief International project areas are on average three years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average five years behind.

- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is slightly above the average found in Relief International project areas for girls aged 9-11 (60) and markedly below the average found in Relief International project areas for girls aged 14-15 (141).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from Relief International project areas showed enrolment rates that were substantially lower than on SCW average. Retention and attendance among 14-15 year olds were found to be relatively low, in comparison with all SCW project areas. However, attendance is close to the SCW average which suggests that girls do attend school once they are enrolled. In addition, EM findings on learning outcomes suggest that girls in Relief International project areas achieve relatively high literacy and numeracy levels (in SCW comparison) once they are in school.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Parents do not support girls' education
- Pregnancy
- Marriage
- Cannot afford basic needs
- Taking care of livestock
- Under resourced schools (Overcrowded, lack of chairs/desks, no teaching aids)
- No access to schools in rural areas
- Poor quality of schools
- Shortage of qualified teachers
- Lack of female teachers
- Sexual harassment
- Physical violence
- Unsafe journey to school
- Corporal punishment
- Cost of school

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project's baseline data collection. Based on the project's baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls' learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls' survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Attitudes	Parents do not support girls' education	People who think there is enough local support for girls to succeed in school	●	●	45%	61%						●●●
Personal	Pregnancy	Report pregnancy		●							0% Somaliland 1% Puntland 1% South Central	
	Marriage	Report preferring education, but need money		●								●●●
		% reporting it as a reason for dropout		●					1% Somaliland 0% Puntland 0% South Central			
Poverty	Cannot afford basic needs	Cannot afford basic needs	●	●	51%	49%						
	Taking care of livestock	Girls have to do housework because they can't afford servant		●								●●●

ANNEX D13 - PROJECT PROFILE – 5253 – RELIEF INTERNATIONAL

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Facilities	Under resourced schools (Overcrowded, lack of chairs/desks, no teaching aids)	Report need for improved toilets	NS	NS			25%					
		Report need for improved textbooks	●				23%					
Supply	No access to schools in rural areas	Report no access to schools		●						3%		
	Poor quality of schools	Report insufficient latrines or lack of water	NS	NS				40%	46%			
	Shortage of qualified teachers	Report teaching needs to be improved	●				10%					
		Schools with gender sensitivity training	●								61%	
	Lack of female teachers	No evidence available										
Violence	Sexual harassment	No evidence available										
	Physical violence	Claim minimal conflict (not cited as barrier)	NS	NS								●
	Unsafe journey to school	No evidence available										
Teaching	Corporal punishment	Claim minimal conflict (not cited as barrier)	NS	NS								●

ANNEX D13 - PROJECT PROFILE – 5253 – RELIEF INTERNATIONAL

Description		Barrier			Source of evidence (project)							
Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Cost	Cost of school	Family could not afford school as a reason for girl dropping out		●			41% Somaliland 74% Puntland 86% South Central					
		Report that it's difficult to pay school costs		●			36% Somaliland 65% Puntland 64% South Central					

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table lists the interventions that the project had originally planned in its full application.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build/fund schools	40% believe that there are insufficient latrines or lack of water in school Toilets shared by an average of 142 girls (if toilets are available)	The project will emphasise provision of latrines in Puntland and in Somaliland, the project will emphasise provision of water supplies for the schools. The project will address the universal lack of sanitary it's across all zones
Community	Community intervention: Behaviour Change Campaign- Education Before Marriage campaigns; video exchanges Mobilisation	Community opinions are positive about girls' education	In recognition of these results the approach of the behavior change campaign will be adjusted accordingly. The campaign will need to be particularly nuanced to help tackle the cultural barriers deterring girls from excelling in school. For example, emphasising the message that it is not enough to not be against girls going to school, communities and families need to actively encourage and support the girls to go to school. In order for them to excel there needs to be changes in the norms relating to their roles and responsibilities in the household and significantly, the age of marriage. Early marriage is a particularly controversial topic to raise in Somalia and it needs to be done sensitively and even indirectly. For example, the team are considering an approach that focuses on educating communities on the health benefits of marrying at a later age, as opposed to simply advocating that child marriage is by definition, wrong.
Governance	Capacity support system: MOE ESSP and Gender Policy Framework implementation; capacity-building (human resources, materials, skills); advocacy of MOE to national	133 students per teacher ratio Only 45% think there is enough local support for girls to succeed in school	

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
	<p>government; project ownership</p> <p>School improvement and schedule development plans: mobile libraries and appropriate technology labs; flexible academic calendar; Qoranic teacher integration with formal primary schools</p>		
Learning	<p>Learning support: Mentors; tutors for home-based learning; menstrual hygiene management</p> <p>Classes</p>	<p>If a girl misses school due to menstruation, she can access extra lessons</p>	
Materials	<p>Stipends funding: Scholarships; conditional grants</p> <p>Family training business</p> <p>Kits / materials</p> <p>Deworming & vitamin: deworming and school meals</p>	<p>Can't afford school (41%-Somaliland, 74% Puntland, 86% in South Central)</p> <p>23% of parents want to see improved textbooks</p> <p>25% wanted to see improved toilets</p> <p>Majority of schools had feeding programs, but only about 45% provided food every day</p> <p>None of the respondents mentioned intestinal worm infection as a cause of illness, though the qualitative instruments did not prompt this topic specifically</p>	
Safe Spaces	Clubs (Child/parent)	23% of girls recognise the benefit of girl-friendly extracurricular activities	
Teaching	<p>Train/fund (general) teachers: recruitment and training of rural teachers;</p> <p>Support psych/health training</p>	<p>12-13% of girls want to see improvement in teaching</p> <p>5% of teachers demonstrated knowledge of girl centred approach to learning</p>	<p>The percentage of teachers demonstrating knowledge of girl-centered approaches to learning was extremely low. The program will therefore pay extra attention to this element of the teacher training and follow-up to ensure that the learning is implemented by the trained teachers.</p>
Voice	Radio		

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

The EM rated the quality of qualitative and quantitative evidence as good. Specifically, the EM noted the strong presentation of classroom observations and methodology of girl-sensitive teaching methods.

Revisions to M&E

Since the Monitoring and Evaluation framework was designed and the data collection took place, there has been a decision between the Fund Manager, DFID and the project consortium, to cease the use of control groups in the evaluation methodology going forwards. This is in recognition of the security risks posed by the approach that incorporates use of control schools. The project results will continue to be comprehensively evaluated at midline and endline.

It will be possible to measure progress against the output and outcome targets as planned and therefore the indicators themselves will not need redesigning in light of the absence of control groups. It has been agreed between RI and the Fund Manager that any further changes to the monitoring and evaluation approach on account of the absence of control schools can be discussed further and any additional changes will be shared in writing.

The project reports minor improvements to the instruments and protocol are as follows:

- The household survey may be shortened to reduce survey fatigue in the respondents, and the school survey protocol can build on lessons learned in the baseline to use a more informed approach to browsing low quality school records.
- Efforts to improve school record keeping should address the gap between apparently high quality classroom records and low quality school-wide records.
- In upper secondary schools, the mid and endline evaluators may investigate secondary students beyond measuring their test scores. Building a more comprehensive profile of those that succeeded in acquiring an education may provide programmatic insights on how best to encourage girls at the lower grade levels.
- Key phrases such as “local support” (output 1.1); “knowledge of girl-centered approaches” (output 2.4) “gender responsive education” (output 3.1) may be elaborated with specific definitions or criteria.
- Output 2.3 may also benefit by discerning “recognising benefits of” vs “benefiting from” in order to make measurement more straightforward. Indicators that require individual level attendance records based on school-records may be better reported through primary data, perhaps by modifying the headcount/unannounced attendance spot check to speak to these. As mentioned above, school-based record keeping was found to be an unreliable source for many schools.

Programmatically, the project reports that there is more of a problem on the supply side barriers than the demand side barriers. As a result the program will look to shift emphasis to focus increasingly on addressing the supply side barriers, whilst still acknowledging that the demand side barriers can't be neglected. Consequently, while all the activities previously planned remain relevant and therefore will still take place, the balance will weigh more heavily on the activities addressing the demand side barriers than was previously planned.

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The project reported the following challenges:

- One of the evaluation's limitations will be the non-random selection of intervention groups, which were selected purposefully by the three respective Ministries of Education.
- The Uwezo-adapted learning assessment also presents a limitation to the study. With a “Do no harm” principle in mind, enumerators were instructed to discontinue any learning assessment where the girl could not answer a single question in the first section. While the sections are generally harder as the test goes on, they also cover different material, which presents the possibility that some students with zero scores are actually capable of scoring higher, given the opportunity.
- School-based enrolment and attendance records were found to be incomplete and on occasion provoked scepticism from the evaluation team. Of the few schools reporting their prior year's attendance, for example, nearly all of them had perfect or near perfect attendance.

- The survey length, particularly the household and school visit surveys, was a challenge as many respondents complained of fatigue during the second half of the interview. Enumerators were instructed to make arrangements to finish the interview later the same day in cases where the respondent needed to discontinue the survey.
- Since the Monitoring and Evaluation framework was designed and the data collection took place, there has been a decision between the Fund Manager, DFID and EGEP consortium, to cease the use of control groups in the evaluation methodology going forwards. This is in recognition of the security risks posed by the approach that incorporates use of control schools. The absence of control groups will make it impossible to robustly monitor differences between the areas of the project intervention and other areas. However, the project results will continue to be comprehensively evaluated at midline and endline.

List of References

- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC
- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.
- Relief International (2012), Full Application for the Innovation Window – Ref # 5253, London: Relief International.
- Social Impact (2014), EGEP Relief International Baseline Report, Arlington: Social Impact

Somali Girls Education Promotion Project (SOMGEP)

Education Focus: Upper and lower primary, lower secondary

Lead Organisation: CARE

Country: Somalia

GEC Funding: £11,471,268

Target Reach: 16,802 girls

Overview of Project

The project “Somali Girls Education Promotion Project” operates in Somalia. It is an innovative project aimed at increasing access to education for some of Somalia’s most educationally disadvantaged children: rural girls who are either sedentary or nomadic.

Baseline Research Activity

The project was approved to move onto baseline data collection in September 2013. The external evaluator for this project is Social Impact. Data collection took place in two phases: the first in December 2013 and the second in February 2014. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were used at baseline: household survey including a girl interview, school visit instrument, head count tool, teacher survey, classroom observation tool, adapted UWEZO test for reading and math, secondary school reading and math assessment, and interviews with parents, Community Education Committee members, teachers and education officials.

Definition and Identification of Target Groups

The project targets girls from poor, vulnerable and marginalised households in rural areas of Togdheer, Sool, Sanaag, Mudug and Galmudug regions. If the security situation in South Central improves Lower Juba may be added to the selected sites. Most of the locations are very remote rural locations that have been marginalised and where access for girls to education is particularly challenging.

After baseline data collection, the project has refined its definition of marginalised girls to the following:

“Girl”-level factors:

- Is out of school;
- Aged 5-7;
- Missed months or years of school;
- Missed one or more days during the past two weeks;
- Is afraid of going to school; and
- Is not comfortable using latrines at school

“Household”-level factors:

- Illiterate caregiver/ head of household;
- Household is unable to meet basic needs without charity;
- Caregiver indicated that there is not enough support for girls’ education or that girls should not be in school;
- Caregiver believes that the girl is better off if married or working, not in education;
- Pastoralist/ unemployed head of household;
- Family not living in the area during the past year;

- Household obtains water from a river, lake or pond; and
- Household does not have a toilet/ open toilet.

The project reported that an analysis of the number of girls affected by two or more of the factors above indicated that 99% of the girls identified in the household cohort can be considered as 'marginalised'. At baseline, the project identified 1,103 out of school girls.

Findings on Educational Outcomes at Baseline

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show baseline evidence on the outcome levels of girls in CARE project areas and indicate the baseline level of educational marginalisation. They draw on evidence provided by the project's baseline report; PBR sheet; the reanalysis of project data; and the analysis of EM household survey data. Findings are disaggregated by age (for girls who are in school) and presented separately for out of school girls (OOS) where data was available.

Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates and Average Grade Behind in Years – CARE Somalia (5274)

	Primary			Secondary		
	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size	Net Enrolment Rate	Grade Behind	Sample Size
5274	48%	-2.3	287	5%	-4.4	85

Table 2: Baseline Outcomes (being in school) – CARE Somalia (5274)

5274	Sample	Enrolment			Attendance			Retention			
	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Unit	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	417	53	50	50				88			88
< 6	36		16	11				77			
6 to 8	121	40	43	32				83			88
9 to 11	83	62	67	58				90			100
12 to 13	63	69	71	76				89			73
14 to 15	80	61	66	71				88			100
16 to 19	0		16								

Table 3: Baseline Outcomes (learning) – CARE Somalia (5274)

5274	Literacy					Numeracy			
	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)	EM data (HHS)	Baseline Report	Outcome Spread.	Reanalysis	EM data (HHS)
Test	UWEZO			EGRA+		UWEZO			EGMA+
Unit	levels			wpm+	yr behind	levels			total / 100
All	2.0		2.0	44	-4			2.8	73
< 6	0.1		0.1			0.5		0.5	
6 to 8	0.6		0.6	24	-1	1.0		1.1	41
9 to 11	2.0		1.9	38	-3	3.0		3.0	62
12 to 13	2.6		2.6	55	-5	3.3		3.3	82
14 to 15	2.5		2.6	58	-7	3.5		3.6	102
16 to 19									
OOS	0.3			2	-3	0.6			22

The following are our key findings on the baseline levels of educational marginalisation in CARE project areas, based on the quantitative analysis of EM and project data:

- **Enrolment:** Analysis of EM data shows that enrolment is 87% on average among 9-11 year olds and 80% among the 14-15 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas. Enrolment among the 9-11 (58%) and 14-15 year olds (71%) is markedly lower in CARE project areas than across the SCW.
- **Attendance:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average attendance rate of 88% among the 9-11 year olds across all 15 SCW project areas, with very little variation across the 9-11 and 14-15 age groups. Among the 9-11 year olds, attendance is slightly higher in CARE project areas (90%) than on average across SCW project areas.
- **Retention:** Based on the analysis of EM data we found an average year-on-year retention rate of 98% among the 9-11 year olds and of 94% among the 14-15 year olds across all SCW projects. It is lower than the average year-on-year retention rate found in CARE project areas (that is 100% among 9-11 year olds and 100% among 14-15 year olds).
- **Literacy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average literacy score of 42. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGRA score of 28 wpm while girls aged 14-15 scored on average 55 wpm. This is slightly below the average found in CARE project areas (that is 38 wpm for girls aged 9-11 and 56 wpm for girls aged 14-15). These literacy scores indicate that 9-11 year old girls in CARE project areas are on average three years behind international oral reading fluency benchmarks, while girls aged 14-15 are on average seven years behind.
- **Numeracy:** Analysis of EM data showed an average numeracy score of 80 across the SCW. Girls aged 9-11 achieved an average EGMA score of 62 while girls aged 14-15 scored 99 on average. This is similar to the average found in CARE project areas (that is 62 for girls aged 9-11 and 102 for girls aged 14-15).

In summary, the analysis of EM data from CARE project areas showed enrolment rates that were substantially lower than on SCW average. At the same time, retention and attendance were slightly higher among 9-11 and 14-15 year olds in CARE project areas than on SCW average and literacy and numeracy scores were close to average. These findings suggest that girls surveyed in CARE project areas are at a relatively high risk of being marginalised in terms of enrolment, in comparison with girls in other SCW project areas. However, once they are enrolled they show rates of attendance, retention and learning that are somewhat similar to those found on the SCW average.

Barriers to Education: Prior Assumptions and Baseline Findings

The following are barriers to girls' attendance or learning, which were assumed to exist by the project or identified during baseline data collection:

- Boys are preferred to girls in education
- Negative perceptions of relevance of schooling
- Pregnancy
- Marriage
- Concerns about secular education
- No female role models
- Poverty
- Housework
- Cost of school (girl uniform is more costly)
- Distance from school to home
- Lack of female teachers
- Poor classroom resources
- Menstruation/lack of sanitary towels
- Disrespectful behaviour by male teachers
- Sexual violence

Table 4 presents evidence gathered on these barriers during the project’s baseline data collection. Based on the project’s baseline report, the table indicates if these barriers affect girls’ learning or attendance outcomes (if not specified, NS). Where possible for the household survey and the girls’ survey, the data is disaggregated by intervention and control group. Qualitative data is recorded as weak, fair or strong depending on the quantity of evidence provided in the report.

Table 4: Barriers and Baseline Findings

Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Attitudes	Boys are preferred to girls in education	Report girls more likely to dropout		●							53% male teachers 70% female teachers	●●●
	Negative perceptions of relevance of schooling	Reason girl does not attend school is because she feels school if not useful		●		3%						
	Concerns about secular education	No evidence available										
Personal	Pregnancy	No evidence available										
	Marriage	Teachers rank as highest barrier		●							49 out of 131	●●●
Motivation	No female role models	Female HoH are illiterate	NS	NS			67%					
Poverty	Poverty	Unable to meet needs without charity		●			54%					
Duties	Housework	Girls do housework		●			40%					●●●
		Enrolment of girls in families with co-wife (who help with housework) compared to no co-wife		●			64% compared to 48%					

ANNEX D15 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5274 – CARE INTERNATIONAL

Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
Costs	Cost of school (girl uniform is more costly)	Reason for girl not to attend school is she can't afford school		●			65%					
Supply	Distance from school to home	Girl lives too far from home given as reason not to attend school		●			8%					
		Report primary school located more than 30 minutes away	NS	NS			8%					
		Report secondary school located more than 30 minutes away	NS	NS			33%					
	Lack of female teachers	Survey sample	NS	NS							Disproportionate balance in sample (Over double number of male teachers)	
Facilities	Poor classroom resources	Not enough classrooms reported	●								45 out of 55 schools	
	Inadequate sanitation facilities	Have separate toilets for boys and girls		●							70% of schools	
		Girls feel comfortable using toilets			●					48%		
Health	Menstruation/lack of sanitary towels	% of enrolled girls who have begun menstruating		●						28%		●●●

ANNEX D15 – PROJECT PROFILE – 5274 – CARE INTERNATIONAL

Higher-level Barrier	Barrier as defined by the project	Evidence of barriers	Outcome Affected		HH Survey			Girls' Survey			Teacher Survey	Qualitative
			Learn	Attend	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	Intervention	Control	Aggregate or not specified	All	Weak - ● Fair - ●● Strong - ●●● None - empty
		Schools currently providing sanitary towels		●							29%	
Teaching	Disrespectful behaviour by male teachers	No evidence available										
Violence	Sexual violence	No evidence available										

Project Interventions: Baseline Evidence and Subsequent Revisions

The following table lists the interventions that the project had originally planned in its full application.

Table 5: Project Interventions and Changes based on Baseline Evidence

Intervention Type	Intervention Description	Baseline Evidence	Changes to Project Intervention after Baseline
Access			
Capacity	Build/fund schools: Refurbishing and equipping schools to be child/girl friendly, with a particular focus on the needs of adolescent girls	53% share chalkboards; 82% share textbooks; 29% schools provide sanitary products	
Community	Community intervention/mobilisation, including religious leaders, community committees involved in education, and diaspora contributions Engage religion in promotion Pee/female mentors	67% of female household heads are illiterate	
Governance	Capacity support system: Strengthening school oversight mechanisms to monitor and improve quality of education	5.5% teachers indicated schools receive support from CEC for teacher salaries 54% schools with management plans	
Learning	Develop extended curriculum	64% girls can make decisions about their future based on what is right	
Materials	Stipends funding	1.8% girls receiving scholarships 9% schools receiving materials through diaspora contributions (not clear if learning materials)	
Safe Spaces	Facilities/WASH/hygiene education (sanitary kits)	29% schools providing sanitary towels to girls	
Teaching	Train/fund general teachers: teacher training	35% teachers received training in the past two years 4% teachers trained in gender 69% teachers call on students not participating 38% use student-centred	

		games 60% allow students to instruct each other 77% schools monitored by CEC	
Voice			

Revisions to Project M&E Activity after Baseline

Quality Assessment of Baseline Evidence

The EM rated the quality of quantitative and qualitative evidence as good. The EM noted in particular strong use of qualitative research in identifying gaps such as the 'early marriage gap' from the household data.

Revisions to M&E

After observing the level of political tension around the control areas and the risk for deflagrating conflict over the perceived favouritism of rival (treatment) clans in receiving the project's inputs, CARE, in consultation with Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PWC) and DFID, decided to begin programming in the control areas. As a result of the removal of the comparison group, the data gathered for this study is no longer going to be used as part of a quasi-experimental evaluation, and the originally devised strategies for analysis subsequently changed to a standard longitudinal performance evaluation using a before-and-after comparison within the intervention schools and communities. SOMGEP's evaluation strategy will shift towards a pre-/post-intervention design, resulting in changes in the setup of targets and minimum required sample sizes. In recognition of this change, the project has developed a detailed description of the proposed new targets, rationale for calculations and minimum sample sizes, confirming that the collected sample is indeed adequate to demonstrate statistically significant results

Challenges in Project Data Collection

The project in the baseline report has listed the following challenges.

An initial review of the data conducted by CARE USA indicated large disparities in the number of respondents (HH survey and UWEZO) included for different sample points. This can be explained due to the differences between former "treatment" and "control" sites and to the fact that whenever several locations had very small populations, apparently the enumerators, unaware of the implications, tried to compensate for the shortfall by collecting additional data in more densely populated sample points. As a result, the distribution of the respondents no longer mirrored the population distribution between the three zones, but was skewed towards a higher representation of the Puntland population.

In order to address the situation, CARE proceeded to a re-sampling of the existing respondents for both household surveys and learning assessments. Initially, sample points with very few respondents were removed from the sample, and afterwards, respondents were randomly selected in each one of the remaining sample points. The process resulted in a random sample with an even number of respondents in different sample points. However, it also resulted in a large loss in the overall number of respondents.

Attendance, however, proved difficult to obtain from school records, though it was not given a specific data target in the logframe or M&E Framework. Multiple spellings of names, multiple girls with the same name, and a lack of formal addresses made it difficult for enumerators to link girls surveyed at the household with their written school records. The unannounced attendance spot checks (head count) conducted by evaluation data collectors may be a more feasible approach to this metric, although the data is collected at the class level rather than individual.

List of References

- CARE International UK (2012), Full Application for the Innovation Window – Ref # 5274, London: CARE International UK.
- PwC (2014), 140430 GEC Annual Review Report Annexes vfinal, London: PwC

- PwC (2014), GEC Logical Framework March 25 Scenarios v2, London: PwC.
- CARE International UK (2014), SOMGEP Baseline Study Report, London: Care International UK.

Project Brief – BRAC Sierra Leone

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in BRAC project areas in Sierra Leone, and more specifically in Bombali, Kenema, and Western Area Rural regions. The most frequently mentioned barrier facing households in Sierra Leone was poverty. Poverty was described as a barrier to children's education as it hinders their ability to afford school fees and material, but also as causing continuous worry to caregivers as they struggle to make ends meet. Secondly and also related to meeting household needs is the struggle to maintain a source of livelihood and employment opportunity to fulfil the household's needs. In most cases this was linked to the environmental disruptions as most households in the targeted communities appear to rely on farming for their source of livelihood, and therefore, are prone to these disruptions.

Following these challenges and barriers to education, respondents often discussed the issue of harassment and insecurity. While the reported incidents of harassment and insecurity were generally described as mild such as children harassing and provoking each other, a few described severe incidents such as sexual harassment. Additionally, respondents reported the governments' lack of support to school and the education system and staff which, as reported, had many negative consequences on the delivery of education and students' learning. The emphasis on the governments expected role was common in Sierra Leone's targeted communities and was mainly in the form of disappointment or appeal for support.

Reports of violence such as rape and sexual assault were also frequently recorded in the community's targeted areas. Other barriers to education such as pregnancy, issues with school facilities and infrastructure, house duties for girls and negative attitude towards girls' education were also reported and will be discussed in the following sections.

While these barriers were reported in the targeted communities, other more positive attitudes and issues were also frequently noted especially by girls themselves. For example, girls interviewed often reported that they have local female role models, and they also often expressed high aspirations and self-esteem. However, while many respondents expressed support to girls' education, a few have provided unexpected reasoning for their support such as avoiding sexual relations, as will be discussed.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

The most frequently mentioned barrier to girls' attendance in schools and learning in BRAC's targeted communities was poverty. Respondents described poverty and its effect on girls' education in multiple ways, while a few simply referred to the lack of financial means as the major obstacle to girls education, others provided more detailed accounts on how poverty affects girls' education, learning and general wellbeing in their communities. Firstly and most frequently mentioned was the challenge in meeting school cost and afford school requirements. Secondly, respondents described the challenge in meeting food needs and the hardships that they endure to fulfil them, thirdly, respondents described how girls were being pushed to drop out of school and engage in unwanted relationships such as prostitution in order to make ends meet.

Poverty was also often linked to the employment situation of the heads of household and/ or the inability to generate adequate income in order to satisfy the households' basic needs or meet its aspirations. It was also often linked to environmental disruptions and weather conditions, in which households' ability to maintain their source of livelihood would be increasingly difficult.

Poverty was generally described in a non-gendered way, affecting both girls and boys within the household, with only a few respondents indicating a specific impact on girls. Moreover, it was reported as a barrier to both learning, enrolment in schools and regular attendance in schools.

Challenges in meeting school cost

Inability to meet school cost due to poverty or lack of financial means was often cited as the most common barrier to education in BRAC's targeted communities. Respondents described school cost as entailing school fees in the case where fees applied, as well as school material such as uniform, stationary and text books. The inability to

meet school cost (both fees and material) was reported to mainly affect children's ability to enrol in school and their regular attendance.

Respondents also expressed their concern and noted the challenge that they face or members of their community face in affording children's education. Very frequently also, respondents described the governments' obligation in providing access to education especially for the poor, and often stated that the government and civil society organisations should step in and support families and schools in order to improve access to and quality of education in their communities.

With regards to the specific issues related to cost of schooling respondents identified a number of cost items: firstly, respondents stated that while public schools were free of charge, households struggled to meet the required material such as textbooks and stationary.

Yes here is government-assisted school they are not paying school fees. The only exception is to buy school uniform, and showed it then the children will start coming to school... But some families do not have money to buy these entire things for their children.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Secondly, respondents stated that in some cases schools were not free of charge, and many households struggled to pay. While this was mainly the case for private schools, some respondents noted that it was also the case for the public schools. It is worth indicating that respondents did not elaborate or explain why they opted for private schools or whether they actually have a choice between the two.

Well no effort has been made even though they [the government] are saying free education but we are not seeing it just little of it.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Thirdly, two respondents specifically referred to secondary schools and stated that these are not free of charge, which represents a challenge for the girls' continuing education and enrolment in secondary school.

I think of the money to buy books, bag, uniforms, and the school fees because she is in secondary school. If there is no money this will hinder the progress of my girl's education".

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Fourthly, and reported by one community leader, is the issue of exam school fees in which a student is expected to pay a certain fee for each exam he or she would sit for. This, as stated, represents a challenge for poor families.

In this community ... [we] are trying hard to promote education but the major problem is too much demand for money from the children by asking them to pay for each exam they sit for...

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Challenges in meeting food needs

The second most frequently mentioned challenge facing poor households is meeting food needs. In most cases meeting food needs was described as a continuous challenge throughout the year, in others, it fluctuated depending on the season, especially the rainy or dry seasons. Respondents described the relation between the availability of food and education, while some stated that the inability to meet food needs and hunger in general affected the learning ability of children and their general wellbeing, the majority stated that it affected their enrolment and attendance in school.

Some families do not have food to eat at home talk less of sending their children to school.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Specific challenges faced by poor girls

Two community leaders from two different communities noted that poverty leads girls from poor households to drop out of school and get pregnant at an early age. This, as they noted, is because their caregivers are unable to provide for their basic needs or pay their school fees and therefore results in dropping out of school. One of the community leaders stated that drop out girls might engage in prostitution to support themselves which might also lead to pregnancy, s/he stated:

In this community for girls whose parent don't have the finance to support and up keep them, they will rather find ways to support themselves which might tend to lead to prostitution and later on followed by unwanted pregnancy, because they might want to get new clothes, shoes etc.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Another community leader indicated that getting pregnant at a young age is a common phenomenon, s/he noted:

So you see if you don't have money to send your child to school they end up becoming dropouts and pregnant at an early age, we have plenty of them in this community who have become pregnant because they were unable to pay school fee.

(Community leader, Kenema, Mano Junction)

Challenges faced by marginalised ethnic groups within the community

Poverty and access to resources as described in BRAC's targeted communities in Sierra Leone appear to affect certain groups within the communities more than others. Respondents identified groups such as the Mendes, the Lokos and the Limas as being more marginalised and facing more difficulties in making ends meet than others. However, with regards to the Temne, there were conflicting accounts on their marginalisation. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude on the marginalised groups within the communities, but as reported, some tribes and groups have more access to resources and public services than others, and therefore, more access to education.

Like I said earlier on for the Temne since they are the owner of the land and have access to education more than the Loko who are not originated from this land.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Challenges faced by marginalised children

- Challenges faced by orphans, adopted and foster children

Few respondents in BRAC's targeted communities noted that children not living with their biological parents such as orphans, adopted or foster children are particularly marginalised. This, as noted, is because they are perceived to have less access to resources and find it more difficult to meet school requirements.

- Challenges faced by children of disabled parents:

In two cases, respondents described the challenges faced by children of disabled parents and noted that these disabled parents are not likely to send their children to schools. A community leader noted that the community supports these disabled parents with food and money; however they are not able to support further in their children's education because they themselves are struggling to do so.

It is not likely because they [people with disability] will not have people to sponsor them [their children] to go to school. The only thing people here do is to help them with food and small amounts of money. They cannot afford to send their children to school because they themselves have problems of their own to care for. People in this community are poor people.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

- Challenges faced by children of large families

Poverty was reported to affect children of large families where the resources needed to be divided on a large number of children and members of the household.

What worries me most of all is how to get what to eat since I have so many children it is very difficult for us.

(Household, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Coping strategies and initiatives

In a few cases, respondents described a few initiatives that the community undertakes in order to alleviate the effects of poverty on children and support their attendance in school and learning. A few respondents of which a community leader and a school teacher, described how the community covered school fees of children whose parents were unable to afford them:

We pay school fees for some that are not able to afford, and we give them free lunch at times, we also encourage them to be serious in school.

(School official, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Poverty and interesting findings

Although providing education for children was described as a challenge for poor families, education was often described as a remedy for poverty. In BRAC's targeted communities, respondents noted that poverty sometimes acts as a push factor for families, motivating them to support their children's education in order for them to overcome poverty and achieve a better life. While this was discussed by many respondents especially when reflecting on the community members' positive attitude towards girls education, two school officials in two different communities referred to the Mende tribe and noted that they, in particular, strongly share this perception and are committed to acting upon it.

Because most Mendes are farmer so they preferred their girl child to be educated and change their standard of living.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Employment challenges and weather disruptions

The challenge in finding employment or maintaining a source of livelihood for the family was reported by respondents as a major concern for households. Most respondents within BRAC's targeted communities in Sierra Leone stated that the main source of livelihoods of members of their community is farming and that this made households vulnerable to environmental disruptions, extreme weather conditions or general seasonal changes. This, as reported was clearly linked to the poverty level of households, and the struggle to meet the basic needs of the family which in turn affects education as previously discussed in the poverty barrier.

“Yes, there are [difficult time when it is difficult to find food], like right now this dry season are rough for us, we survive by our garden work we do to sustain the family.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Less frequently stated by respondents are income generating activities like general trade activities such as selling fresh cool water and selling of collected firewood and stones. As described, these activities do not provide a stable, reliable and sufficient income. In one case, a caregiver described the need for the girl to support the family's income generating activity in trade after school in order to afford food and school cost:

I am the only person doing everything with the help of the very child we are talking about, after school, she helps me to sell goods so that I will be able to get her lunch and school fees.

(Household, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

The teaching profession in the targeted communities did not seem to have sufficient and satisfactory income as teachers were often reported to find it difficult to make ends meet as this teacher noted:

Yes that [facing harder times to survive] happens every day, because am not receiving salary for the teaching that I do.

(Household, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Harassment and insecurity

Respondents in BRAC's targeted communities identified a number of types of violence, harassment and insecurity. Most frequently stated were acts of harassment and insecurity rather than violent ones. Moreover, very few respondents clearly stated that these acts of harassment and insecurities affect the education process or girls enrolment and learning in schools. Similarly, very few respondents noted that the acts and their consequences had a special impact on girls. The few reports that have done so, were often related to sexual harassment, or were statements which generally regarded girls as more vulnerable than boys.

Yes because they are the vulnerable so if any conflict happens they will suffer greatly than boys.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Harassment among students and children

Frequently reported were incidents of harassment, bullying and taunting among children and students. While these incidents were very frequently reported, most respondents appear to regard them as ordinary and normal for children. Moreover, they often noted that adults including parents and teachers control the situation when necessary and do not allow them to escalate or affect children's education. As one caregiver indicated:

Sometimes the children fight themselves but the teachers quickly amend it among them and they started to live in peace with one another.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Domestic disagreements

Less frequently reported were incidents of domestic disagreements and conflicts. These, as described by respondents also seem to be casual and normal disagreements, in which in certain cases the community leaders or other members of the family or the community interfere to solve them. As reported, these disagreements and conflict rarely escalate to violence within the household, with only a few incidents reported to have done so. However, respondents did not indicate whether or how these incidents affected children, their attendance in school or learning.

We don't have major conflict within this community but only minor violence between husband and wife.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Community based conflict and political disagreements

Respondents reported a few incidents of community-based conflict, and described these conflicts to be driven mainly by political disagreements especially in times of elections and distribution of resources such as land. While respondents indicated the insecurities due to these conflicts, they did not however note an impact on girls' education, with one clearly stating that political conflict does not affect the education process.,

This conflict [by national elections competing parties] has not stopped our children from going to school because it only affects the members of the parties.

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Poverty related harassment

A few respondents noted that their children are harassed and provoked in school because they do not have lunch money or food. This provocation and harassment, as described by caregivers affects the children's wellbeing, and as one respondent noted, it affects his/her decision to enrol the girl in school.

Yes, it affects my decision to enrol my child in school because I will not have the money to give her sufficient lunch because that is the reason why they are provoking her.

(Household, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Sexual harassment

Respondents described three types of assaults on girls: Firstly, harassment where the perpetrators are community members; Secondly, where the perpetrators are their male peers; and thirdly, where they are the school teachers. While not many described the effect of these harassments on school girls, some did indicate that sexual harassment by teachers affected their enrolment in school. This, as explained, is because girls would be intimidated by teachers and forced to either engage in romantic relations with them, or fail and therefore end up dropping out.

Respondent (R): The only thing we heard of in the school is when teachers sexually harassed girls to be in love with them. This one is now reducing in the schools because the women's group is trying to put a stop to it now.

Interviewer (I): Does this affect girls in school?

R: Yes, because if the girl refuse to be in love with the teacher, he will fail her. Through this the girl will be discouraged to attend and later be a drop out.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Harassment of the disabled

A few respondents described the harassment and provocation that their girls endure at school and within their community because they are disabled themselves or their parent is disabled. Of these three, one school girl noted that peers would provoke a disabled girl at school, another respondent was a caregiver of a disabled girl and described how the girl is harassed and provoked because of her ill-treatment, and the third was a disabled parent of a girl and described how the girl gets provoked and harassed because of the parent's disability. In the three cases however, and although the girls' soared feelings were expressed, it was reported that this was not a reason for disruption of attendance or dropping out of school. Moreover, in describing the teacher's reaction towards the disabled girl her peers, a girl noted:

[The teachers] encourage her; they talk to her not to stop coming to school and ask us to stop provoking her. They sometimes give punishment to anybody provoking her.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Low government support to education

Very frequently mentioned in this project's targeted communities is the lack of government support for the education system in general. This was mainly expressed by respondents with a disappointment in the lack of government support to schools, teachers and students, as well as the pleading to government to step in to improve the education system in their communities. More specifically, respondents very often noted that the government should qualify, approve and pay teachers as well as improve infrastructure and facilities and support with school material and fees.

Well for the difficulties like for the approval is the fault of the government as a person been trained and qualified from college as a teacher waiting to get approval and on no avail, so I think the government must do something serious for these teachers.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

In explaining why the school is facing difficulties, one community leader blamed the government for not providing adequate support:

The government is not taking our problems into consideration. We always complain to them but they do not respond positively.

(Community leader, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Also, in identifying ways in which girls' education can be encouraged and supported, many respondents highlighted the responsibility of the government in taking an active role in this matter.

Government should give free education to all girl children.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Violence

Respondents in BRAC's targeted communities identified three types of violence that affect girls' education: the civil war and its legacy, theft and robbery, and sexual assault and rape. These, as described, either had direct impact on the wellbeing girls and their education, or an indirect impact as they affected the resources and capabilities of the households to provide education for girls. While the respondents did not specify whether these acts of violence have a special effect on girls, the reported sexual assault seemed to have targeted only girls.

The civil war

Most respondents in BRAC's targeted communities described their communities as peaceful communities nowadays; however, a few have highlighted consequences of the conflict which ended more than a decade ago on their current situation. For example, a few respondents described impact of the war on their household, exacerbating poverty level within their household and decreasing their ability to support themselves and their children's education. This, as they noted, is because they lost family members, assets and resources, as well as physically disabled members of their households.

One respondent for instance, described the suffering of her household and the inability to meet school requirements of her children due to the disability of the father which occurred during the conflict.

Yes, because the father who was trying to send these children cannot afford to do it now just because his feet have been cut during the war and now unless we beg to stakeholders of the community.

(Household, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Theft and robbery

A few respondents reported incidents of theft and robbery in their communities. These incidents were reported to have targeted households, small business, school properties or attempts of land grab. In targeting the school's properties, one school official noted:

Thieves always break into our [the school staff's] office and scattered our document and our school materials.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

In describing the consequences of these acts on the education process for girls and boys, one respondent described a general poor learning environment as a result of these incidents, and did not specify a special impact on girls. Similarly, another respondent mentioned a general negative atmosphere within the community as a whole as a consequence of these incidents without indicating a special impact on girls' education. In describing the poor learning environment due to attempts of land grab within the community, a community leader noted:

It creates an atmosphere of poor educational learning system as it affects us greatly in this community.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Sexual assault and rape

Two respondents reported incidents of rape targeting girls in their communities. One mother reported a rape incident targeting her daughter, and described the effects of the on her daughter's physical and psychological wellbeing, and that the incident caused absence from school. Moreover, she described the ill-treatment and harassment the girl receives from the girls' peers because of the incident, but denied such harassment taking place at school.

In another case a respondent noted that rape is a common issue generally, but not his/her community, and assumed that the reason behind these acts is the indecent clothing and act of girls. The respondent did not indicate any relation to education and schooling, and did not specify whether these girls are school girls or school drop outs, or older women nor if this interrupts their education.

Yes they are common. For example, raping is common because of the way and manner our girls and women dress. And when God created the world and he created us and gave us all parts that formed the body other parts were given that is more external so if younger girls are exposing their private parts and they attract men that will lead the men to abuse them sexually etc. for my area it happens but not so common.

(Household, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Other barriers to education: Pregnancy

Pregnancy of school-aged girls appeared to be a common issue in BRAC's targeted communities. While the majority of respondents indicated that pregnancy is not a barrier to girls' education as girls are taken back to school after delivery, others referred to it as a reason for dropping out completely. Moreover, while some respondents noted that girls are welcomed back after delivery, they clearly stated that they are sent away from school until after delivery. This, however, was not clear whether it was a formal school policy or a commonly accepted informal practice. As one community leader noted:

Here if the girl becomes pregnant during school, the school will send her away to go and birth the child. Then if she wants to come back, they will accept her.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

A few respondents described how girls are not taken back to their own school. It was however not clear whether this reflected a school policy or an informal practice.

Well for someone that has been pregnant before and left school, she will not be accepted, except [if] she finds another school.

(Household, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

In one case, a respondent noted that parents themselves do not support their pregnant girls to go back to school after delivery, s/he noted:

Some parent when their girls are pregnant, they send them out of the house instead of encouraging them to continue their education after giving birth.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Issues with school facilities

With regards to school facilities, respondents identified a number of issues; Most frequently mentioned were the insufficient number of chairs and desks in the schools, as well as the overcrowding of classes. Less frequently mentioned was the general description of poor or old facilities that need improvement, and the lack of libraries and study spaces.

Although these issues with school facilities were often mentioned by respondents as general problems and challenges facing the local schools, only a few indicated the impact of the poor facilities on the teaching and learning process

The school is too over crowded so the teaching is not effective.

(Household, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Significant household responsibilities

Respondents frequently noted that girls are given significant amount of housework at home. The majority reported that girls mainly perform home chores such as cooking, cleaning, fetching water and wood, with a few mentioning that they take care of younger siblings, and only about three stating that girls would do farming activities. As reported, these activities are undertaken by girls before or after school hours. While most respondents did not indicate whether these activities affected girls' attendance in school or their learning, four school officials did note that these responsibilities hinder the girls' education especially their learning. This, as one noted, is because they do not have enough time to study at home.

One respondent specifically noted that these activities are dedicated to girls only, and therefore, have specific impact on their learning compared to boys who do not undertake these activities.

In terms of differences in how they learn boys are far better than girls as the girls are sometimes doing different things at home which makes them less concentrated in school.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Lack of infrastructure and poor social service delivery

In terms of school infrastructure, and as identified by respondents, the lack of school building and the lack of access to clean water were the major challenges for providing education in BRAC's targeted communities. The lack of access to clean water was described as a challenge for learning, a challenge for parents to send their children to school and a problem for children as they need to go a long and dangerous way to fetch water. As one school official noted:

But one major thing we lack is water, water is our major concern children go out in search of water and sometimes take longer time before coming back.

He later added:

When the children wants to fetch drinking water they have to cross the main street and it is dangerous for school children.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

In terms of school building, while many expressed the urgency to improve the school building within their community as it in very poor condition and cannot accommodate all students, two respondents at least noted the lack of school building:

They don't have a building for the school. They have land but it is not yet developed.

(Community leader, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Less frequently, respondents identified access to electricity (light) and food provision in schools as a major challenge for the education process. And while only one respondent the impact of these services on enrolment in schools; many described the impact on the learning process.

The only way I think it could be easier for families in this community to send their daughter to school is to provide good water, electricity, (light) and more preferable lodge or good shelter.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Negative attitude towards girls' education

Respondents in BRAC's targeted communities noted that some members within their communities do not support girls' education and do not send their daughters to school. This perception was described in a number of ways, most frequently mentioned was caregiver's prioritisation of marriage over girls education, and therefore considering that investing in their education is a waste of time and resources; less frequently mentioned was a more severe perception where education was considered as harmful and counter effective for girls.

Priority for marriage

Respondents noted that some members within their communities do not see the importance of girls' education but rather hold the view that a girl's future is limited to her marital home, therefore, education is not important or relevant. As one school official explained:

Some of the parents said that women should be at home, a woman should not go to school because she only needs [...] to prepare the home for her husband.

(School official, Western Area Rural, Sierra Leone)

Negative perception of girls' education

Two respondents noted that some of their community members perceive girls' education as harmful to the girls and their awaited roles as housewives. This, as one respondent described, is because these community members believe that if girls enroll in schools they would mingle with boys and therefore, get pregnant. The second respondent described the perception that educated girls will not fulfill their anticipated role as housewives, without elaborating on the reasoning behind it, i.e. whether they will not have time or they will opt for other choices in life than marriage.

In describing community members' fear of pregnancy due to enrolment in school, one school official said:

Something that even if a girl went to school the later part she will get pregnant; so they do not pay much attention to girl child education.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

In describing community members' perception that girls will not fulfil their role as housewives if they complete their education, another school official from a different community stated:

Well some parents think that if the girl child is fully educated she will not take the responsibility of being a housewife.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Specific to group:

- Livelihoods group

Two respondents noted that traders, in particular, do not support girl's education and would not likely send their daughters to school because they would rather than they go to the market and do business rather than going to school.

The least group that cannot send their children to school are the traders, because they feel that selling is more important than schooling.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

- Ethnic groups

A few respondents noted that the Limba and the Fula people (ethnic groups) in particular do not support girls' education and prioritise marriage for girls over education. For example, in identifying the group within the community least likely to send their girls to school, one respondent noted:

Well for us here we think the Limbas are the least people that do not send their children to school.

S/He later explained:

Because they think that girls are not meant to be educated, they only think that when girls are matured they should be married.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

One respondent noted that the perception that girls will get pregnant if they attend school is specific to an ethnic group in his/ her community, the Temne. According to this school official:

According to them [the Temne] they said girls should not go to school, as they will be impregnated during school, so they prefer that boys go to school and girls stay at home to do domestic work at home.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Interesting findings

Although many described some of their community members' negative attitude towards girls' education, or the prioritisation of marriage or work, others have provided opposing views and described the community members' positive attitude towards girls education. And while the reasoning behind the positive perception was generally to provide a better future for girls and their families, a few provided different and perhaps unexpected reasoning. For example, one community leader noted that the main reason for his/ her support of girls' education is for them to avoid engaging in sexual relationships, but without elaborating on how education contributes to this goal or why is it important:

I: Do you have any opinion that you think will help a girl child in education?

R: The main reason is to avoid sex.

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Another reasoning provided by a school official, is that educating girls will make them better future housewives, without mentioning whether this meant empowering them to contribute to the household with income or whether it was limited to better perform housework and other tasks without increasing their choices in life:

Girls in the future, they will become good housewives and also will be able to manage the home.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Other interesting content

Although respondents had a positive attitude towards girls' education, the perception and opinion about their performance and capabilities were many times noted with rather a negative notion. This sometimes was reported as a motivating factor for teachers to give more attention to girls in school, or to propose initiatives to better support girls.

The girls, some are slower learners than the boys but we do encourage them to challenge the boys because what the boys can do you too can do it.

(School official, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

In a few cases, respondents described their perception in the negative outcome in learning when mixing boys and girls together in classrooms. This, as one community leader described, will result in distractions and poor learning:

As for me I am not happy because, when boys and girls are put together in a class there is no seriousness what I suggest is that they should be separated.

(Community leader, Bombali, Sierra Leone)

Another finding is the perception that boys are faster learners or better performers than girls in school. While some respondents referred to the housework that girls perform as the underlying factor, others did not provide reasoning and merely stated that boys are faster learners or smarter than girls. As this school official noted:

The girls are slow in learning while the boys are faster in learning.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Project Brief – BRAC Afghanistan

Poverty was the most frequently mentioned challenge facing households in targeted BRAC Afghanistan communities. The most common effect of household poverty on girls' education was families' inability to buy school materials, including textbooks, pencils, pens, and other stationery, sometimes leading to girls feeling aware of their family's poverty and often cited as a reason for girls not attending school or dropping out altogether. Another common effect of household poverty was families' need for girls to work to earn money and support the family. This decision appeared somewhat affected by cultural attitudes, with certain cultural or tribal groups, including Pashto and Kuchi, more likely to keep their girls out of school to work. Household poverty affected both boys and girls but in certain areas girls were disproportionately affected as respondents saw that there was a market for female labour (weaving, making rugs) but no market for male labour.

A second factor affecting girls' education was the presence of violence, harassment, and insecurity. Nearly all respondents referred to past wars or conflicts in Afghanistan or to Taliban rule as having prevented girls from going to school. War and conflict seemed to affect both boys and girls, but Taliban rule seemed to have a disproportionately affected girls. These conflicts are not continuing at present, but they have variably affected the ability of respondents or their children to get an education. A few respondents also mentioned violence or harassment of students by other students, but this seemed largely due to misbehaviour and rarely directed at girls because they were going to school.

Finally, a number of respondents mentioned negative attitudes towards girls' education. These tended to be cultural or religious in nature, with respondents noting 'shame' or 'dishonour' in sending girls to school, and these negative cultural attitudes sometimes prevented girls from attending school. Respondents noted objections to girls continuing their schooling past a certain age, or attending school with boys, or being taught by male teachers or without wearing the hijab.

Aside from these, other barriers to girls' education mentioned frequently included the lack of infrastructure, particularly lack of classroom capacity, long distance to school and concerns about lack of transportation options and the safety of the child while travelling, and lack of government support for schools, including allegations of corruption.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Household and local poverty

Poverty was a factor in the majority of the barriers to girls' education mentioned most frequently by BRAC Afghanistan respondents. The most commonly cited effect of poverty on girls' education was household poverty, families' inability to buy school materials, including textbooks, pencils, pens, and other stationery. This lack of materials sometimes led to girls feeling aware of their family's poverty and was often cited as a reason for girls not attending school or dropping out altogether. It is not clear from the interviews whether girls were turned away from schools because they could not afford school materials or whether families felt too ashamed to send their girls to school when they could not provide these materials. Given that the Afghanistan government has undertaken to make primary education free, there were few references to school fees from respondents.

Household poverty also made some families unable to meet their basic needs. This sometimes meant that they had to choose whether to spend money on school materials or on food, and sometimes meant that girls were going to school hungry.

Poverty was also referenced in terms of household employment issues, often in the context of the general poor economy. Many respondents mentioned that there were no jobs or work available in their communities, particularly for men, and this sometimes justified their decision to have children work to earn money instead of attend school. In these instances there was a disproportionate effect on girls, as girls were seen to have more opportunities to earn income through weaving or making rugs than men.

Respondents from some areas also mentioned that household poverty is seasonal, and that in winter time or times of floods, droughts, poor harvests, or other natural disasters, household poverty increases.

Poverty was not generally associated with government schools. These schools were sometimes seen as under-resourced, but this was seen as lack of support by the local or national government, or of corruption at local or national levels.

Employment issues in household

Employment issues in the household were mentioned frequently. Respondents most frequently mentioned casual labour or agricultural labour as sources of employment, and a number mentioned unemployment, often due to the local economy. Casual and agricultural labour were both seasonal and unsteady.

Male members of our family are busy in different types of works; one is labour workers, one is shopkeeper, one is mason and etc. my husband is a free worker but he may find a job some day and may not find any job the other day. You know that there isn't much money in labour working. Job opportunities are less and we are somewhat surviving.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Seasonal unemployment and variable income were particularly associated with those in the agricultural sector, which are particularly important in Balkh and Nangarhar.

My husband provides for the family expenses and he is a farmer. This job does not have a good income because the products will be taken at the end of year and until that time we pass our life with a lot of problems like borrowing money from relatives. Our economic situation is weak and the income from farming is not enough. Most times of the year we cannot provide our expenses.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Formal employment is not widely available in Afghanistan and not all families can rely on it.

We don't have a good life. Our source of income comes from my three sons. One of my sons works as a teacher in a Muslim English learning course. My two other sons are students and they sell cigarettes to get by. Their father is always sick and unemployed at home.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Respondents mentioned lack of income as a reason to worry for the future.

What really makes us concerned is unemployment and when there is no job then there is no income too. We want job opportunities and through that we can provide our life necessities.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Outside of Kabul, some respondents talked about year-round unemployment and the lack of jobs available in their communities, particularly for men.

Widespread poverty and lack of employment is a real concern to us. This is because if we do not find work one day we will not have money to buy food and survive. Life becomes really difficult. There is no job opportunity for people in this area.

(Household interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

In Balkh, a region known for its weaving and carpet making, several respondents referenced women's employment opportunities, and implied that they sometimes provided more and more stable household income.

There are not jobs in our village that our men or youths can do. In most families, women's and girls' income is making carpet and it is not enough.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Employment issues as an indirect barrier to girls' education

As examined in the section on 'Challenges providing school materials' below, lack of employment and difficulty meeting basic needs were reasons why some households did not send their children to school.

Our children provide the family expenses but the money we earn isn't enough and sometime we have to borrow the cash money or food items.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

A few respondents also mentioned addiction to opium or hashish as a reason why heads of household were unemployed, as an additional financial burden on the family, or as a cause of domestic violence.

My husband's brother is a drug addict; he works for few days and earns money and next few days he don't work and use narcotics alongside his friends. Unemployment and the war situation are the reasons for it. They would sit on the side of the street all day without any work; they were concerned about the situation and one would have told them to use narcotics and you will forget all your grief.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Inability to meet basic needs

Some respondents expressed difficulties being able to provide food for their families, or being unable to provide for both food and clothes. While some respondents expressed household poverty as requiring a trade-off between basic needs of food and clothing, there were few references to how this affected girls' education. Some of the responses given included that girl children who had not eaten could not learn well or that children were ashamed to be in school without proper clothes. School uniforms are not widely used in Afghanistan so respondents did not mention these as much as in other countries. No respondent made a direct link between being unable to meet basic needs and being unable to provide school materials for children, but this link is implied by respondents who mentioned not being able to provide for school materials, see the next section below.

We face a lot of problems in our life most of the time. We don't have enough income to survive. If we buy clothes then we lack money to buy food and if we buy food then we are unable to buy clothes. We have economical problems and we don't have enough money to abate all our necessities of life at once.

(Household interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Respondents did make one direct link between needing to fulfil basic needs and attendance. Respondents from several different communities in Balkh and Nangarhar provinces referenced a UNICEF programme which distributed food and oil through schools as a reason why girls from the community enrolled in schools, albeit temporarily.

In the past school and students were supported a lot. They would give biscuits, stationeries, enough books, oil and other things to students. In that time number of girls in school was increased. Currently these donations are no longer in place and the number of female students has decreased too.

(Community interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Challenges in providing school materials

Inability of households or schools to provide learning materials was the most frequently cited effect of poverty on girls' education, and the most frequent reason given for why girls were out of school. Respondents cited lack of textbooks and other teaching materials, stationery including pens, pencils, and notebooks, and lack of chalk and blackboards in classrooms as factors which affect girls' ability to learn or attend school. Because the Afghan government builds government schools and covers school fees, school fees were not an issue for BRAC areas.

For families, household poverty and the inability to provide for necessary school materials was the reason most often given for why families did not send their children to school. It is unclear whether girls were turned away from school because they did not have the required materials or whether families did not send them because they felt ashamed that they could not provide or felt they were not well equipped to learn.

If [families] don't have money then they cannot afford expenses of school; that is why girl remains illiterate.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

This was the case in other provinces as well.

Most people, because of their weak economy, don't let the girls to go to school because they can't provide the stationary and the school needs.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Even when lack of school materials does not prevent a girl from attending school, she sometimes feels bad for not having the same materials as her classmates.

I am happy because I have not faced any kind of problem so far but there are some students in this school who don't have books, notebooks or proper clothes so they face a lot of problems while coming to school. They are poor and they cannot buy all these things.

(Household interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Displacement and poverty

Given Afghanistan's history of conflict, it is not surprising that stories of displacement are widespread. Some respondents gave migration or displacement as a reason for their poverty. Sometimes this was a result of a tribe moving to Afghanistan. This is more common in the north, where Pashtos do not dominate and there is a mix of tribes.

We belong to this village and the Turkman tribe. Because we are refugee and not original resident of this area, we don't have house and agricultural land like the other people that they are from Afghanistan and we have less access to public facilities. If we were from thousand years ago in this area or we had land and property from our ancestors or we were educated then now we could have a good life for our family.

(Community interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

In other parts of the country, displacement was attributed to past conflicts.

Our family has been badly affected by war; it was a bad time and we suffered poverty and serious insecurity. We used to migrate to different place in short period of time due to the conflict. We moved to several places and then to Kabul. My son went to Iran for work and he came back five years ago so we suffered lots of problems and difficulties at that time.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

This was also the case in Nangarhar, which is on the border with Pakistan and close to Taliban activities.

We have been living here in this area for 5 years; before we were living in [a neighbouring] district but due to economical problems and security problems we had to migrate and settle over here. We came to this area because of economical and security problems.

(Community interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Seasonality of poverty

Many respondents said that their poverty affected them at all times of the year. However, some respondents noted that their situation got harder at certain times, particularly in the winter, due to costs around heating, or outside of harvest time, if they were farmers.

As I said before, our economic situation is weak and uncomfortable. We live from the small products that my husband gets. Every year we have problems and we cannot provide our life expenses, especially in winter when the weather is very cold.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Respondents who relied on casual labour also noted that the availability of work was not constant.

We struggle sometimes to get money to buy food or clothes. You cannot have a comfortable life with labor works; sometimes there is work and sometimes not. Income is not consistent.

(Household interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Coping strategies

Afghanistan is an Islamic country deeply influenced by religion. Some respondents faced with poverty or other difficulties looked to God or Allah to deliver them from their situation.

We have a lot of problems in our life. At first, we are Muslim and we are waiting For God and what he will do and bring us in bright life.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Reliance on Allah was also mentioned when respondents had no family to turn to.

We don't earn foods from jungle or land because we don't own any land in this area. We don't seek help from our relatives or friends but our only hope is Allah.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

A few respondents also relied on the charity of others, though this was not mentioned in a religious context, or expected the government to help with their situation.

Poverty and interesting findings

Although poverty was the most frequent barrier to girls' education in BRAC Afghanistan communities, some respondents saw that education was a means to combat poverty. Respondents from several communities mentioned the lack of jobs and the poor local economy but most looked to the government to create jobs in the area. There were limited mentions of poverty along tribal or ethnic lines or other means of discrimination and several respondents stated all community members were bound together as Muslims. Amongst other factors contributing to poverty, orphans and drug addiction were mentioned a few times.

Household responsibilities of the girl

Alongside the household's inability to provide school materials, the most direct impact of household poverty on girls' education was the decision of many families to have their girls work to contribute to household income instead of going to school. The impact on girls was particularly pronounced in Balkh province, where several respondents stated that there were no jobs available for men and boys and so women and girls were involved in weaving or making rugs to support household income.

Our village people have weak economic conditions and most of them cannot provide the necessary school materials for their daughters to go to school. Some other children cannot go to school because they are making carpet. In this village, women and girls work more. There is little or no work for men so because of this girls should leave school to work and find income for the family expenses.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Work at home tended to lead to a girl not enrolling in school or dropping out entirely, rather than failing to attend on certain days. There were few mentions of housework or of the girl having to assist occasionally in doing chores or looking after her siblings.

Violence and insecurity

The most frequent examples of violence and insecurity related to past armed conflicts in Afghanistan. These conflicts sometimes had lasting effects on the education of respondents or their children. Other instances of violence included personal disputes over land or property, but respondents did not identify these incidents as affecting girls' education.

Effects of armed conflict

Afghanistan has a long history of armed conflict, and respondents from Balkh and Kabul mentioned the effects of wars against the Russians and the Taliban. Violence as a part of armed conflict was committed by adults against other adults and generally did not directly target children or schools. Nevertheless, these conflicts sometimes had lasting effects and prevented the respondents or their children from attending school during the conflict.

There is no conflict that we should be affected but in the past war we were affected because families lost a lot of things. Children can't go to school during the conflict so they were several years deprived from school that this problem affected on children.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Although present armed conflict continues and sometimes affects access to education, respondents indicated that it was not on the scale of past conflict.

My children were too small [to go to school] when war was on and the Taliban came to power. Only my elder son was born while other children were not born during the Taliban regime. No one would go to school consistently during the Taliban regime and we were affected a lot by the war too. There was war every day and rockets would hit anywhere around you. We experienced the worst days of our life

during the years of war. Currently however kidnapping, suicide attacks and other acts of violence occur but the situation is much better than it was in the past.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Other instances of violence

Other instances of violence came from personal and community disputes over land or property. These were not seen as common, although they had the potential to disrupt girls' education.

[Conflict] is the result is illiteracy and low level of awareness, and between the families the result is illiteracy and weakness of economy, and in some case jealousy is the result of daily quarrels. If violence happens the student disheartens day by day from lessons and some time will leave the school. But there isn't [conflict] in our village.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Some respondents noticed that violence and conflict had a disproportionate effect on women.

Violence and conflicts affect women in this area. This is because in this area, whenever any kind of conflict occurs then it disheartens families from sending their female members of the family to school. They will not allow them to go to school. If there is no respect to each other in a society and if members of a society don't have patience then there will be conflicts day and day out.

(School interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Kidnapping of girls was also specifically mentioned by several respondents as having a deterrent effect on sending girls to school. It was not clear whether these kidnappings were targeted because girls were attending school, or for tribal or financial reasons.

The problems that prevent my daughter to go to school are the fact that the school is far, car accidents with girls on way of school and when the driver escapes. Also, kidnaping the children on way of school. These things make families worried.

(Household interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment was not widely reported and only one respondent mentioned an instance of sexual violence against a schoolgirl in her community.

Harassment

Harassment by the Taliban

A few respondents mentioned the effects of continued harassment or intimidation by the Taliban.

Currently there is no war in our village and its secure but in the other villages still the Taliban is there and bothering the people. Taliban ask some people for money and say to some others that you are government and American spy and kill some of them. Obviously nobody was giving this chance to their sons and daughters to go to school. This case deprived the students from education and now most of them are illiterate.

(Community interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Harassment among students and children

Harassment among students and children was relatively common, but seen mostly as a form of misbehaviour, without serious impact on a girl's education. Respondents indicated that boys were generally more violent towards each other, but sometimes harassed girls by taking their pens or other school materials. A few respondents mentioned instances of physical harassment or intimidation which could be seen to be gender-based, but this was not explicitly stated.

Small fights and arguments are common amongst the children. They are mostly verbal taunting and fight which is a common thing amongst the children; they are not too serious to need interference from elders.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Harassment by teachers or other adults

Harassment by teachers or other adults was not common, but was mentioned by several respondents. There seemed to be a gender-based element to some of this harassment.

Yes, such incidents have taken place. Some of the girls are really annoyed by boys or by their male teachers. There are wild people who are not brought up well in their families. They dishearten girls from coming to school. They have made it really tough for girls to come to school and seek knowledge.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

However, in contrast to harassment by the Taliban, it was not clear whether this harassment was targeted at girls going to school for cultural reasons, or it was general antisocial behaviour.

One day we got a report that there are four guys appeared in the area who stand beside a shop exactly when girls are going to school and also when girls are dismissed from school. They hit girls with small stones and use bad words. We talked with school administration and they recognized those guys. We asked their parents and talked to them. Some of them were introduced to district police and some others promised that such thing will not happen again. From that time till now nothing like that has happened.

(Community interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Negative attitudes towards girls' education

A final reason respondents gave for people not sending their girls to school was negative attitudes towards girls' education. Given that many of the concerns around violence and insecurity were related to past armed conflicts, negative attitudes towards girls' education can be seen as the second most common barrier currently facing girls' education in BRAC areas.

Traditional or community held beliefs

Sometimes negative attitudes were held by key decision makers, including the girls' fathers or male relatives, or the mother-in-law, and this prevented girls from attending school.

The father of the child makes decision about sending or not sending of their children to school; secondly the mother in law who is also influential in the house makes decision about it. Mostly male members of the family are influential in making these types of decisions. Usually fathers of children are given the responsibility of making decision about their children's school in our family. Opinion of her father is similar to opinion of her uncle. They also believe that girls, especially adult girls, should not go to school. Mothers like me try our best to send them to school but whenever they become adult then they are prevented.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Other times they were held by others in the community, meaning the family considered their reputation and how they would be viewed by others if they sent their daughter to school.

Currently there are some people who are not allowing their daughters to go to school. Some of those people even encourage my husband not to allow his to go to school. In some gatherings and meetings when my husband meets relatives then those relatives tell him that your have done really shameful thing for allowing your daughter to go to school because it is not something that we often do in our area. Then he complains to me and says I am listening to all these things because of you. These people let their daughters only till 5 or 6th standard and then take them away from school.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

In explaining their decision whether to send their girl child to school, respondents considered whether this would bring 'shame' or 'dishonour' to their family. Attitudes were particularly strong against sending 'adult' women to school, starting at around Standard 6, for the shame or embarrassment this would bring.

Cultural beliefs

Respondents also identified certain tribal groups as being more against girls' education. The Pashto tribal group was identified as holding negative cultural attitudes towards girls' education.

The Turkman and Tajik nation in this village are agree to send their daughters to school. In some case the Pashton nation didn't let their daughters to school. In some case they have economy problems, therefore don't let their daughters but some others [have] shame to [send] their daughters to school.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Likewise the Kuchi cultural group, which is ethnically Pashto but engaged in tending livestock and is therefore often nomadic, was identified as holding these attitudes.

The majority of people in this community are against girl's education so they don't send their daughter to school. This is because they think sending girls to school is against their honour and people will talk badly against them if they send their daughters to school. People from Kochi tribe are known to be against girl's education because they are busy in livestock work. They believe that girls should only do housework while there are some people from other tribes that let their girls to get education.

(School interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Religious beliefs

Some respondents based their decision as to whether to send their girls to school on the extent to which the school environment was in accordance with Islamic principles. Sometimes this included separation of boys and girls, particularly after a certain age.

Now some girls are not going in right direction. My daughter tells me story of few girls who themselves talk to boys by phone and go with them to spend time together. This has created a bad reputation for the school amongst people. People say that school is not a good place for girls because of that reason. It is better for girl not to go to school if she earns a bad reputation for her family.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Other times it had to do with a wife's obedience to her husband and responsibility in taking care of the household.

We live in an Islamic society and in an Islamic society all opportunities of women are dependent on their husband. Husband has to provide his wife all the opportunity but in terms of education woman has the right to seek knowledge and become educated. Woman is taking care of children and taking care of things at home therefore their husband is obliged to complete all other responsibilities outside of the house.

(Community interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Other times it was related to the lack of female teachers, and the inappropriateness of female students being taught by male teachers.

The only thing that makes it difficult for families to enroll their girls in school is their traditional behaviour, because most of the people in this area are not in the favour of girl's education. This is because they feel shameful to send their daughter to school, but I think if there would be a special school for girls with female teachers, then this problem might be solved to some extent.

(Household interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Lack of relevance/support for early marriage/emphasis on primary education

In line with traditional and religious beliefs, many respondents stated that there was general support for girls' education only up until a certain age, after which girls should prepare for marriage and household duties.

There are some families who don't allow their daughters to study because they say that education has no importance to girls as they have to stay at home all their life.

(School interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Respondents identified that girls' education was permissible up until around Grade 4 or 5 but it was thereafter inappropriate.

In our village there are some people that permit their daughters up to 4th or 5th grade and then don't let them to go to school and they don't like their daughters going to school. It is as their tradition that they

don't permit girls going to school and suppose it as a shame for their selves that their [older] girls should go to school, and they tell that when girl become [older], they shouldn't go to school, that she must stay at home and education is not their right.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Lack of school/government capacity

Lack of teaching resources/learning materials

Household respondents did not generally comment on problems facing schools. However, school respondents were able to comment. The most frequently mentioned barrier to girls' learning was lack of textbooks. School respondents said that they relied on the government to provide textbooks for the classrooms, which did not always happen. In some cases the government did not provide these at all and in others the textbooks arrived late in the school term.

Students are facing the problem of shortage of books. Whenever we give homework to students they argue that they don't have books and that they can't be expected to do their homework. The quality of published books is not good too. Principal and teachers put on efforts in this regard to provide books for students.

(School interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

The inability of the schools or the government to provide textbooks has a disproportionate effect on students from poor families, as those who can afford to buy their children textbooks and those who cannot, must share. The problem is made worse with homework as students sharing a textbook are not necessarily all live within walking distance.

About 60% [of schools] lack books and 40% we don't have problem. For every six students, one of them has book given by the government and the use it by turn. Due to their economic situation, those that have good economic they buy the books, and those have economic problems, they notice the lessons.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Several respondents mentioned problems with shipments of books printed in Pakistan, that they were delayed or seized.

Because shortage of books is common, we referred to education management and still didn't answer. Sometime they send books but near to final exams. As government reports, the books stopped in Pakistan border and also the books not enough printed. We watched through TV that the books stopped at the port.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

School respondents also mentioned lack of chalkboards, chalk, stationery, and other teaching materials. Some household respondents mentioned that if schools could provide books, stationery, notebooks, pens, pencils, and other materials, then more families would be more likely send their girls to school.

No schools nearby/long distance from home to school

Long distances from home to school were mentioned extensively by respondents in Balkh, and also by a few respondents in Kabul. Some respondents implied that distance to school was itself a barrier to absenteeism or non-enrolment.

The school is located near to a residential area and all people send their daughters to school. If school would have been far, then people might hesitate in sending their daughters to school.

(Household interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

However, distance was more often associated with other barriers to girls' education, including fears of security, violence, or safety of girls, particularly when they had to walk on their own, in adverse weather conditions, or with threats of abduction on the way to school.

The school must be established nearer because it's long way, about one hour. Girls must walk to school during the winter through the mud and water but during the summer in hot weather its difficult

for girls to go school and come back. In this case the girls must be helped and establish the school in their village.

(Community interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Several respondents also mentioned the lack of public transportation to and from school, or that fears of violence or harassment could be addressed if the school or government provided transportation.

The school in our village that girls go there it too far almost one hour they walk to school and there is no bus in the route and girls are in difficulties.

(Community interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

A few respondents also noted that distance to school affected the number and quality of teachers willing or able to teach at the school.

We have the problem of budget for the school from ministry education. Our budget is not enough and also the security problem. The problem with female teacher is because our school is far from the city, so the female teacher cannot get herself to the school and they cannot commute in a day. The government and ministry of education pay small salary. If the teacher commutes each day, she must pay all her salary on the cost of coming and going, even two of her salary.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Low government support

Respondents generally looked to the government to provide a solution to local economic difficulties in their communities, as well as to provide local public services. In general, respondents expected support from the Ministry of Education for construction of new schools, expansion of existing schools, and appointing and paying for teachers.

Our people went to and wish the ministry of government to make our elementary school into primary school and make the primary school to high school and the people can't solve this problem, just government can solve this problem.

(School interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Some respondents also expressed that they expected the government to provide separate facilities for boys and girls, in line with Islamic principles.

The most important thing that should be done by the government is to build separate schools for boys and girls in our community.

(Community interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

There was some evidence of government supporting local schools, but many respondents complained that they had asked for or been promised government support but had not received it.

The education department promised many times that they will build another school in our area but this promise is not fulfilled yet. I don't know why both the government and the ministry of education are not taking this issue seriously.

(Community interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Respondents in general had high expectations of what the government could deliver.

Yes, it is now a big thing that primary school is free for all people so the school no longer collect fees from its students. People are equally treated in the school and when we compare the situation with a few years ago or decades ago, we are very happy with the current condition. However our expectations from the government have increased and we hope that they do much better than this.

(School interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Reasons respondents perceived for this lack of support included lack of government budget or capacity.

Government because of its own problem can't help, cooperate and cover the all region. In some villages still there is no enough facilities.

(Community interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

They also included allegations of favouritism and corruption.

I work in this school and I am aware of everything. All officials including the principal are only thinking about collecting their salary but there is no effort put on by them to improve things in school. The government and its officials are corrupt.

(Community interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

In a few instances, when government failed to deliver, communities tried to provide for themselves. However, this was the exception rather than the rule.

Electricity was also unavailable but it was provided to the school with the cooperation of shura. Police forces should be employed in the corner of the school for maintaining security. Since government and other related entities don't resolve their problem they turn to shura and seek for help. This shura is a social gathering for resolving disputes and issues of people. Shura doesn't have any kind of budget to build schools or provide facilities for school. School always expects shura to help them in their needs while shura is not supported by government, organizations or any businessman. These necessities should be provided by the ministry of education. We are not provided with enough books, stationary and other required materials from education department.

(Community interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Lack of classroom capacity and other infrastructure issues

The biggest infrastructural issue referenced was lack of classroom capacity. This included both lack of formal school buildings and existing school buildings that were too few or too small for current class sizes. Most respondents did not identify this as a direct barrier to girls' education.

Our school has not enough classrooms, but school is not closed due to lack of enough classrooms.

(School 1, Masjid Turkmani, Balkh)

However, a few did identify how they affected the students, particularly during bad weather.

The biggest problem that we face is the shortage of classrooms because lots of classrooms are made from tents and containers; students and teachers are not comfortable in such classrooms, especially in bad weathers like in the summer or during a storm.

(School interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

The lack of proper school facilities, particularly provisions for security and separate facilities for boys and girls can be interpreted as a reason why some households might choose not to send their children to school.

Schools in this area face a lot of problems such as lack of surrounding walls, lack of classrooms, lack of female teachers for girls, lack of labs, libraries, stationary and lack of professional teachers who have studied beyond 12th class.

(School interview, Nangarhar, Afghanistan)

Other infrastructure issues identified were lack of desks and chairs, library, laboratory facilities, walls, electricity, and toilets.

Lack of teachers/qualified teachers/paid teachers

Respondents from all communities sampled in Balkh raised the need for female teachers in the classroom.

School doesn't have enough equipment like we don't have chair, desk and female teachers and men teachers teach the girls so it cause that most of the family not send their daughters to school. We have no educated girls to become teacher to teach the girls. Also the education directorate didn't send the female teacher to our school.

(Community interview, Balkh, Afghanistan)

Many respondents looked to the government to provide teachers. Other problems included lack of qualified science and math teachers.

We have lots of teachers of religious subject but not enough science teachers especially math teachers. I want to ask [the government]: "does a school only need teachers of religious subjects?" They send all the experienced and science teachers to other schools. We already face many

challenges running our school and solving problems within our community, but essential services such as the provision of science teacher should be the responsibility of the government.

(School interview, Kabul, Afghanistan)

Respondents from different areas also noted problems with the ministry failing to provide teachers as promised, not paying them sufficient salary to be able to travel to remote schools, or refusing to hire teachers who had been educated only to Standard 12 because they were not qualified to become Ministry of Education teachers.

Project Brief – PLAN

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in Plan's targeted communities in Sierra Leone. Poverty appeared as the most common and severe barrier to education and the underlying cause for a daily struggle to make ends meet for many households. This, as described, affected many aspects of people's lives of which their ability to afford schooling for their children but also ability to meet food needs, and the general wellbeing of children and girls in particular. The second issue that was mentioned by respondents and which is also related to poverty was the challenge to find and maintain a source of livelihood or employment.

Thirdly, and with a very large gap in frequency of mentions in comparison to poverty (almost a third of the mentions), were reports of violence and conflict that ranged from children fighting and bullying each other to mentions of the civil war and its legacy. Almost as frequently mentioned as violence and conflict, was the issue of house duties that were dedicated to girls. This was frequently mentioned as specifically affecting girls, with a few noting that these duties affected their education.

Following house duties, respondents mentioned challenges related to schools and teachers such as lack of government support to schools, issues with infrastructure and social services, and school facilities. These were generally mentioned as challenges prohibiting the delivery of quality education for children and of providing a healthy and stimulating environment for learning. Other barriers mentioned were: environmental disruptions and extreme weather conditions which affect the daily lives of communities, harassment and insecurity, pregnancy of school girls, and the negative attitude towards girls' education.

Other interesting findings from the analysis can be drawn; these are that girls in general expressed high-self-esteem and aspirations, and that they have role models. However, other less positive statements were made, reflecting a few teachers' negative perception towards girls' potential and learning ability. This was drawn from a few respondents' statements as they described how girls have low potential and learning abilities in comparison to boys.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Poverty was reported as a common issue within this project's targeted communities. Moreover, it was most frequently reported as the major barrier to children's education. As one caregiver noted:

Poverty is the main reason why people do not send their children to school.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Respondents identified a number of ways in which poverty affects community members and children. Primarily; it was reported that poverty affects households' ability to meet school fees and afford school learning material. Secondly, it affects the ability of caregivers to meet food needs of the household. Thirdly and less frequently mentioned, it caused general worry to parents and caregivers to afford their children's education. Lastly, and mentioned by a few respondents, poverty was reported to drive girls to get married at a young age or in prostitution.

While poverty appeared mainly as a non-gendered barrier, affecting girls and boys similarly, some consequences such as early marriage and prostitution seemed to only affect girls. With regards to children's education, poverty seems to affect children's attendance in school as well as their learning.

Challenges in meeting school fees

Meeting school fees was the most frequently reported challenge to caregivers that want to enrol their children in school. With regards to primary education, there were contradictory accounts regarding fees, while some respondents noted that primary education was free, others noted that fees applied and are considered a challenge for caregivers to enrol their children in schools.

I don't like the fact that there is no free education, but I would like things to change and to see free education for primary schools.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

In general, school fees were often reported as a challenge to enrolling children in school or continuing education without disruption:

The reason [for dropping out of school] sometimes is because of financial reasons the parents cannot afford to pay fees for their sons or daughters.

(School official, Kono, Sierra Leone)

While school fees appeared to affect the enrolment and attendance of school children, it was also reported that it affected the payment of school teachers and their attendance in school. This, as reported by a school official, is because fees are used to cover the salary of teachers especially in the cases of lack of government support. As a school official noted:

“We told the Ministry of Education that there are still teachers whose names are not on voucher, the supervisor, [name], came, and we told [the supervisor] that the community that pays the teachers is currently facing financial difficulties, as they cannot pay the teachers. As a result, the teachers have opted to vacate the school.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Challenges in affording school learning material

Similar to school fees, affording school material was reported as a common challenge to households. The materials identified by respondents entailed stationary, textbooks as well as uniform and shoes. The challenge to afford these was reported to affect children’s enrolment and attendance in schools. In describing the challenge in attending school, one girl stated:

I stop going to school because whenever I want to go to school, I have no books, pen and shoe. Even my school uniform is not in good order.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

The availability of school teaching and learning material was also reported to affect the learning of children. In describing the difficulties in teaching, one teacher noted:

We the teachers are applying our own effort to teach the pupils but because there are no materials we find it difficult to teach properly in the classroom.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

It can be concluded that both fees and material constitute a challenge learning, attendance and enrolment in schools in the targeted communities.

It was also repeatedly mentioned that the inability to afford school material affected children in general, without singling out the impact on girls. As one school official noted:

First of all it is the uniform, school fees and even the books are all included in which some parents find it difficult to afford. All these challenges cause some children to stay home instead of going to school.

(Community leader, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Challenges in meeting food needs

Following the inability to afford school cost, respondents noted that poverty is sometimes too severe in which providing food to members of the households becomes a challenge. This worry and challenge was described by caregivers but also by children and girls themselves as they expressed the inability to concentrate and learn in class due to insufficient food intake.

When I’m going to school and I don’t have lunch, I only have one exercise book. This is making me not to concentrate in class. When the teacher is teaching and I’m hungry I can’t even pay attention to what he is teaching in class.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Poverty leading to unwanted relationships:

At least two respondents mentioned that poverty leads children to unwanted relationships and pushes them to early marriage or prostitution. This, as described, is because they are not able to survive and make ends meet, or because they cannot afford school fees and attend school. In describing how poverty pushes children to marriage, one caregiver noted:

Well to me that is what I don't know, because some people are thinking of getting their child to be married because they don't have school fees.

(Household, Kono, Sierra Leone)

In describing how poverty hinders the ability of parents to support their children and their education which might lead them to becoming street children and prostitutes, one community leader noted:

Most time the children of the poor people may have brain than the rich but the poor will have no encouragement from their parent allowing them to live on their own and later engage in prostitution and many other bad things.

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Challenges faced by ethnic groups

It was reported that the Mendes in particular are specifically poor and vulnerable. This, according to respondents is because they have lost many of their community members and families in the war.

Respondent (R): Well here, mostly are the Mendes that are facing such difficulties, after losing other family members.

Interviewer (I): How did these things happen?

(R): Well one is Poverty in the family, like I told you most of the families have passed away.

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Challenges faced by marginalised children

- Orphans, adopted and foster children

With regards to poverty, a couple of respondents noted that orphaned children and adopted children are less able to enrol in school as they are not able afford school material and fees.

These children [orphaned children] don't have access to new uniforms, books, pencils, bag etc. This is making them discouraged to school when they are living with some other relatives they have to work in the farms and other agricultural activities for them to be assisted in their school expenditure.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

- Children of disabled parents

Three respondents at least noted that disability in the family affected their poverty level and the ability to afford schooling. In one case a girl mentioned that she had to drop out of school to take care of her sick mother as there was no help, in another, a caretaker described her struggle to meet her children's school cost because of the disability of the head of household.

Poverty: Interesting findings

While poverty and its consequences such as the inability to pay school fees were described as barriers to education, some respondents reported initiatives that were undertaken or other coping strategies adopted to ensure children's education. For example, a girl described her teacher's compassion and support in providing her with food whenever she is unable to take lunch to school. On a more systematic and community level note, a community leader described how community farms and cooperatives were established to help poor households pay their children's school fees:

That's what I have told you, we the community people always plan private swamps or community farm and swamps ... It is there mainly to help those from disabled family, we process and sell the rice and pay for their school fees."

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

School officials also reported that they exempt school children who are unable to pay fees from the annual school fees or provide them with scholarships in order for them not to drop out of school. As one school official mentioned:

We always go around the village and enrol girls and we also allow them to go to school for one year without fees.

(School official, Moyamba, Sierra Leone)

Employment challenges

Following poverty, and very closely linked to it, is the challenge of finding a source of income. Lack of resources due to insufficient revenue from income generating activities and employment was reported to result in difficulties in enrolling children in schools. As stated by a community leader in Kenema:

Well these days not everybody have access to work and earn money and without that one cannot send his children to school.

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Respondents very frequently noted that they rely on farming as their main source of livelihood. However, they also that farming is unreliable and insufficient to meet the needs of the household. This, as described by respondents, makes households unable to continuously meet their children's needs and enrol them in school. In describing how cocoa and coffee harvest is a major factor for children's enrolment in school in a community in Kailahun, one school official noted:

This community depends on cacao and coffee plantation, if a particular year we have low harvest; there will be a problem because our main source of income is in this plantation. Parent will find it difficult to enrol their child to school.

(School official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

While farming appeared as the main activity for a source of living in the targeted communities, very few respondents mentioned other professions such as mining or wood selling, mining, and blacksmith work. And although it was not often described how these income generating activities affect enrolment in schools and learning, respondents did describe the struggle in meeting the basic need of members of the household.

The father provide food sometime he goes to the bush and mine diamond, if he has a diamond we will eat and if he doesn't we will manage.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Violence

Respondents in the targeted communities described three main types of violence that affected their communities, their households or children's education. Most frequently reported was the war and its legacy. Less frequently reported was the violence between children and students especially on their way to and from school, thirdly and also not frequently mentioned was the political based conflict, as well as domestic violence mainly between couples.

As described, these types of violence appear to vary in time and place of occurrence, conflicting parties, intensity, severity as well as the impact on children and their education.

Legacy of the civil war

The civil war that took place in Sierra Leone and ended more than a decade ago seemed to have greatly affected members of the targeted communities. Respondents described the loss of family members as well as assets which have left them impoverished and feeling abandoned, as noted. With regards to their children's education, a few have noted that while the civil war ended over a decade ago, its consequences are still present, and that this was mainly described in the ability (or inability) to afford education. In describing the impact of the war on families, one caregiver noted:

It [the war] affects us greatly because all our properties were destroyed and some of our family members were killed during the war. All our plantations were destroyed we used to live under a zinc house but now you see where we are living.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Indicating the continuation of the suffering, one caregiver noted:

Yes, the war affected us a lot, our houses were burnt, our families killed, our properties were damaged. Up till now we are still feeling it.

(Community leader, Kono, Sierra Leone)

One household described how the family was displaced to the war which caused children to drop out of school because of poverty and the lack of schools:

Before the war we were going to school but after the war we were unable to go to school because there was no money, my sister got married in her early age, schools were destroyed, there was no fund to build schools.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Violence between children

A less frequently stated form of violence described by respondents was the bullying and violence among children. This was described by a few respondents to take place in school or among school students on the way to or from school. While this was not reported as a reason to drop out of school or disrupt attendance, it was reported to affect the wellbeing of school children with one noting that it affects girls in specific. In these cases, caregivers also noted that they would inform the teacher about these incidents and the school would take action, therefore, minimising the consequences. In describing the bullying and violence on the way to school, one school official noted:

Sometimes they fight and wound one another. As they leave school to their home or from the home to the school. The school does not have control over that and the home too does not have control over them. When that happens they may quarrel and even fight. Sometimes it may lead to very serious injuries.

(School official, Kono, Sierra Leone)

It is worth noting that in describing the action being taken by school officials including teachers, the caregiver noted that the teacher would use violence to discipline the offender. S/he stated:

The teachers normally beat them, that is the offenders.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Political conflict

A few respondents reported that political disagreements and conflict took place within their communities. Although these were not often reported as leading to severe violence, respondents noted that they caused unrest within the communities especially during elections time. More specifically, one respondent noted that some community members would be subject to stones attacks during this political unrest.

And while these political disagreements were reported to take place within the communities, respondents stated that they did not have any impact on children's education.

This conflict [during elections] has no effect on schooling because we are staying far away from their political party offices.

(School official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Violence and the secret society

Two respondents noted the presence of 'secret societies' in their targeted communities in Sierra Leone. These societies are known to undertake the practice of female initiation and Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting. While the relation to violence and conflict is not very clear as the respondents did not unpack their role, it can be concluded that their presence can be detected in the targeted communities, and that they have an influence on girls' wellbeing. As one caregiver noted:

Yes it has happened once, when one man provokes her during a quarrel which resulted to motherly abusive language and as a custom we were to provide one girl child each to the Bondo society.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Another school official also noted their seasonal presence:

R: The only conflict here is about the secret society in this community

I: How common are the disruptions caused by conflict?

R: This is not common here because the secret society is a seasonal something in this area.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Significant household responsibilities

Respondents including girl respondents within the targeted communities noted that girls perform significant housework and support their mothers in maintaining the house. This was mainly in the form of home chores such as cooking, cleaning rather than productive activities such as farming. While most respondents especially caregivers noted that these home chores do not affect their girls' enrolment, attendance or learning, a few have noted the contrary. This, as described is mainly because the girls perform these house duties before coming to school and therefore are either delayed or tired when in class. As one caregiver noted:

Sometimes it [housework] makes her late for school.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Another caregiver noted that house duties affect the schooling of girls without clarifying whether learning or attendance is meant.

Yes some people they give works to these girls until they are late for school so these things disturb their schooling.

(Household Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

- Specific impact on orphans:

In one case, a school official noted that orphan girls living with relatives have difficulty in learning as they need to work in order to afford the cost of the school requirements. S/he noted:

Yes I can think of some girls who are having difficulty learning, some children have lost their parent so there is no one to take care of them and their school responsibilities. These children don't have access to new uniforms, books, pencils, bag etc. This is making them discouraged to school when they are living with some other relatives they have to work in the farms and other agricultural activities for them to be assisted in their school expenditure

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

- Specific impact on farmers' children

In one case, one a school official mentioned that illiterate people who are farmers are more likely to disrupt their children's education. This, as noted is because they would prefer that their children (boys and girls) work in the farms and support the household instead of enrolling in schools.

But those that are illiterate, they are on farming would like to use their children as labour force on the farm. They are more likely to withdraw their children from school than any other group.

(School official, Kono, Sierra Leone)

Low government support to education

Respondents in this project's targeted communities often identified lack of support from the government as the underlying cause for the problems they face as institutions trying to provide education in the communities. This was described in many ways but mainly, respondents and specifically school staff members noted that the government has not approved teachers therefore they are not on the government's payroll.

The main reason for this [difficulties] is because the teacher's recruitment is not effective and is actually affecting us, because it has taken a long time, since 2006 to date the government has not approved any teacher in this school.

(School official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

It also appears that teachers teaching at school are not accredited or approved by the government, and therefore need support from the community which is often not provided:

The teachers that are here are community teachers and they are not on payroll. The community is not supporting them we have tried our best for the Government to approve them, but we have not succeeded.

(School official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

In other cases, the whole school seems to be lacking approval and accreditation from the government, and this, as described, is a major problem to the education process in the communities:

R: The difficult problem is the school is yet to be approved by the government.

I: How are teachers in the school paid?

R: They are not paid because the school is yet to be approved.

(Community leader, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

While most respondents only described these issues as problems and difficulties that the school faces, a few have noted that receiving support from the government especially in approving teachers and schools would allow teachers to do their best in teaching:

All I want is for the Government to approve the teachers and encourage them. Through this they will do their best in the school.

(School admin, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Issues with quality of school facilities

Following the challenges resulting from low government support to schools, respondents noted that schools and the teaching and learning process within their communities face challenges due to the lack of sufficient and adequate school facilities. While in some cases respondents stated that school facilities are lacking or are poor in the broad sense, some did identify specific issues. Firstly and most frequently mentioned was the lack of chairs, desks and benches which, as reported, leads schools to find alternatives such as teach outdoors:

Sometimes the children sit outside to learn due to lack of chair.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Secondly, and less frequently reported, was the lack of proper and equipped facilities such as libraries:

The school do not have library, study space, not enough chair and desk that can accommodate all the pupils in the school.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Issues with school infrastructure and social services

Equally mentioned as the school facilities barrier, infrastructure and social services were also described as important challenges facing the schools, the teaching and learning process and students in general. Respondents identified a number of issues with infrastructure and services, the most urgent issues as noted were access to clean drinking water in schools and quality and size of school building. Less frequently mentioned were issues regarding meal provision and electricity in schools. While these challenges were described as having an impact on the teaching and learning process, the issue of meal provision in particular was described to affect the enrolment of children (both boys and girls) in school.

Access to clean water

Respondents very frequently noted that water was either not available in the local schools, or not clean and therefore not suitable for drinking. This, as a few respondents noted, meant that children needed to leave the school in order to fetch water.

[There is] no source of drinking water, when the children wants to fetch drinking water they have to cross the main street and it is dangerous for school children.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

In describing the availability of none clean water, a school official mentioned:

This water is not good for drinking, it smells. It was poorly constructed and the pupils cannot drink this water.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Issues with school building

Also frequently reported was the lack of sufficient and proper school building. In some cases, buildings were reported to be completely lacking, in others school building were either small for accommodating all students or in poor conditions.

In a few cases, respondent described initiatives by the community to try and improve the situation of the local school in order to provide better education for children, but that further help is needed to achieve that. One respondent noted:

We are in need of another structure; this current one cannot accommodate all the pupils. The community has allocated a portion of land to build a school, but we don't have the available resources.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Access to meals and electricity

Two respondents have also mentioned the issue of meal provision at school. This was described as a main factor for encouraging children to enrol and attend school regularly. In one case, a school official described the situation before and after meals were provided in school. S/he noted:

You will see at the beginning when we have the free food programme at the school the enrolment call was so high, but now the enrolment is coming down because of there is no free food programme. At that time the enrolment was five hundred pupils now is four hundred pupils

(School official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Environmental and weather disruptions

Respondents in Plan Sierra Leone's targeted communities noted that environmental disruptions and extreme weather conditions cause damage to their homes. Most respondents identified extreme conditions as the heavy rain and strong wind during the rainy season which seemed to often cause damage to their homes. This was often noted as a given reality in the sense that people did not often describe the suffering of its consequences. In describing one incident, a respondent stated:

Well some people took their belongings and left their house to move to a place where no water can reach, some houses were destroyed and some were not. After the flooding has taken place, they returned and rebuilt their houses.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Harassment and insecurity

Respondents described harassment and insecurity in three ways; Insecurity due to family and domestic disagreements; insecurity, harassment and conflict due to poverty and limited resources, and sexual harassment targeting girls. Some respondents did indicate that these acts and situations targeted and affected girls and children, without indicating the impact on the their education.

Family and domestic disagreements

A few respondents noted that domestic disagreements between parents or partners took place in the home or the community often happened. However, they were considered as normal issues which do not affect children.

It has no effect on girls or boys education it only affect the parents. If parent are having conflict it will not affect the children education in school.

(School official, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Poverty and resource-related conflict and unrest

A few respondents noted that conflict and social unrest within the community is sometimes caused by poverty and the limited resources. This was described in a number of ways. One respondent noted that miners and due to the limited revenue they make engage in conflict when dividing resources. In other cases conflict was generally described as resulting from attempts of robbery or poverty and financial problems.

But now the major conflict we are experiencing is fighting among family's members for plantation.

(Community leader, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

Two respondents clearly noted incidents where poverty was the reason for harassment and provocation among children which sometimes leads to fighting.

This one is among the children themselves because of mocking for instance if a child has a shoe that is not his/her size, his/her colleagues will mock him/her through this they will go into fighting.

(School official, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment was mentioned by about four respondents in the targeted communities. These incidents were reported to have been carried out by men within the communities, boys and in one case, it was reported to have been initiated by the girl's teacher. She noted:

Yes, she has been having it [sexual harassment] from a teacher. But it has stopped now.

(Household, Moyamba, Sierra Leone)

Other barriers to education: Pregnancy

Pregnancy of school girls was mentioned by respondents in the targeted communities. This was mainly due to girls engaging in sexual relationships with boys and men, with one respondent indicating that pregnancy occurs due to prostitution in return of money. While the majority indicated that girls' education gets disrupted when pregnant, they also noted that girls are welcomed back to school after delivery. In one case a parent stated that s/he will take care of the baby when the daughter delivers and is ready to go back to school.

One of my daughters has given birth to a child so I want to be taking care of the baby while she is attending school.

(Household, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

However, a few respondents noted that girls do not go back to school, and provided different reasoning: Two respondents noted that the teachers and school officials will not allow girls to go back to school after delivery, but did not specify whether it was a commonly accepted practice or a school policy. In one case, a community leader noted that girls themselves will not be interested in going back to school after delivery;

They would be going to school, and then they become pregnant. The men in this community will impregnate the girls, after impregnating them they will abandon the girls after they become pregnant. That will be the end of the girl education, because after giving birth to their child even if we tell them to return to school they will refuse to go to school. That is destroying our girl child education in this community.

(Community leader, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Lack of qualified teachers

The issue of available qualified teachers was described in two ways; the first challenge reported was that some of the available teachers were not qualified, trained or accredited to teach. Secondly and less frequently reported was that some schools are generally understaffed. This was also referred to when describing the lack of government support in accrediting and approving teachers in order to attract them to their local schools and provide quality education. Lack of qualified teachers was generally described as a challenge and difficulty facing schools and affecting the quality of education provided, as this community leader noted:

Most schools lack good and qualified teachers to promote better education and some teachers fail to attend classes to lecture the students.

(Community leader, Kailahun, Sierra Leone)

Negative attitude towards girls' education

With regards to community's attitude towards girls' education, respondents noted that some members in their community did not positively perceive education for girls. This was described in many ways; primarily, respondents noted that some members in their community believed that when sending girls to school, especially when they send them away for secondary and upper level schools outside the community, they will become pregnant. This, as they described, made some people in their communities refrain from sending their daughters to school and hold a bad attitude towards girls' education.

Secondly and equally mentioned was that investing in girls education is a waste of time and resources mainly because girls will get married, with one mentioning that even if girls finish university they will get married and will not be allowed to work, therefore their education will be a waste.

A few incidents were also reported where respondents noted that some members of their communities prefer marrying the off their daughters and receive dowry or use them for work and contribute to the livelihoods of the household, or use them for housework instead of sending them to school.

One community leader described the problem in school girls pregnancy which might contribute to the perception of some members of the community's towards his or her attitude towards girls' education, s/he noted:

They [girls] came here with nothing but pregnancy. So because of that people think that it is a waste of time to send their daughters.

(Community leader, Moyamba, Sierra Leone)

In describing the perception that the girls determined future is marriage, and therefore, investing in her education is not worthwhile, one caregiver noted:

Some people do not want their girls to be educated because they said even if a girl is educated she end up in her husband's house because of this they don't want to waste their money and resources on the girls.

(Household, Kenema, Sierra Leone)

One caregiver noted that while some members in the community believe that girls' education is not worthwhile, they support boys' education and would invest in it:

They fail to send most of their girl child to school and feel that sooner or later they will marry. So they will not try to spend much money on them. Therefore they prepare to send the boys to school than the girls

(School official, Kono, Sierra Leone)

Contrasting these views, one respondent noted that education and sending girls to school is beneficial, and that is because sex for girl will be avoided.

I: Do you have any opinion that you think will help a girl child in education?

R: The main reason is to avoid sex.

(Community leader, Kenema Sierra Leone)

- Specific to ethnic groups:

Two respondents identified two ethnic minorities that they believe have negative attitude towards girls' education and do not send their girls to school. These, as reported are the Temne and the Fula and that, as reported, is because these groups do not believe in educating girls, and that they would rather marrying them off.

R: The Temne are the least likely to send their girls to school.

I: Why is this?

R: Because they believe that girls should not be in school, they say girls should get married and be with her husband.

(School official, Moyamba, Sierra Leone)

Other interesting content

In the targeted communities, about three school officials and one caregiver noted that boys are more intelligent and faster learner than girls, without describing how or why they believe so. As this school official stated:

As for the boys they are more brilliant than the girls, although we have some girls who are cleverer but we can rate them as 60% for boys and 40% goes to girls.

(School official, Moyamba, Sierra Leone)

Project Brief – IRC

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in IRC's targeted communities in the three provinces Bandundu, Kasai Oriental and Katanga in DRC. In these communities respondents primarily noted that the common challenge to households is poverty. This was a challenge that affected households' ability to support itself, but also the ability to afford school fees and school material for children. Related to poverty, respondents frequently reported a challenge in maintaining a source of livelihoods for the household which includes employment and income generating activities. Respondents also noted that violence which included severe incidents such as rape was also a challenge facing girls and their education. Other barriers to education and learning discussed by respondents were related to the quality of the school and the teaching provided, early marriage and pregnancy, negative perceptions of girls education and schooling in general and others that will be discussed.

In contrast to these barriers, respondents noted positive issues within their communities with regards to women's role and girls' aspirations. For example it was often reported that there is at least one influential woman within the community who plays an important role and who stands as a role model for young girls; Also, when asked about their future, girls often described their high aspirations and stated that they would want to finish their education and be nurses or teachers.

In terms of marginalisation, very few respondents in IRC's targeted communities identified girls that are particularly marginalised. These few respondents noted that these marginalised girls are disabled children, girls from families with many siblings, orphaned girls, pregnant girls, girls that reached mid-teenage years (15 and above), girls from polygamous families and girls of divorced parents.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

In IRC's targeted communities poverty was reported as the main challenge facing households. Respondents reported that general and acute poverty affects children's wellbeing, their enrolment in schools and their ability to learn. This, as described, is because poverty operates in ways that affect households' ability to meet school cost, the ability to meet food needs, and pushes girls to opt for paid jobs or early marriage instead of enrolling in schools.

Others do not do it [send girls to school] due to lack of resources. You find children of five, six, seven or even eight years old in the quarter without going to school.

(Community Leader, Bandundu, DRC)

Some respondents also linked poverty and its consequences to the source of income or source of livelihood of the household. These respondents noted that especially for farmers, seasonal changes affect their farming and their crops produce, which in turn affects their resources and their ability to meet food needs or school cost.

Challenges in meetings school cost

Respondents often referred to poverty and the limited financial means of households as the first and most important barrier to children's enrolment and attendance in schools. This, as noted, is mainly because they are unable to pay school fees- in the case where school is not for free-, or meet other school related cost such as uniform, contribution to teacher's salary, afford learning material or transportation cost.

The inability to meet school cost was reported to affect attendance in multiple ways; not enrolling children in school at all; dropping out completely; delay in enrolment; enrolling some children and leaving others out; disruption in attendance as attendance is conditional to paying the required periodic fee instalment; or repetition of classes as students are not allowed to sit in for their final exams if they do not pay the fees.

Also, few respondents noted that their primary worry in life is their ability to meet school cost in order to continuously send their children to school. Others also noted that although they send their children or some of their children to school, they do struggle very hard to do so because of the lack of resources available to the household. This, as described by respondents, indicates that although poverty is severe, educating children is a strong aspiration for caregivers, driving them to find coping strategies to fulfil it.

In my life I am most worried by lack financial means to educate my children. We are working in vain, with many difficulties; we don't earn anything.

(Household, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

With regards to learning, respondents discussed how poverty and the lack of resources affect their ability to provide their children with high quality education. According to these caregivers, this is because they are not able to enrol the children in schools that provide such education due to the cost of these schools or the related cost such as transportation cost or accommodation if the school is far from their community.

Limited resources as described in IRC's targeted communities, is reported to have special impact on certain girls. These are either girls that are from larger families (with many siblings), where enrolment of all children becomes impossible with the limited available resources. As described by one school official when asked about difficulties in enrolling girls:

At the beginning of the school year for example, parents are in financial difficulties, because a parent can have six or seven children to enrol in school. They are often in difficulty purchasing school uniforms, copybooks, pens, and other documents for one, two, up to the sixth child. It is really hard. This is why I see some parents sending only some children to school and others stay home for the lack of necessary resources."

(School official, Katanga, DRC)

While generally poverty and its impact on education appeared to affect both boys and girls, about three respondents in IRC's targeted communities specifically described the gendered difference within this barrier, and stated that poverty has a special impact on girls (and not boys). These respondents noted that the inability to pay for school fees and related cost leads caregivers and heads of household to prioritise the education of boys over girls, as this school official in Katanga noted:

Groups in our community who do not send their daughters to school are those who lack the necessary funds as I told you, they prefer to send first the boys rather than girls. That is why the latter are abandoned to their sad fate.

(School official, Katanga, DRC)

Challenges in meetings household food needs

The ability to meet food needs was the second most frequently mentioned challenge to households in IRC's targeted communities. Although very few respondents discussed how the inability to meet food needs affects children's education, they often described it as a major challenge and a priority that they need to fulfil leaving the schooling of children unattained.

"Poverty makes things tough for families to subscribe their daughters at school, you cannot starve and send daughters to school".

(Household, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Poverty enforcing alternatives to schooling

Poverty and the inability of the household to meet its basic needs is reported to push girls to drop out of school and find alternatives to schooling, or be encouraged by their families to find alternatives. These alternatives appear to be either marriage, where a girl is perceived as no longer a responsibility to the household, or finding jobs where they are able to earn income and support the family.

One respondent, a community leader, described how families tend to push their girls to drop out of school and send them away and abroad to find jobs and contribute to the family's income.

There are parents who want their daughters to go abroad, to look for money to help the family; for them sending a girl to school is a waste of time. They want their girl to go to Angola or Tshikapa to help the family financially.

(Community leader, Bandundu, DRC)

One respondent, a teacher, described how poor households opt for girls to get married rather than enrol at school because of their limited resources.

Here if parents do not send their children to school, this is due to the lack of funds and especially if the girl child reaches the age of marriage, the parents prefer marrying her.

(School official, Katanga, DRC)

Issues with employment and livelihood resources

Respondents in IRC's targeted communities often described unemployment and the ability to generate enough income or accumulate resources for the household as a main barrier to education, especially to enrolment and attendance in school. Related to the previously discussed barriers, respondents often noted that lack of jobs and a sustainable source of livelihood affects the ability of families to meet basic needs of their children and caregivers especially food, but it also affects their ability to meet the school cost. As one school teacher noted:

What prevents parents from sending daughters to school is lack of job in the [village]. Parents are jobless; subscribing children to school means being able to pay fees each month but if parents are jobless, children will not go to school.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

The second most frequently mentioned challenge related to employment and the source of livelihood is that many households rely on farming to make ends meet. However, farming is reported to entail many difficulties, and in most cases, it does not generate enough revenue to fulfil the basic needs of the household or enrol children in schools. More specifically, the inability to purchase fertilisers is perceived by respondents as a challenge to improving crops produce and therefore the revenue. Also, the seasonal fluctuation of rain is reported to represent a challenge for families in maintaining a stable source of livelihood which would allow them to enrol their children in schools. As described by a community leader in Katanga:

As we are unemployed here, the only business we have that generates the income is the field, which is complicated during the rainy season...Families become incapable of paying the school fees, so the children stay home without schooling.

(Community leader, Katanga, DRC)

Respondents in IRC's targeted communities also reported the presence of corruption and the unfair distribution of resources and opportunities amongst community members leading to poverty and deprivation. This was described in a number of ways; the control of resources and wealth by the rich, the seizure of NGOs and government donations by certain groups; and the allocation of employment opportunities to certain people with connections. One household member made an explicit link between these challenges and the ability to enrol children in school, he noted:

The few jobs that exist here, not everybody has access to that except if you belong to a particular tribe or group. Parents don't send their children to school due to the lack of necessary funds.

(Household, Katanga, DRC)

Reports of violence

Rape and sexual assault

The most frequent form of violence mentioned by respondents in IRC's targeted communities is sexual assault and rape targeting young girls. Often, respondents noted that it is still a common issue within their community; with two respondents providing accounts of rape and sexual violence of their own daughters and caretakers. The two separate rape incidents were reported to have targeted an eight year old girl and a 15 year old girl in the communities, and were described to greatly affect the physical and psychological wellbeing of the girls.

A community leader, whose daughter was a victim of sexual violence, noted that this often takes place when girls are sent to fetch water at night, and concluded in saying:

It is all too common and many children are raped.

(Community leader, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Some respondents indicated that rape and sexual assault and harassment often take place within the school environment, where teachers and headmasters themselves are the perpetrators. This, as reported, affects girls in multiple ways. For the victims, and in addition to the physical and psychological impact these incidents have on

their wellbeing, it was also reported that these rape incidents sometimes end up with pregnancies. It was also noted that these incidents have negative impact on girls' enrolment as they, or their parents become discouraged from enrolling them in schools.

Respondents also reported that teachers and school headmasters intimidate girls to engage in romantic relationships with them in return for good grades. This appears to result in girls engaging in those relationships, or discouraging them from attending school.

In some schools, it happens that a teacher or a school authority fall in love with a girl, if the girl did not like and happen to need subscription in the school of the man who loved her...The girl will be frustrated and think that the guy will not admit her in his school because she refused to be in love with him...If the girl hears that in that school teachers and headmasters and principals rape girls, she will be frustrated and will not go to that school.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Crime and political related violence

Less frequently reported was violence that resulted from political disagreement, crime and robbery. Respondents described these cases as entailing physical attacks and armed attacks which resulted in chaotic situations and affected communities at large. In one case, a school teacher described how the latest elections resulted in severe violence, and had tremendous impact on both girls' and boys' education where girls were subject to sexual violence resulting in refraining from seeking education.

In [village], the most serious conflicts happened during the election period. We experienced improbable things, no consideration of human life, what may be your statute if you are caught by the opposite party with objects in connection with elections; you are simply stoned, in some villages around [village] people even used guns to kill others" In describing the impact on children he later noted; "Young people are used for fighting; young girls are used for sex, for carrying things, they are raped in camps, then it causes two situations: boys retract from going to school; girls do not even want to hear about going to school because they become the target of conflict makers.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Concerns with the quality of school facilities

Respondents, especially school staff members but also caregivers in IRC's targeted communities described a number of problems with school facilities, particularly the lack of desks and furniture, the insufficient number of classrooms and the quality of school buildings.

Lack of desks and other furniture

The lack of chairs and desks was frequently reported across IRC project areas as the main issue with regards to school facilities. School staff and caregivers expressed concerns and reported that students in the local schools are forced to share desks and benches or sit on the floor when attending class. A few respondents have explicitly highlighted the negative impact on the students' ability to learn. As one teacher noted:

The great difficulty is especially in my room, I do not have benches, pupils sit on ground, and they have great difficulty for writing.

(School official Bandundu, DRC)

In a few cases, members of school staff reportedly attempted to alleviate the problem and enhance the learning environment by taking matters in their own hands and building their own school furniture. In other cases, students were also reported to bringing their own chairs to schools.

We are trying to make benches in bamboos and there are students who bring their chairs from their homes and we are doing our best to buy desks.

(School official, Bandundu, DRC)

School building and classrooms

Respondents also reported problems with the quality of the school building and the classroom capacity. In some cases, respondents noted that classrooms at some schools were non-existent or barebones structures with no roof

or with leaking roofs. Others reported lack of classroom capacity where classes are overcrowded. In these cases, there were often reports of poorly built structures in a state of disrepair, requiring urgent renovation.

Children are more in number but few schools. Some schools do not have roofs or seep.

(School official, Katanga, DRC)

Some respondents, especially teachers, described the negative impact of such problems and poor conditions on students' ability to learn. One teacher noted:

As in our country we have few official or public schools and girls who go to those schools do not study in good conditions. They are glutted in one classroom.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Other barriers to education: early marriage and pregnancy

This barrier addresses two main challenges that were reported to affect girls' education in IRC targeted communities. These are pregnancy and early marriage which also includes peer pressure and girls' preference to marriage.

Early marriage

Respondents identified three main challenges resulting in early marriage of girls and their dropping out of school. Firstly, they referred to tradition and common norms within their communities to marry girls in the teenage year, most mentioned the age of 15 years old, with one respondent mentioning the age of 10 years old:

When many girls reach their 15th birthday, they get married. No school. Today, a girl cannot even reach her 15th birthday, because she gets married when she is 10.

(Community leader, Katanga, DRC)

Secondly, and less frequently mentioned, was the reference to girls' interest in marriage and the peer pressure they were under to drop out of school and get married. In describing her own experience with her daughter, one mother noted:

I told my daughter that she should study, she refused because all girls of her age at the time she was 17 had already taken in marriage. She said if we refused her husband she was going to lose.

(Household, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Thirdly, and referred to by two respondents, is the issue of girls romantic and sexual involvement with boys and teachers, which, as described, leads concerned parents to marry their daughters at a young age to protect them.

There are in some schools, young teachers whose some parents do not trust. They prefer marrying their emancipated daughters to responsible men to exposing them to those young teachers ill-intentioned.

(Household, Katanga, DRC)

Pregnancy

A couple of respondents referred to pregnancies of young girls or the fear of pregnancies as a challenge to enrolling girls in school. One community leader for example, specifically noted that pregnant girls are not allowed to attend school and classes with the other girls because of fears that these pregnant girls would set up a bad example for the rest of the girls:

Pregnant girls cannot go to school because they inculcate bad ideas in the other girls and contribute to misbehaviour of others who are not pregnant. I've never seen them in my area, but if they happen to come here, they can go to school like others.

(Community leader, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Another community leader in a different village described the parents' fear to send their daughters to school because, as described, teachers often engage in sexual relationships with girls and get them pregnant. This, as noted, discourages caregivers from sending their daughters to school.

Now a teacher is getting engaged to his own pupil...Later on you hear that the girl is made pregnant by the same teacher. These kinds of things discourage us and do not push us to send our daughters to school. All this happens because teachers are not worthy like those of our times.

(Community leader, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Low community support for girls' education

Respondents in IRC targeted communities noted that some members within their communities do not support girls' education. Most frequently, respondents noted that these members of their community perceive marriage as the main priority for girls and that being housewives is their future role, therefore enrolling them in schools and investing in their education is not worthwhile. This attitude, as two specifically noted, is particularly reinforced if the household has limited resources and/ or many children. In these cases, it was reported that boys' education is prioritised over girls' education as boys are expected to support their parents in the future while girls will be married off and move to other families.

When you have a lot of boys and girls enough, first we privilege the boy, because the girl, we know that at a certain age, she will be married. Now after spending the money, the girl is married. The boy that can help, it is like someone who is considered in the family.

(Household, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Less frequently mentioned is the general negative perception towards girls and their potential. One respondent for example, noted that girls are less capable of learning, and that if they were sent to school, they might become pregnant and drop out, therefore, investing in her education is also not worthwhile. In explaining why parents are not eager to pay for the girls' education, one school official stated:

You will notice that boys study better than girls. Girls do not have that art of studying even completing their studies... A girl can become pregnant and stop her studies.

(School official, Bandundu, DRC)

Finally, and as discussed in the challenges with pregnancies barrier, some caregivers also perceive teachers as irresponsible and misbehaving, as they are reported to engage in romantic and sexual relationships with their female students. In describing the perception towards teachers, one respondent noted:

There are in some schools, young teachers whose some parents do not trust. They prefer marrying their emancipated daughters to responsible men to exposing them to those young teachers ill-intentioned. This is one of the reasons that pushes some parents to keep their daughters at home. There are some teachers who abuse the girls at school. Some bedrooms of the boarding school have become hotel bedrooms.

(Household, Katanga, DRC)

Negative perception of relevance of schooling

In contrast to the previously discussed barrier 'negative attitude toward girls' education', this barrier (which is less frequently mentioned) discusses the attitude towards education for both girls and boys. While in the gendered barrier it was noted that opposers of girls' education acknowledged the value of education but questioned its relevance to girls, this barrier discusses the incidents where the value of education (for both girls and boys) is unrecognised and discredited by respondents.

A few respondents in IRC targeted communities reported incidents where members of their communities did not see the general benefit of education, and therefore it is not considered as a priority to their children. This, as described, is due to the lack of awareness regarding the value of education and the benefits it holds. In describing the indifference towards education, one caregiver noted that women in his/ her community are preoccupied by other issues such as shopping and food rather than children's education. Therefore, children, both girls and boys, are not sent to school. Two respondents also described the indifference of some parents towards their children's education, and the prioritisation of work and earning money. Therefore, these parents, as noted, instead of sending their children to school, they are sending them to earn an income.

The parents' negligence, they are not interested in schooling their children. They do not see any importance in send them to school; they prefer sending them to dig diamond.

(Community leader, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

A school official also described the lack of motivation of children themselves to go to school, and stated that children perceive education and going to school as a waste of time. These children, as described, are attracted by the money that they could earn, and are opting for that choice instead of attending schools. This, as he stated, results in the low attendance rate in the local school.

You know that our school is located in township where the schooling rate is low, and in this township many children think that going to school is a waste of time. Instead, they should go to look for money in a mine.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Low government capacity to support

Many respondents in IRC targeted communities referred to the government's role in providing education and encouraging girls' education in their communities. The role of the government was identified in multiple ways: providing salaries for teachers, supporting poor families in their children's education, supporting the school infrastructure and also raising the community members' awareness about education and encouraging enrolment. In addition to recognising the role of the government, respondents also expressed a disappointment in the failure of the government to take up its responsibility

The government has a big responsibility for daughters and sons of the country. As in our country we have few official or public schools and girls who go to those schools do not study in good conditions. They are glutted in one classroom ... This is a very important question and I think that the government has a great responsibility, let him take his responsibility because education is his business.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Environmental disruptions

A few respondents in IRC project areas described seasonal variations in rains or dry periods which affect households' ability to support themselves. A few respondents noted that these environmental disruptions affect the infrastructure of their household as well as the streets in their villages. One respondent described how flooding destroyed their household goods. While most respondents did not describe the impact of these environmental disruptions on schooling, one caregiver and one school staff did express a negative impact. The caregiver expressed his/ her concern and fear for the safety and security of her/ his daughter especially in the rainy season, as the girl has to walk back home at night during heavy rain and storms.

Another respondent, a school official, specifically described the ways in which the rainy season can negatively affect children's ability to attend school, as the classrooms cannot sufficiently keep out rain, and pupils have difficulty getting to school through the flooding and mud.

Schools have many difficulties, including school infrastructure are good for securing children during the rainy season and cannot accommodate a large number of pupils. Another difficulty is about the children who often come to class late especially when it rains and they could not even come to class."

(School official, Katanga, DRC)

Concerns with the quality of teaching

Following the barrier 'concerns regarding school facilities', the second most frequently mentioned issue with regards to school matters in DRC targeted areas is quality of teaching. Respondents reported non-satisfaction with the quality of teaching provided in their local schools, with a few providing evidence for that. For example, some respondents referred to the poor learning outcomes of students as evidence, and noted that students can reach a certain grade without meeting its requirements.

Reading for example, many girls do not know how to decipher words, verbs and sentences... This is due to the quality of teaching; A pupil who is in the 4th grade, if he is not capable of deciphering letters, this means that he did not have solid basic education.

(School official, Katanga, DRC)

In trying to identify the underlying causes for the poor teaching quality, respondents identified a number of issues which can be grouped in two categories, one related to the teachers themselves, and the second is related to the

teaching material and resources available to them. With regards to the latter, and in addition to the general learning and teaching basic material such as school textbooks, one school official noted that the school lacks the necessary equipment which enables students to apply the knowledge they gain, especially in technical training.

We organise technical sections, and this means we should have appropriate materials, yet we do not have all the required equipment for a technical training. For instance for general mechanic we need an equipped workshop, we need to have the tour, a fitting work-shop equipped with vices, files ... but we do not have these workshops ... It means we are more theorists than practitioners.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

With regards to issues related to teachers, respondents noted that teachers' absenteeism, their poor compensation or no compensation, and their incompetence; are all factors that affect their teaching quality.

The good of school is only when you pay fees, then teachers do efforts to teach pupils. If you don't pay for one month, they lose their patience.

(Household, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

While most respondents discussed the poor teaching quality as affecting girls and boys similarly, one community leader specifically noted that it actually resulted in lower educational outcomes for girls in particular.

The quality of teaching here, after the survey that was conducted among the pupils here, the educational standards are very low especially for girls.

(Community leader, Katanga, DRC)

Other interesting barriers:

Disability and special needs

In IRC targeted communities, some respondents reported a negative perception towards people with mental and physical disability within their communities. In most of these cases, the respondents were parents of children with disability or community leaders, and described the ill-treatment of community members and children of disabled people and children. Two caregivers stated that their disabled children do go to school, but that other children humiliate them and bully them and in one case, physically attack the disabled boy. In describing the girls' experience at school, one parents stated:

She is victim of mockery in her classroom especially when she cannot answer the teacher's questions....There is something wrong with her and her friends consider it like a default, [GIRL] often leaves her mouth open, and that is why her friend laugh at her.

(Household, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

In one case, a teacher described the community's negative perception of disabled people and described their social isolation and inability to access public services:

But we see only physical handicapped people like dumb people who do not get integrated in public service.

(School official Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Other marginalised children

Two school teachers identified children that are particularly marginalised, and face difficulties in enrolling in schools and learning. These children, as identified, are orphaned children, children of divorced parents, children of polygamous families, children of parents who travel or are busy in their income generating activities. One teacher noted:

When the child is orphan, he has problems to learn. We have the same difficulties in case of divorce; children are left alone, the parent who obtains the care of children is busy doing his own activities. If the child happens to live with the stepmother, she will not care about his education. Parents who travel much can prevent their children from going to school.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

And in identifying how children of polygamous families are marginalised, one teacher described the financial difficulties they face which negatively affects their enrolment in schools:

But I can say the less likely [to send their children to school] are families where you find many children, polygamous families; those men who are married to more three or four wives, within ten years, they have 30 children. How much money do they earn? That is the problem.

(School official, Kasai Oriental, DRC)

Project Brief – Save the Children Ethiopia

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in the Save the Children project areas in Ethiopia. The most commonly mentioned barriers to education in the Save the Children's project areas are migration, relating to the rural pastoralist lifestyle common in the Afar region of Ethiopia, and a girl's domestic duties where they are needed at home to help take care of siblings, livestock and to go to the market. Frequently, respondents also reported that the poor infrastructure, in particular water, presents a barrier to education as households must migrate in search of water during times of scarcity and when school facilities are poor. Droughts or storms were also mentioned as barriers, as they exacerbate already difficult conditions and often lead to household migrations in search of water.

Commonly, respondents also reported that poverty prevents them from being able to afford the cost of school, including uniforms and textbooks, affecting girls' ability to attend school. They also described violence as a barrier, most often characterised in terms of inter-tribal conflict, but also in terms of domestic violence and sexual harassment.

At the schools themselves, respondents noted that there are insufficient numbers of trained teachers, that the school buildings are poor leading to overcrowded classrooms. Respondents also noted that the quality of teaching itself is poor, tied to a lack of textbooks and teaching materials.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Migration and mobility of pastoralist households

Challenges faced by pastoralists

Save the Children is targeting regions which are primarily populated with pastoralist households, who migrate with their animals in search of grazing land and water with the seasons. Many respondents described the challenges that children from such families attending school face, as these migrations disrupt their attendance in school, forcing them to frequently change schools or drop-out.

These types of challenges manifest in several different ways. Most directly, regular migrations force children to frequently transfer between schools, miss days and sometimes drop-out altogether.

Because of the pastoralist nature of the community, they often move from place to place for searching grazing land. This creates lots of students drop-out from school. They were enrolled in the first month and probably will stay for two or three months. In the fourth month their family moved for searching drinking water and students will follow their parents.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Respondents from pastoralist households themselves described the lifestyle in similar terms:

Every year after the rainy season, our cattle's get a problem of grazing land... We move from place to place when drought happens in search of grazing lands.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

While the majority of respondents described the issues this presents in terms of children's ability to attend school regularly, a few also noted that it specifically affects learning as well. Frequent migrations and children that often transfer between schools also affect teacher's ability to complete their lesson plans and teach a full year's curriculum.

Many students drop-out school at drought seasons. So it hinders the teaching learning process. We can't perform as per our plan.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Relationship with rains and drought

Migrations are often described by respondents as being a result of droughts in a community, as described under the 'environmental disruptions' section of this brief. Pastoralist households migrate with their flocks in search of water and grazing fields:

Families' difficulties in this area are the problem of permanent settlement. Since they move with the changing season in search of rain their likelihood of being a resident at a specific place is very little. They move from place to place with their goats and cattle's. This is not a good life trend for their children's education.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

A school staff member explained how migration affects student enrolment:

For example, in relation with drought, the number of enrolled students becomes decrease and they migrate to other places.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Another community leader described the relationship between attendance, enrolment of children in school and rain in direct terms:

Families have much interest to send their children to school and they are sending their children to schools but sometimes families fail to do that because of the air condition. For example, if there is no rain in the area families are obliged to move to other place in search of food and pasture for their cattle, so that the rain has got direct influence on children's education.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Children needed to help support the household

A more specific issue is that children are often expected to take care of the flocks themselves, which makes it difficult to stay in one place or attend school regularly as they need to be watching their animals and helping to support their families.

There were a lot of students around who simultaneously are shepherds. When there is a shortage/ lack of grazing land for the animals (camels, cow mainly goats) they went to find food and water for the animals and themselves as a family since they lead pastoralist life style, which makes education difficult.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Similarly, a school official described the role children from pastoralist families can play in helping their household to make a living:

The problem of being displaced from place to place is one of the challenges that schools in this area are facing. Families do not settle at a specific place. Besides families can't afford to send their child to school as they want their child for keeping goats.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Long distance from home to school

In another case, a respondent noted that pastoralist households are often spaced quite a distance from one another, making the commute from home to school fairly long. This particularly affects girls, as they are more vulnerable to attack and fearful about walking such a long distance to and from school alone.

When we take the Afar people in general, they have a settlement problem, they are dispersedly populated, which has a negative effect for students not to come to school on time. Girls are also afraid to travel that long. Currently there are a lot of girls who come traveling many kilometres. Even if there are more girls who want to come to our school and enrol, not many girls come to our school due to problem of settlement.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Efforts being made to help pastoralists settle permanently

However, schools in these areas are making some efforts to retain students from pastoralist households, offering lunches in school and FAFA (food rations) to households who enrol their children in school. These incentives help to encourage and enable pastoralist households to remain in one location for longer and enrol their children in school. It is described by respondents as effective at accomplishing this.

We have FAFA. I said there is a diet /food/ for our children. As we have been taking FAFA, we will not go far looking for another settlement area. We are now limited to Gewane and Leas. We have also access to education in our village. If any problem happened, government is ready to support us. Hence, expect for some few dropouts I have not seen and heard any school break ups due to a problem of not having permanent residence.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

A school official in the same community also described the effects of the FAFA and school lunch program, which has resulted in the women and children from pastoralist households settling permanently to be near a school, while the men from the family continue to make a living by migrating with their animals:

There was also a support given to help these families settle in one area... We make mothers stay where the school is with school children so that they can't be out of school and fathers shall go and come as per the demand of the condition.

(School leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Similar efforts, enabled by the government and/or the community were also described by respondents in several communities in the Afar region.

One respondent noted that this assistance also presents difficulty for some households, though, as they must then consider how to best care for their children as they attend school while the rest of the family continues to migrate:

At the drought time, if we can get some kind of help from government, we can stay here and there is no reason not to send the children's to school, the basic problem now is leaving our children here and moving from one place to another.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Significant household responsibilities

Prioritisation of household commitments over education

In these communities, it is widely perceived that education is not a priority for girls in comparison to domestic chores and responsibilities. Respondents reported that outside of marriage, house work and livelihoods support activities are more important responsibilities for girls than attending school. This was reported as a major obstacle to girls' enrolment and attendance. One school teacher noted:

Here as a culture sending girls to school is uncommon because girls have many responsibilities in the community. Girls and women have many responsibilities in household like constructing house, fetching water, cooking food, keeping animals and so on. Therefore, the community does not encourage girls to go to school.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Another school teacher in a different community also noted:

Except for some peoples who reside in urban area, most of the rural community groups have little understanding and demand on girls' enrolment. Both mother and father prefer to remain girls at home and to gather woods for them, shepherding their goats, to carry water etc.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

One respondent presented a rationale for parents who assign housework to girls and not boys by claiming that these parents see that girls are more serious and dedicated to maintaining livelihood assets such as goats: (note, this is also mentioned in 'Negative perceptions of the relevance of schooling' barrier):

Families face difficulties to send girls to school, firstly, because they believe girls are more effective to watch over their goats than boys. Boys are more careless and they let the goats on the field and leave

for playing and the goats are eaten by wild animals. On the contrary girls are serious on the matter and they watch over goats till return home. when they return from herding, they help their families by fetching water and baking "mufe" [which is] bread which is baked on the stone.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Another respondent had a similar perspective:

If we talk the truth they want their daughters to look after their cattle's rather than sending her to school. And if she gets older, they let her for a marriage.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Absenteeism on market days

In these communities, the issue of absenteeism is also common during market days. As in other communities, on market days parents travel to the market, leaving the children responsible for the household and the animals, which means that girls cannot attend school on those days. As one teacher commented:

Children, if they come on one day they will not the other day... This is mainly due to in this community there are days in which the society going out for a market and they mostly send their children to herding while the parents go to the market places.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

A community leader also confirmed:

In our area there is no any market place and this is a problem for the children to be enrolled. Their parents travel for a couple of days to get back to home from the market place. When the parents go to market, the elder girl takes the responsibility to handle home stuffs whichever is possible for her age. In this case the girl is forced to sacrifice her education.

(Community Leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Children needed at home to help with livestock

Respondents reported the community's nomadic lifestyle and its dependence on cattle and goats as their major (if not only) source of livelihood, as a major obstacle to education. A school teacher mentioned:

It is known that this community is nomad they are dependent on their livestock's and most of the time children are the one to carry this burden rather than enrolling in school. When the children get to age six or seven they start to shepherd the goats.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Another teacher from another community also stated:

The nature of their settlement is making their girls to be absent from school as they send them to goat keeping.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Poor school facilities and infrastructure

Challenges with water access and water security

Across all project areas water security and water access were universally stated as one the most common and severe barriers that students face in attending school. Many respondents described how they experienced frequent water shocks which they in turn had little capacity in adapting to or to mitigate the associated risks. As one school staff noted:

In the fourth month their family moved for searching drinking water and students will follow their parents. There is not even unsafe water that can be treated to purify and drink. It takes about one and half hour of walking even to get to river called Awash. Lack of water is the major challenge that unable student to continue their education sustainably.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Also interruption in water services such as water pipes breaking, water pumps stop functioning or the car that brings water having faulty batteries were all examples that respondents reported resulting in water scarcity at schools and preventing students from attending. Respondents described this as frequently interrupting student schedules for extended periods of time. One school staff noted:

But there exists only one water pump. After teaching for two to three months the water pump will stop. The reason might be the battery dies or any other reason. When such incidents are occurred we, teachers come to the town for two weeks or so, which will play a major role in decreasing quality of teaching in the school is the problem of water.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Respondents also described how school sanitation facilities, hygiene and unsafe water are the source of water borne diseases such as Cholera.

First, children are drinking this dirty water. After they drink, turgidity around their neck happens/occurs. This is our first main problem.

(Community leaders, Afar, Ethiopia)

Exacerbating the hygiene and sanitation issue, teachers described how the lack of water also resulted in students not being able to wash their hands during mealtime or after going to the toilet.

The water source is very far from this village even there are times when we face a real short age to cook the FAFA for students and for drinking for students themselves let alone washing hands during mealtime.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Several respondents stated that urgent help from the government was needed in order to ensure student attendance.

Other than this, we want the government to resolve our water accessibility issue and make us able to right of entry to clean water nearby, so students won't stop going to school.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Respondents also mentioned that students often walk very long distances to get to class, which combined with the lack of water availability in schools results either in girls being unable to attend classes or girls having problems concentrating as a result of dehydration:

There are students who come from very far away. They walk from one to three hours to get here. Some spend the night in their relative's home and when they reach school after a long walk they don't get water. It's going to be hard for them to be attentive and even to come to school.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Issues with school meal provision

A commonly stated need by respondents is that schools should provide meals or FAFA. Respondents described food as scarce in many project areas, noting that providing meals at schools would be a powerful incentive for households to send their children to school. However, when feeding programmes were in place at schools some respondents stated that food was not delivered consistently, leading to students going hungry.

The practice of providing food and oil aid to girls specifically, was noted by several respondents as being a major pull factor for many households to send their girls to school. However, respondents stated that when aid is stopped households would stop sending their girls to school.

Till now the region as well as the woreda put pressure and provide food oil aid in order to increase the number of girls who enrol. Due to the fact that families send their girls to school for search of food oil, they focus on counting those 17 days, the minimum requirement of getting the food oil. If this aid disrupts, the girls also get absent.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

This point was echoed by another respondent, who stated when the food programme was interrupted it resulted in dramatic decreases in student attendance:

For instance last year food program was interrupted. In the school semester, related to food program interruption, the number of students dramatically decreased.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Poverty

Inability to afford cost of school

The most commonly reported poverty-related obstacle to enrolment and learning for both girls and boys within these communities was meeting the school material requirements of the school, which are generally described as writing tools, stationery and textbooks.

The problem we face while thinking about sending or enrolling our children to school is expense for school materials like exercise books, pens.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Children may be absent from school when problem happens in affording teaching materials

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

A girl also expressed her attendance disruption:

Once up on a time, my pen was stolen at school and on the next I left from school because I don't have any pen to right at school.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

One teacher also noted:

There are lots of problems [in providing education]. Even families can't afford writing materials for their children.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

A few respondents noted that not having all school requirements and material affects the wellbeing of girls, their motivation to go to school and to learn:

Students have different economic background. There are girls who have a better economic background than my daughters. When they come up with fancy things, my girl feels a little bit jealous. For instance if they come with a better cloth, better shoe, better pen and exercise book than her, when she saw them with new things, she feel jealous. I don't have purchasing power for my girl to buy all that. So if anybody come and help those girls who are from a low income family the above things, it changes girls tendency to go to school and do better in school.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Shortages of food and water

After meeting school requirements, the second barrier which was most mentioned was shortage of food and water. It is perceived as major obstacle to children's (both girls and boys) attendance at schools as well as leaning.

Interviewer: What difficulties do schools face in providing education in this area?

Respondent: Scarcity of water, starvation, inability of teachers to find students in class because of the above reasons. These are the most critical problems that face the school not to provide best services to the society.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Another teacher described the issue of shortage of food for poor families:

There are lots of girls who have difficulties in school. There is a question of survival. If they deal with their breakfast they can't afford their dinner.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

A caregiver described how a better diet would increase a girl's performance in school:

Clothes and shoes should be prepared and we have to give diet food to eat. If she gets the above things, she will score better results in the school.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Violence

Conflict between tribes

The most common reports of violence in the project areas involved inter-tribal conflict. Some respondents noted that the inter-tribal conflict had to do with assets, such as livestock, while other respondents attributed the conflict to natural resources, primarily water and land. Still other respondents noted that the violence was directed at their tribe or family simply because they were of a different tribe than the perpetrators of violence.

One respondent from Afar region summarised the conflict between the different tribes as having gone on for many years over land and livestock. The respondent provided some insight into the extended conflict, primarily between the Afar and Issa and in some cases another tribe, the Oromo:

I heard that with Isas it started very long ago, even during my father's time, they shot each other and it continued during my life time too. Our population was large and it decreased because of the conflict. With Oromia the conflict started because of agricultural land. During drought period Afar's livestock get their feet in to Oromia's agricultural land. When the livestock damage the Oromia's property, they respond by killing or taking away the livestock from Afar. But with Isas, we are told starting from early age that they are our enemy. As a result, we develop so much hatred for them. The main reason for this is that there is a territory in zone 3, which both the Afars and Isas claim as their own. We Afars prefer dying on our land than retreating when the Isas come to expand their territory. Consequently, so many people died, lost their eyes, hands, legs, due to conflict with the Isas over time. However, in this year thanks to God we are in so much better condition. At least we got a break from unrest.

(Community Leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

A few respondents noted that school continued as usual even while fighting was occurring. However, other respondents noted that the inter-tribe violence or the fear of violence was a major barrier to student attendance. Violence, as reported, was a barrier to attendance even if it was not directed specifically at students. However, in many cases, violence and harassment was directed at students, especially girl students:

The conflict has an enormous impact on schooling as well as health care activities are concerned. They attacked two schools and two health centres, which had a big effect on the society to enrol their children. I used to know a student who lost his eye sight because of the attack. We tried our best to help him regain his eye sight; we went to Dessie [a city in Amhara region] hospital for the student to get treatment. The doctors said that the injury has also affected the boy's brain and made us to suffer a lot. We suffer a lot from this conflict. All in all schools are becoming the target of any conflict and communities are afraid of sending their children to school.

(Community Leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Moreover, one school teacher clearly stated how the tribes killed boys and men, which led families to dedicate the task of herding the animals to the girls, and consequently, not enrol or attend school:

You see there is a problem of sending girls to school by most of the families in this community. Families do send their girls to goat, and the ESA (Somali tribe) kills the boys. That's why girls are now days are being sent to keep goats. Though there is a recurring fight in this area, boys do not keep goats. It is the girls that keep goats. In the traditions of Afars, it is a taboo to kill or attack a woman or a girl. It is due to this reason most of the time that families do not send girls to school.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

In describing how the tribal conflict affected children's education, one school staff member noted:

Respondent: In a teaching learning process the conflict enforced for school dropouts. When the conflict started children terminate their class and follow their parents.

Interviewer: Are these problems happening frequently on the teaching learning process?

Respondent: Yes.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

In describing the worry about their children on their way to school from tribal conflict, one caregiver stated:

We all the time are worried of this. At times fathers are the one who safeguards our children while the go to school. If we want to change this problem we have to mobilise those men with their own gun so that the Esa's get rid of our territory and feel safe.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

One school staff also described the effect of the conflict on girls, teachers and the learning process. She described how teachers are forced to leave the community at times when groups of men attack the school to harass girls from the other clan. Teachers try to protect the girls.

Respondents occasionally used the term “gangster” in regards to the individuals who harassed or assaulted others, as is the case with some of the examples below:

Among the effects of conflict and violence, firstly, it put its effect on students. If there is such thing the students can't attend class appropriately. Secondly on teachers, they forced to evict the place. If there is violence or conflict teachers may be afraid for their life around there and forced to leave the place...Some gangsters, who originated from here, sometimes mistreat those who come from other ethnicity or clan. They want them to leave their places... Such a thing occur at least 3 or 4 times per year...Such conflict mostly arose when gangsters come in to school and want to take a girl forcefully from the class. At that time the teachers refuse to let the gangsters in, which led to conflict. The gangsters attempt to kick the teachers as well as take their knife out from their back and try to threaten them.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Domestic Violence

Although inter-tribal violence was the most commonly mentioned type of violence, some participants did mention other instances of violence that impacted attendance, albeit to a considerably lesser extent.

One school staff member noted the impact of domestic violence on student attendance outcomes, specifically noting how feuding family members led one of the teacher's girl students to take armed, violent action:

Because of the conflict that arose in her family between her mother and brother, she was trying her best to mediate. But the conflict was getting harder and harder. And the girl started to get upset. Finally she picked the gun and pointed on her to shot 3 times. By now she is in [LOCATION] general hospital taking her medical treatment. So if there is any quarrel between families' its effect goes beyond the house and affects many parts of the society [...] It has an impact on the learning process. When the girl is absent, the lesson that we used to give for that class were postponed. And her absence too is a problem for the school.

(School Staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Sexual harassment

A small number of respondents were concerned about sexual harassment in the community or on the way to and from school. One of the respondents reported that sexual harassment affected her decision to send the girl to school and also seemed to indicate that sexual harassment was frequent and commonplace:

Interviewer (I): Sometimes children can be harassed on their way to or from school by adults or other children. For example it can be verbal taunting or physical violence. Have you ever heard things like this happening in this area?

Respondent (R): There are people who hit them.

...I: How frequent do things this occur?

R: Most of the time, they occur frequently. The children are bitten.

I: Do things like this happen at school?

R: I have never heard such things happened in school.

I: How do these things hurt her?

R: It doesn't affect her much. It is sexual harassment. There is such kind of thing.

I: How does this hurt/affect the girls?

R: It doesn't affect them.

I: Okay, how do these things affect your decision of sending your daughter to school?

R: It affects my decision to some extent. I prefer her to stay home rather than attending school and being hit and sexually harassed.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Environmental disruptions

Seasonal disruptions, primarily in terms of droughts which affect pastoralist migration patterns and households' ability to support themselves (by damaging homes or schools) were commonly described by respondents in Save the Children project areas.

Challenges in terms of making a living during periods of drought were described by several respondents. One household described it in this way:

Besides, in times of drought, cattle and goats got weak and eventually die, and if there are some which survived the draught no one is willing to buy them. So these are the worst times.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

This same household described the damage caused by a storm to their home in this way:

Interviewer (I): How often does a natural disaster occur?

Respondent (R): Last year there was a storm and it was dangerous and destroyed our house into pieces.

(I): How often is it?

(R): Sometimes it happens only in rainy season.

(I): What do you do when this happens?

(R): We have nothing to do except collecting our demolished properties and woods to build new house.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Seasonal migrations

Several respondents directly described the link between these seasonal disruptions and children's ability to attend school. Pastoralist households (as discussed in the 'Migration and mobility' barrier), are reported to migrate with their herd in search of water during periods of drought. Several respondents noted that this results in children from these households dropping out of school as they relocate to a new area.

The seasonal migrations described by respondents in Save the Children project areas, with respect to the pastoralist communities, were primarily discussed in terms of causing children to drop-out of school to migrate with their families in search of better grazing lands and water in times of drought. One respondent also described the link between these migrations and learning outcomes, as children are forced to re-start the same grade level the next year, putting them behind the rest of their class and over age for their grade:

We are making an effort so that students stay while families move. But all of them do not stay. There are some who move with their family and if they do move they discontinue, if they discontinue, we cannot do anything but teach them the same class again next year.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Some communities are trying to address the issue of children having to drop-out because of migration. As one school staff reported:

We make discussions with the community. We have daily meal program for students from WFP. When the drought occurs, parents will move and we are trying to keep the students by feeding them here.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

These types of school feeding programmes are reported to try and help children and women stay in one place, while the men continue to move with their goats and cattle.

Respondents also described the issue in gendered terms, as one respondent noted that households which have a pre-existing scepticism towards the relevance of education for girls are less likely to enrol their girls in school after this type of migration:

The first problem is communities understanding about education. It is getting better these days though. What I mean by that is, after some time, students move to different places because of drought. Because of lack of knowledge they give their daughters to underage marriage. And they will not come to school if they get married.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

A household in a different woreda also noted that girls are more often asked to fetch water for the family. In times of drought therefore, when the nearest water source may be further away, girls' ability to attend school is reduced as their day is taken up with getting water.

There are many problems that girls face; there is a scarcity of water around this area. When that happens, mothers tend to send their daughters to fetch water.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Seasonal variations in income due to drought

Households also reported the difficulties they face supporting themselves during times of severe drought, where they are unable to buy sufficient food for their household, let alone pay school fees for their children to attend school.

Apart from education I also worry about natural disasters, flood, storm, and drought. These things occur almost frequently. When these disasters occurred, we lost our cattle, so it drives us unable to make our living. So it is also my worry in my life. Like I told you, we depend our lives mainly on cattle, and if drought strikes the area, there will be a shortage of rain, which is the most important component for the cattle's to live. If there is no rain, grasses won't grow, if no grasses our cattle are going to die. If they die we will not have anything left to buy pencil and exercise book to our daughters. The worst scenario could happen in our life if the scarcity of rain is severed. We may reach to the stage in which the family can't able to feed itself. So I worry most about the situation every now and then.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Another community leader also described how the search for water for the animals especially during drought, and for markets to sell animals and provide food, represents a challenge for children's education:

In this area there is a severe drought so in order to feed our children we have to travel so far to find a market to sell our animals. Because of the above reason we are forced to be mobile, we move from one place to another in search of a market and water and food for our animals. So this makes it difficult for our children to attained school. It's so hard to attend school while you are starving, so the only option that they got is to drop the school and wait till something happens. The only season when this area gets rain is in the summer in which schools are closed for a break.

(Community Leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Low community support for girls' education

This project targets communities in Afar region, where early marriage through a practice called 'absuma' is practiced. Respondents noted that *absuma* is embedded in local culture and commonly practiced; preventing girls from continuing to attend school once they reach puberty. In many cases, respondents noted that marriage is seen to be a higher priority for older girls than education.

Marriage prioritised over education

Early marriage was frequently due to *absuma* which is the practice of marrying off a girl to a male relative, or as one teacher explained:

Absuma means cousins. The girl will marry her uncles' [her mothers' brother] son. Absuma means the guy that is going to marry the girl. So it is up to him to decide whether she goes to school or not.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

The respondent went on to describe how, once an *absuma* is chosen, that the male relative from then on decides how the girl's education will proceed:

The parents will choose who the "Absuma" is and after that it will be the Absuma's responsibility to pass decisions on the girls' education and pretty much her life.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Other respondents also noted that the practice of *Absuma* impacted school attendance throughout the Afar region:

Look, not only my region, the whole area in Afar region has its own problem regarding girls' education. Until their age turns fourteen or fifteen, most families send their girls to school. However, when they reach seventeen or eighteen, a girl marries her predetermined husband in a culture. Girls' father and mothers get lost with the ambition of getting some wealth by letting their girls through the 'Absuma', culture that forces the girls irrespective of their will. It is in such a culture and trend that 'Absumas' [predetermined husbands] get girls out of the school when their age reaches seventeen or eighteen.

(Community Leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

The community leader went on to indicate that families and parents do not oppose girls' education, nor does the government or religion, but that the cultural practice of *absuma* does inhibit attendance. This is further discussed in the section on 'Attitude towards girls' education' barriers.

A school staff member mentioned that, beyond early and forced marriage, another issue that girl students faced was female circumcision:

Especially here for girls, there is early marriage, forced marriage and female circumcision. They don't understand these problems, but if they were educated they can protect themselves.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

When discussing communities' attitude towards girls' education, most respondents reported that the communities do not value education and prioritise marriage over girls' education. This is described as a major obstacle to education:

Yes, they do say 'what is the benefit of education for a girl after all' they say it is better for her if she gets married than going to school.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

The same respondent also noted that girls could be married off so the family could receive a dowry:

It is the poorer group of the community that faces difficulty to send children to school. Those families who do not have as such a serious problem as the poor ones have no problem in sending their children to school. If a husband with some wealth asks their economical problem they immediately let the girl to get married and receive the endowment.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Community does not value education

More generally, aside from marriage, respondents less frequently mentioned the general lack of awareness about the importance of education for girls:

Because of lack of knowledge they give their daughters to underage marriage. And they will not come to school if they get married. So the main challenge is lack of understanding and underage marriage.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

A few respondents noted that some community members perceive girls' education as useless and that it will not bring positive change to the community, so, it is not important:

The community has no good attitude for girls' education. They thought that a girl can't reach anywhere and any level even if she is learned.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

There are also families who believe whether their daughters enrol or not, it is not going to bring anything important to their lives. So it is the difference of attitude that is in between those who want to send their children to school and those who don't want.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Don't see value of education, for boys or girls

Some respondents noted that households in the communities, who rely primarily on livestock, tend to emphasise the children's role in taking care of the animals and see those skills as more important than formal education. These descriptions reflect the perception that schooling and education is not relevant for a person's life, and will not make a difference:

They believe that education can't change someone's life and they prefer their children to look after their goats, camels and cattle. This is also another problem that faces schools.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

One school teacher noted that even education for boys is not valued.

They do not believe that girls bring change by education. Even for boys, they are very small in number who went to grade 5 up until now starting from the beginning of the school.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Lack of qualified teachers or absenteeism

Lack of teachers

Many respondents reported a lack of teachers, which seemed to be a common issue at many schools. Although this may have implications the quality of teaching, it was not however explicitly stated how it affects the students:

Yes, all the eleven schools share the problem of lack of teachers. Because of the distance from the Woreta to Kebele, teachers come and will stay for a month or two. In 2009 or 2010, our school finished the school year with six teachers...In fact in 2011, I was the only person serving as teacher and school administrator for the whole school year.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

At times the lack of teachers results in multi-grade classes which increases issues of educational quality and learning:

We just send them to school. In this area, in rural areas, the teachers don't come on a regular manner or basis.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Teachers appear to be underpaid and undervalued which makes becoming a teacher not always an appealing prospect:

The teachers are not happy by their work. They do not have any financial freedom. At this time they do not have enough salary, they don't even support themselves let alone their families.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

In the Afar region there are high turnover rates for teachers due to lack of water, access to health care and transportation:

As I told you before there is no pure water for drink, lack of transportation and absence of health facility are also challenges. Because of this there are so many health problems such as diarrhoea and malaria...With those complicated reason teachers leave the school.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Similarly:

In this area, in rural areas, the teachers don't come on a regular manner or basis. That is why they don't receive their lessons properly.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

In certain places schools are located far from where teachers live. This causes issues with absenteeism and high turnover rates:

Distance from Woreta [District level] to Kebele [Municipality level] and lack of transportation are major problems that hold teachers from going to school on regular/daily basis.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Additionally, there seems to be a wide-ranging issue with getting teachers to attend rural schools, where frequent absenteeism is cited as a major problem. Water scarcity was also cited as a reason for frequent absenteeism in certain areas.

Teacher absenteeism

As discussed, respondents frequently cited the issue of absent teachers. This leads to intermittent learning at best, and long periods of time can go by between teachers attending school:

They don't come to school on a regular basis. They come whenever they feel like. It can be once in a week.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

The frequent absenteeism also discourages households to send their children to school when they instead could be helping out the family:

For the sake of our cattle and goats and the fact that teachers come once or twice a week we are not that interested to send our daughters to school.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Potential students also become discouraged when they asked older students if there are any teachers, which is not always the case:

The other, who left at home asked those who go to school if there was a class, and there was not any class – [resulting in] all of them don't want to go to school again.

(Community leader, Afar, Ethiopia)

Issues with quality of teaching

Quality in relation to teaching methods

The most frequently commented issue by respondents in relation to teaching quality in the Save the Children's project areas was how teachers carry out lessons. A couple of households mentioned that they lack good follow up of student performance but in these cases there was no additional information provided about how this affected educational outcomes or girls in particular.

Last year there was a gap. They were not good in their style of student follow up. This year it's good they improved their gap.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

In a related case, one household described the need for increased knowledge exchange and good leadership of schools to increase teaching quality:

Teachers have to share experiences with each other as well as with other outside their compound. For instance teachers in Addis Ababa and [city] have somebody to oversee them. Here there is nothing like that.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Other households described the quality of teaching in more general terms, such as lack of attention given to students, not teaching ‘properly’ or expressing the need for more encouragement of students. In these a couple of households also stated that they were not able to judge the quality of teaching because they were not present or did not have the knowledge to make an accurate assessment.

I don't know their teaching approaches but I don't think they are so good.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Among households there were at times different views of what teaching methods should be used. One respondent lamented the fact that as a result of not being able to keep discipline in class, many teachers resorted to corporal punishment:

I have protest on teachers. They have poor management/student controlling system. There is a great tendency of physical punishment in our school by teachers.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

A contrasting opinion was expressed by another household, arguing that there was in fact too little corporal punishment at school:

Most people believe the teachers are good only if they do not punish their daughters. I have an opposite idea on this. I prefer my daughter to be punished and get the best out of her teachers.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

Households perceive poor learning outcomes

Several households assessed quality of teaching by looking at students’ performance, student performance being used as a proxy for teaching quality.

In the first place there is, I think a problem of teaching from their side. A grade three student cannot read ‘ha-hu’ (numbers) properly. We are observing such grade students cannot even count numbers from one up to ten. There is a serious problem in this regard.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

An interesting point that emerged was that teachers and households in one kebele (municipality) in the Afar region had widely diverging perceptions of how the teaching quality should be judged and what it was wanting.

On the one hand, school staff stated that they had only college graduated teachers and that the biggest barrier to learning was students being absent for long periods of time due to being a mobile community with not even a single student being able to attend school regularly during one year. They noted this resulted in difficulties with ensuring quality of teaching, since for example performance could not be assessed consistently, with poor learning outcomes as a result.

All the teachers are graduates from colleges and we have never seen incapable or unqualified teacher, however, students attend school one day and frequently absent up to fifteen days.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

On the other hand, households in the region described teachers as being absent, ‘bad’, living away from the community in the ‘kebele’ and not giving the students the necessary attention.

They don't give attention to our students; they live in the ‘kebele’. There are also high absentees on them so that the interest of the students will decrease.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

General concerns with quality of school facilities

Poor quality facilities and not enough classrooms

As in other projects, the lack of classroom capacity in project area schools was the issue most identified by respondents as a barrier to learning. Respondents frequently described this as resulting in overcrowded classes and a difficult learning environment for the students. Several respondents noted the repeated use of multi-grade classes and the practice of sending students to other schools as a result of classroom shortages.

Here we have only three classrooms but it must be four because the level of grade is up to grade four but now they are mixing grade 4 and grade 3 together to solve the problem of classrooms. Besides grade five students are travelling to other places.

(Household, Afar, Ethiopia)

In several cases respondents also described school facilities as being in disrepair and in desperate need of improvements. In a few cases schools were described as missing roofs, respondents often citing wind or storms as the cause, resulting in students being exposed to the elements and making it a difficult learning situation.

The ceiling is taken by wind. So as you can see students were taking their lesson out in the sun for the last three years. There was no leaving room for teachers, not even now. So we are using one of student's class rooms for us and another one for store. Because of this shortage, students are still learning in the old class rooms out in the sun.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

In a few cases respondents also described classrooms as being occupied by teachers as a result of teacher accommodation not being available, contributing to difficult working conditions for teachers.

We teachers don't have living room thus we are using one of the class room, this is a bad thing now because the class is supposed to be used for education.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

In a couple of cases respondents expressed their sense of hopelessness with the lack of quality of facilities and the support received, citing ineffectual and grid-locked bureaucracy as being a major barrier.

And yet, these problems are not solved by the district administration, regional state even by the federal government. There are many people who came here to see the problems, but none of them tried to solve our problems other than talking about the problems.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Lack of desks and other furniture

The second most commonly cited issue in relation to school facilities was the lack of desks and other furniture. Several schools reported especially severe situations with little or no furniture at all. Members of school staff did however describe how they improvised and tried to make the best of the situation.

Yes, we face difficulties. For example there are no chairs and tables. But the school still continues to teaching using stones and woods as a chair.

(School staff, Afar, Ethiopia)

Project Brief – Save the Children Mozambique

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in Save the Children project areas in Mozambique. The most often reported barriers to girls' education in the Save the Children's project areas were poverty and concerns about violence. While primary school is free in Mozambique, there are still costs in terms of buying uniforms, textbooks, and the opportunity cost of not having that child help with domestic chores or income generating activities. Secondary school is not free, and many respondents also noted a significant drop-off after primary school as families cannot afford secondary school.

Pregnancy and early marriage were also commonly reported as barriers to education, as households emphasise marriage over education for older girls, and few return to school after getting married or giving birth. In other cases, households reported a larger scepticism towards the value of education in general, describing it as less useful than helping the household with farming and domestic chores.

Also frequently, respondents reported problems with school facilities, in terms of insufficient number of classrooms and poor quality buildings. Respondents also noted the long distance to school for many students, particularly to secondary schools, and the lack of textbooks and desks for children once there.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Generally, poverty was seen as a major obstacle to paying school fees and meeting other requirements such as school uniform and text books. This was described as a major barrier to enrolment and attendance.

Maybe for some families the lack of money to buy material or uniform makes girls to not go to school.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

Another caregiver noted:

We can say that poverty is very high. Some cannot send their children to school because they have no clothes. Others, despite of child having only one pair of clothes they oblige her to go to school because this is your future.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

However, one school teacher noted that some caregivers and guardians are sometimes unaware of the fact that schools are free and that some students might be able to receive help if they are unable to meet other requirements:

There is need to speak with parents so that we can tell them that there is no money involved from their side to enrol their daughters or getting school material as these are is free. If the parent actually says that has financial problem the school help children with ADE [a national support program].

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

Food shortages

Hunger and shortage of food was cited as the most common and main worry for most caregivers. Although not many have explicitly described the relation between food intake to enrolment and learning, a few have done so. One respondent described how hunger affects girls wellbeing and learning (refer to Social exclusion); another school teacher noted that hunger affects enrolment:

The groups that are less likely to send their daughters at school are groups with no social conditions. This because the parents allege that do not send their children to school because do not have money. Even though enrolment is free they pass with no food.

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

In explaining the problems of girls' enrolment and ways to overcome them, many recalled times when food was provided at school to overcome food shortage, which has a significant positive impact on enrolment. Another school teacher described the situation:

In this community, there was few years ago food for girls due to droughts, like rice, so that girls would not drop off school and they ended up finishing 7th class. In those years, we had success of girl attendance at school; but that ended and now we have poor attendance of girls at school.

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

Inability to afford secondary school

Secondary schools is reported to not to be free for this project's targeted communities and this was described as a major obstacle for poor families to enrol their children (both boys and girls). Moreover, often families are not located in the same community as the school, which adds an extra cost for commuting or accommodation if commuting is not possible:

Others do not enrol [at secondary level which is paid] because do not have money. At secondary school the enrollment fee is 350 Meticaís.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

In describing the difficulties in meeting secondary school cost and accommodation, a community leader noted:

The school has to help children continuing studying. When they finish 10th class and want to continue they do not have where to go because there are no schools for 11th and 12th classes here. The government have to provide scholarship to these children. The difficulties in the boarding school are lack of beds for children to sleep. Some families do not have conditions to buy school materials and also hunger.

(Community leader, Manica, Mozambique)

Another noted that the challenge starts after seventh grade:

Our school teaches until 7th class and the children who finish it have to continue somewhere far away from here. This has financial implications ...and most families do not have financial conditions here.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

In some cases, respondents noted that secondary schools were newly opened in their communities which allowed them to enrol their girls, while others still struggled to meet the cost. This, as commonly reported, leads girls to drop out of school after finishing primary education:

With more money I would feel much more motivated to take the girl to school, because I would be sure that after finishing primary school she would continue studying, but now with no money the future is not certain. I am not sure whether after finishing 7th class she will continue or not. I have no money to send her to secondary school which is in towns.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Violence

Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment—that is, physical punishment carried out to “correct” or redress misbehaviour—was mentioned as a means by which caregivers ensured their children attended school. Additionally, parent and girl respondents mentioned that corporal punishment was often used in the schools to redress misbehaviour, poor attendance, tardiness, and other grievances within the school premises.

While most caregivers did not indicate that corporal punishment prevented their children from attending school, some caregivers did mention corporal punishment by school staff as a challenge, especially if the punishment was deemed excessive. The resultant punishment often served to dissuade students from returning to school:

Teachers do not treat children properly. They are bad. They get angry and even beat them. Boys come home from school and then do not return.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

The caregiver went on to note that, not only did corporal punishment negatively impact attendance, but even when caregivers complained or argued with the teachers, it hindered rather than helped the students:

[The teachers] speak badly about our daughters. They say why these children of yours come to enrol to school? They say so because the children do not attend often classes. And the reason for kids to not attend classes is because of fear of being beaten [by them].

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

Another also described how teachers' behaviour resulted in a negative relationship between the caregivers and school staff:

We do not have these cases here at school but some teacher get angry and beat children...

In these instances, the caregiver goes on to describe:

...we seat with the teacher and ask him to change his behaviour. If the situation does not change we call the school directorate.

(Household, Manica, Mozambique)

Fights between students

Fighting between students was commonly mentioned by respondents when asked what type of conflict or violence occurred at school or affected students. Some respondents mentioned that fighting between students was commonplace and did not inhibit attendance or learning. One school staff member, for instance, mentioned:

At school, there is no violence. Even though children sometimes fight because of this took pencil of the other one, this problem is something that we easily manage, as they are children. We speak with their parents and advise. ...These conflicts do not interrupt classes; they are small things that we handle. What happens outside the school ends up there. It does not come inside here.

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

However, some respondents did mention that physical fights between students did inhibit school attendance and learning. This was attributed to children subsequently feeling unwell at school. Additionally, fighting might lead some children to feel unwell at school and therefore go home early. Although, some caregivers noted that they might not allow children to stay home, even if they are disinclined to do so on account of a recent fight at school. For instance, one caregiver in Tete noted the following conversation with her daughter:

She [girl] said that I am no longer going to school again because they're hitting me. So we told her to go to school, no one will beat you again.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

Domestic conflicts

School staff members and community leaders noted that physical assault and fighting not directly involving the child could impede the learning process of the child. For instance, arguments and fighting at home were noted as possibly affecting the ability of children to learn. A school staff member in Manica noted:

Imagine that a child just witnessed a conflict where her mother was beaten by father, when she gets to school, she comes sad. As result, sometimes she does not want to participate in school activities.

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

Similarly, conflicts between community farmers and pastoralists in which the students' families are involved also prevented children from attending school. To this end, a community leader in Manica noted:

There are many conflicts of cattle and farm. The cattle invade people's vegetable farm. When the farmers go to the owners of the cattle they start to exalt and things end up in fight...

When asked if this conflict affects children's education, the community leader noted that it does:

Because the sons of these families have to put (control) the cattle to pasture so that they cannot invade farms.

(Community leader, Manica, Mozambique)

Sexual assault

Caregivers and community leaders in the project area commonly mentioned concerns about consensual sex and rape directed towards girls as impeding students from attending school. Sex with minors happens on the way to and from school, around the community, and at school, and was perpetrated by both strangers to the child and by teachers. For instance, one caregiver mentioned that on the way to school:

Some people conquer young girls. When girls refuse they insult them. Sometimes girls insult them as result of being conquered by saying that you are not ashamed; I am child.

(Household, Manica, Mozambique)

Of note is that respondents differentiated between consensual and non-consensual sex. Regardless of whether sex is consensual or not, sex with minors was perceived as inappropriate by all respondents who discussed the matter. One community leader in Gaza mentioned:

Here in our community there have not been cases of harassment to girls. What happen is that they are proposed by men but is not done on base of violence or sexual violence. It is on base of mutual understanding...There was a teacher that had to abandon the community only with the clothes that he was wearing (luggage left behind) because of get involved with students.

(Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

Proximity seems to affect the likelihood of being raped. Girls living further away from the community where the school is located seem to be more at risk of being raped while traveling to school. To this end, a caregiver in Gaza noted that:

Recently a man met two girls and raped the older one and she was taken to hospital. But this happen on the other side near where they sell drinks. The man that raped her was arrested and released. This does not happen often...

The respondent went on to note that rape cases such as this:

... affects more people living in interior. Those who live nearby the community does not fear to enrol.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Similarly, proximity to a police station affects how cases of rape are dealt with. Individuals residing closer to police stations tend to report cases more often and seek justice from the police, while communities residing further away from police stations tend to resolve instances of sex with minors between the families themselves. One community leader in Tete noted that:

With respect to cases of sexual abuse here in this community, we have not done nothing because there is no police station around. This issue is solved within families.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

Alternatively, when asked if there are cases where girls are being attacked or sexually assaulted, a community leader in Gaza recounted:

There were such cases. It happened 3 times. The child was raped on streets and she denounced it. It happened here in [location] near the shop. The raper...attacked her on her way from school...we work with the police; for instance, when the raper [...] wanted to escape, the police fired and neutralized him; he is still in prison. We denounced him to police.

(Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

The impact that sex with minors might have on student learning and school attendance was clearly indicated by a caregiver from Gaza. When asked if children in her community were ever attacked on the way to or from school, the caregiver noted that, while it does not happen in her community, it does happen elsewhere. The respondent also mentioned a situation where a teacher tries to rape a student:

This thing may make her not studying well. Even if you try to speak with teacher and arrive to an understanding she would not be concentrated on study...

When asked if concerns of rape affect the caregiver's decision to enrol the child in school, the caregiver stated:

...I have never thought about, I do not know, I think that I would enrol her but if she is raped I may ask her to drop school.”

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Sexual harassment

Commonly, many respondents noted concerns with children being harassed when going to or from school. Harassment primarily included verbal taunting by adults as well as harassment by bandits. Sexual harassment and assault was mentioned, albeit less frequently. The school teacher noted that:

When students leave a little bit late those from [community] sometimes are threatened on their way back home. They walk long distances. But no one have ever beaten.

(School Staff, Tete, Mozambique)

The school teacher went on to say:

We had some cases being followed by bandits. The children had to run but the bandits were running against them. They did not suffer any violence but were followed by bandits.

(School Staff, Tete, Mozambique)

When describing the situation in a nearby community and the effect it has on girls and their education, a caregiver mentioned:

These things have happened in another community very close to here. Some parents forbid their daughters to go to school because they were bandits who intercepted the girls on the way there. These bandits were extracting organs (from someone's stomach), teeth to sell. Then parents asked teachers to release their children to early in afternoon classes because of bad things happening in our community. This even happened.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

Pregnancy and early marriage

Early marriage

Marriage is often described as a major and common barrier to education within the project's targeted communities. This, as often described is because girls' education especially for older girls (those who have finished or are in the late years of primary school) is not important or useful, but marriage is. One caregiver stated:

Is the mentality of people here. They do not know that education will help their children. They just want their daughters to marry and at young age.

(Household, Manica, Mozambique)

Similarly, another caregiver noted that:

Most people enrol their children but some parents do not enrol girls to school because they say that she going to get married later on. But they are not many who say so. They say that is wasting of time enrolling girls at school because soon she will drop school to get married.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Most respondents reported that once girl students were married, it was unlikely that they would return to school. Respondents noted that both caregivers and the girls seemed to prefer early marriage.

There are many dropping school. There are many girls who after finishing this school went to secondary school but ended up dropping it to marry. Most of young girls here are married. Those who study are few. They end up thinking that even if you study you do not finish it. Look at that that and that. She is already married and has money. She has husband that bought this and that as farm tobacco.

(School Staff, Tete, Mozambique)

While many respondents noted that early marriage of girls certainly occurred within the project area, a variety of different reasons were mentioned. Some respondents attributed early marriage as a means by which to avoid subsequent promiscuity.

The parents opt to send their children to school because they know that one day their children will help them. Others think that their daughters will be involved in relationship if they send them to school and get pregnant, so they prefer making their daughters to marry early and do not send to school.

(Community Leader, Manica, Mozambique)

Similarly, a few respondents noted that some do enrol their girls in school until puberty and then she is kept home until marriage.

Many people send their daughters to school here but what happens here is when some people see that their daughter starts having the first menstruation/period they stop them from studying. They say that do not see any advantage of school; it is better to get married in instead of studying.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

Pregnancy

In addition to the factors mentioned above that might lead to early marriage, one of the more common reasons reported in the Save the Children Mozambique project areas for early marriage was unplanned pregnancy.

Here, once you are pregnant you stop studying. The parents take the girl to the family of the boy and stop studying. There was a case where girls got pregnant while studying; both dropped school to marry. The parents were punished by building bricks.

(Community Leader, Manica, Mozambique)

As in the example above, unplanned pregnancy coupled with early marriage often results in the girl no longer being able to attend school, in some cases because the husband does not allow the girl to continue studying. To this end, when asked if educating girls can help improve their lives, one caregiver responded with the following, recalling a case of a girl:

She had scholarship because was the best student at 10th class but she lost it because of being pregnant and her husband did not allow her to go to school.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

While unplanned pregnancy sometimes results in early marriage, this was certainly not always the case. Indeed, respondents noted that the boys and men responsible for impregnating the girls might not help take care of the child. Additionally, most pregnant girls stop going to school while they are pregnant, as they feel ashamed and face taunting and teasing from other children. When asked if there are girls who go to school pregnant, a community leader had this to say:

There are none. When they are pregnant they just stay home. Are you ashamed of being humiliated and suffer taunts. It sometimes happens that the man would not take responsibility of the pregnancy because it going overwhelm his parents.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

Regardless of whether or not girls married the individuals who impregnated them, they often face considerable challenges in returning to school and living well. For instance, if they get married, they no longer have the support of their families. Additionally, they might lack the knowledge required to properly take care of a baby, or they might not have adequate access to food, which can have very negative consequences for the baby. A school staff member noted that:

Those who got premature marriage or got premature pregnancy the difficulties they face are high. They get ill, the baby might die. Although they say they have money they suffer from food. To get back to school is difficult for them [because of evening schooling system]. When they are not married the parents send them to school, but once they marry they are living outside their parents' home because are married. They face many difficulties.

(School staff, Tete, Mozambique)

Menstruation

A few of the respondents within Save the Children's targeted communities noted that, once girl students begin menstruating, there is a chance that their parents might remove them from school. The rationale behind doing this varies. In some cases, menstruation means that a girl will be able to get married, which increases her importance to the community as well as the societal and peer pressure for her to soon be married. In explaining the issue, a school staff noted:

Here these families are very tied to traditional values because children aged from 1st to 5th class manage to attend school but once the 1st menstruation arrives the girl become much more important in the community than at school. Then they prefer to tell her that you stay at home, do not go anymore to school and get married. Then the number of girls at 1st class is high compared to EP2 (6th and 7th class) and lower at secondary school. There is that thinking that me with this age I cannot go to school. I have to get married or because my friend got married. Then this limits girls from progressing at school.

(School Staff, Tete, Mozambique)

Also, emphasising on this practice, a community leader notes that the practice of keeping girls at home following menstruation is a traditional one, although the respondent does not indicate whether there is an underlying reason for secluding the girl. To this end, when asked if there are traditional practices that impede girls' education, one community leader notes:

Of course, it is known as ritual of initiation [of girls]. When girls have the first menstruation, they practically [remove them from school] lock girls at home. [They say:] "As you grew up you cannot just walk around" but they do not know that they are impeaching her from studying. Sometimes, they even ask them to not take bath for a week, without knowing that is not hygienic.

(Community Leader, Tete, Mozambique)

Issues with the quality of school facilities

Issues with quality of facilities and classrooms

Another often-cited issue in relation to school facilities was described by several respondents as the bad quality and lack of classroom capacity, which appeared to be the most severe issue in terms of learning outcomes and access to education. Similar to other projects, many schools in the Save the Children's (Mozambique) project areas were facing problems in the form of multi-grade classes, poorly maintained buildings and limited classroom capacity. This was noted by the community leader:

It is frequent to find that in one classroom there are 3 classes/groups using the same room.

(Community leader, Manica, Mozambique)

Several cases reported how poorly maintained structures and roofs resulted in students sometimes being sent home when it rained.

With respect to class room, children suffer because classrooms leak when it rains. They are not in good conditions. When it rains children return back home from school.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Several members of school staff also reported how school facilities were in disrepair, often from the being built with more fragile and less weather resistant local materials, resulting in increased wear and tear of the facilities.

Our buildings are old. They were built long time ago and until today there was no rehabilitation. Some ceilings are broken; also there are no windows [there are no glasses in windows]. [...] Those other classrooms built with local materials also present their problems. [...] Now when it rains the floor stay wet [...] But even with rain the children come to study and we manage to work. With difficulties we work.

(School staf, Gaza, Mozambique)

In many cases, communities were described as not being provided with any assistance in maintaining and improving school facilities, which led them to having to support themselves.

School condition is the main difficulty. The people from this community have been making efforts to improve the school conditions [facilities]. It was agreed that each family to contribute with 50 Meticaís. With this amount we bought the roof to cover classrooms. [...] We do not have support from government on this.

(Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

There were also reports of storms causing major structural damage to a couple of schools, with several classrooms not being in working order, resulting in difficult learning environments and overcrowded classrooms.

Lack of desks and chairs

The most commonly identified issue in relation to school facilities was the lack of desks and other furniture. As in other project areas, this was described as resulting in children having to sit on the floor, dirtying their clothes in the process, and resulting in a difficult learning environment. One caregiver in Manica stated that:

The major problem is the desks and chairs in classrooms. When she goes to school with uniform she comes back dirty because they seat on floor.

(Household, Manica, Mozambique)

The difficulties in learning were described as particularly problematic when it came to writing, as a lack of desks results in uncomfortable writing positions for the students and difficulties in completing writing exercises. In a few cases, respondents stated the reason for a lack of school furniture and lack of facilities in general was due to the free education policy, which was affecting the availability of school resources.

These problems you mentioned are problems that I have seen also because a school must have desks and chairs, notebooks. This is because the school is free.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

In a couple of cases members of school staff described how they struggled with acquiring any furniture at all, often having to resort to improvising chairs from stones, wood or bricks, in an attempt to manage the limited resources available.

In one case, the relation between girls reaching puberty and the lack of chairs and desks was mentioned as leading to high drop-out rates among girls. The respondent when asked described how girls would state that they were not attending because of the lack of desks and chairs. However, it is unclear what the causal link between dropout rates among early-pubescent girls and the lack of desks and chairs actually is. A caregiver notes that:

Here in this community, when girls get the first menstruation on the first or second month you see that she has already boyfriend. That's why we have poor performance at school for girls. When we ask them why you, women, do to want to go school after the menstruation? It is because there are no desks and chairs at school. Boys can sacrifice; they can seat like this while women sit like that.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

Clarifying the issue somewhat, the same respondent stated that when girls reached puberty it was tradition to leave school and start relationships, not having the required school furniture being an added reason to not attend school.

Negative perceptions of the relevance of schooling

With regards to the community's perception of the relevance of schooling, respondents described different reasoning for some community members' negative attitudes towards education. Some noted that it is because community members give priority to marriage, and therefore education is not relevant. Others noted that it is simply because of the lack of awareness, while there were those that noted that it is because priority is given to farming and education is therefore not relevant.

Marriage is priority, not education

In describing how the targeted communities perceive the relevance of education and schooling, many respondents noted that some parents and heads of households do not value education and do not find it particularly relevant. Rather, they consider it a waste of time, and consider marriage and starting a family as more important for girls. A community leader noted the following:

Others do not favour because girls have to get married so instead of sending them at school they prefer to make them establishing family, because consider them to be much more productive sending them creating family than going to school. Most of the time these girls are minors with age between 12 and 23 years old.

(Community Leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

Schooling is not seen as beneficial

A couple of respondents noted that some heads of households within their community do not value schooling because they themselves were not educated and are doing fine in life, sometimes better than educated people. This perception discourages them to see any importance or benefits to schooling. One school teacher noted:

There are so many people who did not go to school but have so much money due to tobacco so they end up devaluing education. They see that my son have been studying for so many years but does not have anything while the other has. The parent who did not go to school thinks that school is nothing and devalue studying. We have been having more drop offs due to lack of interest of parents and also children on education ... Here at our school we have an area called [community]where people mine gold. It is not necessary to buy, people are getting money. They go there, dig and get money. As people need money there are more drop offs. Students prefer to go there that being suffering for 12 years from 1st to 12th class.

(School staff, Tete, Mozambique)

Another caregiver also stated:

Some people here say: since I did not go to school then my daughter is not also going to school. And she end up just going farming.

(Household, Tete, Mozambique)

A few respondents mentioned that some farmers prefer that their children participate and contribute to farming rather than enrol them in school. They perceive farming as more relevant to their lives and their children's lives than education.

On other people I do not know because some parents do not like to send their children to school. They prefer to send them farming. It is good for them for the child to go farming rather than going to school.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Similarly, another community leader stated:

Most people here are farmers and think that cannot leave children to go to school because if they could allow them to attend school they would not go farming. They prefer more the agrarian work and do not value school. They do not let children to enrol at school.

(Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

Environmental disruptions

Several respondents in Save the Children's project areas in Mozambique reported on the challenges posed by severe storms and droughts, which make it more difficult for households to support themselves due to spoiled crops and damaged homes.

Several respondents reported difficulties during periods of drought, when their crops were scarce and they were forced to take odd jobs or support themselves in other ways.

When there are droughts I do the work of madjolidjo [casual jobs for food or cash].

(Household, Manica, Mozambique)

Damage to homes was often described in a way similar to this respondents' account of the damage done to their own home by a storm:

Respondent: There have been storms. Once it removed the roof of my house when I was away. It happened in evening, we were not at home, there were only children.

Interviewer: What do you do when this happens?

Respondent: I do not know. We do not have money.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

School buildings damaged

A couple of respondents reported specifically that these environmental disruptions also impacted children's ability to attend school, primarily in cases where the school building has been entirely or partially destroyed by storms and the community has not been able to subsequently rebuild them.

One respondent noted that a particularly severe storm had damaged their local school building, destroying the roof in early 2012. A year and a half later, the community was still working to repair the damages:

Storms happen here. Even our school was destroyed by storm on 16 January 2012. Now we are putting the new ceiling [for the school].

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

A community leader in another community reported a similar incident where the school building had been damaged during a storm in 2011, and still had not been repaired:

Attempting to improve schools? No, never heard about it. There was a storm last year and many things were destroyed including school classrooms. Now they (classrooms) are not in conditions.

(Community leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

Another respondent described a similar occurrence, where a storm had destroyed several classrooms, leaving the school unable to accommodate the number of children who want to attend:

The major difficulty is lack of classrooms – the number that the school has does not match to the number of students that attend this school...The problem of classrooms result from a storm that destroyed 3 classrooms.

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

Long distance from home to school

Long distance to secondary school

The long distance coupled with the added expenses associated with secondary school is described as a common reason for girls dropping out of school. In these cases, households, community leaders and school staff reported that these expenses are primarily what are keeping girls from advancing to secondary school, but the expenses are also dependent on the distance to school. Long distances mean added costs for accommodation and transport. One community leader describes the situation in his community:

Here in [community] the school [is primary]. It ends at 7th grade/class, so for those who finish it and move to [secondary level] 8th grade is a problem, because the secondary school is out of [community]. The school is far away from here.

(Community Leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

Sometimes, if girls are lucky, it was described that they could find lodging with relatives or other friends of the family to be able to continue with secondary school. However, this was stated as uncommon. A community leader notes that:

It happens sometimes that someone has relative in town so he or she finds a place in relative house and continues studying but most do not. So students can pass from the 7th grade but have nowhere to stay.

(Community Leader, Gaza, Mozambique)

Lack of teaching materials

Not enough textbooks

Several respondents from Save the Children's project areas have reported that there are issues with access to textbooks and school materials. In these cases, many teachers reported that the lack of school books leads to book sharing during class. The amount allocated to each school, called the Apoio Directo às Escolas (ADE) is often not

sufficient to cover all the associated costs such as exercise books, pencils, chalks and so forth. One school teacher mentioned the following:

That amount is not enough, as we have 1700 students and we have so many things to be done. We have to rebuilt the school, buy desks and chairs, pencils, pens, exercise books. There is shortage of fund for school material that we have to buy.

(School staff, Manica, Mozambique)

A couple of respondents also cite the issue of school materials as a reason for children becoming discouraged and affecting learning negatively:

The support for school material is very weak. It is not enough. It does not cover all students, as the number of students is high. This makes that the child loses will to study.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

In contrast, a couple of teachers describe the lack of textbooks as more of an issue that is caused by children and parents not being careful with the textbooks. In these cases the textbooks are cited as being allocated by the District Education Service who count the amount of books left over from the previous year to determine the amount of books that are needed. The books are in fact stated as being property of the school and are supposed to be returned at the end of every year. As a result of carelessness and mismanagement textbooks were cited as going missing which in turn impacted the learning outcomes of students. A school teacher noted that:

I think the problem is here at grass root because when we get the books they inform us that the students have to preserve well them, so that in following year they give it back to school so that other students use them [...]. If we were taking care well of these books, books would be enough for all.

(School staff, Tete, Mozambique)

Another explanation to the lack of teaching and learning resources available was reported to be a result of the national policy of free education, which has caused school budgets to be overextended, trying to accommodate rapidly increasing enrolment rates. A community leader notes that:

These problems you mentioned are problems that I have seen also because a school must have desks and chairs, notebooks. This is because the school is free. There are many things that should exist in a school but we do not have at this school here.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

Not enough exercise books or stationery

In a couple of cases, teachers reported that students attend school without exercise books or stationery such as pens. The reason was often cited as being attributable to poverty; households simply cannot afford the expenses. Additionally, schools do provide exercise books and other learning materials but a couple of respondents stated that when students finished with the exercise books households were forced to buy replacements which did not always occur.

The school is located in a poor community. We receive children that cannot afford to buy exercise books. Some come with no pencil. The fund that we have is not enough to cover the needs of all children.

(School staff, Gaza, Mozambique)

Inability to afford cost of school fees or materials

Inability to afford secondary school costs

When it comes to primary school, fees do not seem to be a major barrier. However, one of the most commonly cited issues is that of secondary schools being more expensive, effectively excluding many children from advancing further in the educational system. One caregiver stated:

But we going to see with time in more advanced classes [secondary level] because what is happening here is that I do not have money for her to continue studying; I have no money for enrolment. I cannot do anything.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

When referring to school materials as an additional challenge to the cost of school, another caregiver noted:

We have problems to enrol our daughters at advanced classes, from 8th classes, we have problems. We also have problems to buy school material (they are very expensive). In inferior classes (1-7th classes) we do not have problem to enrol children at school (education is free and school material is free); unless when there are no vacancies.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Similarly, a community leader noted:

There is access to education here in the community. But we are asking to government to support us in terms of payment of school fees [at secondary level], so that our girls can continue to study. Most people do not work here and many children drop out school because of the conditions in the parents who do not have money.

(Community leader, Tete, Mozambique)

Often the issue of school fees are especially acute for single parent households, as described by one caregiver:

The problem is that the father of my children (meaning her husband) does not work and I do not know what future is expected to my children. I am not sure whether I will still be able to pay their school expenses. This is what concerns me most.

(Household, Gaza, Mozambique)

Project Brief – Camfed

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in Camfed project areas in Zimbabwe and Tanzania. The most commonly reported barriers in Camfed project areas were poverty, and closely related, the inability to afford the cost of school in terms of the cost of uniforms, textbooks, the higher costs of secondary school and the opportunity cost of children not being able to help with domestic chores or income generating activities. Respondents also frequently discussed the particular barriers that pregnant girls face in terms of being able to attend school, as they are generally not able to attend school once they become pregnant and not able to return after giving birth, making them the group most often singled out as facing particular barriers to attending school.

Respondents also frequently reported violence as a barrier to children attending school, in terms of corporal punishment and fighting at school and sexual assault or harassment against girls on the way to or at school.

With regards to the schools themselves, respondents frequently discussed the poor quality of school facilities and lack of classrooms. They also commonly noted the lack of textbooks and insufficient numbers of qualified teachers leading to overcrowded classrooms.

Less common but also of significance, respondents described the effects of seasonal flooding and droughts, which destroy crops, damage school buildings or homes themselves or make the journeys to school treacherous.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Poverty affects ability to pay school fees

Inability to afford school fees due to poverty or lack of financial means was often cited as the most common barrier to education in the targeted communities in both Zimbabwe and Tanzania. One caregiver noted:

The majority doesn't have the money to send their children to school.

(Household Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Another caregiver noted that:

Many people are very poor. Someone may desire for her child to get education but because of poverty and no any help from the government then we are not able to.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Inability to pay school fees results in both not enrolling in school as well as disruption in attendance where children are sent home and not allowed in class until they are able to pay the fees. In describing the problem, a community leader stated that:

It will force the children to stay at home when waiting for money to send them to school.

(Community leader, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Although poverty and the inability to pay school fees was reported as a common concern to households in the targeted community and a strong barrier to school enrolment and attendance, specific groups of girls seem to be more affected than others.

Single or double orphaned girls are widely identified as the most affected by poverty and the least able to pay school fees. This was largely attributed to the fact that many live with old guardians (mostly grandparents) and are not able to work and secure enough funds for the school fees or, in the case where guardians have their own children that go to school, prioritise them to the orphaned girls. One school teacher noted:

Orphans who stay with elderly grandparents, who are too old to work, struggle to get school fees. This means they cannot stay in school and so remain in poverty for the rest of their lives.

(School official, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Older girls from poor families are not able afford school fees due to poverty, especially in communities where secondary school fees are higher than primary school. As noted by a community leader:

Girls may complete primary education and perform well, but due to financial constrains to their parents they are not able to go on with studies and they end up staying at home.

(Community leader, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Girls to drop out of school to work

In describing the impact of poverty on educational enrolment, many respondents indicated that poverty forces girls out of school and into relationships in order to earn quick money or to simply feed themselves. A community leader noted:

A student can go to school and one he/ she come back home in the evening he/she finds there is nothing, no food or something to drink, they will be tempted to visit or befriend other children from well-off family and in the process they are either lied to and they are impregnated, which makes it worse.

(Community leader, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

School girls were described by respondents as most vulnerable to prostitution as a result of poverty and the temptation of quick money. In unpacking the effect of poverty on school girls, one teacher noted:

This area is prone to drought so some families fail to enrol girls because they use the little money they can get for food. This area is too close to the growth point and to the army barracks so girls are always looking for quick money by engaging into prostitution. The other challenge is general lack of interest on the parents' side. They do not value education so why bother sending girls to school, after all they will get married whether they are educated or not.

(School official, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Few respondents noted that because of the lack of money to pay school fees, some girls drop-out and take on jobs as domestic workers.

They [some girls] don't have school fees then they become maids.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Inability to buy textbooks or other school materials

Respondents often reported that poverty directly affects the ability of caregivers to pay for the school materials for their children. These materials were frequently identified as uniforms, stationery, textbooks, shoes and lunches. It was often reported that the unavailability of these materials does not only affect the learning of students, but also disrupts their attendance as children can be sent back home if they do not have them in school.

One community leader noted:

For such families, these children don't have full school uniforms and can't afford to carry lunch. This affects these underprivileged girls because they don't have enough access to cover their needs. For example where others have shoes, they themselves have to enter toilets without shoes and go hungry the whole day. This effects on the levels that they will be able to learn because they are preoccupied with what they lack and fail to concentrate in class.

(Community Leader Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, in expressing her feelings about the time when she did not have shoes and was sent home, a girl reported that:

It pained me because if you do not have a school shoe the headmaster will send you home.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Food shortages and poor diet

Commonly cited as a major challenge in Camfed's targeted communities was the inability of caregivers to meet the food needs of their household. This was often reported to result in households adopting coping strategies such as reducing the number of meals or changing their diet into a less diverse one, which affects the girls' wellbeing and her ability to learn:

They face a big problem because it's difficult to find the money. We end up sacrificing on food so that we can try... but the child is going to school hungry.

(Community Leader, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Daughters of households that farm were reported to be the commonly affected in this sense as they rely on farming for their food intake and are vulnerable to seasonal variations as will be discussed in the next section. Additionally, girls who are heads of households or have a single parent or caregiver were also specifically cited as having problems of food intake affecting their attendance and learning.

We have from the registers that we have about 12-15 cases and the head is a girl child and that girl is coming to school. She will be doing all the house chores and then possibly they might be waiting for a relative to send some money. Sometimes you see them coming to school hungry. That is a big problem.

(School official, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Farming as main source of livelihood

Many respondents in Camfed project areas mentioned that they are often affected by extreme environmental disruptions such as drought and flooding. When these disruptions occur, households in these communities are reported to lose their crops, and therefore, face difficulties having enough to eat. For example, one teacher noted:

Their [members of this community] income is still low since they depend on seasonal farming. For example in dry months most of parents face difficulties in getting food, they only survive by depending on temporary jobs. In such situation it affects even pupils, they found themselves without exercise books since parents have no money to buy for them. This is the challenges for us teachers.

(School official, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Inability to afford cost of school

Respondents indicated that most households try to send their children to school, particularly primary school, but that the most commonly cited barrier to children attending school is the inability to afford school fees and related costs.

Some of those who fail to enrol mostly are as a result of financial constraints. And majority of them may not afford the fees and the little money asked at school

(School staff, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

And similarly:

The money isn't enough, because as we sit with the parents we say let's pay \$20 per term, you find out that out of 900 and something or close to a 1000 who are supposed to pay, you find out that more that only 400 and something pay and others don't.

(School staff, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Across the board, cost of fees is the most common cited issue in relation to girls not attending school.

Yes, children are sent to school, people are willing to send their children to school but there is a problem of school fees and books. Most parents cannot afford these. As a result children end up not attending school because they have not paid school fees. This is a huge problem in our community.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Even when there are bursaries available other costs, such as exam fees, can prevent children from attending and passing final exams.

The school wanted \$18 for the exams so I didn't have it and my daughter who stays in Harare did not send the money on time, so she was sent back home when the others were writing their exams. When I then had the money, I went to pay and they refused saying that they had already closed on exam writing, so she did not write.'

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Secondary school

Another reported barrier was concerning the increased fees and school related costs households face in Camfed project areas when it is time to enrol in secondary school. Respondents noted that though there are opportunities to get sponsorship through BEAM or Camfed, higher costs often prevent children who have passed the necessary exams from attending secondary school.

A high percentage of people in this area do take their children to school. A few parents have a different perceptions that educating a girl is not beneficial and they only educated them up to primary level...Other girls may complete primary education and perform well, but due to financial constraints to their parents they are not able to go on with studies and they end up staying at home.

(Community leader, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

There are a few examples of schools actually extending services, offering remedial tutoring over school holidays but again, fees prevent some households from participating.

Yes, there are attempts, the parents discussed with teachers that during the holidays and weekends, students should be taught tuition for their improvement in performance and it helps uplift the weaker students.

(Community leader, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Similarly, another respondent noted that:

It's normally those girls who are about to start secondary education. Most girls will end at grade 7. Due to financial constraints, older girls fail to advance with their education.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Intermittent attendance

Another issue that was regularly mentioned by respondents was that of children being turned away from school due to not having fully paid their school fees.

The bad thing its where student are chased from school because of various reasons; for example, school fees and other school contribution and at that time the parents are not in a position to raise money.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

This was reported to affect not only attendance, but also children's motivation to attend school, as being turned away was described as a discouraging and dispiriting experience.

The quality is good but there are a few challenges, like absenteeism where children both in primary and secondary schools are sent home for fees and end up staying away from school for long periods of time; this affects their performance.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

And similarly:

Because there are some children who are orphans but can't go to school even if they have the zeal to go to school and they are good at school, but can't go because they have no school fees. They are sent home to collect fees every time they go to school so they opt to stay at home for a month or so.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Although in some cases, respondents reported that children can be quite tenacious, continuing to try to attend even after being turned away.

We just try to tell the parents to pay, it's not that we chase the children away but just to remind these parents to pay. The children will just go away for a week and see the situation at the school and maybe after a week you find out that the classroom is full again.

(School staff, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

And similarly:

Apart from these cases of pregnancies, I have never seen a child who will stay at home, at least before completing O level. Even if there is no money, they will go and be sent back and keep on doing that, getting some days and missing some. Some, if lucky they will get assistance in BEAM and so forth.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Family planning as an economic coping mechanism

Some respondents described how family planning becomes especially important when sending children to secondary school. Due to the increased financial burden in the form of fees and other related costs, respondents noted that it can at times be essential for low-income families to space having their children further apart.

What I mean is I can better cope with raising school fees if there is only one kid in secondary at a time. You can imagine if they are all in secondary at the same time. It would be very difficult for a parent to cope because secondary school fees are expensive... That's how family planning assists in planning on children's education.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Alternative methods for making school fee payments

A couple of respondents described alternative methods being used by schools in Camfed project areas, to help make it easier for households to afford school fees. Some schools were reported to offer payment plans where a household can pay in instalments and others offer households the opportunity to work off the debt.

At the secondary school last year there was a time when the school would allow those parents who had arrears [overdue debt] or could not raise fees to come and do some work like clearing fields, or weeding at school to cover the amount they owed for fees.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Assistance and bursaries in place

Other respondents noted that some government and NGO assistance is available to help girls with school fees and bursaries specifically targeting girls.

Another thing that can really work is when girls are given bursaries because most of the parents around here do not afford school fees.

(Household, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

These bursaries are described as covering the cost of school, and are reported to be provided by several different organisations, including Camfed.

As I have said, now we here left for these CBOs, under Camfed to do it. We try to convince the parents to send their children (girls) to school but some say they can't afford the school payments/requirements, and they are still finding money in order to send their daughters to school. But what we tried to insist them is that they have first send them to school while finding other requirements, and now other students are being sponsored by CAMFED while others by their parents.

(Community leader, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Concerns with assistance and bursaries

Some respondents also reported concerns with BEAM, a government assistance programme, and the way it is administered. Respondents noted that, caregivers are not always notified when removed from the assistance programme, causing them to owe a lot of school fees at the end of the school year.

Sometimes a parent will be believing that their child is still a beneficiary on the BEAM programme, and they only find out at the end of the year when the child is not given an end of year report that they are owing school fees and that the child was removed from BEAM. So they will be owing quite a lot of money.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Other respondents noted that the government assistance does not fully address the level of need in their community.

Although the government tries to assist, you find that the numbers that are chosen are fewer as compared to those that need help.

(School staff, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Some respondents also noted that only girls are eligible for bursaries from Camfed, leaving boys without means to pursue secondary education.

Camfed on the other hand assist girls only and the boys not selected on BEAM are left out.

(Community leader, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Pregnancy

Pregnancy

Within the Camfed project areas, respondents indicated that in most cases pregnancy results in girls dropping out of school, regardless of whether the girl student was in Zimbabwe or Tanzania. Furthermore, girls and their families were reported to have most of the responsibility for raising the child, especially in terms of financial responsibilities, while the fathers might avoid helping to raise the child altogether.

In terms of groups that are singled out as not being allowed to attend school, the most frequently discussed group in Camfed project areas were girls who become pregnant, as girls in this situation were universally described as not being allowed to return to school after giving birth and often described as being subjected to strong levels of social stigma and discrimination.

A number of respondents noted that girls who were pregnant drop-out of school in most cases. Additionally, these girls suffered more than the boys who impregnated them, as noted by one community leader in Morogoro Region when discussing how girls are inordinately impacted by pregnancy while the boys who impregnated the girls are less impeded.

Educating girls, it's a risky issue in the sense that the girl might get pregnant while she is at school, which means such a parent will lose all the money invested on her as she cannot be allowed in school. [...] It is very unfair for the girls because these boys are the ones who do impregnate them and they end up getting the lion share of education

(Community Leader, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

The respondent goes on to note that education is important for all and makes the point that, by not sending girls to school, they are at even greater risk of pregnancy:

I think education is good and vital for all; and if we don't take the girls to school we are making our lives as parents difficult as well as to those of girls. If a girl stay at home she will not be able to stay long before she gets pregnant, and by then the parent will have another extra mouth to feed and this will make life more harder, unlike when she is in school.

(Community Leader, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Another community leader presented a similar assessment, noting that girls miss out on education while the boys or men who impregnated the girls might leave the girls to raise the child on their own:

To be honest, their situation is not good because there are those girls who got pregnant previously and failed to continue with their schooling, and as a result the situation had become bad, they have missed education, they have missed very important thing; but bad enough even those men who impregnated them ran away and left them, these make their life more difficult.

(Community Leader, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Unable to return to school

For the most part, pregnancy and early marriage were both noted as major challenges in Zimbabwe. However, in Tanzania, early marriage was rarely mentioned by respondents. Additionally, pregnancy for unwed girls was also described as highly stigmatised. Many respondents noted that, should a girl be impregnated, she would not be welcome back in the school for fear that she would negatively influence other girls.

Interviewer (I): What do you think of girls in your school who have learning difficulties, and what are the difficulties faced and what effect do they have to them?

Respondent (R): The problem starts when a girl reaches the maturity age or puberty age. They usually become sexually active, and since there is no right guidance from the parents and the community at large, they end up pregnant.

I: After [giving] birth, do you allow them to continue with studies?

R: No.

I: Why?

R: We cannot allow them because they become the talk of the other students, and they will not be able to perform well while they are still thinking of the babies that they have left at home. Also, they don't become a role models to the younger girls and they might follow the same trend, so if we don't send them away it may not be a good lesson to the other girls.

(School Staff, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Some respondents seemed to take an even more aggressive stance toward pregnant girls, with one respondent noting that such girls have been 'destroyed':

Interviewer: If a girl had been out of school for a while, or was pregnant or was disabled, would she be welcomed at school?

Respondent: No, she will never be welcomed in case of pregnancy.

I: Why they are not welcomed back?

R: Because she is already destroyed.

(Household, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Social stigma and fear of being a bad influence

Several reasons for social stigma were noted by respondents. In the greatest number of cases, respondents noted that it was because other parents, teachers and community leaders fear that these girls will be a negative social influence or poor role model for the other girls.

Also, [we don't allow them to return to school so] they don't become a role models to the younger girls and they might follow the same trend, so if we don't send them away it may not be a good lesson to the other girls.

(School official, Pwani Region Tanzania)

And similarly:

No, they won't accept them [back at school] because they be basing on the fact that she was pregnant so she would be a bad influence to the other children at school.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, respondents indicated that girls do not return to school after giving birth out of social embarrassment, or fear about being teased by other girls or not fitting in.

They will be shy. Because of her age and that she has a child and girls her age don't have children and are going to school.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

School policies which prevent re-admission

More directly, girls are often simply not allowed to return to school after giving birth.

They say they don't want her at school...It's not allowed [to return after giving birth] at this school.

(Household, Manicaland Zimbabwe)

From respondents, it was not entirely clear if this was due to a school policy, a law, or discrimination as it is often phrased as a girl simply not being allowed to return, and a certain level of confusion on this point appears to exist within communities, with different respondents citing different causes.

Interviewer: Are these teachers not allowed to accept [girls who have given birth] or they just don't like them?

Respondent: On that I don't know. I just know that they are not accepted.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Seen as unable to concentrate on studies after giving birth

In a few cases, social exclusion and stigmatisation were described as having an effect on girls' learning, separately from their overall ability to attend school. In one case, a teacher noted that there is a perception (which appeared to be shared by the teacher themselves) that girls who become pregnant should not be allowed to return to school, as they will not be able to concentrate on their studies with a child left behind at home.

We cannot allow them [to return to school after giving birth] because they become the talk of the other students, and they will not be able to perform well while they are still thinking of the babies that they have left at home.

(School official, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Violence

There were a large number of reports of violence against both boys and girls, which affected their ability to attend school and learn. Some violence, particularly sexual violence was reported to primarily affect girls, providing specific barriers to girls attending school.

Corporal punishment

Caregivers and girl respondents indicated that corporal punishment was commonplace within the school. Both girls and boys tended to be punished through corporal punishment, albeit boys tended to get punished more often on different parts of the body.

At times when students walk to school, they take drugs like marijuana along the way. When they get to school, there is a lot of insubordination and ill-discipline. This is why teachers end up beating up some students.

(Household, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe)

And similarly:

Girls are beaten on the palms and the boys are beaten on their buttocks and the back.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Some caregivers were supportive of corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool, others were less receptive to corporal punishment, especially if they perceived the reason for the corporal punishment as unjustified. One caregiver mentioned that the girl child should be beaten if she misbehaves:

Interviewer (I): How would you feel if [GIRL] is misbehaves and her teacher beats her?

Respondent (R): Yeah she should be beaten.

I: So if she is supposed to be beaten if she misbehaves?

R: Yes.

I: So you think the teachers are not too strict?

R: Yes they should discipline them and beat them.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Alternatively, another caregiver reported that, by using too much corporal punishment, children were less inclined to go to school:

The teacher is okay but she was a little bit too strict and she was beating them up, so they ended up refusing to go to school because they were scared of her. We then complained about it so she is fine now.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

A girl from the same community discussed how corporal punishment is also used by teachers when students lack supplies, which worries her since her family does not have the cash required to purchase the necessary supplies:

Interviewer (I): Sometimes children don't all have the same things for example, new school uniforms or clothes, books, pencils, toys, food, drink. Has this ever happened to you?

Respondent (R): This has worried me because sometimes we are beaten up for not having adequate school requirements.

I: What did you think when that happened?

R: It was difficult because I didn't have the money and my grandmother didn't have it as well.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Fighting between school children

A notable number of caregivers, community leaders, girl respondents and school staff members indicated that fighting between students was a common occurrence. Most respondents felt that these physical altercations were a normal part of growing up. As in most of the other project areas where fighting amongst children was mentioned as a problem, most fights occurred on the way to or from school, with a smaller number occurring at school as well.

Many instances of fighting involved boys fighting amongst themselves or initiating fights with girls.

We hear cases of violence, normally the boys block roads and say if you pass here I will beat you up and you will hear reports that I was beaten and so on.

(School Staff, Nyanda, Zimbabwe)

And from the point of view of a girl interviewed:

Boys love playing rough and insulting girls... They take away girls lunch and if you say no, they beat you up.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

In a few instances, respondents noted that girls would initiate a fight amongst themselves, albeit not as frequently as boys.

She [girl] fought with another child at school. They shouted at each other and the other child hit her. The other child said that she was beaten by [GIRL] but [GIRL] didn't tell us anything so the mother of the child came here the following morning with her child who had a swollen face. We called [GIRL] and asked her why she hit her and she said she was teasing her and started hitting her and I hit her back. I told her that she was not supposed to do that because they are related. She should have reported to the teacher.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

And similarly:

I am sure, its question of growing up. Teenage stage where you find out there is bullying from the boy child. There are also girls who engage in fights, very good fights (he laughed), but those are rare cases. Basically, on our school rules we say no bullying and fighting at school.

(School Staff, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

A couple of caregivers also noted that the fighting might be causing the girl child distress. Thus, while most respondents did not indicate that fighting amongst students was having an impact on attendance or learning given the commonplace nature of such fighting, it is possible that it is impeding the education process nonetheless.

Respondent: Some children fight on their way to school or when they are from school. You often see them standing on the way to school in groups fighting each other. That is common amongst boys.

Interviewer: Does that also happen at school?

R: No, it usually happens on their way from school. Not at school.

I: How does [GIRL] feel about these things?

R: I at times notice that she becomes melancholic and feels pity for those who are harassed.

(Household, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe)

Sexual assault

A large number of respondents discussed instances of sexual assault that had recently occurred within their communities. The primary mention of sexual assault was in the form of rape. The perpetrators of sexual assault were reported to include teachers, boys and male family members. Sexual assault was also reported to have an effect on girls' attendance at school.

Some respondents noted that youths would wait along the route to school, whereupon they would rape or attempt to rape school-going girls. One caregiver noted that, in another community:

There were boys who would sit and wait for school children to harass them and rape some of them...

The respondent went on to note that:

...children from that area began fearing going to school and for their safety they would travel in groups from school.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Speaking about the local area, another caregiver similarly mentioned that:

There have been 2 cases of rape last year. One child was raped in the bush on her way home from school, the other one was almost raped, but she got help faster when she screamed and there were people at the clinic who heard her and rescued her, but the rapists managed to run away before they got caught.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

In a couple of instances, respondents mentioned that teachers were the perpetrators of rape against schoolchildren. In one instance, a caregiver mentioned that a local teacher had raped a handicapped girl. The respondent went on to note that subsequently:

We don't know what happened because he was locked up and he is now teaching again we don't know what happened. The parents were very angry and they shouted but it was to no avail. Parents wanted him to be sent away but we don't know what happened and he is now teaching.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Finally, some respondents noted that male family members were also sometimes responsible for sexually assaulting girls within the home. For instance, one community leader mentioned:

There is a grandfather who raped his grandchild. She got pregnant, she was in about grade 6 or 7. Right now she is pregnant, she is yet to give birth.

(Community leader, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Domestic arguments and violence

Domestic violence was often mentioned by respondents when discussing instances of violence, which had affected themselves or others in their community. The reasons cited by respondents for domestic violence varied, but violence was commonly discussed alongside alcohol use, extramarital affairs or problems in terms of household finances:

Men beat others after drinking beer and others fight because of girlfriends (extra marital affairs) when the husband spends money on girlfriends. These are the stories we hear, and at times if you trace the issue you will discover that maybe the man is a failure or beats the wife because of being drunk.

(Community Leader, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

And similarly:

Quarrels are there in households. Most of them have to do with finance, the father who hasn't slept at home, where have you been and it leads to quarrels and beer drinking also leads to quarrels.

(School Staff, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

While much of the domestic violence mentioned stemmed from husbands abusing wives, there were also instances of domestic abuse against daughters as well, as a school staff member recalled:

I can be able to testify that using this example of the child that we have who was being abused by the father. The mother passed away and the father was beating her up until we had to call Mustard Seed [a local NGO] to intervene.

(School official, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Finally, a school staff member noted that domestic violence likely negatively impacts the ability of students to learn:

They [domestic disputes] do affect girls far much more than boys, because when they see parents fighting at home, most girls will obviously sympathize with their mother. So once they see such violence it affects them, but boys are used to violence and sometimes they are also violent (laughs).

I: So how does that affect their learning?

R: It affects their level of concentration in class will be far too low.

(School official, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe)

Issues with quality of school facilities

Challenges with quality of facilities and access to classrooms

The lack of classroom capacity in local schools was an issue commonly identified by respondents in Camfed project areas as being a barrier to learning. It was described in relation to overcrowded classes as well as difficult learning environments for the students. Respondents regularly noted that building more classrooms would also result in increased motivation among students in addition to teachers.

It is difficult obviously. If the class room could be enough in number it could be easy to divide them, for example each class could contain 35 pupils to enable conducive learning environment where by the teachers will be able to assess and evaluate all pupils.

(School official, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

To deal with overcrowding, one strategy described by a couple of respondents was that of 'hot-seating' where children are given classroom time in shifts, in some cases receiving their remaining classes outside or being sent home:

Some children start lessons at 11 in the morning learning outside and are usually disturbed by weather conditions. When it is too windy children do not get what the teachers will be saying and when it rains, lessons get disturbed as all children will be packed into the few classrooms that we have.

(School staff, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

Less commonly, respondents noted how school facilities were often in a general state of disrepair. A couple of respondents explicitly stated that the quality of teaching was good but that they were more concerned with the quality of the facilities. By improving the facilities, respondents argued, one would also improve learning outcomes for the students:

I don't see anything bad thing about the education she gets, but if the facilities could be improved I think she would do better than she does.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

In addition, a couple of cases reported dust being an issue in classrooms, further exacerbating an already difficult learning environment, leading to respondents requesting cement floors to be installed.

When respondents attempted to explain the causes for lack of quality of school facilities, some respondents described it in terms of how the government had transferred much of the burden in paying for school facilities to households:

Previously, pupils found all facilities at school, but after the government failed to provide, the responsibility was passed on to the parents and that is when difficulties started, because most of parents are not able to provide facilities for use in the schools.

(Community Leader, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Lack of desks and other furniture

A secondary barrier to learning often cited was the lack of desks and other furniture such as chairs. Respondents often described how students were forced to sit on the floor making it difficult to perform writing exercises properly, making their clothes dirty and negatively affecting their learning:

The other difficulty is the lack of school facilities like desks, as you can see, standard one pupil are sitting on the floor and others on blocks. Do you think that such a student to write properly?

(School official, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Lack of teacher accommodation

A couple of respondents also described how having teacher accommodation adjacent to schools made for better motivated and performing teachers as well as reducing teacher absenteeism:

Example teachers' houses, teachers are coming from far away from the school. Just imagine some teachers are coming from more than 17km to school. Can you compare that teacher with those who live at school? It is different even the efficiency differs.

(School official, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Issues in terms of access to boarding school facilities

In a few cases respondents reported that there are insufficient boarding schools, which are described as especially important for girls' access to education and learning. The reasons cited included primarily that girls would have more opportunities to study and get better grades, not being distracted by chores and household work.

Yes, if they build boarding facilities I think the girls will be able to stay in school and avoid going home where that also take care of household responsibilities such cooking, fetching water and doing cleaning. When they stay in school they will be able to concentrate and perform well in school.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Lack of teaching resources and learning materials

Lack of teaching aids such as textbooks

The most commonly cited issue in relation to lack of teaching resources was the shortage of textbooks. Even though there are some examples of assistance, many respondents reported that having insufficient numbers of textbooks is a severe barrier to learning:

Teaching aids especially books, because students themselves don't have books and you find a teacher with a single book used for teaching or only two books for the whole class.

(Community leader, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

In many project areas it was reported that pupils are forced to share the same textbook, resulting in situations where students are forced to queue to get access to a textbook. This was reported to slow down the overall learning process:

You find out that at one desk they will all share one book, and the desk will have 10 pupils, five in each side. When one group is done they will pass it on to the others... Some of the pupils might spend 30 min reading the book while others are waiting.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

In addition to this, some respondents reported that not having textbooks was a barrier to children's ability to do homework and read in their spare time:

Yes, the main problem is that at their school there are no books, reading books. You will find out that there maybe 2 books, and of those 2 one of them is the teacher's book. Children should have textbooks to bring home so that we also assist them from home.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

In some cases, the lack of textbooks and other teaching aids was referred to in terms of a general lack of school funding. More commonly, respondents attributed the lack of teaching aids to parents not affording to pay school

fees. A couple of respondents reported that the government previously used to provide teaching resources but this responsibility had been carried over to the parents.

Lack of exercise books and other teaching resources

Less commonly, only in a few cases teachers referred explicitly to the lack of exercise books being a barrier for learning:

The school also has problems with parents not buying their children exercise books, so sometimes the children can go 3 days without writing anything. This affects the children and the teacher can do nothing about it.

(Community Leader, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

However, when asked, many households, teachers and community leaders stated the need for assistance with exercise books and other learning materials to encourage and improve learning outcomes.

Uniforms

In the Camfed project areas there are several cases of respondents citing the need for uniforms. Several parents described uniforms as being an important factor in making it easier for their children to attend and learn at school:

A child should have material like exercise books, pens, and uniform. If she has this stuff she will never miss school.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Often not explicitly referred to as a barrier to attendance or learning, some respondents' state that the lack of uniforms had an impact on students' motivation and was making them unhappy. With the opposite also being true; having uniforms was stated as encouraging them and making students feel socially included:

A child will like to go to school when she or he had all things required. When she had all things she will be happy to go to school.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Environmental disruption

Respondents from Camfed project areas commonly reported environmental disruptions, most often drought but also seasonal flooding, which affect their ability to support their household and damage their homes or schools.

In terms of their ability to support themselves, several households described how environmental disruptions hamper their ability to make ends meet. One respondent described it in this way:

During drought, we just survive on whatever it is that can keep body and soul together. We do just about anything in order to survive... We do piece-jobs, including ploughing the fields in exchange for grains or mealie-meal. Of course at times we also get assistance by way of food aid.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Heavy storms with high winds can also cause damage to homes and schools. Another household described the damage storms cause to their home in this way:

Yes, just recently, the roof of this house was blown off by strong winds, maybe two months ago.

Was your homestead the only one affected or there are other homes that were affected by the wind storm?

It is actually quite a number, you can even see that homestead opposite ours still has no roof, that was a complete house with the roof before the storm, so it's a number of houses in this area that were affected. Some even had the walls also collapse.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Effects of environmental disruptions on school

A couple of school officials described the effect of seasonal disruptions on children's ability to attend school. In the rainy season, one school official noted that the rivers and wells overflow, negatively affecting students' attendance at school:

During rainy season floods do happen because there is a well in the way, and when it rains it floods and become a problem. Even the number of absentees increases during that season.

(School official, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

School officials also noted that during times of seasonal scarcity, households have difficulty affording school fees or materials, affecting children's enrolment or attendance:

[Why is January difficult?] In January because there is little food and children have to go to school and they need books and uniforms.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Harassment and insecurity

Harassment and bullying among students

Amongst interview respondents, verbal harassment was frequently cited as a common and reoccurring concern. In most instances, boy students were described by respondents as teasing, intimidating, insulting, threatening or initiating arguments with girls or with each other. To a lesser extent, girls were reported to verbally harass one-another as well. Respondents noted that girls would rarely initiate verbal harassment toward boys unless in response to verbal or physical harassment they had already experienced.

Most respondents saw such verbal harassment as commonplace and not a cause for concern. Some caregivers did note, however, that the verbal harassment resulted in girls being less inclined to attend school, though caregivers would not, for the most part, allow this to impede attendance.

For instance, one respondent noted:

Harassment among the children is there and it is something normal...

When asked if harassment affects the caregiver's decision to enrol the girl child, they continued:

... It is a normal thing to children; it can't affect me enrolling my child because education is important. She may beat or be beaten by her fellows, it's part of growing up.

(Household, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Similarly, when asked how verbal taunting and fighting might affect attendance, one caregiver mentioned that:

The girl might end up saying, mum, tomorrow I am not going to school, and you ask why and she will say that girl was verbally insulting me or that boy...

When asked what the caregiver subsequently does, the caregiver noted:

I will go to school and tell the teachers that my daughter is afraid of coming to school because so and so is harassing her. The headmaster might call the two children and ask exactly what's happening...

The caregiver also mentioned that:

I will not remove my girl from school but we would have the issue sorted out.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

If the verbal harassment continues, in some instances, respondents report that they approach the teacher or parent for help. When asked if the girl child has experienced any harassment, one caregiver mentioned:

She has actually been a victim of both girls and boys. They have always held this notion that she thinks she is special or that she is intelligent. As a result, both boys and girls have attacked her.

(Household, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe)

When asked what she does to deal with such harassment, the caregiver notes:

She usually threatens them by saying that she will report the issue to the teachers and school authorities. That's what I have told her, to threaten them that way. When she says that, they get scared away and keep away from her.

(Household, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe)

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment was reported as a concern of both parents and community leaders. Sexual harassment was reported by respondents as usually occurring on the way to or from school by both adult men and boys, generally in the form of verbal sexual harassment.

Here in this area there is no physical attack that had been reported, but the most common is the verbal harassment done by men to girls. It is a sexual harassment/deception, after girls get deceived by men in order to have a sex with them, they become convinced.

(Community leader, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

However, it is not clear how severe this barrier is, in terms of preventing girls from attending school. When asked how these reports of sexual harassment affected her girl child, one caregiver noted:

It didn't affect her in anyway. This didn't happen to anyone from their school. But children from that area began fearing going to school and for their safety they would travel in groups from school.

(Household, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe)

It should be noted that some respondents might have conflated consensual and non-consensual sex between youth as rape. This can be seen in the following discussion, where the respondent and interviewer are discussing harassment directed toward students on the way to or from school:

Interviewer (I): How about sexual harassment?

Respondent (R): Yes, they are abused by boys their age especially at secondary school and get pregnant.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Insecurity due to politics and political violence

Politics and political violence were often cited as a cause of insecurity and adverse student attendance, especially (but not exclusively) around election time. Intimidation and violence due to politics affected both teachers and students; in either case, this tended to impede the learning process:

It was in 2009 when the ZANU PF youths were beating up people who supported the opposition MDC. The problem we had was that our teachers were followed to school and were beaten up in front of school children which affected the relationship between student and teacher. All ZANU PF students were asked to face the back of the class while others were taught. During that time O level students who wrote their exams failed and the headmaster had 4 of his children whom he expected to pass but the highest came out with 2 subjects and that was the head boy and the head girl came up with 1 subject. This lowered the teaching at the school and some had suggested that the students should not sit for the exams but to no avail. So this was the problem, but since then we have never encountered any conflict.

(Community leader, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, a community leader noted that, though it might not have impacted the local community, political conflict in 2007 and 2008 affected schooling and caused insecurity:

Children were no longer going to school in fear of being attacked on their way to and from school. If a parent has been attacked, the child will not even do well in school. There were a number of youths especially dropouts, who were roaming around the village and road harassing people. There are those girls who drop out due to pregnancy. Such girls were also joining those militant youth group, inciting violence in the community.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Unqualified or absent teachers

Insufficient numbers of teachers and overcrowding

Lack of teachers was described as an important barrier to children learning in school, particularly in remote rural areas. The lack of teachers was reported to affect learning for both boys and girls, particularly due to overcrowded classrooms.

According to one respondent, the national recommended ratio for student-teacher is one teacher to 45 students. However, the actual teacher-student ratio was reported by some respondents to be much higher:

First, is the few number of teachers, in this case the ratio of teachers-student / pupil should be 1:45 national wise. But here, I have a total of 460 pupils. When you divide to the ration of 1:45, I could not do with less than nine teachers, so there is a shortage of 3 to 4 or 5 teachers. [School has six teachers in total].

(School staff, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Also, the teacher-student ratio between schools appears to vary quite a lot between districts:

As I have told you the ratio of teacher pupils 1:70, while in [local primary school] the ratio is 1:35.

(School staff, Morogoro Region, Tanzania)

Overcrowding and lack of teachers was also commonly cited as a barrier to learning, as it makes it difficult for teachers to give individual attention to students:

No, but there are problems with teachers, I think there is a serious shortage of teachers, they don't have enough lessons. She often tells me that their teacher was not around and as a result, they did not learn anything.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Some respondents ascribed classroom overcrowding to national level policies in Zimbabwe encouraging universal primary enrolment:

It's just a question of their background, when they came from primary [school], there were unable to read and write. So because of this massive education policy, they were just let pass, from grade seven to form one. So they are coming to us in that raw state and it will become very difficult for us since our classes are big, 55-60 students. So it will be difficult to concentrate on an individual.

(School staff, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

Absenteeism

Some respondents also reported that teacher absenteeism is a concern in local schools, generally attributed by respondents to lack of motivation on the part of teachers:

You see in that school [local secondary school] there is need for sacking of the teaching staff together with the head of the school. We need to bring in new teachers who are serious about teaching our children.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

The severity of this issue is unclear, but it was reported by several different respondents, primarily in Mataberland North:

Teachers are away from school frequently. We send children to school in order for them to learn, not for them to be seated in school doing nothing.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

And similarly:

At times children don't go to school because they feel that it is not necessary, since their teachers might be absent from work most of the times. They may say they are discouraged by their teachers' absenteeism.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Teachers avoid being posted in rural areas

In Tanzania, several respondents noted that they face difficulties retaining teachers in rural postings, as they prefer working in urban areas. One possible reason for this is the freedoms given to teachers to choose where to be posted by the government:

Lack of teachers may be caused by the freedom they are given to choose where to be posted by the government. Sometimes a teacher may come to report in the school and there after he/she won't come back.

(Community leader, Pwani Region, Tanzania)

Other respondents cited the overall poor local infrastructure and lack of recruitment as reasons for insufficient numbers of teachers.

Quality in relation to teacher competency and professionalism

Reports of unprofessional conduct and lack of competency was the most frequently issue raised by respondents in relation to quality of teaching. Often this was a subject that caregivers appeared to feel strongly about:

You see in that school [local secondary school], there is need for sacking of the teaching staff together with the head of the school. We need to bring in new teachers who are serious about teaching our children.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Particularly in Mataberland North, several respondents reported that the poor quality of teaching is an important barrier to learning. In these cases, students were reported to perform well in primary school, but as soon as they started secondary school, dropouts increased and pass rates declined.

This was not only described by respondents as an issue with teachers in their educational role, but as relating to a wider problem with the school leadership in the area:

What I realized is that the headmaster had relaxed and teachers were behaving anyhow, absconding and so on. So I think a number of parents complained and the headmaster took up a stricter stance with how the teachers operate.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Other examples of unprofessional conduct cited by respondents in Camfed project areas were teachers drinking beer in front of students and not preparing enough before class. Several households also reported on experiencing teachers as having “bad” attitudes, being lazy, not taking their work seriously and failing to motivate their students.

Teachers should be more responsible and make sure that they teach and encourage children to excel at school. They should also do away with their laziness and attitude towards their work.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

A few households also cited the need for discipline and teachers not being strict enough with students resulting in poor learning outcomes:

Yes, this has resulted in poor grades from children. Children need to be constantly monitored and rebuked by a strict teacher for them to excel at school. Even intelligent children end up performing badly if the teacher is not serious and is too nice.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

A couple of households described how the students themselves were complaining about not learning at school. In one case the cause of bad quality of teaching was cited as being a result of teacher's discontent with their salaries:

The children are always complaining, saying the teachers are not teaching properly. The teachers are discontented with their pay and as a result they are not teaching well. So they will just teach poorly saying that is what is equal to the money that I am getting.

(Household, Manicaland, Zimbabwe)

Quality in relation to teaching methods, curriculum and pedagogy

Households in Camfed project areas raised several different concerns with unqualified teachers in regards to their teaching methods, curriculum and pedagogy. One respondent raised the issue of schools making use of study groups and extra tutoring. Too little of students' time in school was described as being devoted to material subject study which was why provision for study groups and extra tutoring was deemed necessary.

Another respondent noted that teachers were not spending enough time helping students to understand the problem and assisting the student in learning, and instead would simply punish them for wrong answers:

Some of those teachers just beat up children, when students perform badly they just beat the child without explaining how the problems are solved.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

A few households cited negative outcomes in specific subjects and linking this to the quality of teaching:

Looking at how the teachers are teaching, some teachers teach well while others don't, because you actually observe that the child would have failed some subjects and you can actually tell that some of the teachers are not doing their jobs well.

(Household, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

A counterpoint raised by teachers is that at times, students who enrol in secondary school were not taught the required knowledge in primary school with some students not being able to read or write. This was cited as leading to students not passing and having difficulties in school:

It's just a question of their background, when they came from primary, there were unable to read and write. So because of this massive education policy, they were just let pass, from grade seven to form one. So they are coming to us in that raw state and it will become very difficult for us since our classes are big, 55-60 students.

(School teacher, Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe)

This was also echoed by one teacher who argued that increasing the monetary incentives for teachers would increase the teaching quality:

To deliver quality education, I feel the teachers should be encouraged to work harder by providing them with better incentives since their pay is low.

(School staff, Madleleyoni, Zimbabwe)

Project Brief – WUSC

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in WUSC project areas. The most often mentioned barriers to girls' education in these areas were poverty and violence, relating to the material difficulties of life in and around refugee camps, including the limited employment opportunities and the costs of school. In terms of violence, vulnerability to theft, harassment and raids and sexual violence against girls were discussed most commonly. Also, frequently mentioned were concerns related to marriage and pregnancy, which primarily affect secondary school-age girls.

Given that WUSC is focusing on refugee camps and their host communities, the issue of migration and household mobility was also frequently mentioned, either households who have recently arrived in the camps or who make their living through herding livestock.

Less frequently mentioned, but also of importance, were the high level of household responsibilities girls have in the home, the poor quality of school facilities and the insufficient numbers of trained teachers, textbooks and desks in the classroom. Seasonal concerns were also mentioned, primarily in terms of flooding, storms or droughts, which affect homes and livelihoods, making it more difficult for households to afford to send their children to school.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Within the project's targeted areas, there are refugee camps as well as nomadic communities. A common worry reported by respondents within the targeted areas was the availability of food. Many respondents expressed that the unavailability of food was a severe and considerable issue affecting all aspects of life, including education.

Beyond food, respondents also indicated that the affordability of school inhibited attendance, as caregivers struggled to cover the costs associated with school including school fees and uniforms. Furthermore, when money was limited some households prioritised the boy's education while other households had girls seek employment to improve household income.

UN as main source of income and resources

Almost all respondents within the project area stated that, on account of their refugee status, they rely mainly and sometimes solely on their United Nations (UN) refugee card for food and supplies. However, while almost all expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of food they receive, not many indicated the effect this has on schooling, as noted by the following respondent:

We do not get any income from anywhere we only get food from the UN...Even if the household faces economic problem there is nothing we can do, sometimes there will be hunger, there can be food shortage or delay, we need upkeep, even the kids need sugar for their milk.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

A few respondents stated that they sometimes receive help from relatives or engage in casual, informal jobs to obtain an income. When asked if there are certain times of the year when it is harder to support the household, one caregiver noted:

Yes, almost all the time because we do not have money, we just ask our relatives or friend for help or we just survive.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

While insufficient food and income-generating opportunities in these refugee camps are problematic, in most cases education is not described as being impeded due to this refugee status. Indeed, one respondent noted that her/his family is in the refugee camp because of the access to school provided by the camp:

The only reason we live here is for our children to get an education, the living conditions are very poor here and we depend on the food aid we receive from NGO's.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

Poverty affects food intake and diet

Food availability was reported as the most notable challenge and worry to households in the project's targeted communities. Although respondents did not always explicitly link food availability to education outcomes, a few respondents did note that food availability impacted education:

The government should give food to schools because food plays an important role when it comes to education.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

Another school staff member noted that families who were unable to pay school fees or for other costs associated with schooling might also face difficulty learning:

Girls from families which don't have enough funds to sustain them in school and provide the basic needs that are required in the school, like uniform and pens. They are also unable to concentrate in class because sometimes they are hungry.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

One school teacher felt that this connection between insufficient food due to poverty and negative education outcomes might be overcome through food distribution in the school, potentially increasing enrolment:

Yeah, like they give the girls 1kg sugar per month and when the parents see that, they send others girls to school so that they can get more sugar.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Poverty affects ability to meet costs of schooling

Poverty and the inability to meet school fees and associated schooling costs were described as the second most common worry amongst households in the targeted areas. Many caregivers described how students are sent back home because they are unable to pay school fees:

When my children tell me that they have been chased away from school because of school fees, and then they have to sit at home that makes me feel very bad.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

When asked to describe the challenges in enrolling students in school, a community leader corroborated this concern with school fees:

The lack of school fees which has caused many children not to join school and to drop out of school.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Other caregivers noted a similar concern, albeit focused on paying for school uniforms or learning resources instead of school fees:

She [the daughter] sometimes stays home because her uniform is worn out, so she would be encouraged by getting some uniform.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

Poverty and lack of resources hinders enrolment at secondary level

Respondents noted that secondary schools are especially difficult for some households to afford and, as a few respondents indicated, represent a challenge to girls' enrolment and attendance. A caregiver noted that while it might be possible to educate a child up to eighth grade with limited money, this was less feasible for schooling thereafter:

Maybe lack of money you can take your child to primary and when she reach class 8 and there is no money, she can come and stay at home.

(Caregiver, Turkana, Kenya)

In suggesting ways to encourage households to send their daughters to school following the completion of eighth grade, one school staff member stated the following:

Provide bursary to bright students after they finish class eight, because most of them don't go to high school for lack of school fees.

(School Official, Tana River, Kenya)



Within the project area, the types of violence reported by respondents tend to involve thefts and raids by individuals outside of the reporting communities. Such raids and theft in the project area primarily occurred in Turkana County, and to a lesser extent Tana River County and Garissa County. Since most of the population in these three counties are pastoralists, cattle raids – which are seen as a rite of passage for boys – tended to have a considerable impact on the livelihood incomes of the raided families; some respondents noted that due to these raids caregivers would marry off their girls in order to re-accumulate livestock or financial assets, thus indicating a connection between early marriage and poverty. Additionally, a few respondents noted that caregivers might be killed during raids, which indicates that a relationship might exist between raids and an increased likelihood of children becoming orphans.

School bullying and fighting was also often mentioned within the programme area, however most respondents saw bullying and fighting between children as commonplace, thus not impeding learning outcomes. Finally, respondents mentioned that sexual assault – especially rape – was a major obstacle that inhibited education outcomes.

Insecurity, thefts and raids

Theft and raids by individuals not belonging to the communities being interviewed were commonly cited barriers to attending school. This was particularly highlighted as an issue in Turkana, though the communities in Garissa were also affected by these raids. In the case of the communities in Turkana, raids and counter-raids were often conducted by the Tuposu – an ethnic group from South Sudan – and the local Turkana ethnic group of Kenya.

One school staff member from Turkana, for instance, mentioned that cattle raids would often occur within the project area and tended to either impede the ability of children to attend school or would result in the temporary closure of schools:

There is constant stealing of animals, cattle raiding which normally happens in these communities surrounding the camps.... Children are not be able to go to school, and sometimes schools are closed.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

The rationale behind why theft and raids impact school attendance varies based on the gender of the child. For some boys, their schooling is affected because they are involved in varying capacities in the raids – which are seen as a rite of passage for boys into adulthood – from a young age. When asked if students go to war, one community leader in Turkana said:

Yes, they normally go as young as 10 years. The boys must protect their mothers and siblings and their cattle and goats.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Similarly, a school staff member further corroborated this notion that boys miss school due to their participation in cattle raiding, indicating that boy students often drop out to help in the fighting:

During the seasons when cattle rustling is intense like now, some children miss school or drop out completely to join their village men in the fighting.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

Girls are also impacted by the raids, either through rape or early marriage. In some instances, girls are married off in order for the family to re-accumulate assets:

Yes, obviously if most of the animals have been stolen by the other community and the family has girls, they give the girls away for marriage to get more animals.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

In other instances, girls are raped during the raids and caregivers are harmed or killed, as noted by a community leader when asked about the raids:

It affects students because they lose their parents through war. They even killed an old woman last week and raped girls. It has affected our children a lot.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

School fighting and bullying

For the most part, instances of fighting between students were not seen as hindering students from attending school. Generally, fighting on the way to or at school was perceived as commonplace, with caregivers indicating that minor fights, taunting, and scuffles did not impede school attendance. For instance, when asked if children fight or get beaten on the way to school by adults or other children, one caregiver in Garissa noted:

Yes, sometimes some beat them while they are going to school but it is not that much, children like fighting and disturbing one another.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

Another caregiver noted that children fight in school, but this fighting was considered normal. More serious fighting would result the parents or school official intervening:

We consider that normal and part of their growing up unless it is serious, that is when as a parent I can intervene and involve teachers.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

Similarly, a caregiver in Garissa noted that children fight each other in school, but this fighting does not affect the caregiver's decision to take her girl to school:

It doesn't affect [my daughter]; its children games which normally happen everywhere... It does not affect my decision, I will still take her to school.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

While most instances of bullying and fighting between students do not impede learning outcomes, in more serious instances of fighting, some respondents noted that caregivers might intervene or prevent their children from attending school. In one instance, a community leader in Turkana mentioned an example involving large-scale fighting between boys, especially of different clans:

Sometime back we had a seminar for 40 boys and after it was finished the boys had an argument that led to a person getting hurt; the people in the area joined the boys which led to violence, but we intervened and had to cool down the tensions with the help of police. Sometimes these issues are caused by clanisms, especially among the Somalis, but it is an underlying issue which has never been addressed... [W]hat happened yesterday between those boys has led to all the students not going to school, which has an effect to the learning because they miss classes.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Similarly, in Garissa a number of interviewees in one local community mentioned that the day before the interview, a boy had been hit with a stone on the way to school, which required him to go to the hospital. Instances such as this serve to inhibit caregivers from sending their kids to school due to fear that such violence might befall their children:

A boy was hit with a stone on his way to school, and he was bleeding as he was taken to hospital and that caused the students to fear going to school; and also a few other parents were afraid of taking their children to school but it was just an accident, although we are not very sure what caused it.

(Community Leader, Garissa, Kenya)

Sexual assault

Some parents cited sexual assault, specifically rape, as either a notable barrier to attending school or to learning. As previously mentioned, girls are often raped during raids. One caregiver in Turkana indicated that, because the community was exposed to banditry and the military, girls are more likely to be raped or married off early due to the resultant unplanned pregnancy:

Girls are raped and defiled and we have early marriages because of unplanned pregnancies.... If a child is defiled it affects her psychologically which means she cannot concentrate in her studies and most of them get children while they are very young and this prompts them to dropping out of school.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

Often rape occurs on the way to school, and in some cases at the school itself. Furthermore, rape was also mentioned as a reason some girls are withdrawn from school, as noted by the following school staff member in Garissa:

Rape cases around the schooling facility may cause the community to withdraw their children from school.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

A caregiver in Turkana similarly noted an incident where some girls dropped out of school after being raped on account of the resultant pregnancy:

Some two boys raped some girls in that school and they impregnated them... They dropped out of school. I think even now they are still at home because they gave birth last month.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

As such, sexual assault – primarily in the form of rape – might lead to either the affected girl withdrawing from school or other girls temporarily not attending classes for fear of being sexually assaulted. Furthermore, those who are victims of rape might face negative learning outcomes, while others who fall pregnant as a result of the pregnancy might also withdraw from school.



Within the surveyed area, respondents noted that unplanned pregnancy and early marriage often resulted in girls being withdrawn from school. While the relationship between pregnancy and some of the other barriers covered herein are difficult to ascertain, early marriage interacted with a number of other barriers to girls' education. For instance, interviewees noted that girls who married early often had no say in the matter. Additionally, poverty is a common reason for girls marrying early, as families can obtain money or assets from the marriage through dowry. Finally, pregnant girls appear to face varying degrees of social exclusion due to the humiliation associated with unplanned pregnancy.

Pregnancy

Pregnancy was often mentioned by respondents as a factor impeding girls from attending school. Less frequently, respondents also noted that pregnancy impacted the ability of girls to concentrate in school.

Amongst interviewees, almost all instances of pregnancy and early marriage were reported in Turkana. While this does not necessarily indicate that pregnancy and early marriage are not issues in other counties, it might be an indication that unplanned pregnancy is a more overt concern in Turkana, and potentially a more frequent occurrence in the county.

Situations resulting in pregnancy seem to vary: respondents noted that pregnancy was caused by both consensual and non-consensual sex, and the other party involved could be either an adult male or fellow student. One respondent also noted that teachers get girls pregnant. Noting a recent incident in which two boys were accused of raping and impregnating some girls in the school, one respondent provided this assessment:

This market for gold has a lot of people coming, a lot of unwanted pregnancies are seen but nobody knows how it happened, the girls say they were raped and the men say the girls were willing. It is a complicated topic here."

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

Concerns about 'mixed' or co-ed schools

The type of school that girls attended was attributed by some respondents as facilitating unwanted pregnancy. Specifically, some respondents felt that "mixed" schools – that is, schools with both girls and boys studying together – might lead to more instances of unwanted pregnancy. When asked if there are any challenges that arise from having boys and girls study together, one community leader noted:

No, although some parents talk about pregnancy, but as a leader I have observed that even at girl's school, they normally get pregnant just as they get pregnant in mixed schools.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

On the other hand, another community leader from the same village offered a different view point, stating that while there are advantages to having boys and girls study together, there are still concerns with pregnancy occurring:

I find good because it creates competition between boys and girls, and also helps them get used to each other at an early age, but there is always the fear of early pregnancies, especially in upper primary school and secondary school.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Social stigma

Indeed, while most respondents noted that pregnant students would be allowed and encouraged to return to school, pregnant school girls still face humiliation within their community, highlighted by the following caregiver when asked if pregnant children go to school:

No, many face humiliation from people within or out of the school, and they will not accept to go to school.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

Girls who become pregnant appear to face a degree of social stigma which is not applied to other groups, including orphans:

For those who are impregnated we separate them, because they have now become a burden and can spoil the other girls, but the orphans are supported by the community.

(Community Leader, Garissa, Kenya)

Pregnancy leading to early marriage

Some respondents suggested that early marriage might result as a consequence of the pregnancy itself, regardless of how the girl became pregnant. One caregiver suggests that rape might lead to early marriage due to unplanned pregnancy, and describes how this may impact the girl's educational outcomes:

Girls are raped and defiled and we have early marriages because of unplanned pregnancies... If a child is defiled it affects her psychologically which means she cannot concentrate in her studies and most of them get children while they are very young and this prompts them to dropping out of school... Sometimes I get worried and that makes me think twice about taking my child to school.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

A similar viewpoint was expressed by a school staff member:

When they drop out of school it is discouraging, especially because of pregnancy, and they have to go and get married early, it is saddening.

(School official, Turkana, Kenya)

Issues paying school fees

Importantly, respondents did not always define what is implied by school fees: school fees might be the actual amount paid to enrol a child in school, the incidental costs associated with sending a child to school such as transportation, unofficial costs such as those paid to the helper mentioned above, and so forth. As such, school fees in this section can refer to both "official" school fees such as those paid to enrol a child in select government schools, or to cover room and board in these schools, as well as "unofficial" and "ancillary" school fees such as transportation and helper salaries.

Bearing this in mind, the cost of school fees is the number one concern and barrier for children attending school. This issue is often closely linked to poverty and the inability of households to afford school supplies and food for the children. Specifically, respondents focused on issues with two components of school fees: fees associated with secondary school and fees associated with other incidental costs of schooling, such as school uniforms. Not

surprisingly, many respondents found provisions of bursaries, uniforms, and other incidentals as a good way of increasing attendance of marginalised girls.

Secondary school costs

Noting that fees associated with secondary schooling prevented some students from continuing their education, certain respondents mentioned that the government should provide support to students to help cover secondary school costs:

I would also like the government to sensitize the need to have children enrolled to school, and also provide bursary to bright students after they finish class eight, because most of them don't go to high school for lack of school fees.

(School Official, Tana River, Kenya)

A community leader reinforced this notion, stating that financial constraints prevent many households from sending their girls to secondary school:

This is because you find the parents are not sure whether after the completion of primary school, if they will be able to support them for high school or what may happen latter, if they may get employment or not and that's why it's difficult for most of them to pay the school fees for their girl child.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

School uniforms and other incidental costs

Uniforms were a commonly cited challenge for parents in affording school, with some respondents noting that provisions of uniforms could help motivate households to enrol their girls in school. However, uniforms were often only one factor, albeit an important one, in a list of items that would encourage girls to attend school:

Buying of books, pens and teaching materials, uniform, shoes and these will encourage a girl to go to school.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

A school staff member supported this position, noting that the inability of households to afford incidental, household-specific expenses, including uniforms, hindered education outcomes:

Girls from families which don't have enough funds to sustain them in school and provide the basic needs that are required in the school, like uniform and pens.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

Recent household migration

Regardless of the reason, frequent or recent migration was often noted as a barrier to school attendance and enrolment. Migration itself served to negatively affect education outcomes. Additionally, for some households which migrate frequently or have recently migrated, other priorities take precedent for girl students, such as caring for younger siblings.

One cause of migration in particular, violence and insecurity, was specifically noted by participants as inhibiting education outcomes. As such, there seems to be a connection such that migration may arise as a result of violence.

Challenges faced by nomadic households

Since WUSC targets two large refugee camps in Northern Kenya, a number of respondents were recent refugees. As such, respondents in WUSC project areas were more likely to report issues with families being re-located and moving around more often than respondents from other project areas (with the exception of Save the Children's work in Ethiopia, where the target population are nomadic pastoralists). Several respondents noted the difficulties faced by children from migratory families, as moves can disrupt attendance and enrolment, particularly for girls. To this end, one community leader mentioned that this migration resulted in girl students attending different schools:

Yes, but they move a lot and their girls attend different school because of the migration of the families.

(Community leader, Tana River, Kenya)

In some cases, respondents noted that nomadic families do not place a lot of value in educating their children, particularly their daughters, as they know they will be moving again soon. This serves to dissuade caregivers from sending their children to school:

You find in a family of five girls only two are going to school, since most people do not have a very high regard for education. Most people are on the move, they have only been sheltered here and they do not know for how long so they may not consider educating their children as a high priority.

(Community leader, Garissa, Kenya)

Similarly, another community leader pointed out the sense of uncertainty and hopelessness which families living in the refugee camps might feel, which serves to decrease their motivation to re-enrol their children.

Since the schools are free, most people enrol their girls but there are a few who want their girls to be at home and do housework duties, and others because of the nature of camp life, it is not clear whether it is permanent or we are soon moving to another place, they tend to not take education seriously, sometimes I understand them since camp life can also have a sense of hopelessness.

(Community leader, Garissa, Kenya)

A school staff member in the same camp described the situation for children in the camp in similar terms, where their education is often disrupted due to relocation, migration, and a variety of household tasks:

It's a refugee camp with so many activities going on and resettlement, like you will find a pupil who is in class two second term has been resettled to a different camp like [camp], and is now on transit to the USA. Because of the nomadic lifestyle, you find pupils are involved in taking care of the animals or their other siblings instead of coming to school.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Displacement

In other cases, violence and insecurity forced households to migrate in search of greater security. As one respondent noted, this conflict-driven displacement led to delays in re-enrolling the child in school:

[Displacement due to conflict] has affected my children's education because when we moved here they had to wait at home before we enrolled them into the new school.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

Other respondents noted that the violence that these types of families are fleeing from is often gendered, creating additional difficulties for girls who want to re-enrol in school, as rape and other forms of violence directed toward girls disinclines them from re-enrolling:

Yes, like last time, the issue of insecurity targeted girls, there were armed robbers who visited families and if there were girls they raped them, parents started moving their daughter to different places like Garissa.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Significant household responsibilities

Beyond poverty stemming from limited income and assets, respondents also mentioned that girls' education outcomes were negatively affected by girls' share of household work. This work ranged from helping with chores to childrearing tasks for older girls with younger siblings. While girls' involvement in household chores was commonplace, respondents noted that select groups were more likely to be affected by inordinate household work, including girls belonging to single-parent, disabled-parent, and refugee households. Girls belonging to nomadic families were also discussed as being less likely to attend school.

Girls overburdened with housework duties

Girls in the surveyed communities carry heavy responsibilities in the household, with respondents noting that girls engage in domestic work such as cooking, fetching firewood, taking care of siblings, and performing productive activities such as looking after animals. Clearly indicating the preference to keep girls out of school to help in household chores, one mother stated the following:

I don't think it is good to take all of them to school. I prefer one to remain back at home to help with chores, because they say if you have five children, take three to school and leave two to help you in other home duties.

(Household, Turkana, Kenya)

A teacher supported this notion, mentioning that girls often can attend school only after they have completed their household chores:

The girl child in the community is used as a tool of wealth creation. The mother comes and collects her from school to help her carry the younger sibling to hospital, do other household chores like washing, cooking, and doing other duties. School for them is a place they come only if they are free.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

These duties often inhibit school attendance, negatively impact school enrolment, and restrict girls from properly learning and studying after school. Additionally, when female caregivers fall sick, girls often have to assume the responsibilities of the female caregivers, thus potentially further impeding education outcomes:

They [girls] miss like two days, when you ask them they say they were helping their mother when she went to the market. Or else she tells you her mother delivered in the hospital and for that reason she may fail to attend for a week or more as she looks after her siblings... the girl is responsible to take care of the mother so she is given the mother's responsibility when the mother is sick or is away.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

Girls most affected are daughters of single parents, disabled parents, refugees, livestock owners, and nomadic families:

In exploring which girls are most affected by inordinate housework duties and responsibilities, respondents tended to note that children of single or disabled parents, refugees living in camps and children of cattle owners are most affected. Children of these families have more household responsibilities, especially in terms of looking after younger siblings. As one caregiver indicated, children in the area tended to go to school, except for those belonging to some of the aforementioned families:

All children are taken to school, be it a girl or a boy, and if a girl was not going to school, it would be because maybe the mother is disabled, or the mother is a widow and the mother is the sole bread winner. In that case, the daughter can be asked to stay home and look after her younger siblings.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

Another school staff member explained the hardships of children living in refugee camps and how trying to make ends meet, especially in trying to collect food and other essentials, affects students' attendance at school:

You may find a pupil is supposed to be in school and he is at the distribution centre waiting to collect food for his family. It is difficult to keep them in school consistently.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

This notion of children in refugee camps missing school in order to help with other chores was further elaborated on by another school staff member who noted that children in refugee camps had responsibilities similar to those of children not in refugee camps, which inhibited education outcomes in this context as well:

This is a refugee camp and there are a lot of challenges... the learners are also involved in other activities like fetching fire wood, fetching water and so this interferes with education and little time is spent on education.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Some respondents mentioned that children of cattle owners rarely enrol in school. Given that within Turkana County most households engage in livestock rearing, it might be surmised that many children are inhibited from attending school regularly due to their cattle-rearing responsibilities. Indeed, one school staff member felt that children of these families often had to care for livestock which inhibited their attendance:

Those that have cattle to care for and thus they send their children to look after the animals instead of coming to school.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

Children whose families live a nomadic life also found it hard to attend school. That is because of continuous moving and resettlement, as well as the children's share of responsibility towards their livestock, which appears to inhibit them from enrolling or regularly attending school:

Because of the nomadic lifestyle, you find pupils are involved in taking care of the animals or their other siblings instead of coming to school.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Issues with the quality of school facilities

Issues with quality of facilities and access to classrooms

As in other project contexts, WUSC project areas face similar problems in terms of classrooms, with capacity being the primary and most commonly cited issue. Overcrowded and poorly built classrooms were frequently mentioned, with several reports of children being taught outdoors as result of classroom shortages.

The fact that student learn under trees and sheds, we also live in houses that are not secure especially during the rainy seasons, it is not safe since they are not well roofed and they lack good ventilation.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

This issue was reported as especially severe in the WUSC project area refugee camps, where semi-permanent classrooms, overcrowding and the practice of 'hot seating' or multi-shift classes are common:

And the other reason was that the students were getting poor quality education when they were all in one class so the multi shift was started. It works in two shifts in the morning and in the afternoon because students were a hundred and above in a class, so if they are hundred, fifty will attend in the morning and 50 in the afternoon.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

In these cases there were also mentions of lack of school furniture such as desks and chairs, with some respondents stating that the shortage was caused by overpopulation and poverty:

It is because of overpopulation in the camp and a high rate of poverty in the community.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Lack of access to boarding school facilities and dormitories

The second most cited issue in relation to school facilities was the lack of dormitories and boarding facilities which were described as especially important for girls from nomadic families who were frequently migrating:

Yes, we have a problem in the shortage of dormitories and classrooms, because most of the children are from nomadic families they want to sleep in school, not to be interrupted by the movements.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

The need for boarding facilities and dormitories was mentioned surprisingly often by respondents in WUSC project areas in comparison with other fund areas, especially as a strategy for keeping nomadic or pastoralist students in school:

I think the government should come up with a policy of converting the schools into boarding school, so that we can contain the children from moving out of school.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

A community leader in Turkana suggests boarding facilities keep girls from becoming prematurely pregnant, thus reducing drop-out rates:

Public and private schools are looking into building boarding sections for the girls, the leaders feel that if girls stayed in school, this would help reduce the rate of drop outs and protect them from early pregnancies.

(Community leader, Turkana, Kenya)

This was supported by a member of school staff, who stated that boarding schools are an effective way of preventing men targeting girls.

In one case, when asked about the challenge faced in developing facilities such as dormitories, a respondent noted corruption as one of the primary difficulties:

Corruption, especially on the CDF [Constituencies Development Fund] and other government funds.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Lack of qualified teachers or absenteeism

Respondents noted that both a lack of teachers as well as unqualified teachers served as obstacles in education outcomes for students. A high student-teacher ratio inhibited learning outcomes for students; those teachers that were present often lacked the requisite amount of education required for the position. This differs from the aforementioned concerns with the skill level of teachers, which refers to teacher's deftness and abilities regardless of official certification or education level. Qualification, on the other hand, refers to the appropriateness of a teacher's certification or education level to teach regardless of their pedagogical or classroom management skills.

Lack of teachers and overcrowding

A frequently cited issue was the lack of teachers in the classroom. Respondents noted that some schools had over 100 students for every teacher, creating major barriers to learning:

Shortage of teachers is the main problem.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

In order to overcome this challenge, some schools employed "helpers" to assist teachers. These helpers are paid by fees collected from students. However, the helpers often end up leaving due to a lack of payment:

That helper is paid with the small contributions from the parents or using the school feeding programme from the government, and when that is not enough for them because of the economic crisis, they decide to go away

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

As a consequence of teacher shortages, schools may be forced to make use of multi-grade classes; often overcrowded and with high student-teacher ratios, negatively impacting on students' ability to learn and comprising educational quality. However, this problem was not as commonly cited as the lack of teachers.

One respondent attributed this imbalanced student-teacher ratio to the Kenyan government instituting free education, which has led to a large enrolment of students. This has severely strained many schools' capacity and resources, thus impacting learning quality:

Largely the free education programme has not been well funded by the government. They said the children to go to school but did not look into other factors like classrooms, books and number of teachers per class.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Unqualified teachers

The scarcity of qualified teachers in some areas was raised as a concern by respondents. Teachers might only have finished primary school before they began instructing other students. Notably, respondents did not cite this issue as frequently as the aforementioned concern with a lack of teachers, but can nonetheless have considerable impact on education outcomes, as noted by one school staff member:

We need to be given capacity building, training, and scholarship for teachers to study further, because most of them are primary school leavers.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Presence of environmental disruptions

Numerous respondents in WUSC project areas frequently referred to the effects of environmental disruptions, both droughts and floods, primarily in terms of the destruction these types of events have on homes and schools in their

communities. Some respondents went on to note that such environmental disruptions might impede education outcomes.

Effects of environmental disruptions on school

Respondents noted that the houses of those living in camps are often tents, built without foundations or made of weaker materials which collapse in storms or get swept away:

[Strong winds] sometimes leads to houses collapsing since our homes are built of a mud and some are tents.

(Household, Garissa, Kenya)

Some respondents in Turkana mentioned a link between environmental disruptions and schooling. In some areas poor school facilities exposed children to the elements, particularly during the raining season:

The fact that students learn under trees and sheds, we also live in houses that are not secure especially during the rainy seasons, it is not safe since they are not well roofed and they lack good ventilation.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

Another respondent highlighted the difficulties faced during dry seasons when children may be responsible for fetching water for their family, potentially negatively reducing attendance at school:

Water is also a problem for children, they may end up sneaking from the school just to go and fetch water from [location] and [location] and that is a problem.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

Lack of teaching resources or learning materials

When asked about teaching resources and learning materials, respondents offered varying views on what resources and materials they felt were lacking, and why there was insufficient supply. One respondent argued it is largely the government's fault, offering free education but not funding the initiative effectively. Emphasising this point, one community leader discussed how free education enabled more children to go to school without sufficient consideration of the increased demand for other educational resources:

Largely the free education programme has not been well funded by the government. They said the children to go to school but did not look into other factors like classrooms, books and number of teachers per class.

(Community Leader, Turkana, Kenya)

When asked about what improvements to education are needed, the need for more textbooks and teaching aids at school were mentioned, but respondents rarely expanded on the subject. A few interviewees, such as the school staff member below, explicitly reported book sharing as a barrier to learning and a reason for poor education quality:

Due to the shortage of text books, students have to share these books, sometimes, one copy for three students, and others lack any reference copies and this is one of the reasons we have poor quality of education.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Assistance and coping strategies

In some cases, respondents described particular initiatives or forms of assistance, which are currently in place to help girls go to school.

In a few cases, respondents noted that special tutoring for girls is provided. Girls are often considered to have greater challenges in learning than boys, and as a result have been offered extra tutoring by schools and by some NGOs:

We try to offer the girls more support and even remedial classes.

(School Official, Turkana, Kenya)

In other cases, respondents noted that schools provide certain incentives to reward attendance. Some schools reported using strategies such as providing girls with a kilo of sugar after each month of attendance to reduce student absenteeism:

We have introduced a system called “sugar” to give girls 1kg of sugar monthly, and this has brought about big changes, and we provide the exercise books to girls at the end of the month.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Finally, some school officials reported adjusting their teaching styles to help girls learn more in the classroom. School staff report that that girls need more encouragement, and adapt their teaching style to better suit girls.

When you are teaching you have to use different teaching methods when it comes to girls and boys, because girls perceive Mathematics as a difficult subject compared to boys.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Another school staff member outlined how they would praise girls for answering questions on the blackboard correctly in order to increase the confidence of girls in class:

We encourage them when they attempt to answer a question, and to help them gain courage we sometime ask them to explain themselves in writing on the black board and we praise them when they do well.

(School Official, Garissa, Kenya)

Project Brief – Aga Khan Foundation

The most frequent responses associated with barriers to girls' education in selected Aga Khan project sites were the lack of teaching materials, poor capacity of local schools, and the distance to school. Provision of teaching materials, namely textbooks, was usually seen as the responsibility of the government, but some respondents also mentioned that households were sometimes expected to buy textbooks for their children and if they could not afford them then they sometimes did not send their children to school as a result.

The second most frequently mentioned barriers to girls' education were poverty and violence and insecurity. All three provinces interviewed were affected by seasonal environmental factors such as flooding and harsh winters which affected household income and contributed to household and community poverty. Many households struggled to fulfil basic needs and in turn did not have enough money to meet girls' educational expenses. The need for household income also meant that households sometimes decided to have their girls help in the fields or the home instead of going to school.

Past and present conflict also served as barriers to girls' education. On-going conflict between the government and insurgency or other local groups prevented boys and girls from going to school but had a disproportionate effect on girls, as families were more worried about the safety of girls, particularly when they were older. Respondents in Baghlan and Kandahar also reported targeted attacks against girls for going to school.

AKF respondents also reported the quality of teachers and lack of government support as barriers to girls' education.

Compared with other projects, barriers faced by AKF in terms of households being unable to provide school materials and deciding for their children to work rather than attend school were similar, particularly to BRAC areas. The effects of child marriage, seasonal disruptions, and cultural resistance to girls' education were less in AKF project areas than for other Afghan GEC projects.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Lack of local schools and distance to school

Lack of school resources was the most significant barrier to girls' education in AKF areas. This included lack of teaching materials, with textbooks being the most frequently mentioned, and also lack of classrooms and other school facilities. Although many respondents mentioned distance to school as a barrier, it is unclear whether local schools exist but were deemed inadequate, or in some communities no schools are being held.

Lack of textbooks, chalkboards, and other teaching materials

The most frequent issue respondents mentioned in relation to girl's education was the lack of teaching materials in local schools. Respondents mentioned that schools did not have enough textbooks for each student, that the school or government did not provide textbooks or that disbursements were delayed, and that some households did not have money to buy textbooks, notebooks, or supplementary materials. Respondents referenced the inability of households to provide textbooks or other materials as a reason for not enrolling girls in school, and also implied that lack of teaching materials was a barrier to girls' learning when they were in school. Lack of textbooks has a disproportionate impact on poorer households as they are unable to buy the textbooks for their children.

As I think mostly the economic problems causes difficulty for girls going to school because people are not able to buy the schoolbooks. The school doesn't issue the books for students and it causes problem for girls going to school. The school director says after elections we will issue the books, and we didn't get any.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Failure to provide textbooks was sometimes just one issue contributing to the perception that schools were poorly equipped and staffed.

The main reason that we want to send our daughter to school is that she learn something. In addition to this, the main reason we don't want to send our daughter to school is lack of building, lack of facilities, lack of experienced and professional teachers, lack of female teachers. Books and other

training materials are not given to students timely, our children are in school almost half of a day and they are playing in school in order to learn something. Their teachers are telling them that your books have not arrived yet thus we cannot provide any lesson to you.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Respondents from several districts mentioned that the government did not provide textbooks as requested. Explanations ranged from indifference to border delays to local corruption.

There is also problem of shortage of educational materials. Books are given to schools for free but they are sold out in bazaar. This is because government doesn't ask from anyone. There is corruption in government and no one feels the responsibility.

(Community interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

A few respondents also mentioned lack of chalkboards or easels, and some suggested that the school should buy stationery, pens, and other educational materials for students. However, inability of households to provide school materials was not mentioned nearly as much for AKF households as for ACTED or BRAC ones.

Lack of school facilities

Similar to in ACTED sites, AKF respondents frequently mentioned that communities lacked a proper school building, and held school outside or in tents. Respondents implied that lack of school facilities could discourage parents from sending their children to school. Some respondents stated that exposure to the environment could have a negative effect on students' learning.

The worse thing is that students are studying in open area and without classrooms. They are studying under hot and cold weathers, they are studying on the ground. This causes the minds of students to get dismissed and don't learn anything.

(School interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Some respondents also mentioned that exposure to the environment could result in student illness.

Facilities are not good and that is why our male members of the family complain about it. Some students are thought under the tent and in cold or hot weather they can become sick.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

In addition, respondents mentioned that schools had no desks or chairs for pupils to sit. Respondents did not indicate whether this had a general impact on the quality of education but this could be seen as contributing to a perception that schools lacked proper school facilities, which some households did give as a reason as to why they did not send their girls to school.

There is no desk and chair at school the children sit on the ground.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

One respondent also linked lack of chairs and desks to student illness:

Our school does not have chairs; most of the students are sitting on the ground and become dirty with soil and mud. They become sick.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Even where there was a classroom, some respondents noted that buildings had no windows or its facilities or equipment was in need of repair. Lack of windows and roofing also contributes to exposure to the environment.

The bad point of our school is that we don't have enough teaching materials; chairs, desks and also the school window glasses are broken. Also, we had the chairs and desks but it's broken. We don't have budget to fix them and the Education Ministry doesn't give money to repair.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Toilets were also mentioned among other school facilities needed.

Long distance to school

Respondents' issues about distance to school are connected with direct barriers to girls' education through environmental disruptions, conflict and insecurity, and cultural attitudes. Sometimes respondents worried that floods or harsh weather would pose a safety risk for students walking to and from school, and other times they are afraid of violence, whether in terms of on-going armed conflict between adults or violence or kidnapping targeted at students. Respondents from Ghor province were especially likely to mention distance to school as a barrier to girls' education.

The only thing that makes enrolment of girls at school difficult is long distance of school. Unfortunately, the school is very far away from this village, about one and half hours our children need to walk to school. For the younger children, walking this distance is very hard and impossible. After walking long distances children do need for a rest and they will sleep during the lesson. Walking this long distance is very dangerous for adult daughters. When an adult girl is walking long distance, without doubt, we can say that she attracts attention of adult boys and she would be faced with some problems.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Other times there may be local facilities available but households consider them inadequate for cultural reasons, because local schools do not separate classes by gender or else do not have female teachers for female students. This was particularly the case for secondary school students or older or 'adult' girls.

We teach up to grade six in this school, students have no problem but because of long distance to school our grade seven and eight students have problems. After grade six we should separate the boys and girls, second we must have female teachers for the girls and it make it easier for girls to come to school or we should have courses for the girls nearby.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

While most communities asked that the government build a school in their community, several respondents said that transportation schemes would help with long distance to school and fears of harassment or kidnapping on the way to school.

When vehicles will be provided for carrying girls from home to school and from school to home then they will feel safe.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

The rural location of some communities also makes it difficult to attract qualified teachers. Communities are not able to offer salaries that attract qualified teachers. Moreover, two respondents noted that teachers did not want to be assigned to their communities because the communities lacked a stable mobile network.

There is a school but there are no experienced teachers to teach them. The experienced teachers are not coming in this school to teach because it's a long way from here to the city, even the phone network is not working.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Household and community poverty

Poverty, along with violence and insecurity, was the barrier mentioned second most frequently by respondents. Compared with BRAC and ACTED areas, poverty in AKF areas was tied mainly to seasonal difficulties, and unemployment was mentioned far less. Poverty affects girls' education directly in that households are sometimes unable to provide school materials and so do not send their daughters to school, and affects girls' education indirectly in that households may need to decide whether to provide for basic needs or school expenses during the difficult seasons of summer and winter in Baghlan, Ghor, and Kandahar.

Seasonal difficulties

Across all three provinces, floods, drought, harsh winters, and other seasonal difficulties were the reasons given most often by respondents for seasonal household and community poverty.

In Baghlan, seasonal difficulties were most often associated with agricultural activities.

My husband and my son, they both work, if one of them was jobless the other one has job to work, but when there is drought everybody becomes destitute we also can't work. Our life is linked with our agricultural land, if we grow something we will find something to eat if we couldn't grow something then we can't find the money, if we couldn't find money we can't buy something. One thousand flour sacks will be two thousand and everything will be double price.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

In Ghor, seasonal difficulties were most often associated with harsh winters, which affected not only agricultural activities, but also trade and transportation, and closed local roads for three months of the year. Household expenditure goes up in the winter as households have to spend for fuel and warm clothes and borrow or live off their savings in order to get something to eat. Like in the ACTED province of Faryab, Ghor has a different academic calendar to most of the country and so its schools are closed during the winter months.

In this village usually people have a harder time during the winter season because winter here is very bad and cold. During the winter we have a lot of problems such as lack of warm clothes, fuel and other things.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

The winter months in Ghor also bring rains and later floods, which destroy village infrastructure.

Living in this village is hard all season of the years, but we face severe problems during winter season because in the winters there are heavy snowfalls and rains. Due to heavy snowfalls all the roads are closed for a long time. During the winter no one can commute. Due to heavy rains there are a lot of floods that come to this village. When floods come, they destroy a lot of things and during winter, snowfalls and rains we are lacking foodstuffs and wood.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

In Kandahar, both summer drought and winter rain and snow affected respondents by impacting agricultural production.

Drought is a natural plague, anything God want it will be done accordingly. We do not have the ability to dig wells for irrigation. Mostly we are facing problems during the winter because in the winter we cannot work on our land to grow crops. But during summer time there is no problem because we cultivate vegetables and other crops.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Families with seasonal income and without remittances or other means of support must either save money for difficult months or else get loans from other community members.

The fall and winter seasons are the harder times for our household to support itself because we don't have harvest in those seasons and jobs are mostly not available at that time. We borrow goods from the shopkeepers at the bazaar and in the spring or summer when we get harvest or our men find works then we give their money back.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Seasonal difficulties also affected trade by restricting movement and salaried positions.

People suffer a lot during winter season due to lack of jobs or income. Raining occurs during winter and jobs decrease; sales drop and that is why some people face problems. People try and save some money in other seasons of the year and then spend that in winter season.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

These include teachers, who cannot generate income during the months when school is not in session.

We face problems during winter and summer season; in summer season schools are closed so my husband's salary is delayed and in winter season there are no agricultural works so we face shortage of money.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Unlike the ACTED project, respondents for AKF did not mention natural and environmental disruptions as a direct barrier to girls' education. The economic impact of seasonal household and community poverty is an indirect barrier to girls' education through families' perceived inability to pay fees or other expenses or their decision to have girls work in the home, fields, or pastures instead of attending school.

Difficulty in paying fees and meeting cost of education

The most frequent explanation given for why girls did not attend school was the difficulty of households, particularly those in poverty, to meet perceived costs of girls' education. Several respondents mentioned that the cost of school materials and uniforms increased for older or 'adult' girls.

Mostly economy is the problem that people can't send their daughters to school. The small girl's school expense is not too much and the all small girls of this village go to school. Adult girls school expenses for school uniforms, pens, books and notebooks is more than small girls so the poor families can't pay their daughter's school expenses. They are poor people even they can't provide food items to eat how they can provide school stuff for their daughters.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

These issues were found in Ghor province as well.

People who are very poor believe that if they send their daughters to school they need to pay a lot of expenses for clothes, books, notebooks and pens each month.

(Community interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Even when girls are sent to school, they sometimes felt conscious and ashamed of their poverty compared to their classmates.

My classmates have a lot of things but I don't have. They have new book and notebook but I don't have, they have new clothes but I don't have, last year made new clothes but my clothes were old and I told my father several times he said I will make you new clothes this year but now I don't know if will my father will make me new clothes or not, They say that we will buy, my daughter, I know they just deceive me, they think that I will forget after a few days but I don't forget because now I am not a small child. We don't have money to buy these things what should I say? I get very sad that the others have everything but we don't.

(Girl interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Some households stated that they would prefer to send their children to a private school over a government school.

If we had more money we would move to the city then send our children to private school and courses to study, but we don't have more money.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Difficulty meeting basic needs

In line with some households having difficulty meeting the cost of education, some respondents indicated that households had trouble meeting basic needs, particularly in times of seasonal difficulties. As noted by one respondent above, households who cannot even provide food may not be able to meet the costs of education.

Every year flood comes for three or four times like a disaster. When the flood comes it washes everything out, and sometimes kills people. Sometime when we have drought people are starving and if the drought is serious then a lot of people die. Also, storms during the spring destroy people's agricultural land.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

In Ghor, as in the ACTED province of Faryab, seasonal difficulties from winter also carry over into spring, as households are unable to replenish foodstuffs until they receive an income.

We are facing extreme problems during the winter. We have a lot of problems in providing foodstuffs.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Respondents in Kandahar mentioned a programme similar to one mentioned in BRAC communities, where NGOs or the government were giving out foodstuffs at school. This seemed to lead in a temporary increase in enrolment but the programme has now been discontinued.

They were giving oil and other foods to student before so a lot of students especially girls started coming to school. There is nothing else that has been done to persuade girls for going to school. These activities were a lot before but now they have decreased. They were giving oil for two months before but then it was stopped.

(Community interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Poverty pushes girls into working

Given seasonal difficulties in all three provinces and the importance of agriculture in Baghlan and Ghor provinces, households sometimes decided that girls needed to work rather than go to school.

Some families have a lot of work at home or in agricultural lands thus they cannot send their daughters to school because there would not be anyone else to do their work.

(Community interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

In Baghlan one respondent mentioned that girls could be involved in housework as well:

Most of the people work in agricultural land when they grow something then children work with them on the farm, because some of the school students don't go to school and some student when their mother goes somewhere then they are not coming to school, and also some families don't let their children go to school.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

However, even households not engaged in agricultural activities sometimes decide that girls are better off working.

Families where their financial situation is worse, they think whether sending their children to school has a negative impact on their financial situation or not. If they think that their children need to work then they will not allow their children to go to school.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

This was an issue in Kandahar province as well.

Families who face economic problems or those families who live in unsafe areas don't send their children to school. They don't send their children to school because of economic problems but instead force them to work so that they will earn money.

(School interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Early marriage

Unlike in the ACTED province of Faryab, poverty forcing households to marry their daughters off early was not mentioned widely amongst AKF interviews. Some respondents mentioned early marriage was sometimes conducted for financial reasons.

The girl's main problem is their dowry in this area. Mostly they are exchanging with money. If they are Pashton or Farsi speaking then their dowry would be reduced and they miss the education and they are not allowed to study and they count it as a shame.

(Community interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Some respondents blamed this reasoning the illiteracy of the parents.

If I say the truth, in my neighbourhood, there are some families, all of them are illiterate; they do not know the advantages and disadvantages of premature marriage. They do not know, if the teenage

married, what will be the consequences during delivery For them, what is more valuable is money; if they find a rich person, they will marry their daughter disregarding the age and do not know which is ending to death.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Violence and insecurity

Respondents mentioned past or present conflict in the context of girls' education as frequently as they did seasonal difficulties. Respondents generally recognised these conflicts as having a direct effect on girls' education, due to their inability to attend school during a conflict. Conflict tended to have a disproportionate effect on girls, as several respondents stated they were concerned about the safety of girls, particularly older girls, on their way to school, in times of conflict or instability.

Like in the ACTED province of Faryab, several respondents in Baghlan and Kandahar mentioned violence directed at girls for being in education, specifically acid attacks carried out by the Taliban or other insurgents.

Other instances of violence included fighting and misbehaviour amongst students in school and on the way to school. Respondents did not generally indicate that this affected girls' enrolment or learning.

Past conflict

Past conflict served as a barrier to girls' education by preventing girls themselves from attending school for several years, or from denying education to their parents, leading to their parents not seeing the value of education for their children. War also indirectly affected households by contributing to household and community poverty. All of the provinces interviewed for AKF's project recognised the effects of past conflict on girls' education.

During wars, our education and schools were affected negatively and most of children were deprived of education. Schools were reopened in the very recent years and these wars caused our children remain behind in their education.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

In addition to contributing to household decisions not to send children to schools, armed conflict often resulted in the closure of schools.

Armed conflict existed before, but not now. There was conflict and war here and it badly affected people. Because of insecurity children were not going to school, so school were closed.

(Community leader 2, Nawai Deah, Kandahar)

One respondent also mentioned the continuing effect of past conflict on students' learning outcomes in terms of mental illness or trauma:

We had fighting here also in the past and war has affect on their learning. This made dull the wisdom that some of them are still mentally ill.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Present conflict

Continuing armed conflict, largely between government and insurgent forces, but also between local commanders and tribes, affected communities in all three AKF provinces. In some circumstances, fears of violence and insecurity lead households to stop their daughters from going to school or be associated with schooling.

Yes we are affected by the conflict between government and opponents. It was about one or two months ago.

In that situation teachers and students don't come to school and do not wear the school uniform.

(Community interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Other communities are not directly affected by violence to the levels where it influences their decisions to send their children to school, but can see that it could.

There is a group that sometimes attack our village and our neighbouring village. It's had no impact so far, but if their attack increased then students will be worried and may not go to school.

(Community interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

For other respondents, the effects of on-going conflicts are more limited, but still result in occasional interruption of lessons.

We are affected by present conflict. For example whenever male members of our family move outside and a suicide attack occurs then till the time they return back home then we are in panic situation. Next day we will not send our children to school because we are scared of perhaps another suicide attack. Whenever they don't go to school because of suicide attack then they will be absent in school and will remain deprived of lesson in that day.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Targeted attacks on girls

Respondents from Baghlan and Kandahar both mentioned violence targeted at girls for being in school with the aim of discouraging them from attending.

The Taliban groups don't let the girls go to school. In the villages where the Taliban groups existed those girls can't go to school. The Taliban interrupt the girls by leaflet and shooting them by air gun.

(Community leader, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

In Kandahar, several respondents referenced an acid attack by the Taliban against schoolgirls in Kandahar City.

I haven't heard of any bad thing happening to the girls in our area yet but I heard that some Taliban and people from Pakistan threw acid in girls' faces in Kandahar city. This is because they don't want girls to get education. If transportation facility is provided for girls then they will feel safer while going to school on the other hand girls that cannot go to school because their house is far from school can also start school once the transportation is provided for them.

(Household interview, Kandahar, Afghanistan)

Community disputes or quarrels

Some respondents mentioned community disputes or quarrels, sometimes along tribal lines but more to do with community resource usage or inheritance of property amongst families. These quarrels did not usually affect girls' education unless the original cause was children fighting.

Sometimes families are fighting on small issues like irrigation water or when their children are fighting with each other. Then they get themselves involved as well.

(Community interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Some respondents attributed lack of education in the community as a cause of community disputes.

The reason is people's illiteracy, for example when children fight with each other then an adult interferes and makes the fight bigger. Mostly the quarrel gets start in the families by fighting of the children, and the community quarrel starts by problems about water or agricultural lands.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Corporal punishment and misbehaviour

Violence at school was not common amongst AKF respondents. A few mentioned instances of corporal punishment in schools. Violence between children largely occurred on the way to school and was seen as misbehaviour, and not generally serious enough to affect their decision to send their girls to school.

Sometimes there could be verbal taunting or physical fighting between boys along the way to school on different issues such studying or playing, but they compromise shortly. Teachers and families advise them and prevent them from doing those actions in the future. I think such issues don't have any impact on whether my girls go to school or no.

(Household interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Unqualified and untrained teachers

In Baghlan, several respondents voiced concern over the qualifications of the teachers. Respondents said that schools could not receive qualified teachers because the district did not have government support, or because they did not pay a good salary, or because the schools were remote and had no mobile network.

Quality of teaching in this village makes me worry a lot. The quality of teaching in this school is very low because all teachers in this school are graduates of 12th grade and lower. Bachelor teachers do not want to be a teacher in this school because the salary in this school is very low, about Afs. 4,000.

(Household interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Environmental issues

Environmental issues affected AKF respondents less than ACTED schools in Faryab province. The biggest indirect environmental barrier to girls' education was the lack of classroom facilities, meaning that students were exposed to the elements during summer and winter months. See the section on 'Lack of school facilities' above.

Respondents in Baghlan mentioned the damage that rain and flooding caused to schools, which may affect student wellbeing.

Our school building is covered with board and tin metal, during the rainwater enters the classroom.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

They also mentioned that damage to school buildings from floods sometimes caused school closure, another way in which flooding prevented students from being able to attend school.

3 years ago school was closed down because of flood and water coming to school. Flood destroyed our school walls and gate and also the students couldn't come for long time.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Lack of government support

Respondents from all provinces said that they were not receiving support from the Ministry of Education or local district educational offices. The most common issue was distribution of textbooks, but respondents also mentioned the government not building local schools, not paying or supplementing local teachers' salaries, and not providing transport schemes to school.

If the education ministry helped them with vehicle, otherwise there are many families that can't come to school. The problem has not been solved because the government never came to this area to pay attention.

(School interview, Baghlan, Afghanistan)

Reasons given for lack of government support included that the community was rural or far from the district centre, and that the government had not visited or monitored progress in the community, the government or local leaders were corrupt or favoured certain tribes or areas, and the government did not have sufficient budget to meet all of its promises.

In my opinion, the origin of this problem is again because of weak government and the presence of more corruption in government bodies. If any activities can be done in order to make it easier for girl's education, there is a person who is never happy with these activities. In fact that person is a hindrance or a wall between the people and these assistances. This person is a local commander and tribal elder who lives in our neighbourhood and it has been 10 years that we have enemies between that tribe. Therefore, he is trying all his best to not allow us to have a calm and prosperous life. He doesn't want our children to develop and improve.

(Community interview, Ghor, Afghanistan)

Respondents largely looked to the government to solve their problems, but some also mentioned looking to NGOs or rich community members.

Project Brief – ChildHope

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in Childhope project areas in Ethiopia. The most frequently mentioned barriers to girls' education in Childhope project areas were poverty, in terms of household ability to afford the costs of school, early marriage and the lure of work outside the home, including as domestic workers in the Middle East. Respondents also noted that girls are needed at home and that their domestic responsibilities often prevent them from attending school. Also often mentioned were concerns about violence, including abduction, sexual assault and sexual harassment. The fear and reported instances of abduction of girls is of particular note, as it was mentioned quite often by respondents in Childhope areas, but in none of the other GEC project areas.

Less commonly reported but also significant was descriptions of negative attitudes towards girls' education within the community, which appear to be strong and which prioritise marriage, work overseas or domestic duties over education. Some households also noted the poor quality of school facilities, including insufficient numbers of classrooms and desks also contributed to poor attendance and learning outcomes. In other cases, respondents reported that there were few female role models or women of influence in their community, perhaps decreasing the number of role models for girls to aspire to, and fewer champions for girls' education in the community.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Unable to afford cost of school

Often, poverty and lack of resources were stated as the main obstacles for households and caregivers to enrol children and girls in school. This, as respondents noted, is because they cannot afford the school fees or other requirements such as textbooks, stationery, and uniforms:

There are some girls who are not learning, because their families are very poor to fulfil their learning material. There are some where the school fulfilled these materials and they started learning. The school can't help all of them though. In general their problem is poverty.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

I have nine children most of them are not enrolled in school, because as I have told you earlier we do not have enough income even for daily meal let alone for expenses of cloth, exercise book, pen, pencil and so on.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

In one instance, a school official noted that girls living with old guardians or parents are more affected by the poverty barrier and the inability to meet school costs:

Of course it is undeniable that there are elder peoples, seriously sick and highly impoverished people who unable to send their children to school. Apart from this no one is forbidden to enrol in school.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Migration, early marriage and pregnancy

Migration to the Middle East

A number of respondents noted that young girls often dropped out of school in order to work in Arab countries. This, as reported by respondents, is encouraged by parents:

In this community parents are not willing to send their children to school particularly girls because they want to send them to Arab countries to get money.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Most girls who went to Arab countries did so to work as domestic help and would remit money to their families back home. Many respondents noted that not only did families seek to send their children to Arab countries, but girls

themselves often wanted to go due to the degree of prestige associated with it. A school official in Amhara noted that:

It is not a problem to learn girls up to grade 8 but after that the families think that it is enough for girls to lean up to grade 8 then the girl should go to the Arab countries for housemaid work. Secondly, the families were think that the income of the Arab countries is better than in local countries to do a job when completed the class [...] Because they think that the temporary income of Arab countries is better than the local one and also when you see the girl who come from Arab wear a decorated clothes this show one's local girls' attitude changes.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

The promise of paid work encourages these girls to drop-out of school, although the quality and reliability of this work is unknown:

Yes, around here the main reason is drop out of girls; to migrate out of the county for to seek of a job. 'The one who seeks money is blind'. This problem is for their enrolment.

(Community leader, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Although many respondents noted that parents and families send their daughters to work abroad, especially in Arab countries, to earn money and support them, only a couple of respondents explicitly stated that poverty and lack of resources are the underlying reasons for this choice. A school official stated:

The main reason is from the family side not from the school side. Financial crisis of the family is the main reason. To earn money, families send their children abroad or other areas where they can get job and earn money.

(School official, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Early marriage

Outside of migration to Arab countries to engage in domestic work, a number of respondents also noted that early marriage was a barrier to school attendance:

[W]hat I observed in this area is that, there is a backward attitude and wrong neighbourhood pressures from the community. For example, if a girl reached adolescence age they give a mistaken comment and wrong advised which in most cases change the attitude of the parents not in favour of the girl, to her family to search a husband in early ages. Otherwise, they also said, "otherwise if time run out to her, she ends her life without a husband or 'single' and this is ridicules to a family like you. I believe this should be improved."

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Community and family attitude towards girls' education, early marriage and work will be further explored in the 'Community support for girls' education' section.

However, in a couple of instances, respondents noted that community perspectives towards early marriage seemed to be changing. This is due to recent community information campaigns to try to curb instances of early marriage. While early marriage was still a concern to these respondents, they did feel that progress was being made towards addressing the issue of early marriage:

Of course there was a misperception that the destiny of girls should be limited only in door support and if it extends a little, they simply involved her in early marriages. But here in the context of our school, things are moved in the contrary. In September, when we started registration, we tried to give a little emphasis for parents of girl students. We called them in school to give an orientation that the destiny of their daughters should be school enrolment. After they get convinced on that, they sign an agreement to send her to school on regular basis. It is girls that attend school regularly, it is girls that better participation in the classroom, even when I randomly paid a visit to the reading corners of the school, it is girls that often read and study in the library. However, I have a fear that girls are still vulnerable for early marriages. We don't even have a strategy how to minimise early marriage and allow girls for school enrolment. It needs deep research.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

These campaigns, as one community leader stated, have the potential to instead reinforce the value of education and, by doing so, positively impact the lives of these girls in many other ways:

Previously girls were given for marriage early by getting money or cattle in return. But now, with the guidance we got, we are sending girls to school, so as to help them to learn, get their own job, marry the one they love when they need without being forced and decide on their life equally with their husband.

(Community leader, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Given that only a couple of respondents mentioned the change towards early marriage, and that neither of the respondents who commented on the change were caregivers, it is difficult to say if opinions are actually changing regarding early marriage, if not migration for remittance.

Pregnancy

In several cases, respondents in Childhope's project areas noted that girls who become pregnant faced stigma and social discrimination, and often drop-out of school when they become pregnant. This group was by far the most often cited group, in terms of facing particular stigma and barriers to attending school in Childhope's project areas. A significant reason for dropping out of school appears to be strong social embarrassment, stigma and/or discrimination. As one respondent bluntly put it, in response to a question about whether girls are welcomed back at school after giving birth:

No, the other students will make fun of them.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Another noted:

Pregnancy of student is considered as socially disregarded, and students may pinpoint towards her nor should she focus on her education.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Several respondents described the situation for pregnant girls in similar terms, saying that:

She won't get acceptance, especially who are pregnant because everybody look at her as she committed crime or illegal act.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Household responsibilities

In these communities, household duties are reported as major and common obstacles to education, especially for girls. In some cases, girls are described as the victims of their families' prioritisation of household duties over education. This was expressed by teachers, mothers and the girls themselves. One school teacher in Amhara stressed that:

In this area the first problem of schools to teach children is family influence. Most of the time girls are the victims of this influence because a great amount of home burdens are being given to girls. Most of the girls they don't come to school and most of the time they are the ones who drop out. We are struggling to bring them to school.

(School staff, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Another school official noted:

As we know girls are the backbone of the family. Every family wants their economic support in the house. They are the one who prepared food; who bring water from river, who gathers woods for cooking. Due to this reason most parents are hesitant to enrol them in school.

(School official, Amahara, Ethiopia)

Another school teacher commented on girls' enrolment and learning, stating that:

In our school case we usually give special focus to girls because most parents want to exploit the labour of their daughters rather than boys and still parents have less concern to enrol girls than boys. Even if they enrolled her to school they didn't give enough time to study at home.

(School staff, Amhara, Ethiopia)

When asked about the main reason for not enrolling her girl to school, a mother responded:

Home duties, because she [the girl] helps me at home

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

One girl also confirmed:

... sometimes I don't go to school because of workload at home.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Within livelihoods support activities, farming, seasonal farming and taking care of the cattle are reported to particularly affect girls' attendance. One parent indicated:

Children including girls share the responsibility of maintaining the family's livelihoods. "Moms take care of their infants and they can't go to cattle at the same time. In that case I let my girl to be absent from school and look after cattle.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

A school official also noted:

There was high rate of school dropout and repetition because many farmers want to exploit their children labour.

(School staff, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Families with fewer children affected the most

Respondents reported that families with a smaller number of children have more difficulty sending their children to school. This, as stated, is because they need support in taking care of their livelihoods. In identifying the groups that find it most difficult to enrol their children to school, a respondent noted:

Some has few kids, since they are learning in the morning and afternoon shift. If some of the kids go in the morning the others can help us by looking after cattle and they go to school in the afternoon. And vice versa. But if someone doesn't have many kids they can't send them to school.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Violence

When asked to describe conflict and violence affecting their local community and inhibiting students from attending school, interviewees in the project area most often cited fears and actual instances of kidnapping and abduction, sexual abuse and harassment, and feuds between families.

Abduction, sexual assault, and sexual harassment

For older girls, abduction and fear of abduction on the way to or from school seemed to significantly affect the decision of families to send their girls to school. For instance, one caregiver in Oromia mentioned that, instead of having them pursue further education, most people in the village prefer them to marry or work abroad. When asked why this might be the case, the respondent stated:

I'm not sure, but they may fear their daughter may be abducted... The main problem is abduction especially on girls who came from distance and who are older.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

A teacher from the same village similarly noted:

The major problem that local families face is abduction. For example in our school, we lost 9 girls last year.

(School official, Oromia, Ethiopia)

The reasons for kidnapping and abduction were not always explicitly mentioned by respondents. However, one school staff member from Amhara, Ethiopia indicated that abductions were happening in order to take the abductees as brides.

The school staff member also explained that sexual assault and harassment directed towards girls on the way to or from school was an issue that impacted students within the surveyed areas. Another community leader in Amhara, Ethiopia – when asked if any harassment or attacks were happening in his community – noted that, while it had not happened in his village:

We heard that there was rape in some other cluster or 'Kebele.'

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Additionally, a community leader in Amhara, Ethiopia noted that harassment was also an issue in the recent past, mentioning:

As far as I know the reality, I think it was three years back; sexual harassment was happened to three girls.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Bullying and harassment

Respondents in the project area frequently cited harassment on the way to or from school as a significant challenge faced by girl students. Harassment tends to be propagated both by youth – mainly boys – as well as men. For the most part, boys would verbally or physically harass and at times assault girls while on the way to school:

Of course there are some adolescents who taken away girls exercise books and sometimes harassed them.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

In the context of this place as you know this is the time that farmers gathered their crops and we received a complaint from few farmers that 'School girls when they go to school they eat the crop before it is reaped.' In some cases I also know that there are dogs that bite schoolgirls when they go/come to/from school. In some cases there are some adolescents who made physical assault in schoolgirls. Apart from this we don't have any serious problems

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

On the other hand, in some instances, harassment is more extreme, and can be a reason for students not to attend school, as in the cases of abduction:

When girls come from school, individuals chase them for abduction. There are also some girls that we saved after they were abducted.

(Community leader, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Similarly, aggressive threats and situations perceived to be high-risk were also reasons for students not to attend school. When asked how frequently children are harassed on the way to or from school, a caregiver from Amhara, Ethiopia noted:

Every time, on the kids' way to and from school. There was throwing of stone on them; they were also forced to discontinue their lesson because of the stone. Apart from these there is nothing.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Given on-going concerns to and from school, one community attempted to better monitor the routes that students use to reach the school:

It [harassment] was happened in previous time. Now the school has its own student traffic that makes order during travel and there is also community police in every corner. Therefore, there is no serious problem as such.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

In addition to potentially having an adverse impact on attendance, bullying and teasing in particular might negatively impact girls' morale, thus making it more difficult for them to learn. One respondent discussed the teasing experienced by the caregiver's child about eventually going to work in an Arab country:

Interviewer (I): How do these things [verbal taunting] affect [GIRL]?

Respondent (R): It affects their morale and the words “you are not educated you simply go to Arab countries” this kinds of expressions are not good for the girls.

I: How do these things affect your decisions about enrolling [GIRL] in school?

R: It didn’t affect me personally but I advised my daughter to be strong.”

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Conflict between Families

In at least one village, respondents noted that, families within the community that were involved in an internal conflict were unable to send their children to school for fear of reprisal from the other family. As such, when asked about the impact of conflict on schooling in the area, a community leader in Amhara, Ethiopia mentioned that:

Yes, students whose their families died or orphans stopped going to school. For example there was a man who used to send his children to school and he died of this conflict. Now his kids stopped going to school. He was even teaching his son in private college. And the families who attacked this family stopped going to school too, because they are afraid of the revenge from the victims. You see both families are exposed to this problem.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

A staff member from the same community also mentioned fear of retaliation as a factor affecting school attendance for the children of the families in conflict; at least until other attendance arrangements could be established:

Respondent: “[...] I think it was in the past two years a conflict between two households cause for the death of 8 persons. The main reason for the conflict is that one side brings a claim that the second party sexually harassed to his wife.

Interviewer: “Does conflict or violence have a different effect on girls’ education than on boys’ education? Why?”

Respondent: “Of course in the aforementioned conflict raised between two neighbours, their children couldn’t attend school regularly for fear of revenge from either party. Due to this reason they were obliged to enrol in another school, which they believe safe.

(School staff, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Violence on the way to or from school

When asked to describe conflict and violence that impacted school children, respondents often mentioned fighting and verbal altercations between children – including taunting, teasing, disturbing, and annoying – on the way to or from and in school. Respondents usually indicated that this was not a hindrance to school attendance or learning; many respondents perceived this to be normal for children. For example, when asked about the type of violence that happens on the way to school, a teacher in Oromia, Ethiopia mentioned:

[The students] beat one another. Of course students may get in quarrel on their way or at school during playing; which can be solved by discussion with students and their families.

(School official, Oromia, Ethiopia)

However, some respondents provided examples of physical violence that they perceived as unusual or abnormal and which did inhibit student attendance or learning, if not both. Often, this type of physical violence was either not perpetrated by students or went beyond normative physical violence due to the degree of violence, the number or type of individuals involved in the violence, or the use of weapons.

For instance, when asked about the kind and frequency of harassment, verbal taunting, or physical violence that happened on the way to or from school, one caregiver noted that these kinds of things happen:

[e]very time, on the kids way to and from school. There was throwing of stone on them; they were also forced to discontinue their lesson because of the stone. Apart from these there is nothing.

(Household, Amahara, Ethiopia)

Finally, a community leader in Amhara, Ethiopia noted that gangs were having a significant impact on the education of schoolgirls as well as other community members, especially females. The community leader stated:

Of course there are many difficulties. There is administrative problem. There are some gangs or illegal youngsters they threaten schoolteachers and girls. When schoolteachers and girls move from place to place and even at their home they were being threatened but the administrative unit in cluster (Kebele) does take any action. Now our school is up to 8th grade, around 20 teachers, including male teachers, were being attacked by illegal people, but the cluster (kebele) is just watching these. These teachers came to grow us up for peace. Why is this happening to them? I don't have right and ability to accuse them but I wish I did.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

When asked about the reasons for these difficulties, the community leader went on to say:

If administrative unit were courageous enough to decide and manage there wouldn't be gangs and illegal. These gangs and illegal they are living by robbing, killing people, but no one asks them about it...As a result, girls are mostly being attacked. For example yesterday a girl who came to work on health institute was attacked. No one asks that guy, who attacked her. Can someone be courageous to say there is a law?

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Low community support for girls' education

Education is not valued

In describing the general attitude of the community towards girls' education, many respondents (mostly school teachers and staff) stated that community members are not interested in education and are not keen on educating their daughters:

Generally, we can say that families around here lack interest in sending girls to school.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Some respondents also claimed that people within the community think that girls' enrolment in school will lead to the girl ending up husbandless:

Frankly speaking, most of parents believe that allowing girl to enrol in school will ultimately open a path that makes her husbandless.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

One respondent noted that this notion of either working abroad or being married early is caused by a lack of appreciation for the value of girls' education:

The reason behind [dropping out of school to go to Arab countries or for early marriage] is parents in the community failed to clearly understand the value of education and children are unable to see the bright future that they will get from learning besides parents are not willing to send their children to school for the sake of money they get from them.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Prioritises marriage

In explaining why some members of the community have low support for education and do not enrol their girls in school, some respondents indicated that these households prioritise marriage for girls. As one school official stated:

Most of the time girls are intended for marriage.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

One school staff member claimed that some believe if they send their daughters to school the girls will spend their lives without a husband. This, according to the respondent, is why some families do not enrol girls in school:

The number of parents, who have an attitude 'if girl couldn't marry on time, she will finally end her life without a husband,' has significant in number.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Many respondents also mentioned that marriage for girls is perceived as more relevant and evident than education, and that heads of households and families would rather marry their girls, sometimes at a very young age, than enrol them in school:

Families instead of sending their kids to school they are making them to marry, which is actually not a fancy life. They believe and say, "What do you get after you learn and blah blah." Every girl is exposed to backwardness instead of learning, because of marriage.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Another mentioned:

Besides early marriage is also a problem. They want them to get married and start supporting them. Parents have no interest in educating girls at all.

(School staff, Amhara)

Prioritises work

Many respondents within the project's targeted community stated that community members prefer to send their daughters to work in Arab countries in jobs such as housemaids to support their families, rather than enrol them in schools:

Most of them don't want to send girls to school...Families around here believe girls should go to Arab countries to bring some money for their family and sometimes there is an early marriage which is arranged by their parents.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Similarly:

They [families] rather choose to send their girls for a job abroad and they consider it as a good opportunity for girls. But some of them think that it is enough for a girl to learn up to grade 3. They have different opinion on this.

(School official, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Interestingly, one community leader noted that girls themselves prefer to go abroad to work rather than attend school:

We try so hard to enrol girls in school but the big problem that we are facing is that they really want to go Arab countries like Dubai, Qatar, Sudan and other Arabic countries to work as a maid to support their family [...] The whole farmer in this community wants their children to get education and almost all families around here enrol girls in school and support them in every way to continue their education but the girls want to go to Arab countries instead.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

One community leader described the parents who send their girls abroad as parents who love money. Although not explicitly stated, this might indicate that the families might not be in dire need for support; rather, it is a choice and a preference. The community leader noted:

Also some of them love money rather than girl's education for this reason they think for girls it is preferable to work and earn money rather than learning in such way their view is different regarding girls education.

(Community leader, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Prioritises domestic duties

Some respondents reported that girls in these communities are sometimes reported to be more useful at home helping out their mothers and performing home duties rather than sending them to school. A school teacher noted:

When we see the life of most girls they spend majority of their time by supporting their mothers, in some areas there is also an attitude that girls never attend schooling and other negative beliefs.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

This affects both older and younger girls. When asked about younger girls, one mother replied:

Even if they are younger kids, they can help their parents by collecting firewood. Therefore they won't send them", and about older girls she confirmed "They can also help their parents by wiping the weed. So they won't send them.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

These duties are also obstacles to learning. As one teacher noted, even when these girls come to school, they are in a state that does not enable them to participate and learn:

[...] their participation is very low. This is a result of influence on girls from family. They come to class very tired; sometimes they sleep in the class.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Conservative attitudes towards girls' role in society

A community leader and a school staff member noted that some community members are still very strict and conservative towards girls. The school teacher noted that girls are sometimes confined indoors and not allowed out, unless to marry. He noted:

Of course there was a misperception that the destiny of girls should be limited only in door support and if it extends a little, they simply involved her in early marriages.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Moreover, another school official from the same community noted they do not perceive that learning will benefit girls; rather, they prefer to marry them off. She also noted that some families still hold negative attitudes about girls and their potential role in society:

For example they say girls to kitchen boys to go out. Obviously there are bad and good cultures in any society. But some bad cultures might hurt female psychology.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Fear schooling might lead to sex and pregnancy

A community leader and a school official from different regions noted that there are members in the community who perceive girls' education and schooling negatively. The respondents stated that this was due to the perception that girls might engage in sexual relations with boys and become pregnant. The respondents explained that this results in some community members refraining from enrolling girls in schools from the age of 15. The community leader from Amhara region provided an estimation of the percentage of those community members:

Some families are not accepting the sending of girls to the class because if the girl goes to school, she might bring unwanted things like pregnancy. These kinds of attitudes account for about 15 per cent from the total population in the community.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

A school teacher from Oromia region stated:

Because of wide spread misunderstanding in the community that says 'girls misbehave when sent to school and be with boys for long time', especially when their age is fifteen and above, families will not send them to school.

(School official, Oromia, Ethiopia)

The school staff member also added:

From the aforementioned reasons, social pressure is the only cause of difficulties in my perception ...because of wide spread misunderstanding in the community that says "girls misbehave when sent to school and be with boys for long time", especially when their age is fifteen and above, families will not send them to school.

(School official, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Issues with quality of school facilities

Not enough desks

Along with a lack of classrooms, a lack of desks and other furniture was the most commonly identified barrier in relation to school facilities. As in other project areas the issues were similar, desk-sharing or no desks or chairs were described as resulting in children sitting on the floor when attending class, contributing to a difficult learning environment. In one isolated case, members of teaching staff described how students would vandalise school property:

With regard to the problems of damaging school property, I observed low motivation and ownership from the school community especially students. Some adolescent students when they fail in exam they simply take it as revenge to destroy school property.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Poor quality facilities and classrooms

Respondents described challenges with school facilities as:

- lack of classrooms;
- multi-grade classes; and
- difficult learning environments.

Respondents reported students having to attend open-air classes as a result of classroom shortage:

Last year there was also focus on this issue but there was high classroom shortage. Therefore for tutorial we merge students and we use big trees as classroom. This actually is a problem still though it is not severe as last year.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

In addition, a couple of members of school staff mentioned the need for specific facilities such as laboratories, libraries and teacher lounges to increase learning outcomes.

In a couple of cases respondents stated that to accomplish successful improvements to school facilities, the community needed to be mobilised along with government support. This was evidenced in a couple of cases where respondents credited the collaboration between government and communities for the successful improvements to facilities:

Yes, the community was helping to expand and build the classrooms; we cooperate with the government to improve the school.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Respondents also described the opposite as being true; that little community support along with low commitment from the government was exacerbating existing quality issues and limited classroom capacity among school facilities:

I think there is no sufficient participation of community and government. There is shortage of support from both of these bodies.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

In a few cases, respondents also mentioned that the Parent Teacher Union was not supporting and leading schools, resulting in low educational quality among schools:

Kebele Education Training Board (KETB) and Parents Teachers Union (PTU) which was basically organised to support and follow up the quality of education has made below performance.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

The expansion of schools' classroom capacity was however described at times as leading to dramatic improvements for students, reducing distance to school and making attending school safer:

Yes, recently there have been expansion of classrooms and the school was far away children used to walk for hours but now it is at the centre, which is good for the children's safety.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Lack of security measures at school

Several teachers noted that the lack of a perimeter wall was of concern, describing how farmers would come and graze their cattle on school fields and students being able to leave without teacher permission. In one case, a school staff member noted that some households were actually living inside the school boundaries, effectively 'squatting' on school property, which they described as being an on-going issue for several years. One respondent described this as contributing to a difficult learning environment:

The final challenge for this school is that the school compound is not yet protected. Some householders still have been living inside the school compound and this really becomes a challenge for teaching learning process.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Environmental disruptions

Several respondents in ChildHope project areas reported that environmental disruptions, both droughts and floods, have a negative effect on households' ability to support themselves, primarily due to spoiled crops.

One respondent described the situation in this way:

For example, the rain last time has spoiled chickpea and it also spoiled teff that we farmed. Flood normally attacks mountains and highlands. But for us it is just rain that spoiled our farm.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

However, no respondents made a direct linkage between these types of seasonal disruptions and children's ability to attend school and learn.

No local women of influence or role models

Women within the project's targeted area stated that there is no female community leader that has influence and plays an important role within the community:

Can you think of a woman who plays an important role within this community?

So far I didn't see any woman who plays an important role.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

One respondent expressed disappointment regarding education for women. The respondent noted that some educated women have ended up in low profile roles within the community because they failed one exam:

I: Now I am going to ask you the questions focused about role of women in your community. Can you think of a woman who plays an important role with in this community?

R: No, there is no one to hold that role. Though, they were educated, they have failed an exam, so they are leading their life by working as a daily labourer and carrying sand.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

No female role models for girls

Many girls within the project's targeted areas stated that they do not have a female role model that they admire or look up to:

I: Are there any women that you admire or who you want to be like?

R: I don't know any role model.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Inability to afford cost of school

As discussed under poverty more generally, the inability to meet school fees was reported as a significant barrier to education:

The main reason for not enrolling children to school is hardship.... Lack of finance for school fees, and other school requirements.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Households often go to great length to ensure their children's education. Several respondents stated that they were willing to take loans to afford schooling for their children:

Even if I don't have enough finance I borrow for them to learn. I do all my best for them to go to school.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Even if we don't have enough finance, we have to borrow; we do all our best for them to learn.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Even selling off assets was reported as a way of financing school costs:

I worried about the kids. I sent them to school but they failed, so I sold my agricultural land and sent them to private collage. Now I am worried about that college fee.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Lack of trained teachers

Lack of teachers

Lack of experienced and qualified teachers is a recurring theme across the project. Respondents within the project's targeted communities often referred to a general lack of teachers in schools. As one school staff mentioned:

Most schools, including our school, have shortage of teachers and equipment like desk.

(School staff, Oromia, Ethiopia)

However, respondents did not always explicitly state what effect this has on children's learning or attendance. The high student-teacher ratios were however stated as affecting the quality of learning:

Because, the number of students in our school is very high compared to number of teachers, it is mismatched. We have got 130 students in a class. It is difficult for me to say the quality of teaching is good.

(School staff, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Respondents stated that, despite often being understaffed, teachers were trying to make the best of a bad situation. They described that there was often will, but that the means in the form of funding and teachers was lacking.

One respondent mentioned that due to high dropout rates many teachers were transferred and consequently it is difficult to retain teachers:

First, on September, many students register but they dropout after one or two months, then the teachers get transferred to other schools for this reason we face this difficulty.

(School staff, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Quality in relation to competence and professionalism

In a couple of Childhope project areas households mentioned the need for experienced teachers, often equating experienced as meaning qualified:

Recruiting well-experienced teachers on the school side while better if we give them adequate time for their study at home from family side so that they can do better.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

This was echoed by other respondents citing the reduced academic requirement for teachers, describing how it used be better and that the lack of qualification results in poor teaching quality:

In earlier times, the teacher's qualification was certificate, but they are doing in the best way. Currently, many of the teachers have diploma and first degree but in the way of commitment are very poor and not at all visionary.

(Household, Amhara, Ethiopia)

In one case, a respondent described a lack of teacher engagement as a major barrier to learning:

All they are doing is they take attendance and write on blackboard. They don't care about what the kids have learnt. They spent their time by just sitting and taking coffee and tea. They can't even realise that we suffered a lot to send our kids to school.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Some school staff members mentioned the low quality of teaching, without providing clear reasons for this. However in one case, a teacher pointed to class sizes as a contributor to low quality teaching:

We have got 130 students in a class. It is difficult for me to say the quality of teaching is good.

(School staff, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Quality in relation to teaching methods

Respondents cited various issues related to teaching methods and pedagogy in relation to quality of teaching. In one case, a respondent believed that the school were using the best methods but it was only inexperience that was holding quality of teaching back:

Yes, she is learning a useful thing and most teachers use best methods of teaching. But as a weakness; some teachers do not have experience on teaching.

(Household, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Other respondents feel that assessment of student performance by teachers and households is lacking:

There are no continuous assessments from the teachers and the family about their students.

(Community leader, Amhara, Ethiopia)

In another case, a teacher when asked about learning outcomes responded that the major difficulties in achieving good educational outcomes were a result of students 'low moral' and not actually accomplishing and submitting their homework in time.

At times school staff appear to be aware of some of the issues of teaching methods and pedagogy that need addressing, citing the need for tutorial classes to support female students and that some classes are lacking in teaching quality. A school official described how they implemented these measures; special classes for national exams and tutorial classes for girls, and having some success with the initiatives:

For example, they have arranged a special class for students who have a national exam. They also give tutorial classes for girls. We have seen the result of such activities in our school when we got great appreciation from our woreda [district].

(School staff, Oromia, Ethiopia)

Counter-narratives and coping strategies

Special tutoring for girls

In some cases respondents reported that there are already special initiatives or assistance in place to help girls attend school. The most commonly cited assistance in place for girls is tutoring classes. These are used to improve learning for girls and encourage them to continue attending:

We have arranged tutorials and training for the girls. There is also especial class for the girls because we strongly believe that we should support them.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

At times these classes target especially vulnerable girls:

By gathering the data's of low achiever girls from each class we arrange a tutor class apart from normal class hour.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Community outreach

Respondents from several schools described the help they give girls as persuading the community of the importance of education. There are a number of pathways used for this, such as community societies, different teacher led committees, talking to parents and community leaders:

In order to alleviate this problem [Negative attitude towards girl ed.], we gather every household demographic data from Kebele administration offices and list out a household who have girl from 1- 14 years of age. Then every leader of the school moved to every household with having a schoolgirl to discuss on the importance of school enrolment and finally they get convinced with our idea and send they daughters to school.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

They also noted that in some cases committees are in place, which appear to be effective:

Most of the girls they don't come to school and most of the time they are the ones who drop out. We are struggling to bring them to school. There is a committee for this. We teachers work with the committee to bring them. Last year there were a large number of dropouts. This year they are few.

(School staff, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Engaging with students was described as having an impact on girls' attendance at schools:

Most of the girls they don't come to school and most of the time they are the ones who drop out. We are struggling to bring them to school. There is a committee for this. We teachers work with the committee to bring them. Last year there were a large number of dropouts. This year they are few.

(School staff, Amhara, Ethiopia)

School support groups

Several examples were given where schools encourage girls to participate with student support groups. The aim of this is to increase attendance and support the girls by doing follow ups at students' homes:

For example, if the girl misses the class, the development group go to the absent student's house and elaborate and ask why she was absent and enforce a lobby. These have been taking a network with Kebele officials and see a good result.

(School official, Amhara, Ethiopia)

Project Brief – ACTED

Poverty was the most frequently mentioned challenge facing households in targeted ACTED communities. The main causes of poverty in Faryab province were seasonal weather conditions, including harsh winter snowfall, spring floods, and summer droughts, and affected crops, ability to travel, and other local livelihoods and economies. Seasonal weather conditions also presented direct barriers to girls' education in the form of reduced accessibility to schools and exposure to the elements when classes were held in tents or outside. Seasonal weather also contributed to seasonal unemployment and loss of income, as farming, trading, and other local economies were based on agricultural crop cycles and access to the district centre.

Household poverty is an indirect barrier to girls' education because it forces households to consider marrying their girl children off early or have them work to help support the family. The tradition of bride price or dowry in Faryab province means marriage is a significant household economic event. Families faced with seasonal pressures and difficulties meeting basic needs considered early marriage for their daughters as a means of financial gain and relieving them of the responsibility of supporting their daughter. The practice also affected young men, who sometimes went to Iran for two to three years to work and save up enough money for bride price. Several respondents mentioned that young Afghans came back with substance addiction after having worked in Iran, and this addiction contributed to unemployment and household poverty.

Faryab, like other parts of Afghanistan, still carries a legacy of violent conflict, and past conflict has prevented adults or children from attending school. This sometimes contributes to a generation which is illiterate or has not completed school and so devalues education. In Faryab the Taliban is also active, and experiences on-going conflicts which interrupt schooling and often have a disproportionate effect on girls. In recent times girls have also been directly targeted for attending school for cultural and religious reasons.

Lack of school capacity, particularly of proper classrooms, was among the issues around girls' education mentioned most frequently. Respondents tended to say that the Ministry of Education did not provide them support with for the construction of proper classrooms. Through interviews it is apparent that some communities hold classes even in the absence of proper schools, whether outside, in tents, or in the local mosque.

Several respondents mentioned the distance to school as a barrier to attendance. Distance to school was generally related with fears for girls' safety, both in navigating the way to school during floods and hot weather, and in attracting unwanted attention.

Given that some communities hold classes even without classrooms, the extent to which lack of classrooms, government support, or proper facilities is a barrier to girls' education is not clear. It may be that some respondents do not consider these proper schools, or else they mean that local schools do not have the proper facilities, including separate facilities for boys and girls.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Household and local poverty

While most respondents voiced support for the idea of girls' education, household and local poverty were the most frequently mentioned barriers to girls in Faryab actually going to school. Seasonal poverty and unemployment were the two reasons most frequently given for household poverty. Given seasonal flooding, droughts, and harsh winters in Faryab province, families facing seasonal poverty often faced a choice of paying for basic necessities or the cost of education. Employment was also affected by the weather as farmers cannot grow crops during certain seasons, and traders are restricted in movement by flooding and snowfall.

Household poverty is a direct barrier to girls' education through early child marriage and the inability for households to purchase required materials. In Faryab province, a girl's dowry, of around 400,000 to 700,000 Afghani (£4,000 - £7,500), and received by the family of the girl when she marries, was a significant household economic event. After the marriage, the daughter also joins her husband's household, relieving her parents from supporting her further. Respondents mentioned families needing to marry off their girls early for economic reasons, in order to survive harsh seasons or because they cannot continue to support her. The dowry practice also affected male children, with several households reporting that their sons had gone to work in Iran for two or three years to save up enough money for the bride price.

Some households also mentioned that in difficult situations they struggled to meet their families' basic needs, and were unable to pay for school fees or materials. Unlike in BRAC and AKF areas, several respondents mentioned needing to pay school fees in Faryab province. Respondents mentioned their inability to pay for school fees or materials as a reason why they did not send their girls to school.

Seasonal difficulties contributing to household and local poverty

Faryab has harsh seasonal weather conditions which restrict movement, destroy homes and crops, and worsen households. Faryab has harsh winters, which increase fuel and food consumption. Heavy snowfall also prevents travel, including to the district centres, makes growing crops impossible, and is a reason why Faryab has an adjusted school calendar where schools are closed for the winter months.

In the winter we need a lot of support, because roadways are closed for traffic and we cannot go to the city district centre or city in order to provide for the needs of our family.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Seasonal spring floods make certain areas inaccessible or harder to get to, damage buildings and crops, and make rivers impassable. This has an indirect impact on the local economy.

We face a lot of problems during spring season because work decreases at this time of the year. In this season floods come and destroys all the land, road, bridges and culverts, thus movement towards city becomes difficult.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Families also face food shortages in the spring due to consumption of supplies during the winter:

We and most of the other families in this area face shortage of foods such as rice, oil and flour in the spring season. This is because in the beginning of winter all people save foods and then spend it during winter. At the end of winter foods are all finished.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Summer droughts also affect harvests but have a greater direct effect on girls' education due to difficulties walking to school and having school outside or in tents during hot weather. See the section on natural/environmental disruptions below.

Seasonal difficulties also affect income derived from agricultural activities and other seasonal labour. The winter is a difficult time for farmers.

My husband is a farmer, he is doing labor works as well, he earns money daily and we spend it for purchasing food. We always have a problem, sometimes he cannot find work. During the winter we face a lot of problems.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

However, spring floods also present problems and affect household poverty.

During Hamal and Sawor there is a lot of flooding with affects the local agriculture. It causes a lot of problems for families; they are faced with a lot of economic problems.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Seasonal floods and hot weather presents a danger to girls looking to go to school; see the section on the natural/environmental disruptions below. The effect of winter is less pronounced as schools in Faryab are closed because of the snowfall. Their economic impact of seasonal environmental disruptions also presents a barrier to girls' education, through families' inability to pay fees or other expenses or their decision to marry off their girls.

Unemployment contributing to household poverty

Aside from seasonal employment, many respondents mentioned that a large proportion of males in their community were unemployed throughout the year. Unemployment stretches household finances, making it difficult for families to meet basic needs, let alone educational expenses.

The majority of people in our village are unemployed, with no prospect of work.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Respondents also identified poverty due to unemployment as one of the main causes of community conflict over land and other resources.

While some respondents saw unemployment as a result of poor local economy, others mentioned their male heads of household were unemployed due to illness or disability. Disability in Afghanistan is often a result of past armed conflict, while illness, including expenses for travel and treatment, may be partly attributable to lack of local clinics, clean water, and other sanitation facilities.

We have a lot of difficulties in our lives; my husband is disabled and not able to work therefore we spend our days and nights with a lot of problems.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Female employment and supplementary household income

As in the BRAC project areas, several female respondents mentioned that they worked in tailoring, weaving carpets or rugs, embroidery or other handicrafts to provide income. Some respondents were the sole income earners in their households, as their husbands were ill or disabled. Other female respondents mentioned female unemployment in particular as a problem, and attributed it either to poor local economy or to cultural attitudes prohibiting females from working outside the home.

We spend our life leaning on God; I do carpet weaving and abate our life necessities. There is no other source of income for us. Whenever my sons and daughters go to school in the morning then they ask me for money and I don't have money to give them. Our main source of income was in a neighbouring district and that is now destroyed by flood so we don't have any other source of income.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

A household which does not have a steady income will struggle to provide basic necessities, let alone school fees, and heads of household who are unemployed show that their households are in difficult financial circumstances. A school respondent identified unemployment as linked directly to a family's decision of whether to send girls to school. See the section on difficulty in paying fees and meeting cost of girls' education below.

If the head of the household has a job and earns money then he will allow his children to go to school, but if head of household is unemployed then he does not allow his children to go to school because he will not be able to afford school expenses.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Remittances and working abroad

Multiple respondents mentioned males in their household working in Iran and saving up or sending back money. Several respondents specifically mentioned that young men did this for two to three years to save up enough

money for dowry or bride price. This gave the household an additional income source but also strained relations between the absent household members.

If my husband goes to Iran for work then our life may get better, he does not go to Iran because we would be left alone. It is very hard for my family to afford food and clothes for everyone.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

A few respondents noted that men working in Iran sometimes came back with drug habits.

If we have economical problems then we have to send our sons to foreign countries like Iran to work. We don't even know whether they are healthy or they are working in proper conditions or not. Most of the people send their young sons to Iran for work where they become addicted to drugs.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Addiction as affecting household poverty

Respondents from several areas in Faryab mentioned addiction to opium, heroin, or hashish as affecting their economic livelihoods, and contributing to domestic violence.

I am living a very bad life because my husband is addicted drugs, when he started using drugs we sold all our properties in order to purchase drugs for him, if I tell him to stop using drugs or if I tell him to go and work he will beat me, so I don't tell him anything.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

It also affects the quality of life and perception of daughters by their peers.

Other girls wear good clothes and shoes, but I don't because my father is addicted to drugs and he cannot buy these things for me.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

A few respondents mentioned that men who went to work in Iran came back with drug habits; see previous section on remittances and working abroad.

Poverty pushing girls to early marriage as a barrier

Although most respondents said they supported the idea that girls should be educated, in Faryab province it was common for respondents to mention the effects of early marriage on girls' education. Most respondents saw early marriage as a barrier to girls' education and the potential for early marriage may also limit a household's investment in their daughters' education.

In my idea, the girls should marry at the age of 18 to 20 but our village people sell their daughters because they are poor at the age of 10 to 14. If we did not make our daughter marry, we would send her to school.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Early marriage was seen to be primarily an economic decision, rather than a social or cultural one, taken by poor or uneducated households in order to receive a dowry and cease having to support the girl as a member of the household. The tradition of dowry for marriage was also a reason why young men went to work abroad; see section on remittances and working abroad above.

In our village, because the people are poor, they have to get their daughters married at young ages. It is not important for our people that the girl is young or old or if the groom is good or bad. The only important thing is money. Most of the people make their daughters marry at the ages of 12 to 14. The young men go to Iran to find the money to marry and it will take about 2 or 3 years.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Although most respondents implied that a girl's education would stop after she got married, one respondent said that this was a choice of the husband's household.

There are some poor families who marry their daughters early, if their husbands allow these girls to go to school then they go, but if they don't allow them then they have to stay at home and do house works.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Difficulty in paying fees and meeting cost of education as a barrier

Given widespread levels of poverty among the respondents in Faryab province, and seasonal difficulties which make it difficult for households to provide basic needs during certain times of the year, respondents mentioned that households sometimes had to put basic needs before the cost of education. Respondents mentioned the cost of girls' education as a reason why some girls did not attend school.

I decide to send my daughter to school if I can provide her expenses; without that I will not send her to school. I am poor and I cannot provide my life expenses. I also live in a place where floods harm my house every year.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Although not mentioned directly by respondents, given recurring seasonal difficulties, households may anticipate the costs of seasons to come and decide that it is not worth the investment to start sending their daughters to school if they cannot see out the school year.

Unlike in BRAC provinces, where respondents mentioned that the government provided school fees, some ACTED respondents mentioned difficulties in meeting educational expenses alongside difficulties in providing school materials. One ACTED respondent mentioned:

In the village there is no school that doesn't take a fee and if it is like this people don't have this ability to pay.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

It is not clear from the interviews whether school fees are widely collected in Faryab but if so, then this may provide a more direct barrier to girls' education than inability to provide for school materials, where a girl may be disadvantaged in the classroom but is not barred from attending altogether.

Some respondents suggested the link between household poverty and early marriage, indicating that households that could not pay school expenses would be more likely to marry their daughters off early.

Parents should be good economically, because if the parents could not provide the school's expenses. The parents will make the girls marry.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

A household's decision to send their daughter to school can be seen as an investment, and households may not consider girls' education a worthwhile investment if they are to be married after. The main reason given for decisions as to whether to enrol a girl in school or marry her off was financial.

The weak economy is the big problem that makes it difficult to send our girls to the school. The weak economy is the big reason that we marry our daughters at a young age. The weak economy is the main reason that we change our girls with money, animal such as cows or goat. Because of their school expense we are doing this.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Household inability to provide for school materials such as pens, stationery, and notebooks was mentioned less often in Faryab province than in other project areas, and was not presented as a direct barrier to girls' enrolment as in BRAC areas.

Because we are poor people and have weak economies. Life's difficulties prevent us to enrol our children into school. Because sometimes we can't afford stationary like bags, pens or notebooks; these problems impact the morale of our children. The father of each child is self-employed with low incomes.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Natural/environmental disruptions

Faryab faces a host of seasonal weather conditions including harsh winters, spring floods, and summer droughts and hot weather. These natural and environmental disruptions limit access to schools, city centres and markets, and sometimes force households to relocate. They also contribute to community and household poverty by destroying bridges and roads, homes and crops. Natural disasters in Faryab province present direct barriers to girls' education by making rivers impassable during the flooding season in the spring and making walking long distances exhausting during the summer months. They also present indirect barriers to girls' education by destroying crops and other livelihoods, worsening household and community poverty, and forcing households to use limited funds for basic necessities over and above the cost of girls' education and to consider marrying their daughters off early.

Natural disruptions contributing to household poverty

Nearly all respondents in Faryab referenced seasonal floods, which affected crops and other livelihoods, damaged houses and bridges, and sometimes forced households to relocate temporarily or permanently to neighbouring villages. Some respondents mentioned droughts as well, which seemed to come in the summer months and affected crop yields.

Drought has been occurring in our area for 12 years now and flooding also occurs. Flooding has destroyed all our houses and properties. We are very poor people and we spend our life faced with a lot of difficulty but this flooding has doubled our problems and has made us weaker economically.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Nearly all respondents also mentioned difficulties during winter months, where snowfall restricted travel and households saw increased consumption of food and fuel. See the section on seasonal difficulties contributing to household and local poverty above.

Sometimes after floods or poor harvests households do not have sufficient funds to rebuild or survive. Some households are forced to relocate, either temporarily or permanently.

Whenever flooding comes then we go in a panicked situation and our children cry a lot. We take our children and go to another area for a while. We go to that side of the mountain from where dark water comes.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Relocation interrupts the school cycle if girls are enrolled and families may not re-enrol their daughters for some time after they have settled.

If community members have not all been hard hit, some households may take out a loan, which places an additional financial burden of repayment on the household.

This year we have had 5 or 6 floods in our village. Last year the flood destroyed our house and rooms and yards, and the flood destroyed our yard walls. And my son, who is living with us, he rebuilt it and we got a loan but we still have not paid it.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

In difficult financial circumstances, households may be forced to spend money on essentials such as food and fuel rather than school expenses. Poor households often see marriage as a means to offset financial difficulties, as they can expect a substantial dowry of 400,000 – 700,000 Afghani (£4,000 - £7,500) and the girl joins the household of her husband, meaning the household is no longer responsible for her maintenance.

Months like Hoot, Hamal and Sawr are the difficult times of the year for us to spend because all that we have is spent in that time and there is nothing else to spend and survive. We either take loan from shops or we sell our daughters.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Natural disruptions directly affecting girls' education

In Faryab province, natural disruptions also present direct barriers to girls' attendance and learning. Floods along with distance to schools and lack of infrastructure or transportation prevent girls from attending schools during this season.

Our main problem is during three months of spring, there are a lot of flood and students and teachers cannot go to school, students and teachers need to cross river in order to get to school, so when there are floods they cannot go to school.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Likewise, during the summer, some respondents mentioned that hot weather along with distance to schools prevents girls from attending.

All our children want to go to school, but unfortunately school is very far away, our daughters are going to school but when the weather gets hot then they cannot go to school.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Violence and insecurity

Faryab province was affected by past armed conflicts in Afghanistan, and still has Taliban and insurgent activity at present. Past conflict affected the ability of children or their parents to attend school, as schools were closed and students were afraid to attend during on-going violence. This interrupts the school cycle and in some cases contributes to cultural attitudes towards education because the parents are themselves illiterate and have not finished school. Present conflict also prevents students from going to school, with girls often affected disproportionately because families are more worried about their security. Additionally, in Faryab province girls have specifically been targeted by the Taliban for attending school.

Past conflict

Past conflict serves as a barrier to girls' education by preventing girls themselves from attending school for several years, or from denying education to their parents, leading to their parents not seeing the value of education for their children. In Faryab province, past conflict seemed to affect the older generation more than the present one, but contributed to negative attitudes towards the value of education.

[Girls] have a lot of difficulties. First they need to do house works, farming or even agricultural works; during wars and conflicts their mothers could not go to school and become educated, so these girls have illiterate mothers; their mothers don't know the value and importance of education, so their mothers prefer housework to education.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Fear of violence or the effects on conflict can also prevent parents from sending their daughters to school.

Yes, wars and conflicts have negative impacts on girls' education because people are illiterate and do not know the value of knowledge and education. When there is insecurity they justify that situation is not good and it is better for older girls to stay at home and don't go to school.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Present conflict

Faryab province still has Taliban and other insurgent activity, including suicide attacks, rockets, and attempts at poisoning girls. Several ACTED schools have also been targeted by arson by insurgents opposed to educating girls. Present conflict may affect families if family members are victims of violence.

In the last year, there was war and my husband was killed. He had a shop, he had a butcher shop; he was working in his shop when a rocket hit in his shop and he was killed. I have two children; my oldest child was 8 years old. At that time I had all the responsibility of my household. I had to manage my life; I was doing tailoring in order to find food for my children. My son has a shop and our income is now through his shop. Now, my life is very good and Allah does not show those times again.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

On-going conflict also results in households deciding not to send their children to schools. This often has a disproportionate effect on girls, as families fear more for their safety.

Whenever any conflict or war happens in the village, first families do not allow their daughters to go to school and then their sons. Girls are most vulnerable and would face more problems more than boys.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Several respondents also mentioned a disproportionate effect on older girls, either in times of conflict or in the presence of the Taliban. Their concerns may be around sexual harassment and family honour.

Wars have a lot of affects on our children, when wars happen they do not go to school. There are a lot of wars, Taliban are attacking and sometimes ago they killed several people. These wars have more impacts on older girls because families do not allow them to go to school because there is no security. Also, older girls say that there is no security so we don't go to school. When security gets better again then they go back to school.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Lack of enrolment in schools or threats against school personnel may also cause schools to close.

In the last five years, some resistance has taken place about the disturbance of teaching in local schools and even this caused some girls' schools to be closed.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Present conflict can also lead to household displacement, which causes interruption in schooling or relocation to areas which have no school facilities.

Because of war we had to immigrate and we escaped two times; it was very difficult and our children were afraid. Now the fight is over. But during the war we didn't have schools in our village and our children were afraid.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Misbehaviour

Violence at school was not common in Faryab province. Most incidences of violence on the way to school were between students and seen as misbehaviour. Respondents generally said that this level of misbehaviour would not have an effect on their decision to send their girls to school.

[Fighting between boys] affects the girls because they also see the fighting of boys on the way. It won't have a negative impact on our decisions for enrolling our daughters or sons in school because minor fighting or problems are always expected to happen among young children.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Threats from the Taliban

Faryab province still has some Taliban presence. Respondents have sometimes needed to relocate due to threats from the Taliban and one respondent mentioned that clashes with the Taliban discourages girls from going to school.

At the moment, our village is secure, however there are member of the Taliban in the village. This affects us from to time because they scared which in turn prevents them from attending school. However these disruptions are not very common.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Poisoning

Respondents from two areas mentioned one or more instances where unidentified men poisoned the water or medicine of a girl's school. Although respondents did not directly state the reason, it can be assumed that this action was directed against the girls for going to school, and it deterred some families from sending their girls to school in the area. See the section on negative cultural attitudes towards girls' education below.

Years ago, people were telling that Taliban are coming and not allowing girls to go to school, but by God's grace this never happened. All girls are going to school. Years ago, they disspread a kind of

poisoning medicine to the school, but still girls were wearing masks and going to school, those girls who were scared did not go to school for several days, but after some days they went back to school.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

A similar incident was reported in a neighbouring area.

Sometimes students are being toxin and verbally and physically bothered by unidentified men. In the girl's schools students were toxin and bothered verbally and physically by some opportunist people.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Because of these issues we don't allow girls to go to school as well.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Domestic quarrels

A few respondents mentioned domestic quarrels, often as a result of several families sharing one house or over issues of property, personal possessions, or rights of men and women.

Generally, respondents did not see domestic quarrels as a barrier to girls' education, but one respondent mentioned that these quarrels sometimes affect girls' learning at school.

We have [inter-family conflicts] in our house because four families live in one house. It can affect our children's spirits, badly, because of this our children become upset and go to school in a bad manner so they cannot learn anything.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Lack of government support

Respondents frequently complained that they felt the Ministry of Education offered them no support, often giving the reason that their communities were rural or far from the provincial centre. Some talked of having petitioned the Ministry for a local school building, but they were ignored.

The education directorate does not pay attention to us. We suggested to them several times to build a school in our village, but still they did not pay attention to our suggestion. Students are studying under the tents; they don't have chairs and tables.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Others were promised a building but the government failed to deliver.

People try but to the government, ministry of education and Faryab, education doesn't have any attention to our village; education is always promised to us but they do not bring his promise to action.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

And others were denied permission to build.

In the first step our school does not have building, even though we have an area for building, unfortunately the ministry of Education does not permit to build the school and they said that we build school in next program. The children are currently studying under tent and canopy in rainy days, they study in the mosque.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

The lack of a school building is not always a barrier to education, as many communities still hold classes in other facilities. See the section on quality of school facilities below. However, one community leader noted that the lack of school building facilities was a barrier to girls' education, and that girls did not enrol in school because Islamic tradition required separate facilities for boys and girls:

If you want facility for girls, the boys and girls must separated and the teachers also should be the same gender. The government doesn't have the ability to establish separated school for girls and boys.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Quality of school facilities

Lack of quality classrooms was among the issues most mentioned in relation to girls' education. Many respondents mentioned that their community lacked a local school building. As such, some communities ended up holding school under trees, in tents, or in the local mosque.

If school will be close to our village then her uncle will allow them to go to school. If the weather is cold then they are studying in the mosques, if the weather is hot they are studying under the tents. School does not have building.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Respondents' understanding of schools is sometimes unclear. Distance to schools is sometimes cited as a barrier to girls' education even when communities hold classes in the local mosque. It is unclear whether some households refuse to send their girls to these classes because they feel that teaching is inadequate or because they feel that there are no proper classrooms to shelter students from the weather or separate boys and girls.

Yes, schools need be established in this village. The girls are passionate about education, but the school is far away and some families don't allow their older girls to walk the long distance to school. A school should be established in this village as students are studying in the mosque and under the trees.

(Community interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Although the lack of a school building was the most common issue, some respondents also noted the insufficient capacity of existing school buildings, including lack of toilets, electricity, water, and fences.

Distance to schools and lack of local schools

Distance to schools was mentioned almost as much as lack of quality classrooms. Respondents mentioned lack of government support in building local government schools within the communities. Distance to schools had an indirect impact on attendance as households were sometimes concerned for their daughters' safety while travelling long distances to schools.

In my opinion, school is very far away, they are scared that their daughter will be bothered or attacked on the way to school by anyone.

(School interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Fears for girls' safety had a disproportionate effect on older girls, as households saw older girls as subject to more attention or harassment, both by older men and by the Taliban.

People allow their younger girls to go to school, but older girls are not allowed to go to school because security is not good and it is not good for older girls to walk long distance to reach school. People are afraid of Taliban and other groups. Their school is not high school as well, their school is preliminary school, and their school building is not equipped. Students are studying under the tents.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

One respondent mentioned that distance to school also presented a particular problem for physically disabled students and this often prevents them from attending.

Disabled girls are not going to school because there is no transportation and they cannot walk. School is established for younger girls here, if school will be established for older girls near then they will also go.

(Household interview, Faryab, Afghanistan)

Project Brief – World Vision

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in World Vision project areas in Zimbabwe. By quite a margin, the most often mentioned barriers to girls' education in World Vision project areas were poverty, either directly or in terms of an ability to pay the costs of school, including uniforms and books. The effects of poverty were also described in terms of the stigma and shame, which can affect children's self-esteem and hunger which makes it difficult for children to concentrate in school. In some cases, respondents also noted seasonal disruptions which make it particularly difficult to afford the costs of school or which can exacerbate hunger.

Also frequently reported was the lack of textbooks, stationary and desks in school which affect children's ability to learn, even if they have been able to pay the cost of school. The poor quality of school facilities in general was also commonly reported, as were overcrowded classrooms and insufficient numbers of trained teachers.

Respondents commonly described the effects of violence and harassment on children in school and on their way there, including the impact of sexual harassment and sexual violence on girls.

Finally, respondents also reported the difficulties faced by girls who become pregnant and are not allowed to return to school, facing high levels of social stigma and shame. Girls who become pregnant were identified as the group facing the strongest specific barriers to education, although orphans were also reported to face considerable difficulties.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Inability to afford cost of school

Households in World Vision project areas reported that inability to afford the cost of school is the most common and significant barrier to children's education. Generally, this barrier was described as being a supply-side concern, as parents are willing to send their children to school and willing to pay fees, but simply cannot afford to pay:

Well in this area there may be a few who are not concerned about sending their children to school, but the majority seem to understand the importance of educating their children, their major challenge maybe lack of money but most of the parents wish for their children to be in school.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

From the perspective of school officials, some staff reported that they feel parents have an unfair expectation where they cannot pay school fees, but still expect the school to be good quality, not understanding that school fees are used to pay for the schools' operating costs:

Our budget is not always enough for our school needs. The problem being parents are not paying school fees. They seem not to understand that it's the very money that is used to run the school. Some parents if you sent debt collectors, they would come to the school to tell you that they still do not have the money.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

School fees were commonly cited as the major obstacle to education for poor households who are struggling to make ends meet. Respondents reported that this results in girls dropping out completely, but also, in disruption in attendance where girls are sent back home until they can pay the school fees.

They are those who are deprived, they do not have school fees most of them. Some do not even have uniforms to wear. For a child without fees, they are affected in that they are always sent home to go and collect school fees. (School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In explaining why some community members are reluctant to send their girls to school, a community leader noted:

They have the interest of sending children to school but they have financial problems (difficulties) in raising school fees.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

In addition to school fees, other school requirements such as uniforms, stationary and also shoes were equally reported as being difficult to afford for girls of poor families in the targeted areas;

Not being able to provide necessities for school for their children like school shoes and uniforms and stationary. Lack of funds also is a major difficulty because they don't afford to pay the levy.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

This respondent also hints at a level of social embarrassment or stigma associated with the inability to afford these things:

Some girls are out of school because the families cannot afford decent clothing to put on at school.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, respondents noted that this also affects girls' self-esteem,

Girls from poor families come in torn uniforms or even without uniforms and this affects their self-esteem, and as such they cannot learn properly and at times they feel out of place.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

The physical discomfort of not having shoes or a uniform was also reported by some to have an effect on the poor attendance of children in this situation:

In cases where you cannot afford things like school shoes, uniforms it's hard to send the child to school and this also makes the child reject school. When the child gets to school, the headmaster or teacher will be asking them where are your shoes or uniform? When it is cold or hot and the child is walking barefoot they get hurt and this makes them not to like school at all.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Inability to pay school fees and meet other requirements was reported to have a direct impact on the girls' learning. This is because school girls are sent back home if they do not meet the requirements and therefore miss out on classes.

Money is the biggest challenge. As you were told yesterday by my nephew, my grandchildren are always being sent home for non-payment. At times we only get money right at the end of the term. They are not learning because they miss out a lot.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

School policies on fee payment

Several respondents described ways in which schools try to force parents to pay fees, including refusing to allow students to advance to the next grade, allowing parents to pay off their fees through manual labour at the school, or taking households to court.

One school official described the effects of schools not allowing children to advance to the next grade:

Some parents delay in paying schools levies; this affects children because we do not allow children to proceed to the next level if their levies are not cleared. In the end children repeat their grades, if a child repeats two... three times they drop out of school because they cannot fathom learning with children who are three years their juniors.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

In other cases, respondents reported that schools even take households to court, to try and get them to pay schools fees which are owed to the school:

The child is not sent away from school, but the school tries to sit on the parent to make them pay but they won't be having any means by which they can pay. The school then takes them to the community court which is not so lax on these issues.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

More positively, in other cases school officials described ways in which they try to help parents pay fees, in this case allowing them to earn credit through contributing manual labour to the school:

In the last two years we have had a special arrangement with parents who were failing to pay fees for their children to come and provide labour to the school as a way of paying school fees. This has helped in making sure that girls whose parents were struggling to pay for them remained in school.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Poverty

Poverty affects ability to meet secondary school cost

A specific issue often reported by respondents in World Vision concerned the cost of secondary schooling. Respondents reported that secondary schools are not located in all communities in the targeted areas which create a twofold challenge for poor households who want to send their daughters to school. The first reported difficulty concerns affording school fees, which are higher for secondary schools.

Most of our people here face the challenge of lack of financial resources. You see we do not have boarding schools around here and we do not, for most of us, have the money to send our kids to school, so most of our girl children do not go for secondary education.

(Community Leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Second, their unavailability in all communities means that girls either have to commute or relocate to another village or town which adds to the cost of secondary schooling and makes it unaffordable in most cases.

Yes, I would really like for us to have a secondary school around here that children from this area can attend. The current situation is a huge burden for the parents. One may have the money to pay for tuition but sending a kid to stay with another family usually means incurring more expenses as one is expected to contribute to food wherever the kid would be staying, yet the same parent has other people to look after back home. This has affected our community in a big way. Some children only go to secondary school for a term before they drop out because of this. Parents cannot afford to take care of a split family... As we speak, two kids from this area who have been learning at [local community] have dropped out due to unbearable or unaffordable lodging arrangements.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Poverty pushes girls to drop out and find work

A few respondents noted that poverty and the hardships lead girls to drop out from school in order to do little jobs and earn little money to support themselves and their households.

People are after things that bring quick money, such as vending, so girls may decide against going to school because they want to go and sell firewood or anything to earn fifty cents or one dollar.

(Community Leader Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Other respondents have gone further in indicating that poverty and the urge to fulfil needs and desires led girls to drop out of school relocate to South Africa to find jobs such as housemaids. As one respondent indicated, this is also driven by the conviction that education is not rewarding and will not lead to a better life. Moreover, the respondent noted that these girls are very vulnerable as they can be as young as primary school graduates and their safety and security is usually at stake.

Most of the children here prefer to cross the border and work in South Africa. But even in South Africa for people to have very good jobs they still need an education. You will realise that the allurements of the immediate gains is quite strong. When those who cross are able to acquire things that even school teachers do not have then you notice that education loses its appeal... girls do cross as well and it is a worrying thing because they will still be very young, some grade sevens

cross and some younger are enticed to be housemaids there and they do cross. The problem as I see it is that this is not safe at all for the girls especially. When they get there, there is no telling about the safety of where they stay and also they tend to live promiscuous lifestyles. We have buried a lot of them back here who return home having contracted the deadly aids virus. It is sad.

(Community Leader Cituripas, Zimbabwe)

Poverty leads girls to drop out and get married

A few respondents noted that poverty in the household can sometimes lead girls to drop out of school and get married as a way to escape poverty and better support their families economically:

At times they see that their fees are not being paid and they are always being sent home; they look at themselves, they have no uniforms, they go to school with no shoes on. This may lead them to think of marriage as an escape from all this.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Other respondents reported that girls will have sex with men in the area, described as soldiers in the army barracks or gold miners for money, as a way to support themselves and their families:

Girls are also affected by makorokoza [gold panners]. We have had some drop outs even in this school because of gold panning... You see, there is some gold in some parts of this district. So when gold panners return from the field they bring lots of cash with them. Girls are then lured by that cash and have sexual relations with gold panners.

(School official, Midlands, Zimbabwe)

Poverty hinders school development

Respondents frequently noted that parents are responsible for supporting the development of schools including infrastructure development and providing teaching and learning resources and tools in the project's targeted communities.

There is a shortage of classrooms, which makes children learn under uncomfortable environments exposed to unfavourable weather conditions. As result children do not pass ... It is because of poverty, we do not have money as parents to support the schools build more class rooms.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

For this reason, many respondents complained that because parents are in difficult financial situation, with very limited resources, schools are in a bad condition. And this, in turn, has tremendous effect on girls' learning.

Working with a community that has a low source of income is a big challenge because they find it difficult to pay, and then the school lacks funds to run itself.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Poverty affects learning

A few respondents also noted that having better resources would allow them to provide better education for their children. This was often described in terms of having the opportunity to choose a better school so that the girl could receive a better education. However, one respondent noted that in addition to opting for a better school, having the financial resources would allow her to register the girl full time:

If you had more money, would it influence that decision? Yes, it would.

How? [Girl] will be getting full time lessons at school because she would have paid up in full and she won't be crying also for anything which has to do with education, will also get a chance to go to a better school.

(Household, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Social stigma of poverty

A couple respondents noted the difficulties faced by girls from poor households in terms of the stigma and teasing they face while being in school. This can come from other students, but also from teachers who single out these students are having not paid their school fees. This type of stigma then discourages these kids from

attending school, but it is unclear how gendered this issue is, as girls were not described by respondents as being particularly affected.

These days we live in an era of school fees and gone are the days of free education. So when at school follow ups are made on the non-paid up kids, there is a tendency that those kids that are singled out as not having paid up their fees, feel uncomfortable and may start to stay away from school because of the stigma that they will be getting from their peers because of the label attached to them for non-payment.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Respondents also discussed the situation of children from poorer households in terms of their levels of confidence and the amount of time they spend in school, which can both have an effect on school performance. In one case, a respondent described how girls with dirty school uniforms or without shoes can be teased, making them feel less confident in school. Respondents noted that teachers will also dismiss kids from school who are wearing dirty uniforms, telling them to go home and come back the next day in cleaner clothes, decreasing the learning time available to these children in the classroom:

They are those who are deprived, they do not have school fees most of them. Some do not even have uniforms to wear. For a child without fees, they are affected in that they are always sent home to go and collect school fees. For the one without a uniform they feel embarrassed as it can be seen that they are less privileged. It is embarrassing to them to be seen by others that they have never put on shoes in their life. So they do not even feel good or confident, some can ask what size do you put on and they are not able to answer as they have never worn a shoe.

Some come with dirty clothes or uniform and the teachers instruct them to come with a clean uniform the next day, without knowing that the child cannot afford soap. It's the child that knows that there is no soap at home, so if they are told to come with clean clothes, they do not understand and ask themselves where does the teacher want me to get the soap. These are some of the challenges that at time we do not know what kind of families are our students coming from and it affects their learning when such demands or requirements are made on them.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Food shortages

Food availability was described by respondents as a very common challenge in targeted communities. Households commonly expressed concerns about satisfying their family's food needs, and several identified hunger as a major obstacle to children's attendance and learning in schools.

Sometimes they [girls] go to school without uniforms, or with empty bellies. This affects their learning... However we just motivate them to go to school and try their best under the circumstances.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

In explaining why some children are not attending school in the community, one household noted "Maybe it's because of hunger; children will not go to school hungry" (Household, Masvingo, Zimbabwe).

Respondents also noted that hunger can negatively affect children's learning while in school, as they have difficulties concentrating:

The main challenge is hunger. This is making it difficult for most girls because they cannot concentrate on an empty stomach. These girls are physically at school but mentally they will not be there.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Lack of teaching resources

Not enough textbooks

It was frequently reported by respondents that children must share textbooks in class, due to insufficient numbers of textbooks. In relation to lack of teaching resources, the shortage of textbooks was the barrier most frequently identified by households, teachers and community leaders in World Vision target areas.

Texts books are shared at times 10 - 15 pupils per book.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

A couple of teachers expanded on the impact this had on children's ability to learn, citing it as a significant barrier to children's learning; describing it in terms of reduced learning rates, no self-studying, negative outcomes on pass rates and as a generally difficult learning environment.

The quality may be low because if you take textbooks, you find that a teacher may have only one or two textbooks, which means that some of the things that require pupils to see for themselves from a textbook, or to research for themselves from textbooks may be difficult because there are no textbooks.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In these cases teachers described how children were often only taught orally and at times not even having access to chalkboards, which was stated as making it even more difficult to acquire reading and writing skills.,

You find out that there are no text books at the school. A teacher just teaches orally without students referring to text books. There would be only a single text book which the teacher uses.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

On a related note, teachers described the process of organising the lessons as becoming less cumbersome when textbooks were available, teachers being able to direct the child to self-study and reading exercises.

With the textbooks, at least children have them and they can now read on their own. The teacher is also able to give you work from a textbook or direct the children to go and open a certain page, there is a comprehension passage from that page, go and read. This is good, rather for the teacher to prepare the material, write on the board, it takes time and it's tiresome.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Conversely, in a few cases, schools official respondents in the project area stated that the textbook situation had improved dramatically through the aid of donor programs such as the Education Transition Fund managed by UNICEF. This was however reported to be mainly for the core subjects such as maths, English, science, geography and history, other subjects such as Religious and Moral Education were still described as unsupported in terms of textbooks.

Materials are also a challenge, but you find that of late UNICEF has donated some material but there are some areas where UNICEF did not feature like RME (Religious and Moral Education), Home Economics and so forth. So we get challenges in those areas.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

The reason for the lack of textbooks and other teaching aids was attributed to different sources; chief among these was the lack of school funding and the inability of households to afford the expenses.

In a couple cases, lack of teaching resources for specific practical classes such as agriculture or sports were mentioned as well as lack of resources for extracurricular activities. In these cases not having the resources was stated to have negative impact on the ability to carry out the activity and that it made practical demonstrations difficult.

The number of students taking that subject and the available equipment we have in our hands do not match. We do not have adequate equipment for students to use during practical. For example we need some hoes. We had 67 students in form four yet we had 9 or ten holes for students to use during demonstrations. Then you expect these students to perform well.

(School official, Midlands, Zimbabwe)

Lack of stationery and exercise books

In addition to textbooks, many respondents reported that there is a lack of teaching aids for both students and teachers. These were cited as including things such as pens, chalk, manila sheets, chart and so forth.

The provision of stationery for both teachers and students. These include exercise books, pens and pencils for students and for teachers, chalk, charts, manila sheets, markers and pens.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

In a few cases, there were reports of students failing to do exercises due to not having stationery such as pens. This appeared to not be a significant problem and was not widely reported as a learning barrier.

Some pupils fail to do their exercises because they do not have stationery.

(School official, Mataberland North, Kenya)

Not having stationery or exercise books was not cited by a couple respondents as a reason for not attending school but rather it was described as demoralising students and affecting learning negatively. Only in one case was it reported to lead to dropouts;

Others it's because of the problems they have at home, they might lack stationery that affects their learning negatively and demoralises the children. Some even withdraw because of that.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

In particular, not having access to exercise books was reported by respondents to be a significant learning barrier for students. It was reported that students were expected to buy exercise books and as a result of lack of financial resources students were not able to acquire them. Some teachers describing cases of students coming to school and not being able to do any school work at all during the day.

But because of poverty some of them just come and sit the whole day. A few just manage to buy one exercise book and that is used for all subjects and they quickly get used up and they just sit again.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

This was cited by several teachers as a significant barrier to follow up on student performance, especially writing skills were stated as being difficult to judge. In addition, teachers noted that it is difficult for students to demonstrate that they grasp the concepts taught unless it is in written form.

For a teacher to know how good or how bad a child is doing, they base on written work, so if one is not writing, the teacher has no way of judging their performance."

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Furthermore, one respondent noted that when students finish their exercise books there might go considerable time until a new one is bought, effectively disrupting the learning process of the student.

But you will find that some children when their exercise books run out of pages can spend up to two weeks before they get a new one. So for those two weeks they are not writing any exercises and are therefore losing out on their lessons.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In one case, the problem was described as the school deviating from the national syllabus; effectively covering the wrong subjects than the mandated by the national syllabus. This was stated as a cause for students failing national examinations. This appeared to be an isolated incident but it was reported as having severe implications on the students who attended the school.

We have a problem with access to the national syllabus. We resort to using pupils' books. Maybe this is caused by the fact that we are far away from the towns. So we end up deviating from the syllabus. This greatly affects our pass rate because national examinations are set in accordance with the syllabus yet we would have taught without the syllabus."

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Violence

Election-related violence

In some instances, respondents noted that political violence had negatively impacted student learning and attendance. The violence was primarily reported to occur around the time of elections. In some instances, the violence was described as directed at households and their assets, while in other instances; it was described as

directed at the schools, especially if school staff members are involved in politics or with political parties. It appears that some schools shut down around the time of elections while others continue to function. Either way, as one community leader notes below, it impedes learning outcomes:

When we go towards elections and there is violence, school children and teachers will prefer not to go to school. There are political parties that force everybody to go to rallies and commands, and declares that the schools close in order for all to attend the rally. This affects students. Some schools can remain open but there will not be serious learning. The disruptions are common during campaigns and election periods. People have to attend rallies in fear of victimization

(Community leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

And similarly,

I think it should have been 2000. It's about politics at that time when the MDC was just starting. I think it was because we had some of our teachers who went for the strikes and did not come to teach, its long back. But for now such things have not happened. The teachers just left on their own, they ran away in fear they would be beaten or threatened but doing happened. They feared for their lives not knowing what is going to happen.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Sexual violence and assault

Sexual Assault and violence was mentioned by some respondents as a potential factor impacting school attendance. The majority of respondents noted that, for the most part, instances of sexual assault – or fears of sexual assault – would happen on the way to or from school and would be perpetrated by strangers.

A grade five pupil was physically attacked and raped and that forced other children to be scared of going to school.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

The fear of assault alone often served to prevent parents from sending their girl children to school, especially older girls who had to attend secondary schools that were farther away and in other villages:

The school is very far so they leave before dawn and get back here after dusk. This is why such incidences [sexual assault] are often heard of. In some instances, as soon as parents hear of these incidents, they have stopped their children from going to school immediately.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In other cases, though, respondents noted that the community works to bring those behind such attacks to justice through the legal system:

Once there were some school leavers who were in the habit of waylaying girls and proposing to them violently, especially the ones going to secondary who travel long journeys at times through thick bushes. But the community got together and flushed them out. One was arrested and charged for abusing a girl he had fondled.

(Community Leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Domestic violence

A few respondents noted that domestic violence between caregivers or by a parent or step-parent toward a child impeded student attendance and learning. To this end, respondents noted that the problems ranged from neglect of students to physical violence toward children (especially step children) to domestic violence between caregivers. For some students, these domestic issues negatively affected their ability to concentrate and learn while for other students, their attendance might be impacted because they were withdrawn from school:

Some girls especially those staying with step parents are mistreated at home and when they go to school they get so distracted, making it difficult for them to learn.

(School Staff, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, another respondent reported,

I have seen families that fight so bad that they hurt each other. This is bad because it also troubles the children and it affects them to the extent that children from families that are at loggerheads, do not fare so well at school and they have concentration problems in class. In some other situations the children in that family may end up having to side with one parent and not want or love or accept the other parent. It's just not so good.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Other respondents noted that domestic violence can affect children's attendance at school, as well as their behaviour towards other children in class:

Sometimes that when parents quarrel because the father is drunk, the child does not come to school and when we ask why they stayed at home, the child says that there was no one to wake her up and prepare her to go to school. That is because their mothers neglect them whenever they fight or quarrel with their fathers. Most of those who do this are stepmothers, so sometimes they decide to leave the children alone at home such, that you find them staring at people while the mother is elsewhere and then will come back late, leaving the children without food. Maybe they will have had breakfast in the morning and spend the whole day without food. Sometimes these conflicts end up affecting the children psychologically and physically, such that the children become uncouth and violent to other children.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Bullying and fighting at school

Fights and altercations – both physical and verbal – were mentioned by a number of respondents as commonplace occurrences between children. Respondents noted that fighting usually occurred while students were going to or returning from school:

The recent reports we have received involves older pupils ambushing the younger ones and hitting them for no reason. We had an occasion were some out of school teenagers where waylaying one girl who has reached adolescence on her way to and from school. The boys were called to the office and reprimanded and it stopped.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Respondents also noted that the tone of bullying changes as children get older:

At infant level, there is no difference in the behaviour of boys and girls. From grade 4 upwards notable changes are that some girls become passive because of what will be happening to their bodies, while some boys become wild, bossy and start bullying others or girls.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment was mentioned as a disciplinary tool used often to critique the poor behaviour of students. Some parents reported concerns with corporal punishment, stating that it is abuse and shouldn't be tolerated:

Another problem is on disciplining children. You know nowadays there are children's' rights and calls against child abuse. So community members fail to comprehend child abuse correctly. Such that any punishment of students would be regarded as abuse. They then physically attack teachers when teachers visit the shopping centre. Some students even threaten some teachers that they are only safe within the school premises as they would be pay back [beaten] when they go out of the school premises.

(Community Leader, Midlands, Zimbabwe).

However, a few respondents noted that while they were in favour of corporal punishment within certain limits, some respondents reflected on positive aspects of corporal punishment, particularly in the sense that it's a way of controlling children's behaviour and giving them attention:

When I was still at school, I could not report to my parents that my teacher has beaten me. That assisted a lot in controlling me from being mischievous. Let us comeback to the schools of today. Parents go to school to fight against the teacher when a teacher beats their child. In retaliation, the

teacher stops putting effort into that child during lessons. He even marks correct on wrong answers in the child's exercise book. Then how do you expect the child to pass? It's us parents with problems. Children have also problems of course. If a child is beaten for misbehaving in class, as a parent I should not criticize the teacher. On the other hand, the teacher should not beat the child excessively so as to injure the child, no.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Environmental disruptions

Many respondents in World Vision project areas described disruptions to their ability to make a living, primarily in terms of spoiled crops, damaged homes and lost livestock, generally due to seasonal or chronic droughts. Respondents in World Vision project areas discussed this issue more often than respondents from other project areas, across all regions being surveyed, suggesting that it is quite a severe issue which commonly affects children's ability to attend school.

We had hard times because of inadequate rains. We hardly could put food on the table. We used to dig roots and ate wild fruits. We would sell livestock at a cheap price in order to secure food. At times we would do barter trade i.e. 50kg maize to one beast. This is what kept us through that season. It was survival of the fittest.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Other respondents focused on the damage caused by storms on homes and buildings:

Yes, it happens but not every year. This year around March, we experienced storms which were destroying people's houses as there was too much wind... People just rebuilt their home, those that had roofs destroyed in the storm. They did not get any help from any organization but did all the work by themselves, as it was only a few houses in this area that were affected. It was mainly those weak houses that were affected as there was too much wind.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Droughts

Compared to other projects, a relatively large number of respondents in World Vision project areas made an explicit link between seasonal environmental disruptions (particularly drought) and children's ability to attend school. Several respondents noted that in times of drought, they aren't able to afford school fees and even have difficulty making sure their children aren't going to school hungry.

Drought and where I can get money, especially money for school fees when kids have to go back to school. These two things worry me the most particularly when you are aware that all sources are dry, there is no solution in sight to those problems. Children look up to the parent, so if there is nothing you can do everything becomes hopeless.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, another household describes the economic desperation caused during times of drought:

The reason why money is a problem is because there is no employment for parents. Remember there is also drought, people did not get good yields from the field and livestock is dying, this makes it difficult to sell some things and get money. During this time livestock does not sell well, imagine a goat going for a 100 rands (US\$10) only while at school they need about 400 rands (US\$40), so one will end up finishing the whole kraal of goats. The goats will be thin and will do not fetch a good price on the market.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In some areas, drought is described as an on-going phenomenon, which has taken a deep toll on some families in the community who have been pushed into chronic poverty.

Money is the largest obstacle, as it is the money that enables a child to go to school. If you do not have money, the child will not go to school. Also being poor is hindrance. As it is we do not have any livestock because of drought. Our kraals used to be full. The drought is too much. It's not only affecting people but it affects our goats, our cattle. As you see it is so dry there is no water and grass and the livestock die. I have 2 other children whom are failing to educated because of being poor.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In a couple cases, the issue was reported as being so severe that households are forced to prioritise being able to eat over paying school fees, forcing their children to drop-out of school.

I can say droughts are some of the factors which make parents to withdraw some of their children from school, as the priority issue becomes the purchase of grain/mealie- meal instead of paying school fees.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Flooding

While the majority of comments relating to environmental disruptions concerned times of drought, a couple respondents noted that time times of flood, rivers may overflow making it difficult for students to cross those rivers to get to school.

There are some families who stay a long distance from this school, like 4 to 5 kilometres away. Despite their willingness to enrol their children for grade zero, some parents do not do this because of long distance. In the end children just come to enrol for grade one which is against government policy. During the rainy season some children miss school because of flooded rivers.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

A community leader in Mataberland South reported similar problems when the rivers flood in their community, affecting children's attendance at school:

Other kids are crossing [M] river to go [to nearby city]. Most of the children from the other village go there. If the river is flowing most students do not attend school because they cannot cross the river. At times they get to the home late especially during the rainy season when the river is flooded. Parents are forced to go after them calling out names in order to locate them.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Issues with quality of school facilities

Not enough classrooms

Having insufficient numbers and poor quality classrooms was the most identified educational barrier facing students in terms of school facilities, as many respondents described severe shortages of classrooms which have resulted in negative learning outcomes for students:

There is a shortage of classrooms, which makes children learn under uncomfortable environments exposed to unfavourable weather conditions. As result children do not pass, sometimes you find a class of 50 children learning under trees sharing 3 text books.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Several school official respondents described the practice of multi-grade classes, where different grades were placed together. In extreme cases of multi-grade classes, members of school staff reported how some schools were forced to put three classes in the same classroom, making it an even more difficult learning environment.

Our enrolment is going for 515 at the moment and we have got only seven classrooms. So you can imagine, they are sharing and at times you find that one class [room] is supposed to be shared by three grades and it becomes very difficult, in term of learning.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In a few cases, a variant of multi-grade classes was described by members of the teaching staff where two classes share the same classroom, with students sitting back-to-back. Unsurprisingly, this was reported to make it difficult for students to concentrate, as there are two teachers conducting different lessons at the same time:

Classrooms are a big problem here... two classes share a classroom sitting back to back. This greatly affects the concentration of children because in some instances a teacher might have a louder voice than the other.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Additionally, the relatively common practice of teaching classes outside of classrooms was reported as resulting in high student absentee rates during times of bad weather, particularly the rainy season:

The school kids usually are absent when it rains. Sometimes when they are here, they move in to that one class room and join others.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Difficulties in rural areas

Rural schools were described by respondents as facing particular challenges in terms of quality, with several respondents citing them as having especially poor facilities:

Rural schools have pathetically poor facilities so to speak. There are not enough chairs or desks. Each child cannot have a chair for him or herself. Some even sit on the floor.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Often respondents explained the reasons for the poor quality of facilities as a function of being a rural community with the often accompanying issues of poverty, lacking development and not having access to financial support from donors.

On poor facilities, I guess it is because we are in rural areas where development and finance are a problem. We do not have some form of support from well-wishers.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

This was partly echoed by other respondents, describing how the improvements of schools were mostly dependent on the contributions from the community and households, often making it difficult to initiate school developmental projects as a result of rural communities not being able to contribute the necessary funds.

We also do not have enough classrooms because we depend entirely on tuition from parents.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

However, in some rural schools parents were reported to be heavily engaged in improving the school and assisting its development. Respondents noted that households sometimes help out with the construction of new facilities and are part of the school decision-making process, through School Developmental Committees:

They represent the community (parents) in all school development programmes. When the new block was being constructed they took turns to work with villagers as well as working on the project because they are also parents.

(Community Leader Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Lack of desks and chairs

The second most commonly reported issue in relation to school facilities was lack of desks and other furniture. In World Vision project areas respondents reported that there are insufficient desks and chairs, which negatively affect children's learning. In several cases respondents detailed how students had to sit on the floor during class or bring their own furniture from home. The lack of school furniture was particularly described as affecting writing skills by respondents, students often having to sit in stressful positions making it difficult to concentrate on write.

In one case, a member of the school staff described the lack of quality furniture as 'emotional abuse', citing how students only had metal frames to sit on which was described as particularly uncomfortable and in turn discouraging students from attending school:

So in other words it means the child is being emotionally abused because once they think of coming to school, they think about sitting on those metal frames or sometimes writing while sitting on the floor. Sometimes they prefer to write while sitting on the floor because it is less painful than spending a day sitting on a metal frame.

(School official, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Harassment and insecurity

Sexual harassment on the way to school

A few respondents noted that sexual harassment was a problem that girls faced on the way to or from school. They reported that harassment was often perpetrated by older boys toward older girls. A caregiver in Mataberland North also noted that sexual harassment by boys was a problem when asked if things like taunting or physical violence happened to children on the way to school:

Some children are very stubborn so such issues are common. This does not happen to younger children, its common among teens. This happens because they propose love to each other and end up having serious conflicts. Some cases even result in physical assault of girls who do not respond positively to boys' proposals.

(Community leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

The risk of rape and sexual harassment on the way to school – coupled with distance from school – was one reason reported by respondents that some older girls as well as younger students do not attend school:

Even the secondary school is too far, so our children fail to proceed with secondary schooling because of the long distances they have to walk to school. Most of those dropping out are girls because they cannot walk the long distances and there is a risk of rape along the way. Some parents have very intelligent children but they cannot afford to pay for lodgings or provide transport for their girls to go to secondary school. Some end up being abused and going to Bulawayo or South Africa to look for employment. We hear stories like that.

(School Staff, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

A community leader described a similar situation, but noted that the community took an active role in protecting the girls and stopping the harassment:

Once there were some school leavers who were in the habit of waylaying girls and proposing to them violently, especially the ones going to secondary who travel long journeys at times through thick bushes. But the community got together and flushed them out. One was arrested and charged for abusing a girl he had fondled.

(Community Leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Tribal initiation ceremonies

The initiation ceremonies of a local tribe in Midlands province were specifically mentioned by respondents as affecting student attendance. As per this practice, boys would be inducted into manhood at the initiation ceremony. Afterwards, when returning from the ceremony, if the new initiates came across other students, they would physically assault the students if they did not know their post-initiation name or were unable to pay the student to learn the new name. Fear of this abuse was noted as a reason some girls would not attend school:

This is common when the local boys have returned from initiation ceremonies. It's a cultural practice that boys are given new names on completion of the initiation ceremonies, which they would expect to be called with. When the boys meet girls coming from school, they would ask the girls to pay some money so that they could disclose their new names. Upon responding that they have no money, the girls are then beaten... This causes harassment to young girls and boys. The government has intervened and set out a policy that it was illegal to have such a cultural practice in school. The problem however starts when students leave school when they are on their way home.

(Community leader, Midlands, Zimbabwe)

However, a school official noted that students – especially girls – not belonging to this tribe are no longer being abused through this practice after a local leader instantiated a rule that a fine would be levied on anyone from the offending tribe who abused someone not belonging to the tribe.

Harassment and bullying by students

Taunting, teasing, insulting, and minor fighting from boys toward girls was usually not perceived as problematic or cause for concern for most caregivers. Often, this was seen as a normal part of childhood, with boys tending

to be the initiators of verbal and physical confrontations. Bullying and harassment usually occurred on the way to or from school, and occasionally was mentioned in the context of the local community.

The recent reports we have received involves older pupils ambushing the younger ones and hitting them for no reason. We had an occasion were some out of school teenagers where waylaying one girl who has reached adolescence on her way to and from school. The boys were called to the office and reprimanded and it stopped.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Respondents noted that teachers would be responsible for addressing any cases of fighting or bullying, sometimes using corporal punishment, including caning, creating a cycle of violence within schools:

They [teachers] eh ah, usually beat them [boys] up. Boys just tease the girls because they are stronger and if the girls respond, these boys beat them (girls). Girls then go and report such to the teachers and the teacher would then cane the boys.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Other times, respondents noted that caregivers would resolve the issue themselves, as described by one household:

The school doesn't do anything but we usually resolve such issues as parents. When children have a problem we try to find a solution as parents and then we involve the teachers after we have discussed the issue amongst ourselves as parents. Sometimes children harass or insult each other without the knowledge of the teachers. Teachers sometimes take the children and try to resolve the dispute.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Most caregivers noted that bullying did not have an impact on school attendance, as the child would go to school regardless. However, a few caregivers did note that, on account of bullying, their children are negatively affected, at least emotionally. It might therefore be possible to assume that bullying might have an impact on the ability of some girl children to learn, if not school attendance.

Yes, other children harass others on their way to school. In particular boys tease and ridicule girls. This has an impact on [girl]... She is a very soft person and she sympathises with everyone. Even if she is not the one who is being teased, she ends up crying.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Pregnancy and early marriage

Pregnancy

The group most often identified by respondents in World Vision target areas as facing specific challenges in terms of being able to go to school were girls who become pregnant. These girls were described as often facing stigma and are often described by respondents as not being allowed to return to school after giving birth. One respondent noted that girls who give birth face significant social stigma, and face concerns that they will be a negative influence on the other girls at the school and so they are not allowed to return to school.

Ah no, she would not be welcome [back to school] because she would teach others bad thing like sleeping with men. Girls don't come back to school when they fall pregnant.

(Household, Mataberland South Zimbabwe)

This social stigma may also manifest in terms of social segregation, as these girls are now perceived as being 'parents' rather than still being 'girls':

They feel out of place as other students segregate them. They are viewed as parents rather than pupils.

(Community leader, Midlands, Zimbabwe)

A number of respondents in World Vision project areas noted that pregnancy was a common reason for girl students dropping out of school. Some respondents noted that pregnant girls are able and encouraged to study

– at least after they have given birth, if not while pregnant – but face considerable societal pressure that disinclines them from doing so:

As far as girls who fall pregnant are concerned, we try to get them to re-enrol at school when their babies are old enough to be left. We are continuing to educate the parents to let them, but there is still a lot of stigma concerning girls who fall pregnant while at school. It's like there is an unwritten rule that they should not get another chance at school.

(Community Leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Other parents explicitly noted their disapproval of pregnant girls or young mothers attending classes on account of fears that the girls would negatively influence other students, as illustrated by one caregiver:

Ah no, she would not be welcome because she would teach others bad thing like sleeping with men. Girls don't come back to school when they fall pregnant.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Acknowledging the challenge that girls face in re-enrolling in school after giving birth, one community leader noted that the chance of girl students re-enrolling might be better if they became pregnant in a different location, as other community members might then not know about their pregnancy:

Girls who get pregnant whilst at school become drop-outs. They are not reinstated afterwards. Those who stand that chance are the ones who would have got pregnant whilst in different areas, because nobody would have known about their situation or position. They would simply come and enrol as if they are transferring from another school.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

As such, social stigma seems to impact school attendance as well as re-enrolment. One respondent noted that, beyond societal pressure, another reason girls did not enrol after giving birth was that, at that point, their parents see them as grown up and therefore will not cover their schooling fees.

Most girls who get pregnant don't go back to school because they are regarded as grown up and their parents are not willing to pay their fees anymore. Some don't want to go back even if they have access to fees.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

At least one community leader noted that parents might prefer to send their sons rather than daughters to school simply because boys do not get pregnant and therefore their parent's resources are less likely to be wasted:

You see girls will fall pregnant before they are able to even finish secondary school and that is a waste of resources, because at the end of the day they will have nothing to show for the time and money spent. But boys do not fall pregnant, yes they make girls pregnant but there is never an issue of them dropping out because of pregnancy. So girls should go to school less than boys for this reason. I cannot have money to look after the baby and pay school fees as well. However this is not to say in all cases it is as I have said.

(Community Leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

This notion of resources being wasted if girls become pregnant was also echoed by another community leader when asked if pregnant girls who had not been to school for a long time would be accepted back into school when they return:

They go back to school, some realise their mistake and are willing to leave their small kids behind. I am not too sure but there could be a way to assist such returnees. The other thing is this, most girls leave home at a very early age. This is why children get spoilt early. Secondly, these girls need to be talked to. They disappoint parents by going to school for three years, lots of money being used, only to fall pregnant in the last year of school.

(Community Leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Early marriage

A number of respondents noted that, on account of pregnancy, girls within their communities would end up getting married early:

In the past it was common for children to get married around 21 years. Nowadays children are getting married around 16 years because most of them will have fallen pregnant then and they are not yet ready for marriage but are forced because of the pregnancy. As a parent you cannot just stay with your daughter when she is pregnant and you cannot prevent her from getting married if that happens, because you cannot keep another man's child. In the past people used to follow the proper process of marriage by having to ask for the hand of the girl in marriage.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

However, it was not the case that pregnant girls would invariably get married to the individuals who impregnated them; rather, both the girl and her partner seemed to be able to choose, at least to some extent, whether or not they wanted to get married. As the caregiver above goes on to note:

If the guy who is responsible for the pregnancy does not want to marry the girl, the two families should talk and resolve the issue amicably on how they will help take care of the baby. It does happen that a young man can accept responsibility of the pregnancy but will say I am not yet ready to marry.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

A number of respondents mentioned that children seemed to be getting married at a younger age than they did in the past. Respondent rationale as to why this was the case varied considerably: one respondent attributed early marriage (due to pregnancy) to the increased risk of HIV/AIDS. As such, when asked what the respondent thought the proper age was to begin having children, the respondent answered as follows:

The proper age is eighteen years. These days it can even be sixteen or fourteen years. Did you see a small hut at the primary school that's written "HIV Youth Centre" or something by Save the Children? These days early marriages are caused by fear of the virus. Getting married late or after 20 years prompts the girls to engage in high risk behaviour that exposes them to HIV. Getting married early reduces the risk as they would have settled with their husbands and there are few chances of promiscuity.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Another respondent attributed early marriage to the different format by which information on sex is provided to youth. Specifically, the respondent noted that, while community film screenings use to be used to relay information, current methods by which information is disseminated, such as books and conversations with adults are to blame. To this end, when asked why girls in the past married after 21 years of age and why the rate has decreased, the respondent replied as follows:

I think that this is being caused by books or education and people like us who received an education. We teach children issues to do with sexuality, sexual intercourse and being in a relationship at a young age. In the past we used to get our teachings at community film screening (biskop) together with elders and children would then receive explanations at their level from adults. Unlike now children now what activities go on in the bedroom between their parents because they have been taught that.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Yet another respondent felt that girls were getting eloped after being lured away by the money that some individuals have made panning for gold:

You see, there is some gold in some parts of this district. So when gold panners return from the field they bring lots of cash with them. Girls are then lured by that cash and have sexual relations with gold panners.

(School official, Midlands, Zimbabwe)

Religious practices

A few community leaders noted that select Christian apostolic religious groups are specifically against education, particularly for girls, placing more value on marriage, leading girls from these groups to drop-out of school when they reach puberty. When asked if there are groups that do not educate girls because of cultural or religious practices or beliefs, one community leader responded as follows:

Yes, we have some apostolic sects who are against the education of girls. Normally their girls go to school up to grade 6/7. As soon as their breasts start to show, they are married off. To them marriage is more important than education.

(Community Leader, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

In the case of another sect, all-night church services also interfered with children's ability to attend school:

I have seen the Marange Apostolic from across the river near the Mountain. They are a small group there. They send their children to school but their children are often absent from school especially on Tuesdays and as from Thursday until weekend. Their children are absent from school as they are required to attend church services at venues that are far away from this community where they would spend the whole night attending prayers. They prioritize their church services more than attending lessons at the school. Sometimes their children are away from school for more than a week and affects girls' learning. It is a nightmare for them to ask questions on the performance of their children after being absent from school for many days.

(Community Leader, Midlands, Zimbabwe)

Employment issues in household

Farming as the main source of livelihood

It was frequently reported within the targeted communities that households rely on farming in order to support themselves. However, in most cases, it was noted that farming is either insufficient or not reliable to meet all the needs of the household, including food. This is mainly due to the seasonal drought that affects crops and the farming produce, and in fewer cases, the livestock owned by some households.

Most parents do not afford tuition fees because of unemployment. Parents also depend on farming of cash crops like cotton for income...these continuous droughts mean that parents have poor harvests. As a result parents only produce food for consumption not for sale and this affects their ability to send their children to school.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

This, as many have noted, represents a significant challenge for families to meet school fees and enrol their girls (and boys) in schools.

On the issue of failing to pay school fees, most people are unemployed. They rely mostly on farming. On poor facilities, I guess it is because we are in rural areas where development and finance are a problem. We do not have some form of support from well-wishers.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

A few respondents described that in addition to farming, they also receive some help from relatives to make ends meet. One respondent explicitly noted that this help is also to support education of children:

I used to sell vegetables just like everyone else, but here I'm getting assistance from my parents. The livestock that used to help me died and the ones remaining have complications. So my parents are supporting with my children's education and food.

(Household, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Challenges faced by orphans

Extended families don't value orphans' education

Several respondents noted that extended families may not treat orphans as well as their biological children, prioritizing education, school materials, even food and medicine for biological children over orphans under their care. One community leader noted that because of this attitude, extended families are less likely to pay for the orphan's education.

There are some parents who do not pay for their children even if they have the money or the means because they do not value education. Some parents do not pay because the girls are not their biological children and they think it's a waste of money.

(Community leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Similarly, another community leader noted,

I think that kids who are orphans have trouble accessing school. I think these have the biggest problem in accessing education. In most cases they will be kept by someone else and they will always have trouble in accessing school. Say if it's an uncle, and that uncle has no excitement about school, it means the child has a double burden, because it is bad enough that she is under a guardian, but if the guardian sees no value in school then it's even worse for the child.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Another respondent related the situation of one of her neighbors,

Ah, you see there is a girl I know. She is an orphan but she stays with her uncle. The uncle works but the girl does not have school shoes, she goes to school barefooted. I don't know the reason why he doesn't buy her shoes. To me, that shows that he thinks educating her is not important.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In this case, the respondent notes that the household isn't particularly poor as there is money to clothe the girl and send her to school, but the uncle simply doesn't choose to take care of her as she is an orphan.

Other respondents described how neglect and a lack of care from their extended families also affected orphan's motivation to attend school regularly and make an effort to succeed. Without someone checking up on their progress, ensuring that they are attending on time and properly equipped, these children tend to drop-out.

Orphans do go to school and they might have bursaries, but they lack other necessities for school like uniforms and stationary. Also no one follows up on them. The other problem with some bursaries is they do not come on time so they affect the day to day running of the school. Because of lacking these other things, children drop out even though their fees are paid up.

(Community leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

This neglect can also affect orphans in a more basic way, as a couple respondents noted that orphans may be denied medical care by their caregivers, as the caregiver won't want to spend money on the orphan in the same way as for their biological children.

Orphans are looked after by extended families. The problem is that the very caregiver has his/her own family and will not offer the same care. E.g. when the orphan breaks a leg to get maximum care or to go and get services at hospital might be a challenge. She might not have somebody to take care or pay for the services at the medical center.

(Community leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Extended families unable to afford cost of school

Neglect by extended families wasn't a universal narrative though, as other respondents noted that extended families often wish to send orphans under their care to school, but simply can't afford to. This was reported quite often in World Vision project areas as something that is very common across Zimbabwe and which significantly hampers orphans' ability to attend school.

The elderly who will be taking care of orphans because they cannot afford to send children to school.

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Another household in the same community described the situation similarly,

Yes, at times you will find that a child may be an orphan without a father or mother. She only lives with her grandmother and the grandmother maybe very old without any money to send her to school.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Times of scarcity or economic depression are also described as particularly difficult, as many children are left temporarily orphaned while their parents look for food or move elsewhere to look for work.

This area is prone to drought and I can say it is suitable for a game park not for cultivation. So hunger forces some children to stop coming to school. Children including girls are left in charge of the home while parents/caregivers go out to look for food. Most of these children are orphans staying with old grandparents. Some are staying with step parents while others have parents who went to South Africa because of the economic meltdown of 2008.”

(School official, Masvingo, Zimbabwe)

Difficulties affording the cost of school aren't limited to grandparents who take up care for orphaned grandchildren, as this community leader explains.

The older folk do not have a steady or any source of income in most cases. But again this situation is not limited to the old only. For example if I were to give you a close example, in my case, my husband's four sisters all died and all left their children in my care. They do not have any responsible fathers who help with their care and maintenance. Also my husband's young brother left his kids in our care when he died. So whilst we try our best we are so overwhelmed with responsibility and expenses to the extent that we are not moving forward in terms of acquiring items of value addition in life.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

In situations where the extended family is already receiving assistance from others to help them support themselves, respondents reported that households in this situation may also feel like asking for help paying for school fees would be ungrateful or a step too far, in terms of relying on other peoples' kindness.

Most people who have problems are orphans, you find that they might have lost their mother and father and are now staying with the grandmother. The grandmother is old and is unable to even do any work like sew baskets or make sweeping brooms to sell and send their grandchild to school with that money. The grandmother will also be thinking in such a way that, "I am being given food by someone else now for me to also ask that person to send my grandchild to school will be too much." So the grandchildren just end up staying at home.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Lack of qualified teachers or absenteeism

Temporary teachers

When discussing quality of teaching, the concern most often brought up by respondents was that of temporary teachers. This refers to untrained, temporary teachers which schools hire to fill gaps when there aren't enough qualified teachers available. Several respondents noted that this was a barrier to learning for the students citing lack of subject knowledge, pedagogy and inexperience as contributing factors to low quality of teaching.

The biggest challenge is most of the teachers at her school are temporary teachers so we just send her to that school because there is no option.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

A couple respondents reported that it is a common practice to hire poorly qualified temporary teachers in World Vision project areas; at some schools unqualified teachers representing the lion share of the teaching staff:

Only two teachers out sixteen were trained at this school. Fourteen teachers are untrained temporary teachers.

(School official, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Respondents noted that having many temporary teachers' leads to high turnover rates every term which leads to children not having enough teachers to cover all subjects and might be left without teacher for periods of time. Anecdotal reports also state that the teachers are not professional, not taking children's education seriously even abusing substances and engaging in sexual relations with students.

We do have a problem with teachers; most of them are untrained temporary teachers. These temporary teachers renew their contracts every term and this process takes a very long time such that some children spend more than a month without teachers. You find a school with 2 trained teacher out of thirty.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Furthermore, some respondents described how having many temporary teachers led to some subjects not being covered by the curriculum.

It should be such that we have qualified teachers for all subjects, and have a curriculum that is wide enough to cover all the subject areas possible so that we have a well rounded child coming out of [community].

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Many respondents describe the situation as a marked deterioration from previous years with has had significant impact on learning.

Looking at pass rates, the rates have gone down so badly in the last two years. When students leave this school for others we are often told that they need to go back to earlier grades because it seems they are not getting education commensurate with their grades.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

One of the reasons cited by respondents for the lack of qualified teachers was that few households have the money to send their children to college, making it difficult for people to qualify as teachers. This leaves the only recourse for schools to hire unqualified teachers.

Most parents do not have money to send their children to college, they only afford to send them up to O' or A' level. For such people the only option is to become temporary teachers as they cannot get any other form of employment.

(Community Leader, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Several respondents describe how quality in schools has drastically deteriorated in the past years, citing how teachers were not experienced or qualified and how students can't speak English fluently but after grade seven they can qualify to become a temporary teacher:

Children are going to school but the quality of education has deteriorated. In grade six children cannot speak English fluently but long back a grade seven pupil could become a teacher.

(Household, Mataberland North, Zimbabwe)

Absenteeism

Several respondents reported issues in terms of teacher absenteeism, where respondents reported that teachers may not show up for work, sometimes for weeks at a time. This was described as having an impact on learning, but it's unclear how common this issue is in World Vision project areas.

One of my grandchildren has been at school and has been saying that their teacher is away, it been three weeks now, so they are not learning.

(Household, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Multi-grade classes

Several respondents also reported that overcrowding is an issue, due to lack of teachers. In these cases, respondents noted that schools have multi-grade classes, where children in different grades are taught simultaneously by one teacher. It is however unclear if this is only due to lack of teachers; one school reported that it was due to low enrolment.

Of course this problem may be related to or stems from the fact that the enrolment at the school is rather low... As a result the school has few teachers and teachers end up having to combine two grades each sometimes. So you see, if the school had a larger enrolment, the ministry would deploy more teachers to this side and each grade would have its own teacher.

(Community leader, Mataberland South, Zimbabwe)

Project Brief – CfBT

This project brief details the barriers to girls education which were most often reported in CfBT project areas in Kenya. The most commonly reported barriers in CfBT project areas were poverty, early marriage and pregnancy. These barriers were particularly cited as affecting older girls, who cannot afford the cost of secondary school, and who can get pregnant and are seen as marriageable once they hit puberty. Respondents also often described violence as a barrier to education, including violence at school, domestic violence and sexual assault.

Frequently, respondents reported that schools have insufficient numbers of textbooks, that the quality of school buildings and classrooms is poor and that there aren't enough trained teachers, which hamper children's attendance and learning outcomes. Respondents also reported particular difficulties sending children to school in times of drought or flood, due to the attending poverty, or hazards which make the journey to school impossible or ill advised.

Less commonly but also significant, respondents reported negative community and household attitudes towards girls education, particularly among pastoralist households in Samburu. Migration and mobility, of nomadic households or displaced populations searching for work were also reported as affecting school enrolment and attendance.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Inability to afford cost of school

It was commonly stated that poverty and limited resources were main reasons for the inability to meet school cost such as fees, uniforms and learning materials which consequently was described as resulting in students dropping out of school, interrupting attendance and difficulties in learning. At times it was difficult for respondents to hypothesise over the reasons why other students were not attending school:

I would not know, maybe it is because of lack of school fees or it might be because of poverty level. Many people worry, if they take their children to school they will require shoes, uniforms, and books and they cannot afford them, so it becomes hard to think of taking them to school. Some parents even have up to three children but all of them do not go to school.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Even in public schools where education is free, some caregivers were not able to afford other associated school costs such as uniforms or the firewood that students were described as having to provide in order to receive lunch. Having free public schooling is thus not entirely accurate as there were several additional costs:

One teacher mentioned:

In public schools food is free, but we are given the grains that is the maize, the beans and the oil, but there is no firewood and there are no cooks and the government does not pay for this, so the children have to pay for the cooks and for the firewood. Like in our school, they are paying twenty shillings per week per child [...] if the parent wants to take the child to school and they cannot afford that money it will be a challenge.

(School Official, Nairobi, Kenya)

As one community leader explained: The only problem we have are maybe poor, the ones who have no money, to take the children to school for them:

It is a challenge, that is why we came up with the bursary [bursary is a government] fund for education given to needy children] but you know bursary is just a portion that you get, the rest you have to add in.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

It was also often described that even children who are enrolled at school, sometimes are sent back home for not being able to pay their fees. This can be a temporary disruption to attendance, or permanent.

Sometimes they go home and stay because of school fees and then return when they have the money.

(Household, Samburu, Kenya)

Another caregiver explained why this temporary disruption may lead to a permanent drop out by noting that students may lose interest in school:

If a family is not well off when the children go to school and they have not paid the fees, they will be sent back home to bring the money. So the child may even lose interest school because she is always sent back home because of money.

(Household, Kilifi Kenya)

Ability to attend secondary school

The feed associated with secondary school were described by many respondents as being higher than the primary school fees (Kenya has free primary education), and this was described as leading to poorer households not enrolling their children in secondary schools:

I think the main problem is poverty, so that even when they are through with their KCPE [Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education] there is no money. Things like fundraising and donations can be used to raise money to enable the girls go to secondary school.

(School official, Kilifi, Kenya)

At times the consequences were severe, a few respondents described how girls were caught in 'cycle of poverty'-narrative or 'poverty trap', where as a result of not affording secondary school, girls got prematurely pregnant and ended up in prostitution as a means to acquire money. This was described as leading to girls attracting HIV/AIDS, resulting in early death and leaving HIV/AIDS infected orphans in the hands of grandparents:

The parents are poor and cannot afford to take them to secondary school and so they get early pregnancy and end up in prostitution, trying to get money where they get HIV/Aids; then they die early and leave their infected children with their parents.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

This was also described in similar terms by another household, noting how orphans and other girls were ending up in prostitution as way of supporting their households.

For example, there was a case of a girl whose mother died and she was left in the care of her grandmother who sent her on a daily basis to go and beg for money from people in town with a target of ksh.300. That was when some men took advantage of her and slept with her and gave her a little money. At last she was arrested in a night operation and she was finally rescued. But many more girls are ending up on that route of prostitution to support their families.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Early marriage

A few respondents described how poverty specifically resulted in girls getting married early; at times this was described in terms of marriage being an economic support strategy for poor families:

Sometimes they take them, but only to class eight and they let them drop out to get married for either financial reasons, they do not have money for high school or just because they do not value education.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

In addition one respondent described when households were struggling to afford the school fees the girl child was more likely to be married early:

It's for the parents to struggle [to find money for fees], because if you don't, the child may get a husband and go get married early.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Forces girls to work

Less frequently mentioned was the impact of poverty on girls which leads them to drop out and find jobs to make ends meet:

Describing the situation of girls' education in his community, a community leader noted:

...due to poverty they [households] are not able to take them [girls] to school so you find most girls drop out of school at a very tender age and go looking for casual jobs like barmaids, house-helpers and others become prostitutes.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Poverty and hunger was described as driving children to spend their time scavenging at a garbage dump site in the Nairobi area, looking for anything that could be sold for money. A caregiver described the situation for poor children in an urban Nairobi community:

In this community the rate of poverty is very high, and some children here spend their time at [a local market place] dump site looking for things they can salvage and sell to make some money, and their parents encourage them since there is nothing to eat at home.

The caregiver noted that this had serious impacts on attendance:

Some will attend school one day in a week and then spend the other days looking for food at the dumping sites.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Leads parents to favour boys' education over girls'

A couple of respondents noted that poverty and limited resources were resulting in families prioritising boys' education over girls'. From an economic standpoint, respondents described households choosing boys over girls, as an internally rational choice, girls being noted as running higher risk of dropping out to marriage or early pregnancy:

Is it the girls or boys who drop out? The girls drop out mostly especially when the family can only afford fees for one-some will prefer to keep the boy in school with the fear that the girl might anyway drop out eventually, maybe she can get pregnant or choose to get married to support her family.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Food shortages and diet

Also commonly stated, was the impact that poverty has on girls' food intake (or food shortage), which directly affects the ability of students and girls to concentrate and learn in class.

Like food, because food is the main problem that makes them feel weak and unable to learn, sometimes they even worry about what they will eat in the evening. So if all their needs are available they will be able to concentrate and study well. Also assistance when it comes to school uniforms and shoes can reduce the problems further.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

To mention but a few, first of all the economic status of this area is a very big challenge.

How does that affect education?

We solely depend on agriculture, so if we have hostile climate, it becomes difficult to get food. And if there is no food, there is no learning since the children can't concentrate.

What do you mean by that?

Pupils can't learn on empty stomachs so if they miss the basic meals from home, it's very difficult for them to concentrate in class.

(School Official, Kilifi, Kenya)

In other cases, in availability of proper and adequate food was described as a reason why children and girls drop out of school:

Sometimes, because of poverty, the children come home after a long day and find that there is nothing to eat and that child loses interest in school; and instead drops out to go into the streets looking for money.

(Community Leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Poverty limits the choice of school

In few cases, poverty was mentioned as a hindrance to better schooling and learning. This was mostly expressed by caregivers who are concerned with the quality of education the girl child is receiving and if it were possible, the girl would be transferred to a better school or to a boarding school.

More money will help me give her better education in a school which has more facilities. This will help her to improve and get better grades in school.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Livelihoods

In these communities ability to afford education for girls was directly attributed to the family's livelihood. Households in most of these communities rely on farming to make ends meet, and therefore are subject to weather and other seasonal factors which might reduce their available resources and their ability to send their girls to school.

Yes, poverty, because unlike other regions in our country where one can depend on farming, here we cannot depend on farming because we receive very little rainfall, so most of the farm produce we get is not even enough for the basic family unit. So you find when a child goes to school, he/she will be expecting something for lunch but when she/he does not get food they get demoralized. Did it rain heavily here the way it has done in other places? Yes it rained but the rainfall was not sustained so crops germinated and died before maturity. So we remain with only cassava.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

In other cases, respondents noted that these problems are exacerbated during times of drought:

It is because of that poverty; because when there is drought we don't expect any farm produce. So children don't go to school, their fathers don't have any job, some even go up to class three then they drop out of school.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Pregnancy and marriage

Pregnancy

A number of respondents mentioned that unplanned pregnancies were a considerable hindrance to girl's education. Pregnant girls were noted by respondents as often not attending school entirely, this was often described as a result of embarrassment the girls and their families faced. For instance, one community leader mentioned that caregivers favoured funding the boy child's education over the girl child given the risk the girl child faces of becoming pregnant:

[T]he girls are carelessly impregnated so they cannot continue with school when pregnant. Most parents do not see the need to take the girl back to school after giving birth so that she can continue with her studies and so they decide to let her stay home now that she has given birth.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

When asked why girls were likely to remain home after giving birth, the community leader went on to mention that it was because of the embarrassment caused to the parents as well as a means by which to punish the girl child for her mistake:

It is because number one, the parent is a bit frustrated, embarrassed by the girl's bad behaviour or some people might blame the mother for not raising her daughter well, so the only way is to hide her at home or just let her get punished for her own sins.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

A few respondents provided first-hand accounts of how they were dealing with pregnant daughters. In one instance, a caregiver noted that her/his daughter was impregnated not while at school, but at home after having been sent home for not being able to pay the school fees. The daughter had since dropped out of school on account of embarrassment coupled with an inability to pay school fees:

She was attending school and she dropped out after becoming pregnant. She told me it's embarrassing to go to school when pregnant, so I asked her what she wanted me to do, she told me to let her leave school and after she delivers, she wants to go for a tailoring course. She did drop out because of school fees.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Another respondent described similar experiences with out-of-school girls – who were often out of school due to their inability to pay the school fees – stating they were at increased risk of becoming pregnant.

The parents are poor and cannot afford to take them to secondary school and so they get early pregnancy and end up in prostitution, trying to get money where they get HIV/Aids; then they die early and leave their infected children with their parents.

(Community Leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

While the two respondents above indicated that girls out of school are more prone to unplanned pregnancy, many other respondents noted that girls in school were also likely to become pregnant. For a few respondents, this meant a preference for schools to be separated by gender:

If it was my choice, I would separate them to be in different schools that is boys alone and girls alone. Because as we know, there is a stage at which boys and girls cannot control their emotions (adolescent stage). They start having boyfriends and girlfriends at primary level, which leads to early pregnancy in school, so to avoid these cases it is better to have them in separate schools.

(Community Leader, Samburu, Kenya)

Importantly, the community leader also noted that girls are disproportionately impacted by unplanned pregnancies, whereas boys often are less affected. As such, unplanned pregnancy was usually described as resulting in girl children no longer being able to attend school. However, there was mixed evidence about what was most effective in keeping girls from early pregnancy, some respondents noted that being out of school led to pregnancy, while other respondents felt that being enrolled in school increased the chance of pregnancy.

Social stigma associated with pregnancy

With regards to girls who become pregnant, often respondents noted that these girls dropped out of school while pregnant and did not return. This was attributed to social embarrassment and stigma attached to giving birth outside of marriage, which was felt to reflect negatively against both girls and their parents:

Mostly it is because the girls are carelessly impregnated so they cannot continue with school when pregnant. Most parents do not see the need to take the girl back to school after giving birth so that she can continue with her studies and so they decide to let her stay home now that she has given birth

And why is that?

It is because number one, the parent is a bit frustrated, embarrassed by the girl's bad behaviour or some people might blame the mother for not raising her daughter well, so the only way is to hide her at home or just let her get punished for her own sins.

(Community leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Social stigma and discrimination against girls who become pregnant was also described by girls themselves, in the form of gossip and social isolation:

They welcome her [the girl who became pregnant], but start talking behind her back... Yes they gossip her and no one wants to be her friend

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

In cases where the girl did not marry the father of the child, respondents described that the social stigma placed on her was much greater. In addition to dropping out of school, in some cases girls had to leave home as parents now viewed them as unsuitable for marriage (and the accompanying dowry) and therefore a financial burden.

Stigma from within the household

The social stigma attached to these girls appears to be as strong within households as from the community. Respondents noted that a girls' father or brother is likely to punish her or tell her to leave home as a result of falling pregnant. As noted by a community leader in Kilifi:

Community looks down upon her, the girls' mother may say she was not aware, but as I said earlier, if the girl has brothers, then the girl will be punished by the brothers. Like in this area the other day, a girl was beaten up by her brothers because she went to spend the night at a man's place yet she is a standard 7 pupil, we tried to follow up so that we can help the girl but we realized that the parents were not serious about the issue, they just took her to the hospital but did nothing about the brothers. They just took the girl to hospital but were not taking any action against the brothers.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Pregnancy sometimes results in early marriage

In some instances, unplanned pregnancy was described as resulting in early marriage. In the following example, the husband was the same age as the girl, and the two were forced to marry:

When the girl gets pregnant, that's the end of it...it's like it's your own problem you did it on your own and she is taken to the boy who is responsible for her pregnancy and both are forced to marry, but if you look at the boy who is supposed to be here husband, himself, they are age mates.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

One community leader noted that similar aged couples who were married faced a large number of challenges that impeded their and their families' well-being. These problems were cited as initially occurring when the parents of the girl were unable to afford school, which was described as resulting in her becoming pregnant. Subsequently, the girl and her partner were described as unable to provide for their child or children's basic needs. The husband was at times noted as leaving the family, with the girl mother and her children subsequently suffering.

Yes, girls should go to school but their parents are so poor they can't afford; especially after class eight there are very few who join form one in secondary schools, and they end up having the problem of early pregnancy at fourteen years. Then, the young parents get a lot of children who they are unable to provide for the basic needs; and sometimes the husband leaves the family, leaving the girl to suffer with the children. So you will find the children loitering around collecting scrap metals for sale and eventually they become street kids. They usually look for food at the dumping site and they don't go to school.

(Community Leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

It was not always stated that the girl and boy would marry, though. In these cases, the girl's pregnancy was cited as being a reason for not being able to receive a future dowry if subsequently married, which was described as negatively impact her standing in the family:

Most of these girls will have stopped going to school. Such a girl suffers a lot especially if the boy who is responsible for her pregnancy is not ready to take her in for marriage, she is solely blamed for this and if she has brothers, they may kick her out of their home since she is considered a disgrace for the whole family and the family now cannot marry her off and gain goats out of her dowry. So she may end up being homeless or attach herself to a benevolent family or relative from time to time. It is very very difficult for such a girl and her young child.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

In sum, in a few instances, pregnant girls were described as marrying the individuals who impregnated them. However, even if marriage did take place, the girl and her child were described as being at risk of falling into further poverty, whether or not she married the boy or man who impregnated her.

Inability to afford cost of school

It was frequently noted in CfbT's targeted communities that many households do send their children to schools. However, cost of schooling is reported to represent a challenge which affects girls' attendance. Respondents noted that although primary education is free, there is however other school related costs such as fees for Parent Teacher Associations, lunches, uniforms, activities and exams. These are similar findings to ones reported in the poverty barrier and its impact on the ability to meet school cost.

The problem is that even in the public schools, you will need to buy uniform and pay money for lunch so it is still a challenge to the poor.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Impact of late/non-payment

As discussed in the poverty barrier, attending secondary schools is reported as a challenge for girls within these communities.

They [the poor] only go for primary education, which is free, and after class eight they cannot afford to take their children to high school so they drop out.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Late payment of school fees is reported to disrupt the students' attendance to school and therefore, their learning. Moreover, it affects the teachers' salary as primary schools in Kenya are reported to have PTA supported teachers that are directly dependent on the fees that schools collect from parents.

These [PTA supported teachers] are the teachers that the school administration has sourced directly and are paid salaries by the school and not the government. Sometimes it becomes troublesome, because the parents know for sure at the end of every month they are supposed to pay something small to contribute to the schools monthly expenses, but they wait until the children are sent home. When a child is sent home, it takes two or three days before they come back and this interferes with learning and also the teachers don't get paid on time.

(School official, Kilifi, Kenya)

It was also reported that the inability to meet the schooling cost and requirements affects the ability of schools to buy teaching material or do development projects. This, as noted, hinders the ability to provide a good learning environment for children:

Then there are also the extra charges or fees for helping the school buy things or do development projects and when such parents can't remit the funds, it poses a challenge to the school. For example if they want desks, and they are told to contribute like 200 shillings for every parent so that they can buy desks and they don't bring, then the children will be forced to sit down on the floor.

(School official, Kilifi, Kenya)

However, there seems to be differences between regions, where at some schools, as reported, they don't charge extra fees from parents because they are not allowed to.

No, the government does not allow that because if they would have allowed, we might afford a few more learning materials e.g. pens. As for now, when a teacher needs to use a pen in class, we have to buy using our own money from our pockets.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Public vs. private

A few households noted that they opt for private schooling even though public schools are free. This, as described by respondents, is because private schools are less demanding in terms of additional requirements, such as uniforms and books.

Yes, I prefer private since there I can negotiate, as opposed to taking them to public schools; where they demand that the kids be fully equipped with things like uniform, books and other things, although they don't charge school fees.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Another caregiver in a different community also noted:

Public school is very expensive to join and they even demand that you buy all the requirements uniforms, books and desks upfront, which are very expensive. You see with the small private school they are very understanding; I haven't even bought uniform, she is using what her older sister used to use in another school.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

One respondent noted that although public schools are free, they have limited space and this affects children who cannot pay for private schools and miss their registration in the public schools. These children as reported by the community leader end up dropping out of school completely:

If they miss a place in public school, some fail to take the child to a private school because they charge more, and then the child becomes a drop out.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Violence and sexual assault

Within the project area, violence was primarily conceptualised in terms of bullying and fighting between school children, sexual assault, political unrest and domestic violence.

Bullying and students fighting

Physical and verbal altercations between students were relatively common in the project area. This involved students from the same school fighting each other as well as students from different schools fighting on occasion, as noted by a household from Kilifi, Kenya:

There was this time when some children were coming home from school, some were from [school] while others were from [school]. So when they collided on the road, these ones were expecting the other group to let them pass on the way of which they didn't, so they collided and started fighting. They didn't respect each other.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

The respondent went on to note that fighting between children from the same school also happens, and served to discourage the girl child from attending school:

It affects her because sometimes it makes her not feel like going to school.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Nonetheless, the caregiver remained determined to send the child to school. This stance was taken by many parents who mentioned fighting and bullying as an issue faced by their children, as depicted from the following quote from a caregiver in Samburu, Kenya:

There are a few incidences of children misunderstanding each other or fighting about minor things. That's normal where many children are staying at the same place but it's not anything alarming/serious case.

(Household, Samburu, Kenya)

Sexual assault

Sexual assault was identified as one of the most major concerns for parents, school staff members, and community leaders in the CfBT project areas. In most instances, sexual assault was described as relating to rape, although instances of other unwanted sexual contact were also described which may be categorised as sexual assault. The individuals perpetrating sexual assault primarily consisted of strangers and community members, although school staff members and family members were also mentioned, albeit to a lesser extent. Assault happened on the way to school, in the nearby vicinity of the school, at the school, and in the home. Sexual assault was mentioned as impacting attendance and, to a lesser extent, learning.

Of note is that one respondent in Kilifi mentioned that sexual assault likely remained underreported, especially for poor families. When discussing rape, the respondent mentioned that:

We know very well that such things are done to you, but since you are poor nothing will be done about it, so you opt to keep quiet; even the girls who might be victims just keep it to themselves... Because even if you report, the girl and the mother will be blamed, some might say the girl is not disciplined while others might say the mother is not teaching her well.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Many of the sexual assault references were indicated to have been perpetrated by strangers. The type of sexual assault included sexual harassment, unwanted physical contact, and rape, often on the way to or from school or in the nearby vicinity of the school. These instances of sexual assault often led parents to be fearful of sending their children to school, which inhibited school attendance. The sexual assault usually involved girl students, though instances of boy students being assaulted were also mentioned.

For instance, speaking about a girl in the village, one caregiver from Nairobi mentioned that a girl was touched on her breasts by a strange man and she insulted the man and ran away. Another caregiver from Nairobi mentioned, when children are going to school:

There are some rare cases of sodomy, but only in some areas. Also, cases of sexual abuse for young girls which we report, and the law takes effect.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

A school teacher in Nairobi provided a recent example of the impact of sexual assault, indicating that, the Sunday prior to the interview:

We found a girl behind the school having been raped and she was in a coma a situation; like that may scare parents and make them not take the girls to school.

(School official, Nairobi, Kenya)

Community members were also frequently indicated as sexually assaulting girl students and, to a lesser extent, boy students. In some instances, the community members were known, while in others, unidentified individuals would engage in sexual assault with the students in the confines of the local community.

For example, a caregiver in Nairobi mentioned that:

There is a neighbour's daughter who was raped just behind this block. There was a house that was vacant and in bad condition, so they just lured her inside and raped her and then ran away – the girl was about four years and she didn't even know what had happened to her.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Sexual assault by community members or within the community was also found to impact student learning as well as attendance. A school teacher in the Nairobi region mentioned one such case where:

A girl in this school was being abused sexually by a man from just within the community. The parents tried to follow up the case but it was said there was no evidence, the girl had to be moved to the grandmother's place.

(School official, Nairobi, Kenya)

When asked how this impacts the education of children, the school teacher went on to say that:

You will see they are dropping both in their grades and eventually out of school, either due to early pregnancy or to join the prostitution business.

(School official, Nairobi, Kenya)

Sexual assault in the household is also seen as a hindrance to learning in school. In one particular instance, a community leader in Nairobi indicated that albino children are especially at risk of being violated sexually:

Commonly by their fathers, neighbours, and uncles.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

When asked how if this affects these girls' education, the community leader mentioned that:

If you are molested or sexually abused when you go to school, you cannot understand anything because you think about what happened last night and if it will happen again today. So most of these girls become depressed and isolate themselves.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Sexual assault at school

Sexual assault by school staff members, especially teachers, was also mentioned by interviewees. Such assault usually impacted girl students, but boy students were also affected.

To this end, when asked how children are bullied or inappropriately treated on the way to or from school, one community leader in Nairobi mentioned that:

Yes, even the teachers bully the children including the boys.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

When asked to describe the type of bullying that was occurring, the interviewee indicated that:

Sometimes [children] are sexually molested and they even try to rape them; but most of them its rape cases, mostly girls of less than five years.

The community leader went on to mention that, while at school:

Mostly teachers sodomize the young boys, but between the children it's rare they get along well. When this happens we arrest the teachers and take them to court.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Political unrest or conflict

Violence following political events – especially elections – was another factor that was described as preventing children from learning and attending school. For the most part, respondents indicated that the most recent cycle of elections was less violent than previous elections, especially in comparison to 2007 and 2008. Even so, some students did not attend school following the last election cycle, with respondents indicating fears of post-election violence as the primary reason for not attending.

For instance, a community leader interviewed in Nairobi pointed out that, though the recent elections were peaceful

The 2007 post-election violence [...] hindered the kids from going to school.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

A caregiver in Nairobi mentioned a similar point for the most recent election, stating that:

children stayed home for two days as they waited for the violence to stop, then they went back to school.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

While mentioned less frequently, political unrest was also indicated as a reason for children being unable to focus on their studies. A school staff member in Nairobi summarised this point well by noting that children were traumatised by previous election violence and chaos:

There were some children who were coming from areas which had been affected by chaos and most of them were traumatized; and we had to do a lot of counselling before they stabilized, when they are traumatized they cannot learn or concentrate.

(School official Nairobi, Kenya)

Domestic violence

A school official and a community leader mentioned that domestic violence was occasionally a problem that affected the girl child's education. One school official from Nairobi, Kenya noted severe impacts on learning in relation domestic violence:

Yes we have seen parents' conflicts, which really affect the children. You will know when the parents have fought at home, the child will be reserved, will not participate. The child who used to be very clever will start dropping in performance, so it really affects.

(School official Nairobi, Kenya)

Additionally, a few respondents noted that alcoholism sometimes plays a role in domestic violence incidents. A community leader from Kilifi, Kenya noted as much when asked what the causes of quarrels within the households were:

It happens because may be the husband is a drunk, and the wife wants her children to be educated when she is told of what is required by the teacher and then she explains to the husband that the teacher wants this and that, and you find the husband is drunk and is unable to meet those demands, that's where such conflicts arise in the house.

(Community leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Lack of teaching resources

Lack of textbooks

Several respondents reported on the issue of lack of textbooks and other teaching aids at schools. The practice of textbook-sharing among students was often described as particularly common:

Five textbooks, which are not enough, sometimes we buy 1 book per subject for all classes. We cannot even be able to afford footballs and other playing materials needed during the games.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Although many respondents cited the need for more textbooks and described the lack of textbooks as a major issue, rarely did they elaborate on what impact the lack of textbooks had on learning. When explicitly stated it was described in terms of having access to textbooks would result in student improvement or in increased motivation to attend school.

They don't have enough books. If they could get more textbooks it would help them improve.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

In several cases the lack of textbook and other teaching aides is described as being caused by lack of funding by the government. One teacher described the allocation of money for each student as being too small resulting in consumables such as pens, rubbers and other stationery running out. This, as noted, was attributed to the Kenyan national policy of free primary education which was described as under-funded:

This is because the government said they shall provide free education, and when it comes to allocation of money. Like now, our school here we have about 75 children and you can imagine if a child is allocated 100kshs and the child needs about 5 textbooks, 2 complimentary books (that's story books for reading), we need a manila paper and other teaching aids like dusters and brooms. This money is not enough.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

The same respondent described this as resulting in the school only being able to buy exercise books for their students due to textbooks being too expensive.

Uniforms

A few respondents cited uniforms as a factor in helping and encouraging girls to go to school. In the majority of these cases households were the ones stating that uniforms were an issue:

If she could get new books and new uniform, she would love going to school.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

In one case a respondent stated that frequently poor households had an especially difficult time in affording school uniforms. It was however not stated if this is a cause for not attending school:

The common challenges are for example some children who come from poor families are not able to afford school uniform because their parents don't have jobs or a source of income.

(Community leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Only one example of uniforms being a direct barrier for girls attending school was mentioned by respondents in the CfBT project area:

Yes there are some, you can see some selling vegetables up to here and if you ask you find that they don't go to school, because they don't have school uniforms, or they have been chased from school because of school fees or she is an orphan she cannot support herself.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Issues with quality of school facilities

Challenges with quality of facilities and access to classrooms

The most commonly identified issue among CfBT target area respondents in relation to school facilities was the lack of classroom capacity. This manifested itself in several different ways; students were described as being sent home when it rained as a result of not having enough classrooms; classrooms were overcrowded with reduced learning outcomes with multigrade classes where students from different grade levels were placed together was cited as being a common practice. In these cases, respondents often described how the lack of classrooms impacted negatively on the learning environment:

The classrooms are not enough, since sometimes you will find the pupils from different classes sharing the same classrooms; some pupils facing this way and other the opposite direction.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

In one case a community leader noted how as a result of lack of school classrooms, students were forced to transfer to bigger schools that could accommodate more grades:

Classrooms is one of the major problems, we do not have enough classrooms in this school. When a child reaches class four or five, they are transferred to other schools which are bigger and can handle more children.

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

At times it was not always clear if it was classrooms or the amount of teachers that was the limiting factor for reasonable classroom sizes, in many cases schools being described as both lacking teachers and classrooms.

A common explanation to the problems with overcrowded classrooms and lack of desks and such was that of the free education policy in Kenya resulting in 'access shocks' with respondent describing schools being overwhelmed by students.

The government had promised free education, but there isn't enough space or facilities because of large number of children, and so they all don't get these things. They have to be squeezed into a class.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Lack of desks

Another often described issue by respondents is that of lack of desks and seating in schools. Commonly students were described to having no other option than to sit on the floor during class, making it difficult to concentrate and dirtying/ruining their clothes.

Their clothes may tear, because maybe they are sitting on a log or on a rough ground, they are also not comfortable and this affects their concentration.

(Community leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Lack of qualified teachers

Very frequently reported by respondents is the issue of high student/teacher ratios, which appears to have a major impact on learning. This barrier is described to function in many different ways such as; follow up on weaker students who are neglected, keeping attendance becomes difficult; teachers being forced to teach subjects they

are not knowledgeable in; or subjects not being covered at all (anecdotal examples include mathematics and Kiswahili). The overcrowded classes also put pressure on teachers and contribute to difficult work environment:

You find that a class has seventy five to hundred pupils with one teacher.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Public primary schools are especially vulnerable due to free primary education which results in high teacher/student ratios:

Large enrolment because of the government's free primary education programme is another challenge.

(School official, Kilifi, Kenya)

Regional: Additionally, there used to be a teacher exchange between private and public teachers, were government certified would come and share learning, ideas and experiences.

We have private schools and we had the government helping us with public teachers during the holidays, and the private teachers used to learn a lot from the qualified government teachers, but it has stopped and I don't know why.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Only one respondent mentioned that teacher/student ratios having a direct effect on attendance. Due to it being difficult to keep note of which students attend class, some students, reportedly skip school during the day, keeping up appearances by handing in homework.

So the child may leave home in uniform and on the way they change clothes and go off to do other things, in the evening all they need to know is whether the teacher gave out homework and they do the homework and tomorrow they hand in their book yet they were not in class the previous day.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Households perceive lack of teaching quality

Often, respondents within the project targeted communities noted that the teaching quality at school is poor. To describe why they perceive the quality of teaching is bad, one caregiver noted the performance of the children as an indicator:

I just know education is good if my kids are performing well, so when I look at their performance I don't think their school is the best.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

One respondent described educational quality in terms of the child showing maturity and being able to take responsibility for studies and housework, with more emphasis on life skills rather than educational outcomes such as literacy and numeracy.

If they are able to show some maturity in everything they do, when it comes to study or housework, then I am sure that they are being taught important things.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

In several cases teachers were described in generic terms as being unmotivated or not being serious about their job.

I mean the drive of our teachers when it comes to education is wanting. Some of them have this don't care attitude. They are not as passionate as they used to be especially in the public schools.

(Community leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

On a related note, a couple of respondents discussed how the relatively common practice of hiring unqualified teachers due to teacher shortage was impacting the teaching quality. Stating that the short term approach of hiring unqualified contract teachers resulted in significant negative learning outcomes. Respondents stating, in some cases, that the students were explicitly being misinformed by the unqualified teachers.

Most of the teachers are not qualified and are misleading the children.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Few report the issue of untrained teachers as a significant issue but in the individual context it can have a large impact on learning.

They perform well, but the problem is that there are few teachers. It even forced us as parents to hire untrained teachers who we pay as parents.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

In the few cases, the professional development practices for teachers were universally cited as not being especially effective or frequent.

About trainings there is a SEMASE (Science and Mathematics) training which was held sometimes back but it was not very fruitful because it is only done once a year. Seminars for teachers are not very common in this area.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Often other circumstances were mentioned as affecting teaching quality, class room sizes, facilities.

Quality in relation to teaching methods, curriculum and pedagogy

Public schools were described by some households as being comparatively less competitive and having poorer standards than private schools. One respondent gave a more detailed account of why public schools were lacking in teaching quality citing 'access shock' that was caused by Kenya's free primary education policy:

Before I transferred her I decided she should take exams from public school, and comparing the exam in public school to that of the private school, it was easier than the one from the private school so I decided it is not challenging enough... Public school is over populated because of the free primary education children are too many in one class.

(Household, Nairobi Kenya)

Environmental disruptions

Respondents in CfBT project areas commonly reported environmental disruptions and seasonal disturbances in terms of both flooding and drought which make it more difficult for families to support themselves, result in migrations in search of water, damage homes or schools and/or create health concerns in terms of water and sewage mixing together. Many of these issues also appeared to be quite geographically specific.

Several respondents across the regions being targeted by CfBT discussed the impact of environmental disruptions on their ability to support themselves and their families. One respondent described the difficulties they face:

Interviewer (i): Do you face natural disasters like floods, drought in this area?

Respondent (r): Yes, sometimes

(i): Mostly what happens?

(r): It's the drought

(i): Then what do you do when that happens? What actions do you take?

(r): We pray and wait for God to bring back rain

(i): So when there is a drought, what kind of problems do you face?

(r): Famine and frustrations on keeping the children fed as well as the rest of the family. It is difficult.

(i): So during the famine period, how do you survive?

(r): It's usually a difficult time we are forced to buy food for consumption and it is very expensive and some people in the neighbourhood are poor with limited resources.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

In Samburu, a respondent described the situation similarly:

There are times when we have drought, where living becomes very hard due to lack of water and food, this is very common for everyone who normally depends on livestock and its products, during those times we experience water shortages and getting food and money for my family becomes very hard.

(Household, Samburu, Kenya)

In Samburu, respondents also frequently noted the connection between droughts and seasonal migrations:

We normally migrate to places that have better pasture and enough water and when it's a rainy season we migrate back here again.

(Household, Samburu, Kenya)

In urban areas, flooding was reported by several respondents to cause health hazards in terms of water and sewage mixing and flooding into houses and schools:

Water enters in the houses and usually it is a mixture of water and the sewage, since the drainage and sewerage systems are very poor or non-existent.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

In Kilifi, one respondent described the damage caused by rains on their homes in this way:

Yes I have a lot fear because whenever it rains I have to stay awake all night, as you can see the conditions of these houses. Houses fall down or leak all over; we end up surviving on top of beds... We just stay on top of our beds till the rain and flooding is over, because there is nothing much we can do, and since the house is made of mud, we just stand in a group and wait till the rain is over. But sometimes we have to go seek refuge from relatives in other areas till the rain stops and we can rebuild our homes.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

Effects of environmental disruptions on school

Given the severity and commonality of the environmental challenges described, it can be reasonably expected that they affect the ability of children across project areas to attend school. However, only one respondent made this linkage explicit, noting that in Nairobi seasonal flooding and rains disrupt school, forcing teachers to stop classes until the flood waters recede and creating a health hazard for students:

The only problem here is flooding; when it rains, it's very bad. If it happened to rain now, you wouldn't make it out of this house because of the flooding. The sewerage breaks and filth floods come into the doorstep of the school, and the teachers are forced to escort the pupils home.

(Household, Nairobi, Kenya)

Low community support for girls' education

Lack of awareness about importance of education

One of the most frequently mentioned challenge in these CfBT target areas to enrol girls in schools was the general perception that education was not important and not useful:

Most of our parents don't [value education], which is one of the major obstacles. It is hard to expect that parents who never attended school can seriously advise a child to focus on education. Those children who attend school sometimes just drop out and never come back to school.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Moreover, a few respondents described how peer and social pressure also pushed parents and children themselves to denounce education and drop out from school. Another school staff member from the same community also noted:

Most children within this area are not schooling and are at home discouraging those who are schooling. The number of children who are not attending school is bigger than those who are here at school. So those who are here are discouraged because some of their age mates are not attending schools and seem to be enjoying life outside ... The parents here are very problematic; someone

might have four children and opt to bring only one to school, insisting that the rest are busy with the livestock at home. It's only a few parents who clearly understand the importance of education.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Pastoralist households

Rural pastoralists in the northern parts of Kenya were specifically identified by many respondents as a group that didn't enrol their children, particularly girls, in school. This was described as being a result of their pastoralist lifestyle, households often having to migrate in search of pastures for their livestock to graze making it difficult for continuous attendance. In addition, several respondents described negative attitudes towards girls' education among the pastoralists, at times perceiving education as an obstacle to marriage. This will however be discussed further under the heading 'Negative attitudes towards girl's education'.

Yes, there are some girls left in the village because they are busy grazing livestock, it is very important to educate them too, but the parents see the animals (livestock) as the most important thing. It's hard for the parents to send all their children to school, because they entirely rely on livestock, so the solution is to ask them to mix the ratio of boys and girls to suppress the ignorance. Some household can enrol all, but it's hard to convince some other household to take two children out of about six children.

(School Official, Samburu, Kenya)

Many respondents described how there was low community support for girl's education among the pastoralist communities:

In the areas close to a town or shopping centres, people are better in terms of educating their children. But those migrating with livestock do not see the importance of educating children, especially girls

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

In a few cases, respondents described how pastoralist's survival and culture were deeply embedded with and dependent on animal husbandry, respondents noting how it took priority over education. Having girl's that can be married was also indicated as an asset in the sense of future dowries, which was noted as a reason for pastoralists not seeing value in keeping girls in school:

Those in the rural areas are not taking their children to school totally because they say animals are more important than education, that is the problem [...] The rural people depend on their animals and would rather have the boys herd the animals all day and marry off their daughters as early as possible to get more animals and increase what they call wealth (i.e. more animals)

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

The people who migrate with livestock are the ones who rarely take their girl's child to school [...] Because of their culture, they believe that having a girl child is equal to having more cows because when they get educated they might not get married, and hence no dowry will be paid to the parents. So they opt to bring them up in the bush and prepare them for marriage.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Some respondents referred to groups of people who practice specific cultural or traditional practices in their communities or locations, and noted that the lifestyle and cultural practices of certain groups have not changed in a way to embrace education. One community that was specifically named from two respondents is the Luhya community, another respondent also referred to the Samburu tribe. More broadly, some respondents indicated that those (like the mentioned Samburu tribe) who practice the beading tradition (or booking the girl at a very young age for marriage) generally perceive education as irrelevant to both girls and boys:

Mostly the Luhya community prefers to take odd jobs like house helps and security guards, and so they encourage their children to do the same instead of furthering education.

(School staff, Nairobi, Kenya)

These are the illiterate ones who still hold onto the culture and the beading traditions; they want things to be the way they were and have not embraced change.

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

There is the practice of beading of girls by a suitor that is the warriors when the girls are still very young. We try as much as we can to stop these cultural practices so that the girls are enrolled in school in larger numbers. These have changed the rate of enrolment because initially, Samburus didn't like to educate girls. So as we go by things are changing slowly and many girls have been enrolled as a result.

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

Concern that educating girls is a lost investment

Many respondents described how there were several groups in CfBT project areas that did not send their girls to school and perceived girls' education as not being necessary or at times even negative, because after marriage these girls will become part of another household, and therefore that the investment made in her education would be lost, benefiting another family. This was especially frequent in households that were described as perceiving girls' primary function as to get married and take care of the household. This belief was described as common among many, mostly rural, households in project areas:

They think a girl should stay at home and do domestic work and then get married; others think it is not necessary, because after educating her she might drop off due to pregnancy or early marriage, so they see it as a waste of money.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

A few have explained that marriage for girls means that the parents will not benefit from their girls' education, and therefore they are not willing to invest in their education:

The parent might think that he will educate her and she will end up married elsewhere and the parent will not benefit in anything

(School official, Kilifi, Kenya)

Are there people against girl education?

Yes.

Like, which type of people?

The Luhya, they say the girl will be married and therefore there is no reason for educating her as it will be a lost investment.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Others explained that cultural practices and norms still dominate the lifestyle and attitude of some groups within the society, these perceive marriage as a priority, and not education:

I would prefer if my daughter got married after completing school, but Samburu culture doesn't care about completing education when it comes to girls, so she can be married at any time as far as the age allows and a good suitor is found.

(Household, Samburu, Kenya)

In other cases, respondents indicated that families rely on girl's dowries when they get married as a form of income, providing an incentive to marry their daughters early. This point was illustrated by a Community leader for the Samburu region:

The rural people depend on their animals and would rather have the boys herd the animals all day and marry off their daughters as early as possible to get more animals and increase what they call wealth [i.e. more animals].

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

In addition, respondents noted a rationale used by households for not sending girls to school was that the possible advantage of girl's education would not benefit the girl's original family, but the in-law family:

They say if the girl is educated, they as her parents won't get any benefits from her... They feel like they will run at a loss because, they educate her; then she gets a job and gets married. She will go

and help the other family that she will have been married to and so her own family will consider that they have lost their child.

(Household, Kilifi, Kenya)

In economic terms households were described in several cases as perceiving small returns on investment in girls' education or as a respondent noted:

There are some who think it's a waste of money and prefer to have the girl stay at home and support the mother with the daily chores but this is changing with time.

(School Official, Kilifi, Kenya)

As mentioned above, respondents stated that some believe that girls' role is confined to the household doing home chores before marriage. One community leader explicitly described the perception of these members of his community who do not send their daughters to school:

I would say the illiterate who probably see the girl as good only for housework and getting them married off.

(Community Leader, Kilifi, Kenya)

Similarly, another respondent explicitly stated that school is only seen as irrelevant for girls and not for boys. He noted that boys' education is seen as worthwhile as boys do not move to new families when they get married, so the value of that investment remains within the household:

They see it as a loss to educate the girls for they will be married in future. But for a boy, even if they get married, they are still belong to that family and will be fruitful (productive) to the family.

(School Official, Samburu, Kenya)

Household mobility and migration

Households that move frequently in search of work

Several respondents in CfBT project areas noted the difficulties children from households that move around frequently face, in terms of being able to regularly attend school and remain enrolled.

In most cases, respondents noted that households are re-locating in search of work and employment. While the reasons for relocation may vary, children who are moved mid-school year are reported to face similar barriers in terms of transferring schools and re-enrolling:

Maybe the refugees who move from place to place, they come to school but when they relocate to another place they leave school.

(School official, Nairobi, Kenya)

In some cases, respondents also noted how these types of movements will sometimes leave children temporarily orphaned, or living with extended family who aren't able to support their education:

Sometimes it becomes a problem because the girl maybe living with her grandmother because the mother is searching for jobs here and there and the girl may be living both with her mother and grandmother, and these movements may sometimes interrupt her education.

(School official, Kilifi, Kenya)

Landless poor

In other cases, respondents noted that the landless poor, people who don't own land and instead rent their houses, are more unstable and move more frequently:

Mostly the tenants who have just rented their houses because they are financially unstable and they keep moving from place to place; and transferring the children from school to school becomes a problem because intakes are usually only at the beginning of the year. So when they move at other times the child might miss school for some time before re-enrolling.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Nomads and pastoralists

Households that make a living as nomads or pastoralists were also described as moving frequently, causing disruptions to their children's education. This was reported most often by respondents from Samburu.

Mostly it is the cattle herders, because they move from place to place and sometimes are very far away from public services.

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

Similarly:

Not at all, access to education is the same for everyone here, except maybe if the villagers migrate far away from the school voluntarily in search of pastures.

(Community leader, Samburu, Kenya)

Internally-displaced persons

One respondent from Nairobi indicated that some of the internally-displaced persons (IDPs) from the 2007 post-election violence remain in their community, and that they still face challenges caused by their displacement, including that their children still haven't been integrated into the school system.

We have internally displaced persons, who came all the way from Molo (in Rift Valley Province) after the 2007 post-election violence, and they were not used to the kind of life they are living now and whenever there is food I call them. Their children and the orphans mostly don't go to school unless we the social workers intervene and find them a place in the public schools.

(Community leader, Nairobi, Kenya)

Assistance from school

One respondent noted that a school in their area tries to accommodate the needs of families that migrate frequently by having a dormitory, where children can stay even if their families move away, allowing them to remain in school. The respondent also notes that girls who stay in the dormitory are able to take extra classes at night, which helps their learning:

Yes, we have girl's dormitory in school to help those whose families are mobile, the cattle herders and even for those that have homes around here we still encourage them to board, as this will make them focus more on education and learn more in school.

To make them learn more in school is there any help for them?

Yes, those girls who are in boarding attend evening classes making it easier for them to revise and learn more.

(School official, Samburu, Kenya)

Counter-narratives and coping strategies

Outreach efforts towards parents

In some cases, respondents reported initiatives or assistance currently in place to help girls attend school. The most common cited method of helping girls was through outreach programmes that encourage parents to bring girls to school:

Yes, in the class meetings we encourage parents to bring girls to school and because of those meetings, we have seen the enrolment of girls going up.

(School official, Nairobi Kenya)

Teacher outreach towards girls

The teacher outreach towards girls was reported in different ways. At some schools teacher take the opportunity to counsel girls on issues of sexual health:

We also had the issue of girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy; this is now a thing of the past, we advise them to keep away from the boys and we have one hundred and fourteen girls doing their KCPE this year which is the same number that started class one.

(School Official, Nairobi, Kenya)

While other schools focus on the importance of education:

We do send people to speak to them and also we usually talk to them during the culture week when many of them are around and emphasize to them on the importance of education.

(School official, Kilifi Kenya)

Sanitary towel program

Sanitary pads were mentioned as a possible barrier and some schools offer this to their students through the support of both governmental and non-profit donors:

The only thing that gives us problems is the monthly periods that the girls experience because buying the sanitary pads is a bit expensive for them. So what we do we try and get donors, [...] and the girls feel free to come for some when they have a need, so periods are no longer an issue to keep them from coming to school.

(School official, Nairobi, Kenya)

Project Brief – Relief International

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in Relief International project areas in Somalia. The most frequently mentioned barrier to girls' education in this project's targeted community was poverty. This, as will be discussed, functions in many different ways affecting mainly their attendance but also their learning. Following poverty, challenges to girls' education due to incidents of violence, harassment and insecurities were reported. These reports ranged from large scale armed conflict and violence to corporal punishment and feelings of insecurities resulting from the instability of the region. Thirdly, respondents described challenges in providing teaching and learning resources and material which mainly affected negatively the quality of teaching provided and the learning of the students. Also frequently mentioned was the issue of house duties that appear to affect mainly girls and their education. In this context, respondents often expressed their support to girls' education, but regarded the support of girls at home as vital which in some cases led to the sacrifice of their education. This situation was exacerbated by poverty and the need for mothers to join the working force and leave their homes and younger children behind.

Other less frequently mentioned barriers to attendance and learning were mainly related to infrastructure, social services, and availability of qualified teachers, government support, facilities and toilets. The issue of pregnancy and marriage, although not frequently referred to as barriers to education, appear to be common in some targeted communities, with girls' marriage taking place at the age of 15 to 18 years old.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Poverty was the most frequently mentioned barrier in Relief International's targeted communities in Somalia. Poverty, which appeared to affect both girls and boys, mainly affected their ability to go to school but also their learning. Respondents in the targeted communities noted that poverty functioned in multiple ways, primarily; it affected the household's ability to meet children's cost of school and pay the fees; it also affected the ability to meet the food needs of members of the household, as well as affording learning and teaching material, and finally, it appeared to push girls to work and do housework.

While children of poor households seemed to be generally affected, some children and girls appear to be more marginalised and affected than others. These are: refugee girls or internally displaced girls; girls with many school-aged siblings; and girls belonging to families that own livestock:

Challenges in meeting school fees

Primarily, respondents in this project's targeted communities noted that poverty hinders the ability of caregivers to pay for their children's school fees. While school fees appeared as a challenge and a struggle for most households, many have stressed that it is the main reason why some children are not enrolled in school or do not attend school regularly. One caregiver noted that his/her daughter is forced out of school when she is unable to pay school fees:

My girl wishes to have school fees paid on time, which doesn't happen, as she would like. She always feels intimidated whenever the teacher asks her to stand up and get out of class due to my failure to pay fees on time.

(Household, Banadir, Somalia)

In highlighting the severity of the consequences on the whole school and the provision of education, one school official noted that poverty and the inability to meet school fees results in closing the school temporarily. This as noted is because the school running cost is covered mainly by the students' fees. Therefore, the inability to cover the cost and the temporary closing of the school results in a disruption in the education process:

The school is sometimes closed because students cannot pay the fees at the end of the month and there is nothing to run the school with financially and the teachers want to be paid so you are forced to shut the school.

(School official, Banadir, Somalia)

The link between poverty and quality of education was often noted. This was repeatedly noted when caregivers expressed that if they had more money, they would enrol their children in better quality schools where the learning of their children would improve. A community leader has clearly made the difference between the rich and the poor, where children of the poor would receive bad quality education, and children of the rich would receive good quality education:

The expensive and good schools are for the rich people while the poor people goes to the lower quality schools with low school fees.

(Community leader, Banadir, Somalia)

While affording school fees was most frequently described as the main challenge to enrol or maintain children in schools, it was noted by at least one respondent that primary education schools are for free and even provide meals. However, it was not clear whether this was a temporary initiative or a permanent effort. As this school official noted:

An important suggestion would be connecting the primary schools to the secondary schools. The primary schools are free and have got feeding. So these things encourage the girls to study the school.

(School official, Hargeisa, Somaliland)

Challenges in meetings household food needs

The second most frequently mentioned challenge that households face due to poverty is the ability to meet household members' food needs. While this was primarily expressed as a worry and struggle to survive, in some cases poverty was an extreme, forcing parents to choose between food or school fees. As one caregiver noted:

I don't have enough income for school expenses and food expense; sometimes I can't pay for both school and the household food.

(Household, Banadir, Somalia)

Others have also expressed extreme poverty where food needs are not met. As a caregiver noted:

We are struggling getting food; it happens that we sleep at night without eating.

(Household, Banadir, Somalia)

In describing how poverty and the inability to fulfil food needs, one school official noted that some students come to school hungry. While the school official did not indicate the impact of hunger on the learning ability of children, it can be assumed that hunger affects negatively the children's ability to learn.

Some cannot also afford the uniforms and some others don't have what to eat and come to school hungry so they needed to help in these areas.

(School official, Garowe, Putland)

Challenges in affording other school cost

Thirdly, respondents noted that poverty hinders caregivers' ability to afford school material such as books, stationery and uniform for school children. While this was generally described as a barrier to education, some respondents specifically noted that the inability to afford these represent a challenge for learning. As a school official noted:

There are girls in difficult learning situation like those from poor families and can't afford the education materials like books, school uniforms.

(School official, Garowe, Putland)

This will be further discussed in a separate barrier.

Poverty forcing girls to stay home or work

A few respondents noted that poverty and the limited resources pushes girls to stay home to help in housework or find jobs in order to support the family. In describing the situation of poor girls that have to drop out of school to contribute and support the family's livelihoods, one school official noted:

Some girls are working as housemaids to earn family bread

(School official, Banadir, Somalia)

A female caregiver also noted that her girl is forced to stay home take care of younger children and undertake home duties because she has to leave the house and children behind to earn an income and support the family. She noted:

My girl doesn't go to school now...I as a mother decided for her studies to discontinue, just because I had no any other option. We as a family met difficulties after their father become jobless. I realised that my family couldn't depend on my husband in terms of money making... Whilst working hard with this small-scale business to get family daily meals, I lost motherhood and care of the children and house management, which is an important role for every mother. Unfortunately, to cover that gap for other children and housework my daughter shall lose her school. That is why I decided this painful decision, it's a necessary sacrifice for the entire family. She has to look after children, arrange and cook meals, feed younger sisters and brothers, clean house and utensils. She also keeps almost all the housework until I'm coming back after I finish this work in the night-time.

(Household, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Secondary school and higher education

Affording secondary school education and higher education appear to be more challenging than primary schools. This, as noted, is because they are more expensive and not available in every town, therefore students need to commute or move to larger towns to attend schools, but for many households and this is not affordable. When asked about secondary education, one caregiver noted:

This is the most challenging area. Such students are costly and a lot of families can't support their children to continue in large towns, they drop and leave education.

(Household, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Coping strategies

While poverty appears to be a major barrier to education, some respondents including caregivers and school officials described ways and coping strategies adopted that allows children from poor families to attend school. Most frequently mentioned was the school's patience with children from poor families who are not able to pay fees on time.

What is good about our school is that we are very patient with those people who have nothing and cannot pay the school fees although we may close the school if the situation continues this way because of funding difficulties.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

Others have also mentioned that they receive a fee waiver for some of their children especially when they have a number of children all in school and cannot pay for all of them. As one caregiver noted:

If for instance have five school children so I cannot afford paying the fees of all the five therefore I get assistance from the school administration and they assist me by exempting some the children's school fees.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

It is worth noting that while these measures and initiatives are applied, it is not clear whether these are official school policies or merely informal initiatives.

Most marginalised girls:

Poverty appeared to affect all children in poor households and their education. However, a few respondents noted that some girls and children in general are more marginalised than others. These are:

- IDPs, migrants and nomads

It was mentioned that refugees and IDPs in particular are generally poorer than other community members. This, as described, makes their girls particularly less likely to afford school fees and materials. As a school official noted:

IDPs (internally displaced persons) are very poor and cannot access the education service. The reason is not that they are being discriminated but the reason is that they cannot afford the school fees.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

- Specific impact on girls

In some cases, it was reported that limited resources would lead parents to prioritise boys' education over the girls. This was often rationalised by the support a girl would provide in conducting home chores while boys would not provide this support.

If they did not earn enough fund for school fee for both boys and girls they send only boys.

(Community leader, Garowe, Putland)

Violence

Violence was very frequently reported in Relief International's targeted communities. Types of violence that were reported ranged from very severe types of violence such as war and armed conflict, murder, robbery and armed robbery, and attacks between tribes and targeting minority groups, to domestic disagreements, corporal punishment by teachers and children bullying each other. These types of violence were reported to have direct impact on children and their education. This, as reported, is because children are either caught in the middle of the fighting, are themselves targeted by members of other communities or the same communities, have arms and guns at their disposal, or get abducted or raped (especially girls) as a result of the chaotic situation in their community and the wider region.

Many respondents described the impact of some types of violence on children's education and the whole education process. These were mainly the severe types of violence within the community or in the region where school can be closed temporarily, or parents themselves would refrain from sending their children to school due to instability and violence.

Violence among children

The most frequently reported type of violence was the violence among children (both boys and girls) themselves. While in many cases this was described beyond acts of bullying and taunting such as stone throwing, it was often still referred to as normal acts that required normal interference from adults. It was also noted that these acts take place in school as well as outside the school, without explicitly indicating whether it had an impact on the children's attendance in school or their learning.

School students normally have conflicts during the break time. Sometimes, they throw stones to each other or over roof of the school. These are minor cases, which we deal with on an everyday basis, by giving advice to students over the morning parade in order to build relationship and harmony between students in same school."

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Large scale conflict between communities

The second most frequently mentioned type of violence is the large scale conflict and fighting between groups within the community, with groups from outside the community or in the nearby areas, or with (armed) militias and government forces. Often, respondents described their community and region as unstable and dangerous.

Heavy fighting has taken place for the last five-ten years. We could say these wars were the worst for those twenty years the country was in the chaos.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

Many respondents referred to these conflicts as the underlying cause for children dropping out of school, temporary closing of the school, or students being dragged into the conflict as well. In describing the unstable situation, one community leader noted:

It was around four years since the EL-berdale conflict was erupted. The conflict was just settled superficially but there is no deep and durable solution for the conflict that has been reached so far. In

other farmer's community, there are many children who discontinued their schooling as a result of the conflict.

(Community leader, Gabiley, Somaliland)

In describing the recurrence of disruptions in the education process due to conflict, one school official noted:

The effect of a conflict and violence on schooling happens at least four and five times a year, disruptions are common and when they happen it causes a lot of problems. This is because the region is not stable; wars and violence are always taking place. People and schools have developed coping mechanisms to address shock and recurrent civil war.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

While in these cases, the conflict appeared to affect children and the education process indirectly, others have described the direct involvement of children and the direct targeting of schools and staff as a result of the conflicts. One community leader described how children themselves get involved in these large scale conflicts, but noted that these acts seem to be decreasing, s/he noted:

I have seen students dividing themselves along clan lines and they start throwing stones. But really, such community-based violence is relatively decreased this year.

(Community leader, Banaadir, Somalia)

In describing how teachers and staff in school are targeted by militia groups, ordering them to close the school, one school official in Mogadishu stated:

Sometimes, it happens that school management receives threats from militia groups, who tell us to close the school.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

In a couple of cases, respondents described situations where children and youth had arms at their disposal. In one case, a community leader described a fight among the youth which resulted in deaths due to an incident where children's lives were lost due to an armed fight.

I remember when our children played football in another village than they have won the match. The kids of the other village got angry and attacked our kids in the following night with guns. Three kids from our village died in that tragedy and it was very painful.

(Community leader, Banaadir, Somalia)

Corporal punishment by teachers

Less frequently mentioned were corporal punishments in schools. Few respondents have indicated that teachers use corporal punishment at schools to discipline children who misbehave, or fail in a certain assessment or task. This was usually mentioned not as a form of negative violence, rather, to describe measures for disciplining children or in some cases, to indicate equality in treatment between boys and girls. While these statements were described in the context of discussing school matters, respondents did not indicate the impact of this type of violence on the attendance and learning of children. In describing equality in corporal punishment for boys and girls, one caregiver noted:

The teachers treat both boys and girls the same and in good manner. For example, if a girl fails to read her lesson, the teacher beats her the same way he beats the boys.

(Household, Hargeisa, Somaliland)

In describing under which circumstances corporal punishment is used, another caregiver noted:

Teachers are usually informed of any confrontation or harassment. Students or group of students involved in such crime are being collectively punished, depending on level of crime committed. He/she will be charged by the school's disciplinary committee based on the school's code of conduct. He/she could be given first warning or alternatively face corporal punishment like beating with sticks, or either they are sent out from school minimum five days.

(Household, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Harassment and insecurity

Harassment and insecurity were described in the following; acts of harassment between children, harassment targeting particular community groups, domestic disagreements, and insecurity due to the large scale conflict and violence.

Harassment between children

Harassment among children was frequently mentioned as a common issue. Respondents noted that harassment carried out by children targeting other children are normal acts, and that in certain situations it necessitates adult interference, without indicating how these acts affect children or their education.

Children all the time quarrel, that is why they are children. Children have tendencies to be either friends or fights, but that's not major, they frequently change. They are different moods in each hour.

(Household, Gabiley, Somalia)

Few indicated that girls get harassed by boys to get in romantic relationships with boys while on their way to or from school or inside the school. However, these incidents appear as minor and contained with adult or teacher interference.

Yes, girls are being harassed on her way to school by the fellow youth boys who wish to build relationships.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

Domestic disagreements

Secondly, and also perceived as normal and mild conflicts are domestic disagreements. These were sometimes mentioned as resulting from poverty and lack of resources where partners fight and get caught in conflict because of frustrations and inability to provide and fulfil the needs of the household. Others have also noted general family disputes and disagreements.

Normally family conflict happened in everyday life. It could happen as results of argument between husband and his wife over financial matter.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

Harassment of marginalised persons

In some cases, acts of harassment and intimidation were described as targeting marginalised groups and persons. These were the disabled persons, internally displaced persons and persons from minority groups. As one caregiver noted:

Yes it happens sometimes; they insult our children simply by calling them IDPs and refugees. They face discrimination against them due to the torn or dirty clothes they have to wear; they look dirty.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

With regards to harassment targeting minority groups, a few respondents noted that some groups such as the Bantus and Jareer are discriminated against and harassed within their communities.

There are people who get discriminated. They are either Jareer or called others. They are discriminated from the rest of the people and verbally abused.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

Insecurity due to conflict and violence

As previously discussed, large scale and community-based conflict and violence appear to be common in Somalia. Many expressed feelings of insecurity affecting their daily lives due to these conflicts, large-scale fighting and violence.

Regarding safety and security of this place, I feel no safety for my family to live in this place, it is not secure. I don't feel this place is secure, there is ongoing conflict and destruction, and the security situation in this place is not reliable. It is stable now, but can change to its worst at any time.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

While feelings of insecurity were often described in general terms, at least one school official noted that this insecurity drives parents and caregivers to keep their girls in school due to the instable and unsafe way to school.

Some also face challenges in going to school because the way to school is not safe and they encounter problems and they are afraid. The effect is girls get no access to education and that affects their future life.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

Teaching resources and learning material

Respondents in Relief International's targeted communities in Somalia noted that there is lack of teaching resources and learning material in schools. This, as described, is either because the school or the government does not provide them or because caregivers of students are not able to afford them, as previously noted in the poverty barrier.

According to respondents, these materials and resources were identified as textbooks, uniforms, teacher's guidebooks, blackboards, chalk, stationery, sports equipment and other material, with textbooks being the most frequently mentioned.

While most respondents generally noted the lack of these teaching aids and learning material in schools or appealed for their provision, some specifically indicated that the lack of this material causes poor teaching and learning quality, with one indicating that it discourages students from attending school.

There are some girls whose families face difficulty in financing books and uniforms, as a result, girls withdraw from studying at all, but in these circumstances, we support them before they dropped out.

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Significant housework for girls

Respondents in Relief International's targeted communities in Somalia noted that girls are sometimes not sent to school because parents and caregivers believe that they should be kept home to help mothers and contribute in the housework such as cooking, cleaning, fetching water and taking care of younger siblings. While the significance of this cannot be determined as some respondents noted that this belief or practice is diminishing nowadays, others (of which school officials) mentioned that it is a widely spread practice, in which many households keep their girls at home and do not enrol them in school.

There is an old phenomenon that still exists in some families, in which they believe that girls shall stay and serve for the houses or assist their mothers, where they send only boys to the school. Though girls are among our students and most families have changed that behaviour, but it's not totally eliminated.

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

On the other hand, while the majority of respondents noted that home chores hinder girls' attendance in school, others (though a smaller number of respondents) did note that home chores do not necessarily hinder girls' attendance in school, but it affects their learning as they are supposed to undertake the house duties before or after their school, which firstly, sometimes cause a delay in their attendance, or does not give them enough time to study at home.

Yes. Household activities affect her education because she will not have enough time to revise her lessons but she still goes to school.

(Household, Garowe, Somaliland)

It was also mentioned that boys sometimes do also conduct some home chores (mainly fetching water) which also leads to their delay in attendance in school and affects their learning, but in a less severe manner than girls.

Girls involve in cleaning more than the boys. But yet, boys also work. Usually, it seems that boys are slight higher than girls in learning capacity. I think it's because of the role of the girl in the family which girls traditionally involve to do more domestic works like dish washing and so on.

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Less frequently mentioned were duties related to livestock owners' families and nomads, where children (and girls in particular) are not sent to school but rather sent to look after the animals. While this was reported to be generally the case for livestock owners, some noted that this was in particular for families with larger herds.

And on the other hand, there are some families with rather much livestock those need more help for herding their livestock and keep girls to look after livestock. Without such particular circumstances, I don't think there are families who shouldn't otherwise send girls to the school.

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

As previously mentioned in the poverty barrier, girls of working mothers are also particularly marginalised as they are usually kept home to take care of the home chores and younger siblings while the mother is absent (and usually throughout the whole day) to earn a living and support the family.

This happens when the family is mainly supported by the mother which is turn is also an economical factor.

(School official, Garowe, Putland)

Issues with school infrastructure and social services

In terms of infrastructure and services, respondents noted that schools in general are old and run down, and in some cases are not reliable or safe for children. In addition, respondents complained about the lack of sufficient classrooms, toilets and other facilities. Some respondents made a clear link on the impact of such learning environment on the children's learning, noting that if the environment is enhanced, children will be motivated to learn.

The building could be rehabilitated because can collapse anytime while the children are inside. When things are improved in the school the children will be morally encouraged and will have strong desire for learning.

(Household, Banaadir, Somalia)

Some respondents also referred to the insecurity and violence in the community and neighbouring area (discussed in the violence and insecurity barrier), and noted that necessary fences to keep the school safe and secured was lacking.

The school is located in an open space, there are no security fences.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

Less frequently mentioned were electricity and water access issues in the school. In one case, it was mentioned that the school managed to obtain computers but that there was no electricity to run these computers.

Electricity is not also there. Computers have been brought but I think there is no electricity.

(Household, Garowe, Putland)

In addition to general school building issues and facilities, some expressed the need to provide girls with separate toilets. In one case, a caregiver noted that girls do not go to school toilets because they are not separate, rather, they wait until they are back home to access toilets.

They have 2 latrines. Girls have no separate one. They keep the things until they reach home.

(Household, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Lack of qualified teachers

Following issues with infrastructure and social services, respondents in Relief International's targeted communities noted that there is lack of qualified teachers teaching at their schools. This, as described meant that the number of teachers available is not sufficient, some even specifically noted that there is shortage in female teachers in particular, but also that the teachers available are often not qualified to provide good quality education.

While this was reported to affect the learning of students in school, respondents did not indicate whether it affected the enrolment of children in schools, or whether the absence or shortage of female teacher discouraged parents from sending their girls to school.

In identifying the underlying causes for the shortage of teachers and their poor quality teaching, respondents noted two main issues: teacher training in Somalia is very limited, and that teachers are not paid well which meant that they are not motivated to teach, and are easily attracted by better paying posts in private schools leaving the public and community managed schools with the less qualified and trained teachers.

The good teachers are being attracted by the private schools because they get better payment, for this reason, they run [away] from public primary schools and go for the private primary schools. Then this problem results the government primary schools to be without good quality teachers. The quality of the teaching decreased.

(Community leader, Hargeisa, Somalia)

Some respondents also referred to the low capacity of the government to provide necessary training and qualify public sector teachers. This, as noted results in poor quality education provided to children.

This school was established in 1996. Since education is managed by community. It has been no other option rather to select and recruit among individuals graduated from secondary starting from 1990s. The plan was to upgrade teachers through long-term in-service teacher training program existed in the past. But MOE is giving five to seven days teacher training/seminar. I feel this is not enough qualifying teacher on necessary teaching skills.

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Other barriers to education

Early marriage

While some respondents noted that girls should continue with their higher education and get married in their twenties, early marriage was often mentioned by some respondents in Relief International's targeted communities. These have identified the ideal age for marriage to be between 15 and 18 years old, and in one case, a caregiver in Sitiile noted that it was from 13 to 15 years old.

No one can tell who will be a daughter's husband and when it would be. But ideally, she should marry at the age 13, 14, or 15.

(Household, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Early marriage was generally rationalised by the readiness of the girls to get married, and the well-accepted norm for girls to get married at that age. A few have also noted that girls themselves seek to get married at that age. Some respondents denied that arranged marriage or forced marriage existed in their communities, noting that the time of this practice was over. However, it was expected from girls and future grooms to approach the family and take approval as tradition dictates.

When she studies Quran and reaches age 15 or 18 and she talks to a man we allow her to marry. If she reaches 20 years unmarried, we consider her as an old lady in our culture. If the man is responsible and can take care of her and she is happy with him, he proposes we accept him to marry. If she says no, we don't force her to accept. The time of forced marriage is long gone.

(Household, Garowe, Putland)

With regards to the impact of early marriage on girls' education, there were contradictory findings; some clearly stated that girls usually drop out of school and get married, others (with almost a similar number of respondents) stated that marriage and having children did not prohibit girls from continuing their education. A third grey area of findings was also identified where respondents stated they support girls education, but believe that the right age for marriage is about 15 years old without specifying whether this means that education means primary and middle education or that marriage does not necessarily mean dropping out of school. In describing how girls drop out of school and get married a community leader in Garowe noted:

They are the same number. First in the early age of the school girls are more than boys. But in the middle age girls [get] married and stop [their] education and at that time boys are more than girls.

(Community leader, Garowe, Putland)

And in describing how girls do not necessarily drop out of school when they get married, another community leader in another community but the same region noted:

Most of them finish except one that chooses to marry, that is her will... But girls may still learn while they are married and pregnant.

(Community leader, Garowe, Putland)

The same community leader however, noted that early marriage which led to dropping out of school is particular to minority groups like the Midhiban, Tumalo and Yibro. Although it is difficult to assess this finding as it was only mentioned by one community leader:

Yes, they do have access to free primary education because they are part of the community and they share everything with the community. They are not discriminated...But, the school enrolment of girls from minority communities is extremely low. ...The vast majority of girls from minority families get married early, later drop out from school before they complete primary school.

(Community leader, Garowe, Putland)

Pregnancy

With regards to school-aged pregnancy, respondents commented on whether pregnant girls are welcomed back to school or not. While a few have noted that pregnant girls are not welcomed back to school after delivery, the majority noted that they would be welcomed back. In no case, however, did respondents refer to a school or government policy regarding pregnant girls and young mothers. Moreover, they did not indicate whether in practice this actually takes place.

We really welcome her very warmly. For example, we help her with the lessons she did not attend. We even read to her, the same way the teacher read the lessons to us.

(Household, Hargeisa, Somaliland)

Low government capacity to support schools

When describing the challenges in providing education in the targeted communities, many respondents noted that the government does not play its prescribed role in supporting education in their communities. This was described in many ways, such as lack of funding to support school budgets or the teachers' salaries, teaching and learning resources and equipment, and rehabilitating schools or building new ones. This, as reported, creates a poor teaching and learning environment for children.

This school has no even sufficient chalk piece. We submitted request indicating our school's needs and mentioned that this school is one of the national schools to Ministry of Education several times. We didn't get any response yet, we are really feeling it's unfair... We, the teachers and village community are committed to work hard but it's obvious that this school is suffering from frequent negligence.

(School official, Gabiley, Somaliland)

While schools were reported to be facing great challenges, some respondents described initiatives that they undertook in order to improve the education environment in their communities such as collecting money to build classrooms and hiring new teachers. However, these attempts to increase enrolment and improve quality of education in schools failed, and the reasoning was that the government did not pick up on those initiatives and invest in sustaining them. In describing the attempts, one school official noted:

There was one time we hired extra teachers. We have raised awareness and mobilised the families to bring their children to the school.

(School, official, Banaadir, Somalia)

However, in describing the result of some of these attempts, the school official noted:

The attempts that were not successful ... because the fact that we did not get support from the central government.

(School, official, Banaadir, Somalia)

Uncategorised barriers to education and interesting findings

Respondents in RI's targeted communities in Somalia often made comparisons between girls and boys in general, but also in their behaviour and potential. In many cases, respondents indicated that boys and girls behave

differently and that girls behave better than boys. This was cited by caregivers as well as school officials. However, following such an observation, one caregiver indicated that because girls behave better, if there were limited resources s/he would prefer to send the boy to school and not the girls because the boys will cause trouble if kept at home. While this does not necessarily reflect a negative attitude towards the girls or their potential, it does act as a barrier to their education.

Every parent likes for their children to progress equally. If I can support one child's fee and I have one boy and a girl I would send the boy to school because boy is troublesome and if you don't make him busy with something he will start misbehaving but the girl will politely stay at home.

(Household, Garowe, Putland)

Another comparison respondents often made was the ability to learn and perform in school. While some respondents have indicated that girls perform worse than boys in school because they have a lot of housework duties (as discussed in a previous section), some have indicated that girls not only behave better than boys and are more polite, they also perform better in school.

In class, boys are more playful while girls mostly behave politely. In terms of learning, when they are in the school, boys and girls are not the same; girls are performing better compared to boys.

(School official, Banaadir, Somalia)

In terms of extracurricular activities, one caregiver described the privilege of boys over girls in having activities, space and tools to play with, while these are not available to girls.

Boys have playing ground and balls, they play with that. But girls don't have any playing and have no entertainment games.

(Household, Gabiley, Somaliland)

Project Brief – CARE International

This project brief details the barriers to girls' education which were most often reported in CARE Somalia project areas. In CARE Somalia's targeted communities, the most frequently reported challenge facing households is poverty. This functioned in multiple ways but mainly affected children's education negatively as it hindered the ability to meet school cost. Less frequently mentioned, and with a significant difference in number of mentions compared to poverty, were challenges in relation to incidents of violence and harassment. While these were not as frequently mentioned as poverty, they included some severe types of violence targeting children and girls such as rape.

Less frequently mentioned were challenges specifically facing girls and their education such as house duties specifically dedicated to them, as well as the community's negative perception towards their education. Other less frequently mentioned challenges are the environmental disruptions that mainly affect households that rely on livestock to support their source of livelihood.

The following barriers to education as reported by respondents are mostly related to the school and staff. These were issues with infrastructure, social services, availability and quality of teachers and school facilities. Lastly, respondents mentioned barriers to education related to early marriage and also related to the negative attitude towards minority groups within the society.

While many of these barriers equally affect communities at large or members of households, some do have a specific impact on girls and their education. This will be further discussed in the following sections.

Barriers to girls attending school and learning

Poverty

Poverty was described as a severe and a common challenge facing members of the communities within CARE's targeted areas in Somalia. Moreover, it was reported as the main barrier to girls' education.

Poverty within the household and the communities was described in multiple ways by respondents. Primarily, respondents described their inability to afford school fees and other material and requirements due to the limited resources. Secondly, they described the hardships that households face in meeting the basic needs in the household especially in terms of food needs. Additionally, poverty was reported as causing girls to stay home and undertake housework. Finally, poor girls were reported to be subject to harassment from their peers.

Poverty seemed to be more severe to certain groups and girls within the communities than others. These groups were identified as the refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs), larger families with many children, nomad families and livestock owners, certain ethnic minority groups, and people living in remote areas.

In terms of its impact on children and girls' education, poverty was primarily described by respondents as a barrier to enrolment and regular attendance in school, and to a lesser extent to their learning.

Challenges in meeting school cost

Respondents described two issues that they or members in their communities cannot afford due to poverty and their limited resources. Most frequently mentioned, was the issue of school fees. Many respondents noted that children are not able to attend school regularly, are not able to enrol in schools at all, or drop out completely because they are unable to pay school fees. In describing how common the problem is, a school official noted:

Many people don't send their girls to school. This is mainly the poor people. These people have no money to pay school fees.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Secondly and less frequently reported was the challenge in meeting school requirements. While many generally described their inability to afford school materials, others have identified certain items such as school uniform, stationery and books that they are not able to afford.

There are some people that can't afford to send their children to school, simply due to lack of school fees, buying school uniforms, books and other teaching and learning materials.

(Household, Mudug, Putland)

Challenges in meeting food needs

The second most frequently mentioned challenge resulting from poverty and the limited resources is meeting household food needs. As stated by one caregiver in Mudug:

Most of the time it happens to us. There are times you cannot get the children school fees. There are times when you cannot even get something to eat.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In one case, a caregiver indirectly highlighted the impact of hunger on the learning ability of children. They noted that their girl gets low scores due to hunger and this, in turn, causes her harassment and teasing by her peers in class.

It happens that if a child comes from a poor family and lives in a hut and his family has no economic facilities then children usually harass and teachers harass her and similar children especially when she under scores in her exams because of hunger.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In another case, a caregiver noted that some households enrol their girls in school because of the food they receive. While this was mentioned only once, it can be indicated that food is a major challenge to some families, and that food programmes might encourage girls' enrolment in school:

"There are others who send their girls to the school because of the feeding."

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland).

Challenges in providing the desired quality education

In addition to the impact of poverty on children's enrolment and attendance in school, a few respondents noted that poverty and the financial ability is the determinant to the type and quality of education available to children. This was expressed in multiple ways. Firstly, caregivers expressed their wish and desire to be able to send their children to private schools or schools in the city where quality of education is better but more expensive.

If had more money I would have taken her to the city so that she can study better.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

A couple of respondents also noted that their girls attend religious Islamic schools because they are not able to afford sending them to the desired secular schools.

The poor person his education is in limbo because he thinks about school fees, he cannot feed his kids if he sends them to schools. Instead of school they send them to Islamic Schools.

(Community leader, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Challenges facing poor girls: housework

As will be later discussed in a separate barrier, there were reports in CARE Somalia's targeted communities that poverty drives women and mothers to find work and leave their girls at home to take care of siblings and perform house duties. This is an indirect effect of poverty leading girls to drop out of school or not enrol at all. As noted by a school official:

The poor families have no money to send their girls to school, instead the mother is working and she wants the girl to take care the younger siblings.

(School official, Mudug Galmudug)

Challenges facing poor girls: harassment

About four respondents noted that poverty was sometimes a reason for discrimination, social exclusion or mistreatment and harassment by peers and members of the society. In one case for example, a caregiver described how her daughter's peers discriminate against her because of the fact that she is poor.

There are discriminated people who are not respected: the IDPs and poor people. You know that Somalis respects the person who has money only.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

Specific impact on marginalised groups and individuals:

- Children from pastoral families

Primarily, children from pastoral families were reported to be particularly poor, and therefore, are unable to afford fees. As one school official noted:

People cannot afford paying their children's school fees since people living around here are mostly poor animal herders."

(School official, Mudug, Putland)

- Children from large families

Poor children from large families with many children were reported to be less likely to be able to afford school costs and attend school. This, as reported, is because the limited financial resources available to caregivers are not sufficient to meet all basic needs of the family as well as afford school costs for all the children. As a result, some families were reported to feel compelled to send some of their children to school and keep some out of school.

The main reasons are actually expense based. These families have a number of children but cannot afford to send all of them to school; they choose to send only some.

(Household, Mudug, Putland)

- Children of refugees and displaced families

It was noted that refugees and IDPs are particularly poor in CARE's targeted communities in Somalia, and because of that they are unable to afford a school for their children. In describing the poverty of refugees and IDPs, one school official noted:

We have refugee camps in this town. The people in the camps are living very poor life.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Another school official described how children from these families and backgrounds cannot afford to enrol and attend school:

These people... are IDPs and poor families and they cannot afford to pay the school fees.

(School official, Mudug, Puntland)

- Children of ethnic minority groups

Respondents in CARE Somalia's targeted communities identified a number of ethnic minority groups like the Bantus or the Madhiban and stated that these groups are particularly marginalised and poor. This, as stated, hinders their ability to access services and afford many things such as schooling.

Somali Bantus, Madhiban and some others. This is because they are poor and cannot afford paying for these services and this is a small town, it is a village and there is nobody assisting them. During a drought we had, I have seen some people crying due to hunger and nobody was helping them except a few sheikhs in Masjids but that is insufficient.

(School official, Mudug, Puntland)

- Specific impact on girls

Some respondents noted that due to the limited resources, and especially if the family has boys and girls, parents and caregivers would opt to send the boys and keep the girls to help in housework duties. This will also be further discussed in following barriers.

Some of the families who live here have six or seven school children of which four or five are girls. So it is possible that a family may not be able to send all of them to school and the family give the first priority to the boys, as is often the case in Somali culture.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

Other interesting findings in poverty

It was reported in the project's targeted communities that due to the inability to pay school fees, caregivers would send their children to religious schools. This indicates that these schools are either less expensive or free of charge, or do not require the material that ordinary schools do. As this caregiver noted:

She does not go to school. I enrolled her once in school but I could not keep her in school for long because of financial challenges. If I had money I would have taken her to school. She attends a Quranic school though. She has good character and nobody has ever complained from her.

(Household, Mudug, Putland)

Coping strategies and initiatives

Although poverty appeared to be a major barrier to children's education, and girls' education in particular, many respondents described initiatives and attempts to lessen the impact of poverty on children, and enhance their access to education and their learning. For example, some reported that the school administration would exempt the fees of some children from large families so that all children can attend school. Other examples included community members to launch initiatives and schemes to fund the education of children from poor families.

Sometimes a parent come to school with five children and tells us he/she can only pay for two or three and we will negotiate with the other two or three and accept it. Therefore, we always try our best but need assistance from the ministry.

(School official, Mudug, Puntland)

In describing a fundraising initiative to support the education of girls from poor families, one community leader noted:

We give help and encourage every girl to get access to education irrespective of their social status. We have a community fundraising scheme, we give financial support to girls from poor families in order to retain them in school.

(Community leader, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Violence

Many types of violence were reported in the project's targeted communities in Somalia. Most frequently reported was violence between children; secondly, sexual assault and rape targeting girls. Less frequently reported was violence among adults, and especially between community groups, tribes. Individual cases were also reported of violence targeting minority groups, religious-based violence, and kidnapping and abduction of children.

Although respondents reported these types of violence, very few indicated the impact of violence on the children's education such as causing disruption in attendance or dropping out of school. Moreover, the majority of respondents did not indicate a specific impact on girls, except when referring to sexual assault and rape, and a few indicating that girls are generally more vulnerable to violence and fighting than boys.

Violence between children and students

The most frequently mentioned form of violence was the fighting and bullying between children and students mainly on the way to and from school. Although this was generally described as ordinary fighting between children and where adults sometimes interfere to prevent these incidents from escalation, a few reported incidents which appeared very violent such as students throwing stones at each other:

They fight each other and verbally attack each other and throw stones to one another but we mediate them and take tough actions against those who started the confrontation in the first place. We have prisons and places to discipline children.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In about three cases, respondents reported incidents where girls were subject to harassment and violence. This was described by one caregiver as s/he noted that girls in particular are frequently harassed and bullied on the way to school because of the lack of respect to education, without indicating whether it reflected a negative attitude towards education in general or girls' education in particular. Another indicated that parents might not send their girls to school because of the fear of violence that they might be subjected to on the way to school.

There are regular harassments and bullying that girls face in the way to the school. Because there are many people who don't respect education

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

Rape and sexual violence

Rape and sexual assault was frequently reported by respondents in Somalia's targeted communities. One respondent in Sanaag noted that rape was a common issue in his/her community. Moreover, at least one respondent stated that rape occurred on the way to and from school.

Though occasionally they are even raped on the way, but these are not regular incidents. Rape is prevalent; rape is not something unheard in this town.

(Household, Sanaag Somaliland)

One respondent noted that because rape is a common issue, caregivers generally fear for their daughters when newcomers and migrants come to settle in their community. However, it was not clear whether this fear affects the attendance of girls in school.

If some pastoral community moves to our locality as a result of draughts, we fear that girls may be raped by the new arrivals who we do not know each other. It happens in the nomad community to girls to be raped by men, and it's also possible another man may come to help her.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Tribal and community violence

Few respondents reported that adults in their communities or tribes and groups from different communities engage in violent conflicts and fighting. One respondent for example reported specific incidents of tribal violence in his/her community where members of the different tribes attacked each other:

Tribal [violence] between Darod and Sheikh Ishaq it happened very often between these two clans and it's all about land and gunshots to the people who passing through and transportation attacks. We immediately call the parents and secure the matter, with Allah help we settle the people.

(Community leader, Sanaag, Somaliland)

In highlighting the impact of these incidents on children's education, a community leader noted that children are kept home when violence breaks out within the community or in the nearby communities in order to protect the children.

Parents, even if they are in peaceful place, when they hear the gun fire they will not send their children to school unless they are sure of what is going on.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

Other reports of violence

Individual but severe incidents of violence were reported in CARE Somalia's targeted communities. These are:

Corporal punishment by teachers; at least one caregiver described incidents of corporal punishment carried out by teachers. The caregiver noted that some girls from pastoral households miss classes because they are in charge with the task of herding the animals, and so when they would come back to class the teacher would beat them for missing class.

Respondent (R): These things happen because girls sometimes miss their classes... So when she attends the class next day, she is asked why she was absent yesterday. That is where clash starts.

Interviewer: Does the school do anything when this happens?

R: They beat girls

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

Abduction of children and human trafficking; one caregiver noted that s/he has heard of incidents of abduction and human trafficking within his/ her areas, and that when caregivers hear of such incidents, they keep their children at home and do not send them to school to protect them from such acts:

But in our town we have a feeling that there is human trafficking problem. Though it did not happen to my girl but I have a heard of a lot of families in here who complain about that problem. We also heard that some children are kept somewhere in our town. Such children have being abducted from other towns for clan issues.

S/he later continued:

We keep the children at home and wait for few weeks till things are getting better. Who can follow the children goes with them. Who can afford puts them in the bus and keeps eye on them.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

Violence targeting ethnic minority groups

At least one respondent described the attacks that children of the Bantu ethnic group were subject to, and noted that these attacks might lead girls to be discouraged from attending school and drop out due to these attacks:

R: Yes. Those people from the Bantu are minority. When their boys and girls are sent to school, the other children beat them and the minority boys and girls cannot fight back. Though this happens occasionally, yet it hurts minority people because they feel helpless.

I: How likely are girls from those groups to go to school?

R: It varies from one person to person. You will find some girls who are tolerating and keeping learning despite challenges they face. On the other hand, yes it is possible that you find a girl who leaves the school because she is disappointed.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

Harassment and insecurity

Harassment and insecurity was reported as to mainly take place among students and children. In many cases, this was described as ordinary fighting among students and children with no severe consequences, in others; they require some engagement by adults to resolve. These incidents were not reported to affect the education process or target girls specifically. As one respondent noted:

It always happens that students may run into different problems like children fights or family disputes and fighting sides but there is nothing big towards education that possesses a threat.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

In some cases, respondents stated that girls get physically harassed on the way to school which reportedly affected their wellbeing. However, it was also reported that girls have been walking in groups or accompanied by adults so that they are not subject to these harassments. As one caregiver noted:

There are too many minor boys standing on the way to the school and these are girls, girls are always weak and vulnerable in terms of security. Then they harass and scratch their skin sometimes that is why we accompany them to and from the school.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In a few cases, domestic disagreements and conflict were also noted, mainly between partners. While these incidents were generally described as ordinary, one respondent indicated the negative impact these incidents have on the children and their education. The caregiver noted:

Yes, if conflict arises in the family it confuses children and house wellbeing. The children may think it's an earthquake happening in their house and they are insecure. Therefore they cannot do school lesson work.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

In a couple of cases, some feelings of insecurity due to conflict within the different community groups or families have been reported, and even though in some reported cases these were described as violent generating feelings of insecurity, they did not seem to have an effect on the education process.

Lack of proper jobs for men, land disputes and when the husband is unable to provide the living expenses for the family.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

Significant household responsibilities

It was frequently mentioned that girls in the targeted communities are unable to attend school because caregivers dedicate many of the housework responsibilities to them. In the past in Somalia, housework was traditionally seen to be the role of the woman which fulfils her full potential, and that a girl is incapable of performing other activities, such as enrolling in schools and being educated. As one community leader noted:

They believed that the girls could not do anything besides house chores.

(Community leader, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Although this perception is reported to have changed to some extent over time, housework appears to be a barrier to girls' education where they are left at home mainly to conduct household chores, while boys are reported to be sent to school.

In fact their level of education was very low, but now they have improved. In terms of educating both boys and girls, it seems that community prefers boys than girls. Girls assist their mothers while boys don't. So this gives boys the chance to study.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

These household chores, as reported, mainly affect attendance in school, but in some cases where girls do attend school, it was reported that they also affect their learning. This, as described, is because girls perform these duties before or after school, and therefore are either tired or do not have time for homework.

Yes. Household activities affect her education because she will not have enough time revise her lessons but she still goes to school.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

While the home chores are reported to be mainly performed by girls, taking care of the livestock appear to affect both girls and boys.

This community in this area is nomads and they rear livestock. So when the child comes to school for number of days, his/her family moves away from the area and the child goes with the family and looks after animals. Therefore, the child is unable to regularly attend and sustain the classes. He/she misses one day then two days so he is on and off.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Negative attitude towards girls' education

Although many respondents indicated that the attitude towards girls' education has been changing in the recent years, many have reported that some members of their' community still hold negative attitude towards girls' education. Primarily, respondents referred to the perception that education was simply not important and not useful; secondly, referred to the perception that marriage was a priority for girls. Thirdly, they referred to the perception which put housework for girls as a priority to education. Less frequently were reports that referred to livelihoods groups or religious groups when identifying groups within the community that hold negative attitude towards girls' education.

Limited awareness

Respondents in the targeted communities noted that some members of their communities do not value or see the importance of education for girls and therefore do not send them to schools. This, as sometimes explained, was because caregivers are either not educated or ignorant about the value and importance of education. One respondent also noted that these community members believe that they have survived without education and therefore do not see its added value. Although respondents discussed girls' education and the perception of community members towards that, some referred to education for children (both boys and girls) in general, noting that education in general is not valued, and therefore the impact is not specific to girls.

The evidence showed that about 80% of the community don't know the importance of education for girls.

S/he later continued:

Their idea is that they don't see education as valuable and they argue that they were living without education forever.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

Perception towards girls' potential and future

A few of respondents indicated that members of their communities look down on girls and do not see their potential therefore do not believe in investing in their education. This, as reported was often linked to the perception that a girl's future is determined and fixed, and that is to find a husband, be a housewife and perform home chores. In describing how some community members look down on girls, a caregiver noted:

They believe that girls should go with husband soon and has no potentials to be invested for education.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Another noted that although the attitude is changing, there are still members of the community who look down on girls and their potential, therefore, do not send them to school:

People had different views about girls' education; they believed that girls cannot continue their education and marriage will interrupt it. They believed that girls are always sick and have some illnesses and that they cannot bear the length of education. Now however, around 75 or 80 per cent of the people have positive views towards girls' education.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

In addition to describing the perception that girls' potential is limited to conducting home chores and being housewives, one community leader noted that girls themselves perceive their role as such and therefore, persevere and prepare for that role. The community leader noted:

They [community members] believed that the girls could not do anything besides house chores. They are mostly engaged in activities at home until she got someone to marry her. Girls also prepare themselves to have marriage as early as they could so that they become independent housewives. All parents believe so. Parents believe that girls will obviously get married before they complete their education.

(Community leader, Sanaag, Somaliland)

In describing the low potential for the future of educated girls, one community leader noted that parents prefer that their girls stay home while boys are sent to school:

Generally, people perceived low returns from educating girls ... Therefore, parents rather believe girls to stay at home, help their mothers work at home, while boys are encouraged to go to school learn both religion and other subjects.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

Priority for work

A couple of respondents also explained that some community members send their girls to work and earn money instead of sending them to school.

Some families prefer sending girls to work for the family domestically or in the business, whereas others support to send girls to the school.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Religious influence

A couple of respondents noted that sheikhs (Muslim religious men) and some other members of the community do not support girls' education and persuade people to drop their girls from school. While the caregiver noted that these people targeted girls' education, the respondent also noted that they target and criticise the whole education system as a whole. S/he noted:

There are some people in the community who say whatever is taught in school is lie and is wanted is to take our girls away. We also have those who what is taught in school is forbidden and against Sharia.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In commenting about the religious men's discouragement of girls' education, a school official noted:

The Sheikhs who were in the community used to discourage sending girls to formal schools.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Environmental disruptions

Respondents often noted that environmental disruptions and weather conditions negatively affected their livelihoods. This, as reported, was mainly in the form of drought which at times becomes very extreme resulting in the death of livestock or the forced displacement of households in search for water to save their source of livelihood. While this appears to have a severe impact on households, especially in trying to meet the needs of the household in food and water, there was no explicit mention of how these weather conditions and environmental disruptions affect girls' education.

Catastrophic, I can't finish if I start how it affected people and animals too, thousands of animals died, people got malnutrition. Some places human losses are reported, that was when people came to towns. They become poor of the poorest, because all the wealth they had were animals, if single sheep couldn't survive their belongings, then what do you think one will look like, it was really a tragedy.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Challenges with employment and sources of livelihoods

In CARE Somalia's targeted communities, households were reported to rely mainly on livestock for their source of livelihoods. This, as noted, made households largely prone to environmental disruptions and weather conditions as they needed to move their animals during extreme weather conditions, especially during the drought season as they need to search for water. In most reported cases, the impact of the moving results in children's disruption in attendance. As a school official in Mudug, Putland noted:

The livelihood of most families depends on livestock. Almost each family of the community has some kind of animals around like goats or camel. So, if drought comes and the child is in the school they just move with their child and look pasture and water for their animals. They may need the child's support during long walks for pasture and water. Because the parent may not understand the importance of education and give more value to their livestock and because their lives are at risk. So the most difficult time [is the] drought seasons.

(School official, Mudug, Putland)

In addition to moving away for long periods of time, it was also reported that siblings sometimes alternate in attending school and take care of the animals so that they maintain their source of livelihood but also get the chance to attend school. This was reported by a caregiver in Sanaag, Somaliland:

There are many families in nomad communities who send their children to the school. Some of them who have two children send each one on alternate day so each look after livestock one day and the other day attends the school. While others send them all and the parent look after livestock.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Less frequently noted was relying on other professions and daily jobs such as construction, with a couple reporting that they rely on selling khat to make ends meet for the family.

I sell Khat to get at least daily living expense to support my family. It is not the job of my choice. I don't like selling Khat. I saw it is the easiest and quickest means to daily living expenses. Selling Khat has its challenges; it is not that one gets profit always.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Lack of infrastructure and social services

In CARE Somalia's targeted communities, infrastructure and social services were frequently mentioned as barriers to education. Specifically, as identified by respondents, this primarily entailed issues with access to water and electricity, as well as the need to provide food and meals in school. Respondents repeatedly reported these challenges, and while they did not indicate the impact on girls' or children's enrolment in school, some did note that their provision would enhance the teaching and learning environment and experience of students and teachers, and fulfil some of their basic needs.

Water and electricity

Most frequently stated in terms of infrastructure, was the lack of access to clean water and electricity. Although these were described in general terms and mainly as challenges facing the school, school staff and students, some indicated that electricity will allow teachers to give evening classes which will decrease their load during daytime.

The school has no electricity. The water in the school is very scarce.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Food provision

Less frequently mentioned was the lack of meal provision, which many have stated that its provision would encourage students to come to school. In addition, a few have indicated that the lack of meal provision in school affects students' attendance and learning as they tend to leave the school to go to their homes and causes delays to classes. As this teacher noted:

"The school is also a bit far away from the town so we need a student feeding program. When we release students for tea break, most of them go to their home and because of the distance, they come late to the first period that follows the break; they may come to the second period midway. If we had a feeding program at school we could have given food to them. They would not have gone back to their homes and miss their classes afterwards"

(School official, Mudug, Puntland)

Lack of qualified and sufficient teachers

Following issues with infrastructure and social services, respondents in CARE Somalia identified issues with teachers as the next challenge facing the education process and system in their communities. More specifically, respondents including school staff, caregivers and community leaders noted that there are three major problems with regards to teachers; firstly, and most frequently mentioned, was that teachers are not well paid, secondly, that there is lack of sufficient teachers available, and thirdly, that the teachers available are not well trained or qualified to deliver the desired quality of teaching.

Challenges with teachers' salaries

Challenges with providing teachers with sufficient pay was often mentioned as a challenge that affects the education provided in the schools. This as noted is because unpaid or poorly paid teachers tend to leave their posts in search for better paid positions, leaving schools that are unable to provide reliable and sufficient pay with high turnover of teachers.

When the teacher is not paid well he does not teach well, he is discouraged and that is a challenge to the school. Therefore teachers leave the school and look for better places.

(Community leader, Mudug, Puntland)

Poorly paid teachers are reported to be discouraged to teach and provide good quality education to students. As a caregiver noted:

If teachers are trained and those who are not paid are paid, it will boost their moral.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Challenges due to lack of teachers

Having insufficient numbers of teachers was reported to affect the quality of teaching and learning in schools. This is because the few available teachers in the school are forced to teach a large number of students beyond their capacity, but also because they would not necessarily be knowledgeable or have the time to teach all subjects which in turn results in poor quality of education provided to students.

Teachers are also very few. It happens that one teacher teaches four or five subjects which he may not have any background about it and then the school fails to complete the syllabus.

(Household, Mudug, Putland)

Challenges due to unqualified and untrained teachers

With regards to teachers' qualifications, it was often noted that teachers lack good training and are not qualified enough to provide quality education to children. This results in low quality education especially for children from remote communities where the ministry of education's support and training provision is almost lacking, as reported by a school official in Mudug, Putland:

The other challenges include the fact that this town is bit far away from the Puntland capital city. Therefore the teachers don't get enough trainings and support from the ministry of education. All this results the education quality to be incompetent compared to the other towns, which are near to the capital city.

(School official, Mudug, Putland)

In describing the impact of training on the teaching quality, another school official in Mudug noted:

We are very much in need of trainings because we have untrained teachers, and if they get trainings and workshops they can improve and overcome their personal teaching challenges...Training motivates and gives hope to teachers, their level of education also goes up.

(School official, Mudug, Puntland)

Migration and mobility

As discussed in the poverty barrier and in the employment and source of livelihood barrier, households that depend on livestock for their source of livelihood tend to migrate and move with their animals in certain seasons and during extreme weather conditions. This results in students migrating and disrupting their attendance in school. However, it was not clear whether they would come back to school or completely drop out as a result of this migration.

Also these communities are rural people. Large numbers of students attend the school when rains fall here and they leave when there is drought. You may see students leaving the school while it is still open going after their livestock and pasture. That fact has also an influence on school attendance.

(School official, Mudug, Putland)

Refugees and internally displaced persons who have recently migrated and settled in some of the targeted communities were also identified as facing great challenges in enrolling their girls in school. The main reason as discussed by respondents is because these groups of people are particularly poor and therefore cannot afford their children's education.

The majority of the community is poor. There are displaced people from the south central Somalia who are very poor. These last parts are focused in getting food rather than sending girls to the school.

(Community leader, Mudug, Putland)

Issues with quality of school facilities

The main challenge that was identified by respondents in terms of school facility was classroom capacity. This was described as both lack of sufficient number of classrooms to accommodate students, but also in terms of size and quality of classrooms. Secondly, respondents noted that the general state of the facilities is bad and that schools are in need of rehabilitation.

While respondents described these issues as general challenges facing the school, one school official noted that rehabilitating the school and improving its facilities would encourage caregivers to send their daughters to school and increase enrolment in their communities. When identifying the major problem, the school official noted:

The school facilities are very limited and have not enough classrooms or capacity.

And in identifying the extent of the impact these challenges have, the same school official stated:

I think if they could get better arranged schools like schools with enough classes, parking, fenced, well seated, and has a playground; they would change their minds and hearts to sending their girls to the schools.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Low government capacity to support

Respondents in CARE Somalia's targeted communities described the lack of support from the government, the local administration and the Ministry of Education. This was generally described as a concern by school officials, community leaders and members for the sustainability of education provision in the communities as schools are mainly private and rely on the unreliable contribution of parents. Also, it was described as the underlying factor for the bad quality of schools and education provided. In a few cases, it was expressed with an appeal to inaugurate public primary and secondary schools in order to ensure access to quality education.

In describing the reasons for the difficulties that the school faces in the community, one community leader noted:

There has been no central government since the collapse of the Somali government and there are no effective organizations involved in helping the education.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

Another school official noted:

There is no functioning government and the school is dependent on the student's fee as source of income. Such attempts made cannot solve more than 20% of the school financial problem.

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

While these challenges which result from the government's lack of support for schools and education provision the targeted communities clearly hinder the teaching and learning process, respondents did not specifically define the impact on girls' access to education and learning.

Early marriage

Early marriage in CARE Somalia's targeted communities appeared to be relatively common. Marriage was reported to take place when girls are between 10 and 15 years old, and when girls reach that age, they either drop out of schools to get married, or drop out and stay at home to learn how to take care of the household and perform housework duties.

If the girls reaches intermediate school they will remove her from school and keep her at the home. Such families believe that the girl will be married and instead of sending her school you better keep her at home so that she gets trained for her future home.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In a couple of cases, girls were reported as being not interested in education and aspiring to get married and be independent housewives. This, as reported also leads them to drop out of school.

When they feel themselves growing up, they are likely to get married. They are not patient enough to stay in school for long period, but rather prefer to be married earlier.

(Community leader, Mudug, Galmudug)

Negative attitude towards minority groups

In CARE Somalia's targeted communities, discrimination was reported as an issue affecting certain groups within the community. Mainly, discrimination against ethnic minority groups was frequently reported; followed by discrimination, secondly and less frequently reported was discrimination against refugees and IDPs. Lastly, and reported by one respondent, is religious-based discrimination.

In commenting on whether discrimination was also existent in school and whether it affected girls' education, contradictory accounts were reported. While some of the respondents stated that discrimination did not affect girls' enrolment in school or their ability to learn, others have noted that it did affect their ability to enrol in school, attend classes regularly, learn and be treated equally. While in some of the cases being from a minority group appeared not to have an effect on these girls' education, a few have noted that it did affect the choices of marriage, where intermarriage between minority and majority groups are not able or allowed to marry.

Challenges facing ethnic minority groups

Respondents reported a few ethnic minority groups or minority clans that are discriminated against within their communities. These, as reported by respondents are the Bantu, Midgo, Jarer, Madhiban, and Gaboye. Discrimination against ethnic minority groups was either described in the ability of children and girls to attend schools regularly and learn without harassment and bullying, or by the inability to make intermarriage with other majority groups. In describing the bullying that children of minority ethnic groups are subject to, a caregiver noted:

“Yes. Those people from the Bantu are minority. When their boys and girls are sent to school, the other children beat them and the minority boys and girls cannot fight back. Though this happens occasionally, yet it hurts minority people because they feel helpless.”

Also, in describing how the discrimination and harassment leads girls to drop out of school, the caregiver noted:

You will find some girls who are tolerating and keeping learning despite challenges they face. On the other hand, yes it is possible that you find a girl who leaves the school because she is disappointed.”

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In describing how education for ethnic minority groups is not a challenge but that intermarriage with the majority ethnic group is, a caregiver referred to the Madhiban or Gaboye people, and noted:

“R. Their girls and boys go to schools. No problem for education.

I: What about marriage? Can they marry girls from majority clans?

R: No, they can't. That is where problem lies. They can't marry. Marriage is amongst them, they marry each other”.

(Household, Sanaag, Somaliland)

Challenges facing refugees and IDPs

About three respondents mentioned that refugees or internally displaced people face discrimination from the communities they re-settle in. These refugees or IDPs are reported to speak a different language as well which makes integration more difficult. In two cases respondents noted that girls from these refugees or IDPs do not attend school because they are discriminated against and bullied, and sometimes coupled with poverty.

They cannot go and stay in school; they have to stay at their homes because they don't feel secure in the school. This is because she is a young girl for instance who is discriminated by getting laughed at or made fun of her own language and you the person is very young and she cannot bear it. May be the old people can tolerate or ignore it but children cannot.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

In one case, a respondent noted that refugees and IDPs do attend school but that they face difficulty in learning. The caregiver noted:

Yes they [IDPs, refugees and minority groups] do learn with other girls. They don't face any difficulties in education aspect but you will see somebody who naturally self-stigmatized and different from other students. You will observe that fact if you pay close attention.

(Household, Mudug, Putland)

Religious-based discrimination

In a couple of cases, girl students in their religious dress were reported to have faced harassment from peers and other community members on the way to and from school. On school official noted:

Yes, I can understand that there are girls with problems to come to the school. Namely girls with face covered as a religious dress face harassment from by-passers or side-liners”

(School official, Mudug, Galmudug)

Challenges facing disabled girls

Few respondents noted that disabled people in particular face challenges within their communities. This was generally described in terms of discrimination and harassment of the disabled.

More specifically, respondents noted that disabled girls do not go to school because they would be harassed and mal treated on one hand, on the other, because the school and facilities are not equipped nor have specialised teachers to educate disabled children or children with special needs.

Yes, because not only her but always people with disabilities meet with discrimination from other community members.

(Household, Mudug, Galmudug)

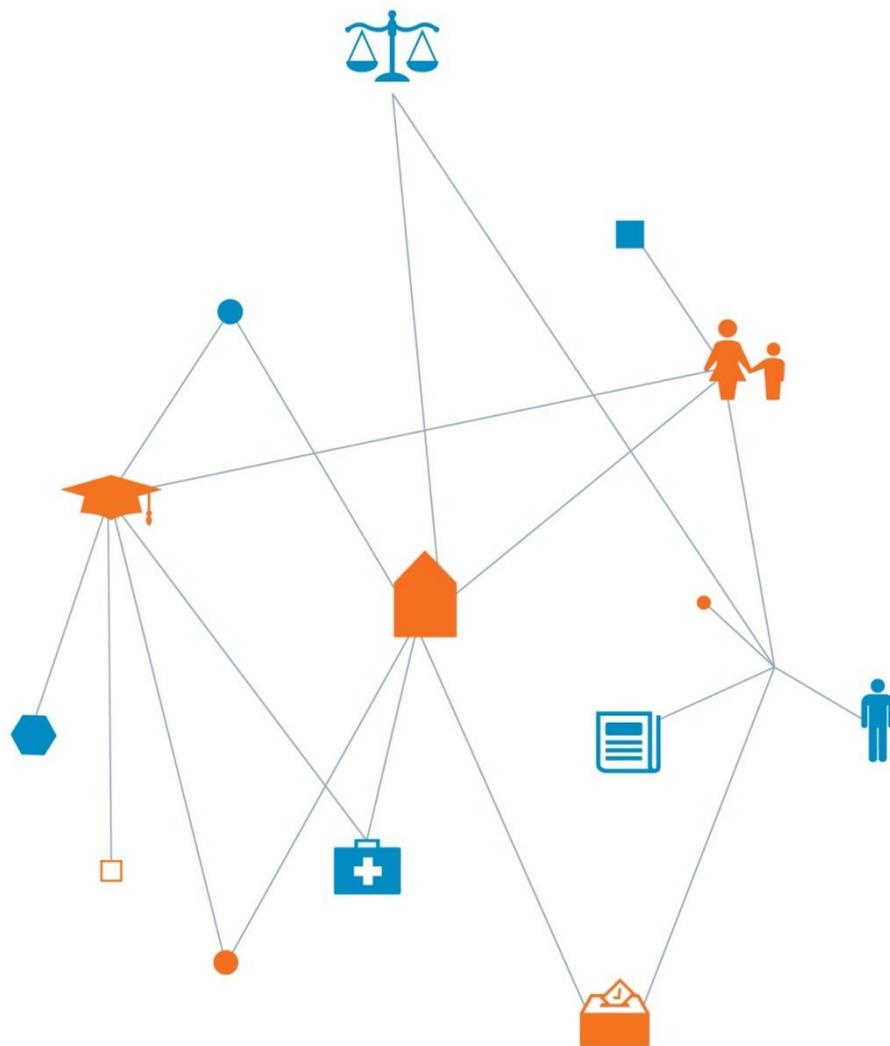
In describing the impact on education, a caregiver noted:

If the girl is disabled, she is not enrolled in school. There are no teachers trained for these special needs girls.

(Household, Mudug, Putland)

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Annex G – List of Data Sources

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Annex G – List of Data Sources

Evaluation Manager Data

The table below provides an overview of the Evaluation Manager data to be collected in each GEC focus country at baseline. It indicates the status of fieldwork progress, and states what data is included in this version of the baseline report.

Country	Project Number	Status of Fieldwork Progress	Quantitative – Household Surveys	Quantitative – School Visits	Qualitative – In-depth interviews	School-based learning assessment of boys and girls
Afghanistan	BRAC (5085) Agha Khan Foundation (5147) ACTED (5224)	Complete	Data included in this report	N/A	Data included in this report	N/A
DRC	IRC (5097)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report
Ethiopia	Save the Children (5098) ChildHope (5170)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report
Kenya	WUSC (5136) CfBT (5252)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report
Mozambique	Save the Children (5099)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
Sierra Leone	BRAC (5063) Plan (5096)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report
Somalia	Relief International (5253) CARE (5274)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
Tanzania & Zimbabwe	Camfed (5101)	Complete	Data included in this report	N/A	Data included in this report	N/A
Zimbabwe	World Vision (5243)	Complete	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A

ANNEX G – LIST OF DATA SOURCES

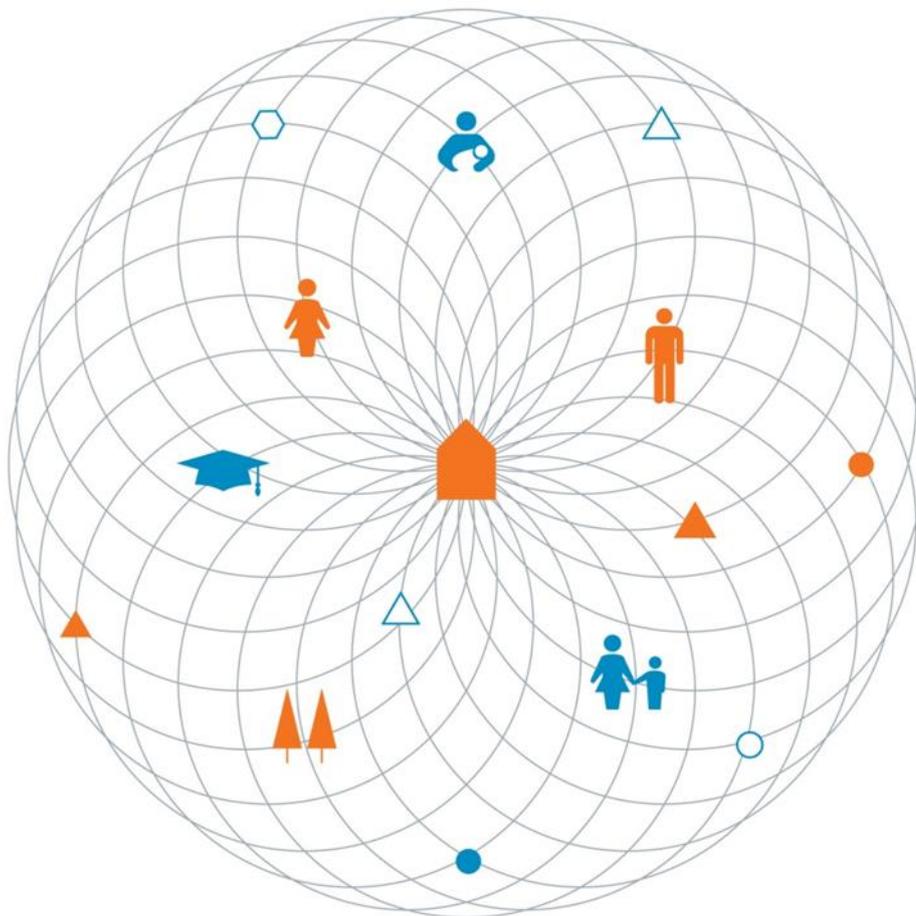
Project Data

The table below provides an overview of the available sources of project data and whether they have been integrated into this version of the baseline report.

Project	Country	Project Baseline Report	Project Data (Reanalysis)	PBR Return	Full Application	Additional documents consulted
BRAC (5085)	Afghanistan	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	To be included in a later version	Data included in this report	N/A
Agha Khan (5147)	Afghanistan	Data included in this report	To be included in a later version	To be included in a later version	Data included in this report	N/A
ACTED (5224)	Afghanistan	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
IRC (5097)	DRC	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
Save the Children (5098)	Ethiopia	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
ChildHope (5170)	Ethiopia	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
WUSC (5136)	Kenya	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	To be included in a later version	Data included in this report	N/A
CfBT (5252)	Kenya	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
Save the Children (5099)	Mozambique	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
BRAC (5063)	Sierra Leone	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	M&E Framework; Logframe
Plan (5096)	Sierra Leone	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
Relief International (5253)	Somalia	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	N/A
CARE (5274)	Somalia	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	To be included in a later version	Data included in this report	N/A
Camfed (5101)	Tanzania	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	M&E framework & feedback Logframe feedback
	Zimbabwe	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	M&E framework & feedback Logframe feedback
World Vision (5243)	Zimbabwe	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Data included in this report	Logframe feedback

Annex H – Terms of Reference

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Annex H - Terms of Reference (revised February 2014)

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation Manager of the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC)

Introduction

1. The Department for International Development (DFID) manages the UK's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty. DFID is working to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the international targets agreed by the United Nations (UN) to halve world poverty by 2015. Progress on girls' education is critical to the achievement of these targets. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2 and 3 specifically relate to education and achieving gender parity.
2. Globally 39 million primary age girls, have never been to school. And 70% of these girls come from the poorest and most marginalised communities in the most disadvantaged locations, ethnic groups etc. Over the last 20 years primary enrolments for girls have improved along with boys but completion rates are equally low for both sexes. At the secondary level the differences between boys and girls participation rates really start to show. Large disparities exist within countries with poor rural girls come off the worst in terms of educational disadvantage even at the primary level.
3. Levels of traditional ODA to education have stagnated and, given the global financial situation and shifting development priorities, may even go into decline. DFID is refocusing its efforts on girls' education through the Girls Education Challenge fund with the ambition that this will have a catalytic effect on other international partners.
4. The GEC is open to competitive bids from non-state organisations to fund programmes that focus on getting girls into primary and lower secondary education, keeping them there, and making sure they learn. It is expected that £355 million is available in total to support the GEC up to March 2016.
5. This support should enable at least 660,000 marginalised girls to complete a full six-year cycle of primary school or 1 million marginalised girls to complete three years of junior secondary school.
6. A dedicated Fund Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the GEC, including establishing the bidding process, supporting bidders,

sifting and scoring proposals, evaluating Value for Money and making project funding recommendations for DFID approval, and managing the relationship with projects to be funded.

7. The independent Evaluation Manager which these Terms of Reference relate will be contracted to establish, lead and manage a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness and impact of individual projects and the GEC as a whole, and disseminate lessons to inform GEC design and wider DFID programming.

Objective

8. DFID is seeking to procure the services of an independent Evaluation Manager for the Girls Education Challenge (GEC) Fund over the next four years. DFID is committed to ensuring that every girl and every boy has access to a good quality education but there is a specific need for an additional focus on girls. The Evaluation Manager will provide an independent and rigorous monitoring and evaluation function, designing and implementing a framework which will assess the effectiveness of individual projects and the GEC as a whole and disseminate good practice.
9. Full details of the GEC can be found in the Business Case on DFID's website www.dfid.gov.uk.

Recipient

10. The recipient of this service will be DFID.

Scope of Work and Requirements

11. The independent Evaluation Manager's primary responsibility is to track results effectively, feedback accurate assessments to DFID and work with the Fund Manager to make lessons available to inform GEC evolution and wider DFID programming. Generate lessons learned based on evaluation findings, primary research and reports from Fund Manager.
12. The Evaluation Manager will be expected to provide a draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for approval by DFID within the first 6 months and an inception report (within the first six months) that should also contain:
 - Risk management plan.
 - Quality assurance plan.
 - Proposed basis of work with Fund Manager.
 - Outline of proposed methods for assessing core indicators.

- Outline of proposed approach to assessing grant-specific additional indicators.
- Outline of proposed approach to measuring and evaluating value for money of individual projects and cost benefit of the programme as a whole.
- Draft M&E guidance and standards for the Fund Manager to disseminate to key stakeholder and partners.
- Proposed outline method for measuring educational outcomes; and
- First draft of design of longitudinal study outlining the feasibility of sampling and data collection strategies to ensure a representative sample of beneficiaries is selected for the subsequent study. Refinement of the design will take place following inception and once the cohort of beneficiaries has been identified by DFID; and
- provide guidance on “evaluability” criteria for project selection process at concept Note and full proposal stage.

Once the inception report is approved it is expected that the Evaluation Manager will be responsible for delivering the following:

13. Tracking progress: ensuring robust measurements of performance at the project and programme level:
 - Quality assure project progress reports, with a focus on ensuring robust tracking of performance based on agreed milestones and targets and challenging data and conclusions if necessary.
 - Notifying DFID of progress with projects, including where problems have arisen that may require action at least twice annually.
 - Provide technical expertise and generic guidance on M&E at the project and portfolio level.
 - Provide technical expertise on a PBR approach, including a framework for administering payment by results and guidelines for grantees on the M&E aspects of PBR.
 - Develop guidance for the Fund Manager to assess the adequacy of project M&E plans to collect systematic baseline, performance, and impact data.
14. Evaluate new approaches to implementation: presenting lessons, including cost comparisons, to inform GEC evolution and wider DFID and global programming.

- Through the Fund Manager disseminate lessons learned and report those to DFID to agree evolution of GEC accordingly.
 - Check that generic lessons are drawn out on what works in girls' education, triangulated with other evidence, and reported to DFID. These lessons may be both immediate and used to inform future GEC evolution or longer term and inform future DFID or others' interventions.
 - Systemic lessons are drawn out on the costs and benefits of the Challenge approach compared to other approaches including DFID bilateral aid and other DFID Challenge Fund type operations.
15. In-depth evaluations: to include working with DFID and the Fund Managers to select, design and administer in depth evaluations on a select number of thematic areas:
- DFID will, following recommendations from the Evaluation Manager, select a number of projects and/or thematic areas for in depth evaluation. These decisions will be based on relevance to the overall objectives of the GEC, potential for wider DFID and global lesson learning and the potential to fill key knowledge gaps and feasibility and cost of collecting data. Whilst designing these evaluations the Evaluation Manager's considerations should include how to: measure the adequacy of methodologies; assess cost comparisons with relevant tried and tested interventions; combine quantitative and qualitative assessments and include a variety of methodologies including community surveys.
 - Track whether results chains set out in the Theory of Change and logframe holds good and that evidence base is sound.
 - Using a variety of research tools (including school-based EGRA/EGMA, classroom observations and teacher interviews) assess the impact of GEC on gender disparities in school-based learning trajectories in a selection of four countries (see Annex B).
 - Producing and dissemination evaluation syntheses across DFID and wider audience.
16. Conduct a meta-evaluation to report on the impact and value for money of the GEC programme as a whole, including the impact of the GEC programme on girls' educational outcomes in absolute terms and relative to boys in certain circumstances.
17. Design the Longitudinal study: to include draft methodology, outline core indicators, milestones and example budget:

- Design at least one separate longitudinal study to follow through a cohort of girls for at least ten years to assess the longer term health and economic impact of education set out in the Theory of Change likely to require study well beyond the 4 year life of the programme. The focus of the longitudinal study will be selected by DFID.
18. Supporting grantees to develop and deliver effective project M&E including the specific requirements linked with Payment by Results and working with the Fund Manager to help grantees design and manage effective M&E components which are consistent with the GEC logframe.
- Support the Fund Manager to ensure all successful proposals have written and financed within the project concrete M&E plans designed to collect systematic baseline data; consistently monitor progress against milestones and targets in the GEC log frame and a plan for conducting an end of project survey to facilitate the project completion report.
19. Disseminate and communicate information: Through the Fund Manager design and administer a structure for disseminating key findings and lesson learning to key partners and stakeholders:
- Through a variety of mediums design an innovative strategy to disseminate data and engage key partners and stakeholder in lesson learning on implementation and good practice.
 - This should include outreach and engagement with: project implementing partners; national governments; DFID country offices; bilateral and multilateral the private sector and civil society.
20. In addition the Evaluation Manager will be expected to:
- Establish a good working relationship with the Fund Manager.
 - Provide input on reporting mechanisms and templates at project and programme level to ensure evaluation data is captured effectively.
 - Provide quality assurance reviews of Fund Manager quarterly reports.
 - Provide technical support on the use of Payment by Results.
 - Review the Fund Manager's recommendation on updating the programme logframe annually and submit recommendations to DFID. Final approval to be provided by DFID.
 - Respond to the needs of the GEC Team.
21. The Evaluation Manager should have a proven track record of:

- Monitoring and evaluation of development programmes using both quantitative and qualitative methods.
- Working with educational programmes including testing of educational outcomes.
- Social research management.
- Management of impact evaluations; and
- undertaking evaluations in the context of major donor interventions, ideally focused outside of government.

Constraints and Dependencies

22. The Evaluation Manager will be expected to provide its own overseas duty of care in relation to its employees and other personnel it retains and logistical arrangements. If deemed necessary DFID may need to be convinced that systems and procedures that it has in place are adequate if traveling to conflict affected countries. Where the security situation in a GEC country has deteriorated (per the designation of the FCO or another reputable risk and security monitoring service) such that additional security precautions are required to undertake work, the Evaluation Manager may make an application for further funds to meet duty of care requirements.

Reporting and Monitoring and Evaluation

23. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are attached at Annex A. These will ensure that the management of the contract is undertaken as transparently as possible and to ensure that there is clarity of roles and responsibilities between the DFID GEC Team, the Evaluation Manager and the Fund Manager. The Evaluation Manager will need to demonstrate to DFID, at intervals which will be agreed with DFID within 2 months of contract award, its performance against these KPI's.
24. DFID will evaluate the performance of the Evaluation Manager throughout the life of the programme and at least twice yearly one of which will be as part of DFID standard Annual Review of the programme. The Evaluation Manager will be expected to submit progress reports and lessons presented written and orally to DFID twice annually in-line with DFID's programme cycle as outlined in the requirements section of this ToR. It is expected that the Evaluation Manager take a proactive approach to notifying DFID of any matters which may require immediate attention.
25. The inception report should be finalised within the first 6 months as detailed in the scope of work and requirements section. The inception report should outline details of timelines for in-depth evaluations and the longitudinal study

milestones. Comprehensive progress and evaluation report in spring 2015 to inform possible future support for the GEC. The final evaluation report by March 2016.

26. Milestone-based payments within the first year will be based on the approval by DFID of inception and quarterly reports of high standard and which correspond to the requirements of these Terms of Reference. During the first year of the programme, DFID and the Evaluation Manager will use best efforts to agree an amendment of the criteria for milestone based payments to include as an element (at approximately 5%) satisfaction of the KPIs already agreed by DFID and the Evaluation Manager and which incorporate aspects of communication, engagement and timeliness of report submissions.
27. Within the first year of the programme, DFID and the Evaluation Manager will use best efforts to agree an amendment of the criteria for milestone based payments to include additional elements reflecting the KPIs agreed by DFID and the Evaluation Manager pursuant to paragraph 22 of these Terms of Reference.

Timeframe

28. The contract for the Evaluation Manager will be awarded from July 2012 – June 2016. The contract is designed to end after financing is dispersed to allow a final evaluation of projects to be completed if necessary.
29. The Girls Education Challenge fund will run for four years initially (2012 – 2016) with the possibility of a further extension. Although no project financing is committed beyond March 2016 the Evaluation Manager should consider establishing monitoring and evaluation systems in terms of measuring the long-term sustainable benefits of the GEC benefits beyond the life of the programme.
30. The first Step Change Projects will be awarded in late 2012 and Strategic Partnerships will be asked to express further interest around the same time. Initial Innovative projects are likely to be awarded in January 2013. All projects proposals will be approved by DFID, following recommendations by the Fund Manager.
31. The Evaluation Manager will be expected to play a significant role supporting the Fund Manager to arrange an event to be held in early 2016 at which the GEC projects will be able to demonstrate the results of their investments to the Fund Managers and a panel of potential funders (including private sector foundations).

DFID coordination and management

32. The DFID GEC team (consisting of the Girls Education (GE) Lead Adviser and Programme Co-ordinator, Innovation and Private Sector Manager, Evaluation Advisor, Programme Manager and Deputy Project Manager) will have the day-to-day oversight and management of the Evaluation Manager. The DFID GEC team will monitor operational and financial progress and raise any issue that require attention to DFID senior management and Ministers as necessary. The DFID EvD Team will also have an oversight role of the GEC Evaluation Manager, providing strategic advice as required and ensuring that evaluation and monitoring activity aligns with wider DFID activity. The DFID GEC team will work alongside the Evaluation Manager and Fund Manager to consider what input is required, by whom and at what times to ensure technical advice is on hand at the right time during the bid approval process.
33. The Evaluation Manager will be expected to report to the DFID twice annually alongside the Fund Manager who will be expected to present funding recommendations along with progress and decision points to the steering committee. DFID will then submit their view on this information to the Secretary of State for International Development for his final approval before any financing is awarded or any significant changes are made to the fund. It will be expected that there will be a regular weekly meeting between the GEC team and the Evaluation Manager for the first 6 months of the contract and thereafter to be agreed with the DFID GEC Team.

Enc:

Annex A - Evaluation Manager Key Performance Indicators

Annex B – Gender Disparities in Learning Concept Note