Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies

ACCELERATED EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

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Accelerated Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda

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The AEWG would like to dedicate this report to Rachael Corbishley, who passed in 2021. Rachael was a huge advocate for Accelerated Education and during her time as Education Consortium Manager for Save the Children in Uganda, she worked tirelessly to advocate for quality education for children and youth affected by crisis.

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List of Acronyms

AE	Accelerated education
AEP	Accelerated education programme
AEWG	Accelerated Education Working Group
BRiCE	Building Resilience in Crisis through Education
CAP	*Centre d'Apprentissage Professionnel*/Professional Apprenticeship Centre, DRC
CATED	*Cellule d'Appui Technique de l'Education*/ Technical Support Unit, DRC
CCT	Centre coordinating tutor
CEP	Continuous education professional
CMC	Centre management committee
CRS/AE	*Centre de Ratrappage Scolaire* (Centre for Accelerated Education)/AE centres, DRC
DEVCO/ INTPA	[European Union Directorate-General] International Cooperation and Development, now known as INTPA
DIS	District Inspectors of Schools, Uganda
DIPROMAD	Direction des Programmes et Matériels Didactiques/Curriculum and Teaching Materials Division
DIVAS	*Division des Affaires Sociales* (translated as the Ministry of Social Affairs)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EMIS	Education management information system
EGMA	Early grade math assessment
EGRA	Early grade reading assessment
EPST	*Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Technique* (Primary, Secondary and Technical Education), also referred to the Ministry of Education, DRC
ESA	Education situation analysis (ESA)
FCDO	Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (formerly DFID)
FDCs	Folk development colleges
GBV	Gender-based violence
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
JENA	Joint education needs assessment
LGIHE	Luigi Guissani Institute of Higher Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MoEST), Uganda
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Uganda
MOHA	Ministry of Home Affairs, Dept. of Refugee Education, Tanzania
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre, Uganda
NECTA	National Education Council of Tanzania
NER	Net enrolment rate
NFE	Non-formal education
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
OOSCY	Out-of-school children and youth
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PLE	Primary leaving examination
PNRS	*Programme National de Rattrapage Scolaire* (National Programme for Accelerated Learning)
PTA	Parent teacher association
PTC	Primary Teachers' College, Uganda
PO-RALG	President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government
SEQUIP	Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project SEQUIP, Tanzania
SMC	School management committee
UPE	Universal primary education
USE	Universal secondary education
TENAFEP	National end of primary studies examination, DRC
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
Vas-Y-Fille!	Valorisation de la Scholarisation de la Fille (Valuation of the Girl's Education)

Introduction: Accelerated Education

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) clearly articulate the need to reach out to all children and youth with appropriate educational opportunities. Globally, accelerated education programmes are being employed more frequently to address this need and provide access to flexible education opportunities for large numbers of over-age out-of-school children and youth.

Accelerated education (AE) is a crucial intervention for over-age, out-of-school children and youth aged between 10-18 years of age. Accelerated education programmes (AEPs) are flexible, age-appropriate programmes run in an accelerated time frame that aim to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out-of-school children and youth – particularly those who missed out on or had their education interrupted due to poverty, marginalisation, conflict and crisis.[1]

The Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG) is made up on education partners working in accelerated education. The AEWG is part of the Inter agency network for education in emergencies (INEE) with representation from UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, NRC, Plan, IRC, Save the Children, Education Development Centre, ECHO, and War Child Holland. The AEWG aims to strengthen accelerated education programming quality through a more harmonised approach aligned with the AEWG 10 Principles for Effective Practice[2]. The AEWG has five focus areas: More governments including AEPs in national education plans and policies; strengthening the AE evidence base; improving the quality of AEPs; all key stakeholders better resourcing AEPs for scale and quality and supporting the COVID response.

In practice, there is an incredible diversity of programs labelled AEPs. In addition, recent research, AE reviews, and AE mapping conducted by the AEWG have highlighted that a high degree of variability exists in the intensity and quality of implementation of various components of accelerated learning and education, with terms such as 'bridging,' 'remedial,' and 'catch-up' being used incorrectly yet interchangeably with AEPs. The table below clarifies the different types of educational programming that may support learners who have spent substantial periods out of school.

1 AEWG (2020) Accelerated Education Working Group. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/accelerated-education-working-group.html

2 Ibid

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES TO SUPPORT MARGINALISED LEARNERS				
	CATCH-UP PROGRAMMES	ACCELERATED EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	REMEDIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	BRIDGING PROGRAMMES
LEARNERS Learners are/were...	» Previously attending a formal or non-formal education programme at any stage/grade/level » Missed a couple of months to approximately one year of education due to an education disruption caused by crisis, conflict, or displacement	» Over-age for their grade » Out-of-school (e.g., for 2 or more years) or never attended school » Did not complete primary school » Affected by poverty, crisis, conflict, or displacement	» Currently enrolled/ attending an education programme » Require additional support in a specific subject area(s)	» Displaced learners of any age/grade » Previously attending school in their home country where the curriculum was significantly different than the host country curriculum or was taught in a different language
OBJECTIVES The programme helps learners...	» Recover lost learning » Acquire skills they missed during the disruption » Resume education from the point they would be if the disruption had not occurred » Transition back into the same education programme they were in prior to the disruption	» Gain basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills » Complete the primary curriculum and obtain a certificate » Transition into secondary school, vocational training, or livelihoods	» Acquire knowledge and skills in a subject area(s) through additional targeted support » Succeed in the education programme they are currently enrolled in	» Gain skills in the language of instruction or gain other knowledge and skills for success in the host country education system » Transition into the formal education system of the host country
COVERAGE The programme covers...	» Knowledge and skills learners already had but lost when they were out of school » New knowledge and skills they missed during the disruption	» All of lower primary, the entire primary cycle, or the entire basic education cycle	» Subject areas that an individual learner or group of learners are having difficulty with	» A new language of instruction or background knowledge learners need for success in the new education system

Table 1. Education Programmes to Support Marginalised Learners, Accelerated Education Working Group (2021).

Source: *Accelerated Education Working Group (2021)*[3].

The COVID-19 pandemic, which left 1.6 billion children out of school worldwide, meant the world needed to scale up flexible education options to reach all learners rapidly. This global need mandated the AEWG to leverage their expertise in accelerating learning to guide donors, implementers, and education systems to help all learners catch up when schools reopen. It also required additional capacity within the AEWG to document and support the implementation of the AEWG's work plan.

3 Accelerated Education Working Group (2021). Catch-up Programmes: 10 Principles to Help Learners Catch Up and Return to Learning. Catch-up Programmes: 10 Principles for Helping Learners Catch Up and Return to Learning | INEE

The Building Resilience in Conflict through Education (BRICE) project

In 2017, the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (INTPA) allocated significant funding to support multi-year education projects under their Building Resilience in Conflict through Education (BRICE) initiative. The European Union aims to improve quality education in preschool and at primary and lower secondary levels for children in fragile and crisis-affected environments through the BRICE programme. BRICE is currently being implemented in DRC, Ethiopia, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda, and EUR 24 million has been invested in funding between 2018-2021 across the four locations.[4]

This report stems from a NORCAP[5] deployment to the AEWG that aimed to contribute to each of the AEWG's areas of focus with a specific emphasis on supporting the ongoing AEWG work in the BRICE countries. In particular, the NORCAP expert directly supported the AEWG's work with donors and governments to promote recognition of AE as a critical component of humanitarian, early recovery, and development programming. Another key task of the NORCAP deployment to the AEWG was to strengthen the evidence base from the BRICE projects, linking in AEWG research around how policy level is enabled or constrained and sharing good practice between the research countries of focus and the BRICE countries.

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Through the BRICE initiative, four consortia (including the research partners mentioned below and international and national organisations and NGOs) were awarded multi-year grants that included independent research studies to complement the more significant project intervention. The BRICE programme's specific objective is to deliver safe, quality primary education and strengthen societal and institutional resilience to make these actions sustainable over time. Research on teaching and learning in safe learning environments to build the evidence base of what works best in crises is an essential element of BRICE. The request for proposals for the BRICE initiative required that 'research on teaching and learning…be embedded into project proposals to ensure evidence building as a sound basis for policy development and action at national, regional and global level and that linkages should be made to existing global and regional knowledge management networks and initiatives and platforms.;

The specific objective of the BRICE project, 'to deliver safe quality basic education and to strengthen societal and institutional resilience to make these actions sustainable over time,' fits well with the AEWG areas of focus, particularly around improving quality and ensuring AEPs are sustainable through the AEWG's work with governments and other key stakeholders at the policy level and in advocating for more resources for AEPs.

This report investigates Accelerated Education (AE) in South Sudan, DRC, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Methodology

While there are various methodologies and frameworks to apply when assessing an education sector, the author decided to conduct an education situational analysis (ESA) for this report.

Policy environments in the BRICE programme contexts are incredibly dynamic and require particular attention to interactions between development interventions and their contexts. An education situation analysis has synergies with political, economic analysis (PEA) frameworks, which are increasingly popular in education and international development research. A PEA takes into account the structures, institutions and agents that influence education in any given context.[6] Education systems, and the content and outcomes of policy interventions, do not exist in isolation from broader social issues, structures, and processes. PEA provides a means of unpacking the political and economic interests and relationships that underpin and intersect with educational policies and interventions, from setting policy agendas to policy formulation to implementation. Most PEA tools and frameworks cover multi-stage processes, involving determining the focus and scope of analysis, desk research, stakeholder mapping and analysis, planning for primary research, primary data collection and analysis, and reporting and dissemination. Most involve both desk reviews of existing materials (e.g. policy analysis) to inform understandings of contexts and sectors, key challenges and knowledge gaps, and primary field research involving interviews, focus groups, workshops, and other methods.

PEA has thus become an increasingly important part of national and international education policy-making processes in conflict-affected contexts. These analyses draw explicit attention to forms, structures, relations, and power dynamics – between 'local' and international, and governmental and non-governmental actors – central to development politics, processes, and outcomes.[7]

4 ECHO (2020) Giving everyone a chance to access education. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/stories/giving-everyone-chance-access-education_en

5 NORCAP is a global provider of expertise to the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors.

6 Novelli M, Higgins S, Ugur M, et al. (2014). *The Political Economy of Education Systems in Conflict-Affected Contexts: A Rigorous Literature Review*. https://gsdrc.org/document-library/the-political-economy-of-education-systems-in-conflict-affected-contexts/

7 Ibid

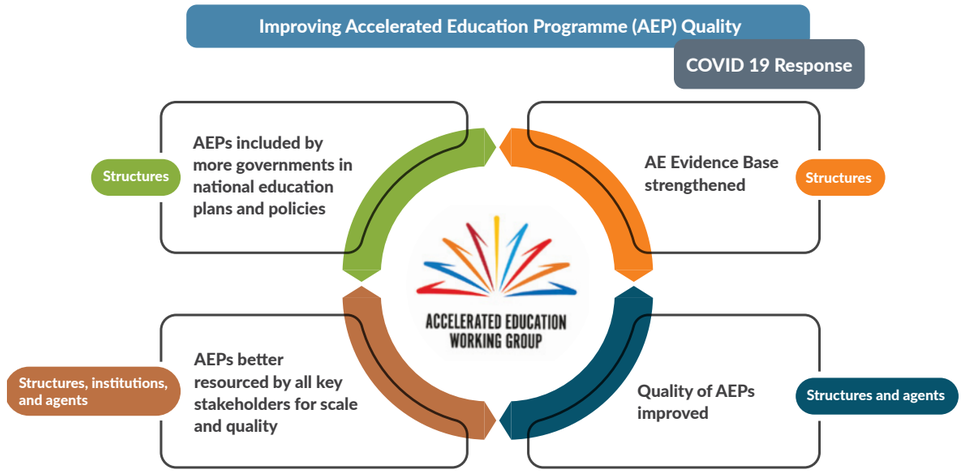
Secondly, similar to most PEA tools and frameworks, this report covered multi-stage processes involving determining the focus and scope of analysis, desk research, stakeholder mapping and analysis, primary data collection in the form of key informant interviews and analysis, and reporting and dissemination. The research included a desk review of policy documents, academic literature around PEA and ESAs, AE reviews, programmatic evaluations, and assessments. It included sources from South Sudan's Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP), education statistics (UNESCO, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) country sitreps), education sector plans (ESPs) and partners' programmatic documentation. The desk review was undertaken to inform understandings of contexts and sectors, key challenges, and knowledge gaps. The majority of data within this report came from a desk-based review of available external and internal evaluations, studies and research of AE programmes in the four contexts. Discrete analysis of each piece of evidence with information relevant to the critical questions and sub-questions was documented and coded using Excel.

Due to COVID restrictions, the author could not travel to conduct data collection. Therefore, the primary field research involved interviews with key education stakeholders via Zoom calls and an online survey with identified AE stakeholders. The consultations included education stakeholders in South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and at the regional and global levels (see appendix for the complete list of participants). The report was later circulated to AE partners in-country for review.

In framing this report's approach, the author found that the PEA multilevel model aligned with the AEWG'five 5 areas of focus (in 2020, the AEWG added an area of focus, 'Support for COVID-19') response efforts. As the tables on the following page illustrate, the AEWG's areas align with a PEA by examining structures, institutions and 'agents' or key stakeholders involved in accelerated education in the BRICE programme, as highlighted in the table below. This report also captures how AE programmes were adapted in the wake of the pandemic. As such, the education situation analysis covered the AEWG's five core areas of focus:AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies;

1. AE evidence base strengthened;
2. Quality of AEPs improved;
3. AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality and;
4. Support for the COVID response.

Structures	Institutions	Agents
1) AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies	3) Quality of AEPs improved	3) Quality of AEPs improved;
4) AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality	4) AEPs better resourced by all key stakeholders for scale and quality	2) AEPs better evidenced
	5) Support for the COVID response.	5) Support for the COVID response.



In each country context, the AE stakeholders were asked the following questions relating to different components of the PEA:

STRUCTURES

- How, by whom, and at what scale is educational provision for out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY) in the country problematised, determined, coordinated, governed, administered, and managed?
- What national and regional frameworks, plans, and policies support AE?
- What does education provision for OOSCY cost, and how is it financed?

INSTITUTIONS

- In whose interests are these practices and politics carried out? What is the scope of education for OOSCY, and what are its relations with other state sectors?
- How do other sectors inform, influence, and interact with AE/non-formal education models?
- Are there coordination mechanisms, task teams, working groups, and the main stakeholders and institutions engaged in shaping and providing AE/education for OOSCY?

AGENTS

- What are some of the indicators of quality of education provision for OOSCY/AE? (e.g. programmatic enrolment vs transition rates, access (from an equity lens), teacher professional development opportunities)?
- What percentage of AE learners complete the last level of AEP?
- What percentage of AE learners pass the primary/basic leaving exam upon completing AEP?
- What percentage of AE completers transition to formal education, other education, or livelihoods?
- What are the individual, private, public, collective and community outcomes of these processes and decisions?
- Has COVID–19 impacted education provision for OOSCY/AE? (e.g., programmatic adaptations, impact upon retention and transition taking into account equity)

However, one of the limitations of this study has been the number of stakeholders that the author was able to consult within each context. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the author could not conduct primary data research with children, parents, and communities, despite these groups being the most crucial education stakeholders in assessing the state of AE. Furthermore, the author could not connect with local and community-based organisations that may also implement AE. To mitigate their absence, the author examined programmatic documentation where possible, including evaluations, assessments, and reflections by children, parents and community groups supplied by the AE stakeholders. For the analysis, where possible, the author also applied an equity lens as identified by Shah and Lopes Cardozo[8], recognizing that examining educational access and equity concerns concurrently requires both an intersectional and intersectoral lens that acknowledge the intersectional, hybrid dimensions of opportunity and disadvantage (including geography, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality, and social class).

The first section of this report will explore AE in the DRC.

8 Shah, R., and M. Lopes Cardozo. 2019. Achieving educational rights and justice in conflict-affected contexts. *Education and Conflict Review*, 2, 59–64.

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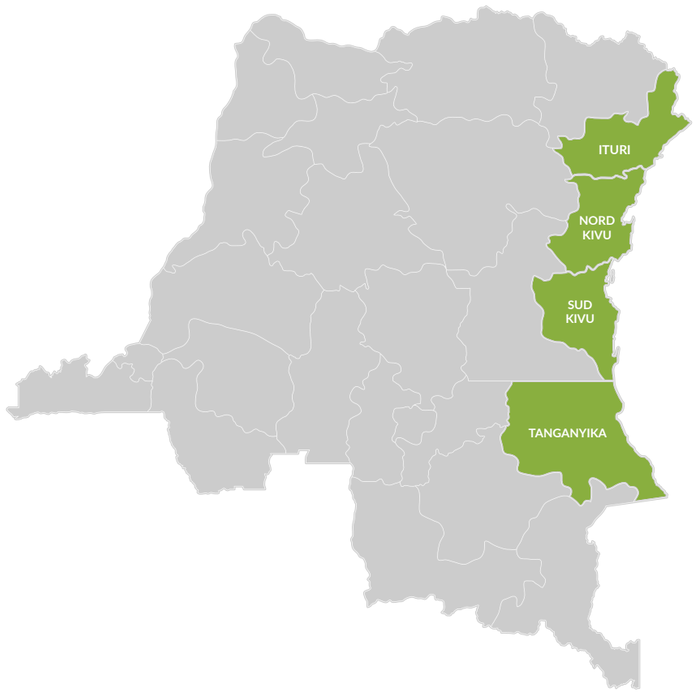
EDUCATION SITUATION ANALYSIS:

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Background (Context)

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has one of the world's most complex and long-standing humanitarian crises, particularly in eastern DRC. Despite being endowed with abundant natural resources, DRC remains one of the poorest countries in the world. In 2019, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was only US$564, and an estimated 76.6% of the population lived in extreme poverty (on less than US$1.90 per day). DRC accounts for 7% of the total population of extreme poor globally and ranks third (after India and Nigeria) in terms of the absolute number of extreme poor – about 62 million people. Furthermore, a complex emergency has persisted in DRC for more than 30 years. Population displacement is frequent, repeated, and driven mainly by armed clashes and intercommunal violence between foreign, self-defence, and other armed groups. More than 5 million people are internally displaced, and the DRC has the largest IDP population in Africa.[9] The security situation remains volatile because of armed clashes and inter-ethnic conflicts, particularly in four of DRC's 26 provinces: Nord-Kivu, Sud-Kivu, Ituri, and Tanganyika (*see figure 1*). Humanitarian needs are projected to be higher in 2021 than at the beginning of 2020 as displaced and local populations are faced with violence, food insecurity, floods, disease outbreaks, and the secondary effects of COVID-19 restrictions.

Figure 1: *Map of DRC*



Source: *ACAP 2020*

9 ACAPS. (October 2020). *Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform.* https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf

Over 941,000 refugees from DRC live in African host countries. DRC also hosts about 527,000 refugees, mainly from Rwanda, the Central African Republic, Congo, and Angola[10]. Since mid-December 2020, 92,000 refugees fleeing violence related to the 27 December elections in CAR have arrived in Bas-Uele, Nord-Ubangi, and Sud-Ubangi provinces. Most arrivals are located in villages close to the river border, where host communities have already struggled to meet their needs.[11]

Education in DRC: Government Plans and Policies

Link to AEWG: AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

As aforementioned, DRC has been embroiled in a violent conflict for close to 30 years. Despite the ongoing violence, the education sector has continued to operate, but many factors prevent children from receiving a quality education.[12] However, education access is a critical, strategic goal for the Government, all the more pertinent as DRC's under-14 population accounts for 46% of the country's total demographic[13] Despite this, DRC is ranked 146 out of 157 countries on the 2018 Human Capital Index (HCI), and a child born in the country today is only expected to obtain 4.7 learning-adjusted years of schooling.[14]

In 2015, the DRC government created a ten-year national education strategy with two goals: increasing children's access to education and ensuring that all children master fundamental reading skills by the end of Grade 2. A fundamental part of the strategy was to roll out free primary education.[15] In September 2019, the Congolese Government started implementing a new nationwide policy called *Gratuité* to provide free access to primary schools.[16] Until the start of the 2019 school year, the DRC was one of the few countries in the world where primary schools still charged fees, and public spending per primary student in DRC is among the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa.[17] The average public finance for education has fallen over several decades, from $150 per pupil in 1982 to $10 in 2006, indicating a severe lack of infrastructure and curriculum investment in public schools. Over the same period, the number of primary and secondary teachers on the government payroll was cut by half and salaries reduced by 25%.[18] Several partners trace the decay of the education

10 Ibid

11 Ibid

12 Marchais, G. et al. (2021). *Marginalisation from Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Learning from Tanganyika and Ituri in the DR Congo, IDS Working Paper 544.* Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.017

13 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

14 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at: https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

15 Cambridge Education (2017) 'The School Fees Landscape in the DRC ACCELERE!2', available at A2-School-Fees-report-FINAL-DRAFT-3.pdf (eduquepsp.education)

16 Marchais, G. *et al.* (2021). *Marginalisation from Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Learning from Tanganyika and Ituri in the DR Congo*, IDS Working Paper 544. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.017

17 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

18 ACAPS. (October 2020). *Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform.* Available at https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf

system in DRC to the establishment of the democratic process in the 1990s, when Zaire (as it was then known went from being seen as one of the best places in the region to be educated changed to DRC, where parents were forced to take responsibility for the education of their children. Whilst the state oversees the education system, almost 75% of all primary school pupils attend the '*écoles conventionnées*.' These are schools managed by church networks but recognised as public schools. The religious networks are powerful and influential and maintain their administrative structures linked to the Government at the national, provincial, and sub-provincial levels[19]. The state pays teachers and administrative staff, but relationships are ambiguous. The dual nature of education management of the écoles conventionneés and non-conventionneés impedes efficiency and accountability in the system.[20]

According to data collected by the World Bank, until the *Gratuité* /free school policy was implemented, Congolese households financed two-thirds of the essential education services that the state could no longer afford, including teachers' salaries and administrative staff school operating costs.[21] As a result, parents spent nearly $65 per year per child for primary school on average. The most vulnerable families were not always able to afford this. Some 64% of households surveyed in 2018 indicated that high fees were the main obstacle to their children's school enrolment.[22] In 2016 almost 27% (3.5 million) of children of primary school age did not go to school, 44% of those who did attend started late, and just two-thirds completed their education to sixth grade.[23]

"About 84% of primary schools are publicly funded and are managed under two regimes: (i) écoles conventionnées and (ii) écoles non-conventionnées. Conventionné schools account for 80% of public primary schools and are managed by faith-based organizations (FBOs) under a 1977 agreement. The agreement establishes that the state 'organises' education and churches 'manage' the schools. The state defines the pedagogical programmes, oversees quality, and pays personnel and operating costs. FBOs hire teachers and mobilize additional resources as needed, including for new infrastructure. They have their own administration and inspection services. Non-conventionné schools are managed directly by the government. Both types of schools are supervised by administrative structures known as management offices (bureaux gestionnaires (BGs). Private schools make up 16% of all primary schools and disproportionately serve the better-off (30% of their students come from the top quintile of household income, and only 11% come from the bottom quintile)."

Source: World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

19 Brandt, Cyril Owen, and Stylianos Moshonas. 2020. "L'impact de La Décentralisation Sur La Gouvernance Du Système Éducatif En République Démocratique Du Congo : Entre Contraintes Budgétaires et Fragmentation Administrative." In Congo : L'État En Morceaux. Politique et Administration Au Prisme Du Découpage Provincial, edited by Pierre Englebert and Balthazar Ngoy. Paris: Harmatta

20 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

21 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

22 World Bank (2020) ' The New ambitions of Congolese now that school is free, available at : https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/06/16/the-new-ambitions-of-congolese-schoolchildren-now-that-school-is-free

23 Mott MacDonald (2020) 'Goal 16: Learning to deliver quality education', available at https://www.mottmac.com/goal-16-learning-to-deliver-quality-education

Given how recently the *Gratuité* free school policy was implemented, its impact is unknown. However, reports from partners and implementers during the data collection of this research reported significant increases in the number of students in classrooms and, as a result, increased difficulties for schools and teachers in accommodating those students and providing quality education. According to the World Bank, 'little planning was done ahead of the September 2019 implementation of the policy, in part due to the seven-month delay in forming a Government.'[24] Over 80% of the 2019 budget of the Ministry of Education (MoE), known nationally as the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Technical Education/*Ministère de l'Education Primaire, Secondaire, et Technique* (EPST), was for salaries and other recurring expenditures.[25] 'While the 2020 budget foresaw a doubling of education spending, domestic revenues will not increase rapidly enough to finance the additional costs in the short term fully, and the economic impacts of COVID-19 are expected to increase external financing needs significantly.'[26]

A second consequence of the new *Gratuité* policy is that there has been a massive addition of teachers and non-registered schools to the *Service de Controle de la Paie des Enseignant* (SECOPE)/ teacher payroll service database. Due to previous education reforms in 2014, three groups of teachers have emerged: (i) those recognised by the payroll system and paid; (ii) those who are in the payroll system but not paid (NPs); and (iii) those not yet recognised by the payroll system, who are in posts with or without official decrees (*nouvelles unités* (NUS)).[27] Teachers in the NP category started receiving their salaries soon after the announcement of the free schooling policy in September 2019, whereas up to 190,000 teachers may be in the NU category. A similar situation exists for schools themselves. Again, as many as 13,000 may be NU and not receive operating grants.[28]

According to data collected, the average monthly salary of a Congolese teacher today ranges from $90 to $180. With the introduction of the *Gratuité* policy, teachers can no longer rely on payments from parents and community groups. As a result, since September 2020, there have been teacher strikes across the country, called by the Congo Teachers Union (SYECO) and the National Union of Catholic Teachers (SYNECAT).[29] The strikes have called for a series of changes to the MoE/EPST,[30] with salaries at the centre of teacher demands.[31]

Furthermore, according to a recent report, 'in November 2020, the DRC's auditor general published a report that revealed the payroll crisis's depths. Masses of teachers remained unpaid while new

24 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

25 ibid

26 ibid

27 Notes from ey informant interviews and World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

28 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

29 Forku, R. (2020). 'Teachers Observe Strike in DRC',https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/teachers-observe-strike-in-dr-congo/2011572

30 use the acronym MOE/EPST to encompass the most widely used term in the DRC when referring to the Ministry of Education.

31 Ba-Mweze (2020). 'Des parents inquiets face à la grève dans les écoles en RDC' https://www.dw.com/fr/des-parents-inquiets-face-%C3%A0-la-gr%C3%A8ve-dans-les-%C3%A9coles-en-rdc/a-55430715

ones were added to the payroll. There was also an influx of administrative staff, diverting resources from teacher salaries. In addition, the report revealed the embezzlement of 62 billion Congolese francs (about US$30 million) and other forms of payroll fraud'[32].

In summary, this section has aimed to provide an overview of the dynamic and fast-changing macro-level education policies currently unfolding in the DRC. Reviewing macro-level policies is critical when conducting an ESA. AE (and broader education) stakeholders need to understand the effectiveness of existing interventions. This requires an awareness of the context-specific political and cultural dynamics into which programmes and policies arrive.[33] The education reforms mentioned above demonstrate a long-term commitment to transform the education system in DRC; however, for transformation to occur, there are numerous challenges to overcome before DRC has an equitable education system. Drawing on statistics predominantly from the World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), the following section highlights the powerful influence of circumstances such as wealth, gender, ethnicity, citizenship status, and location, over which people have little control but which play an essential role in shaping their opportunities for education and life.

National Overview of Education Access and Inequity

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs improved

There are profound discrepancies in educational access in the DRC.

As many as 87% of primary-school-aged children were believed to have enrolled before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the free school policy. This amounts to approximately 17 million children enrolled in primary education (including public and private education providers) across more than 53,000 schools staffed by 540,000 teachers.[34] Nevertheless, despite relatively high primary school enrolment nationally, an estimated 3.5 million children of primary school age were out of school before the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the WIDE database, 17% of girls and 13% of boys aged 9–12 years have never attended school in the DRC. In addition, most unenrolled children are based in rural areas, highlighting that in DRC, location is an essential factor in education access.[35] Furthermore, the discrepancies in data suggest that there is a gap between enrolment and actual attendance.

However, whilst these statistics provide an essential insight into the number of out-of-school children nationally; it should be noted that the system for tracking education, the Education Management Information System (EMIS), is not updated regularly and thus does not include children whose education may have been disrupted due to conflict, Ebola, and COVID-19. However, it is precisely in these challenging contexts where most AE implementing partners respond, and further analysis on this specific age group is discussed in the following chapter.

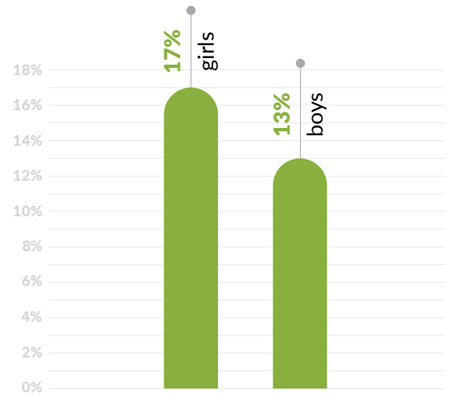
32 Brandt, C., Marchais, G., Mwakupemba, G., Moshonas.S., Herdt, T. 'Why payroll fraud in the DRC's education sector will be hard to fix', available at: https://theconversation.com/why-payroll-fraud-in-the-drcs-education-sector-will-be-hard-to-fix-162257

33 Novelli, M. et al (2014)' The political economy of education systems in conflict-affected contexts', available at: https://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=3495

34 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

35 UNESCO (2021) 'Education Inequities in DRC', available at: https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/d-r-congo

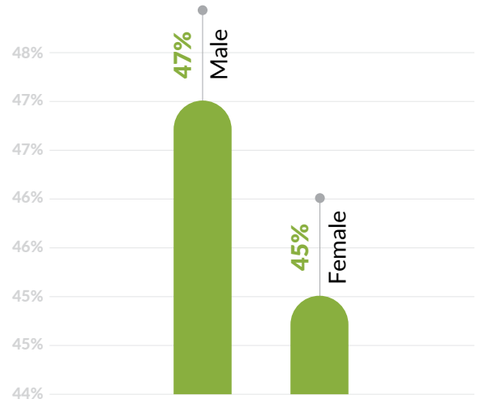
NEVER ATTENDED SCHOOL (9-12 YEARS)



44% of children start school above six years of age, the mandatory entry age for primary school [36]. This has resulted in an average of 46% of school-age children being two years over their 'grade' age. The AEWG considers learners who have missed more than two years of school and above ten eligible for AE. Due to the late enrolment rate in the DRC, the figures indicate that a high proportion of learners in DRC could become eligible for accelerated education programmes due to being above the grade age.[37]

A further examination into the percentage of learners completing education at primary graduation age indicates that the national average is 81%, even though almost half of the learners will start school above age. However, the completion figure differs greatly depending on family wealth (63% of the poorest children versus 97% of the wealthiest families). For example, the 2018 average (girls

OVERAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE



36 USAID (2021). 'Education in DRC', available at https://www.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo/education

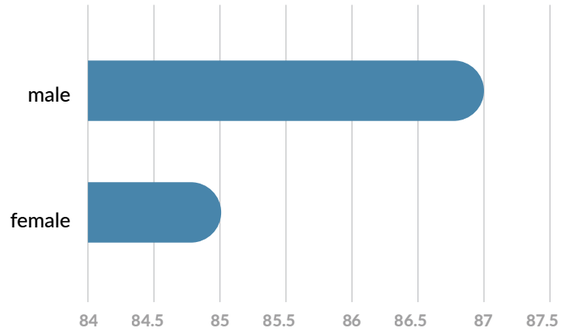
37 The AEWG guidelines recommends AE programmes for children 10–18 years of age.

and boys) primary completion rate was 67%, yet learning poverty (the share of 10-year-olds who cannot understand a simple text) stood at 86%, indicating that a high percentage of school-age children are not acquiring age-appropriate functional literacy and numeracy skills.[38]

One of the reasons learning outcomes could be so low may relate to the language of instruction (LOI). According to a recent brief by Brandt, 'national and local languages can be used in the first four years of primary schooling (*cycles élémentaire et moyen*), while French remains the ultimate LOI. In practice, national and sometimes local languages are the LOI in grades 1 and 2, while grades 3 and 4 are transition years where French is introduced and increasingly used as LOI. In grades 5 and 6 the respective national language remains a subject while French becomes the LOI.'[39] Parents strongly advocate for French to be the LOI, despite very few families speaking French at home. Studies show that learning in mother tongue correlates to higher learning outcomes globally. As noted, there is a need for an awareness-raising campaign among communities to demonstrate the benefits of the shift to national languages.[40]

According to the WIDE statistics, the primary completion rate for learners 15-24 years of age is relatively high, with an average of 86%. Once again, this highlights that most learners are 'above' their grade age and suggests that accelerated secondary education provision may be needed to enable 15-24-year-olds, particularly females, to continue their education with more age-appropriate pedagogy and flexibility.

PRIMARY COMPLETION RATES FOR 15-24 YEARS



Whilst there is relative gender parity nationally at the primary school level, DRC was ranked as one of the thirteen countries in the world with the worst gender disparity at the secondary level, suggesting that even if girls do complete primary education, there are gender-specific obstacles to completing their education.[41] At the secondary level, 29% of females of secondary school age are out of school compared to 21% of male learners of the same age[42]. In the North Kivu Province, adolescents were twice as likely to have less than two years in school (three times as likely for poor females) compared to the national average.[43] The disparity between girls and boys' enrollment at the secondary level could be attributed to the violence, sexual harassment, and abuse prevalent in certain conflict-affected provinces.[44] According to a 2014 Demographic and Health Survey, 27% of women ages 15-49 reported having experienced sexual violence, among whom 14.4% reported that the attack occurred before the age of 15.[45] Boys and girls are victims of physical abuse perpetrated primarily by teachers; in many schools, male students more frequently suffer corporal punishment than females.[46] However, girls are often victims of discrimination and sexual abuse perpetrated primarily by male teachers and students. The scarcity of female teachers is believed to contribute to this situation – for example, only 29% of teachers are female across all primary schools. Evidence suggests that learners' mistrust of the system and that parents and directors are likely not to believe student reports leads to the underreporting and documentation of sexual and gender-based violence in schools.[47] For female students, it has been reported that if they refuse the advances of their teachers, they may be punished by mistreatment in the classroom or by a failing grade, the latter of which could contribute to gender disparity in higher grades.[48] As a result, safe, protective education spaces and accelerated modalities are essential in supporting girls in finishing their primary and secondary education cycles.

As mentioned, location plays a huge role in education completion rates in DRC, which is particularly evident when exploring completion rates for girls and boys. Whilst there has been a considerable increase in literacy levels for males and females over the past two decades, there is still gender inequity, with 91% of males literate versus 79.7 % of females.[49]

Location further impacts average youth literacy rates (the percentage of 15–24 years with functional literacy skills) for girls and boys. For example, functional literacy ranges from 81% in Equateur to 98% in Kinshasa.[50] On the other hand, the literacy rate in conflict-affected areas like Kasai, Katanga and Tanganyika, the literacy rate is 85%.[51]

38 World Bank (2020) Project Appraisal Document: Education DRC , available at : https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/950891592618926682/pdf/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-Emergency-Equity-and-System-Strengthening-in-Education-Project.pdf

39 Brandt, C. (2020) Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: What works?. Available (5) (PDF) Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: What works? (researchgate.net)

40 ibid

41 Ackerman, X. (2015), *Innovation and action in funding girls' education.* Brookings Institute. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Ackerman-Girls-Education-v2.pdf

42 UNESCO (2021) Education Inequalties in the DRC available at https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/d-r congo#?dimension=sex&group=|Female|Male&year=latest

43 Sperling, G.B. and Winthrop, R. (2016). *What works in girls education.* Brookings Institution Press. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/What-Works-in-GirlsEducationlowres.pdf

44 Ibid

45 USAID. (publication date unknown). IMPROVING READING, ACCESS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE DRC (ACCELERE!) PROJECT FINAL GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, available at PA00TKJQ.pdf (usaid.gov)

46 Ibid

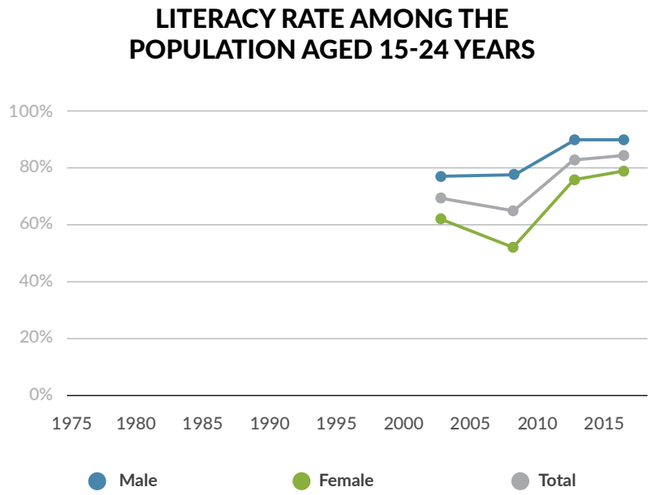
47 Ibid

48 Ibid

49 UNESCO (2021), Democratic Republic of the Congo | UNESCO UIS, available at http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/cd

50 Ibid

51 ACAPS. (October 2020). *Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform.* https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf
Ibid



Whilst the statistics above highlight the educational inequities learners face in DRC; it is essential to note that some groups, particularly refugee learners, face additional barriers to accessing education. For example, according to a recent report in 2020, 46% of Rwandan refugee children and 30% of Central African refugee children living in camps in DRC are unenrolled, while 62% of those living outside of camps are unenrolled.[52] Similarly, 40% of South Sudanese refugee children are not enrolled in school.[53]

As the statistics in this section have highlighted, DRC faces multiple challenges about access, quality and transition rates on a national level. In addition to complex and multiple challenges to educational access nationwide, recurrent bouts of conflict and displacement have severely impacted school enrolment and retention levels in affected provinces. In DRC, the WIDE data highlights that education participation varies markedly between regions, particularly at the secondary school level. This is important for AE stakeholders to reflect upon because, increasingly, global evidence suggests that a lack of secondary education opportunities, particularly in conflict-affected regions, can have a devastating impact upon primary progression and completion rates.[54]

The following section provides a deeper analysis of education in conflict-affected provinces, where cycles of continuous education disruption would indicate a need for accelerated education opportunities. In addition, the following section seeks to outline the incredibly challenging context that influences the political economy within which AE programmes operate and underlines why outcomes and expectations should differ for interventions taking place in these, particularly challenging contexts.

52 Ibid

53 Ibid

54 Mastercard Foundation (2018), 'Secondary Education in Humanitarian Contexts', available at *SEA-Education-in-Emergencies_revised_final-1.pdf (mastercardfdn.org)

Education in Conflict-Affected Areas of the DRC

Schools in conflict- and Ebola-affected provinces are exposed to significant levels of violence. For example, over half of the schools (59%) in the territories of Uvira and Fizi, both in South Kivu, reported having experienced a violent attack since 1990, with 20% having experienced a violent attack in 2017–18.[55] According to a recent assessment by the national education cluster in DRC, the situation in North Kivu does not allow non-formal education structures to function normally, as some centres have been destroyed by repeated clashes, continuous population displacements driven by the Ebola virus, and persistent insecurity.[56] In provinces such as Ituri, North and South Kivu, different armed factions control territories, mining and armed groups recruit thousands of school-aged children each year, and looting and burning of schools are prevalent.[57]

In addition, recent research conducted by BRICE consortium partners Save the Children and IDS points to the emerging issue of ethnic segregation and homogenisation of schools and the emergence of what can be called 'mono-ethnic schools' in conflict-affected areas.[58] For example, findings from the research conducted in Tanganyika highlighted the increase in mono-ethnic schools due to the Twa- Bantu conflict in the area. In their report, Marchais et al. argue that there is a need for a closer analysis of ethnic homogenisation and segregation in schools as this phenomenon has direct implications for educational programming. Their study suggests a critical need for deeper conflict-sensitive education analyses by education stakeholders to understand and support teachers in polarised social contexts, mainly where polarisation occurs along identity lines, as this impacts teacher and student retention rates.[59] To date, there is a paucity of research around these dynamics and their implications for AE programmes in the conflict-affected regions of DRC[60]. However, without exploring ethnic tensions, programmes might inadvertently reinforce the relative marginalisation, inadequately support teachers, and, by doing so, fuel the underlying dynamics of violent conflict and exacerbate drop-out.

To address the multiple education needs in conflict and Ebola-affected areas, in 2021, the Education Cluster devised its humanitarian response plan, outlining sector-specific humanitarian education needs.[61]

55 Marchais, G. *et al.* (2021). *Marginalisation from Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Learning from Tanganyika and Ituri in the DR Congo*, IDS Working Paper 544. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.017

56 ACAPS. (October 2020). *Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform.* https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf

57 ACAPS. (October 2020). *Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform.* https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf

58 Marchais, G. *et al.* (2021). *Marginalisation from Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Learning from Tanganyika and Ituri in the DR Congo*, IDS Working Paper 544. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.017

59 Marchais, G. *et al.* (2021). *Marginalisation from Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Learning from Tanganyika and Ituri in the DR Congo*, IDS Working Paper 544. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.017

60 Marchais, Gauthier, Sweta Gupta, Cyril Brandt, Patricia Justino, Marinella Leone, Pierre Marion, Samuel Matabishi, et al. 2020. BRiCE Project DRC and Niger: Baseline Report. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. doi:10.19088/IDS.2020.003.

61 Areas of prioritization have been selected on the basis of the following factors 1) operational education partners and 2) humanitarian needs (COVID, cholera, and ongoing conflict and displacement). This includes supporting education in 97 localities, located in the provinces of Ituri , Tshopo, Haut-Uélé, North and South Kivu Maniema, Kasaï, Kasaï-Central, Kasaï-Oriental, L'Oréal, and Kasai-Oriental, Lomami, Tanganyika, Haut Katanga and Lualaba. (Source: DRC Education Cluster)

Despite the high level of out of school children in the conflict-affected areas due to Ebola, conflict, cholera, the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher strikes, and nationwide school closures, AE is surprisingly not mentioned in the 2021 Education Cluster's Humanitarian Response Plan. The strategy of the Education Cluster aims 'to ensure access to education for children in displacement situations and those in host households in order to preserve their physical and mental integrity in the short term and improve their living conditions in the medium term, and on the other hand to reduce the risks transmission of epidemics in schools located in the most located in the most at-risk areas.'[62] For example, in 2021, the Cluster will target nearly 230,000 children between the ages of six and 17 affected by population movements (between seven and 12 months), including 202,000 displaced, returned or exiled, 28,000 children from host households, and 10,500 teachers, of which 30% are women. The Education cluster aims to reach 65% of children in need six to 11 years old through this strategy. Ultimately, 35% of children in need between the ages of 12 and 17 will be targeted, with an intended ratio of one teacher for one teacher every 55 children. In addition to these challenges, it is estimated that 15% of the targeted people have disabilities (88,000 people).[63]

Although AE is not mentioned explicitly in the humanitarian response plan, there is a provision of educational activities for out-of-school children under the Education Cluster response, as the extract below highlights. Furthermore, this report explores how cluster partners provide AE programmes in the targeted areas in the following section.

> *The activities will help maintain access to education for children for whom the displacement situation persists and thus improve their living conditions in the medium term. More specifically, in the context of frequent school closures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, recovery or refresher recovery or refresher courses will be organized and community mobilization will be strengthened to mobilization will be strengthened to encourage the return of children to school (especially girls who are most at risk of dropping out).*
>
> *Source: (Humanitarian Response Plan, DRC 2021)*

In summary, in addition to inequitable education access nationwide, there are numerous and nuanced challenges to educational access in conflict-affected areas of DRC, ranging from school-based violence to cycles of displacement due to conflict and health outbreaks and ethnic tensions. Nevertheless, AE is not highlighted as a cluster response, despite the high proportion of children being out of school in these contexts, which stands at odds with the Government's recent efforts to make primary education accessible to and free for all. In the following section, the report will explore how non-formal education, including AE, is problematised and coordinated at the national level.

62 OCHA (2021) Humanitarian Response Plan DRC, available at https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/hrp_2021-vf_28_janvier_web_ok-links.pdf

63 OCHA (2021) Humanitarian Response Plan DRC, available at https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/hrp_2021-vf_28_janvier_web_ok-links.pdf

Non-Formal Education and AE in DRC: Government Structures

Link to AEWG Principle 1)AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

In 2012, UNICEF conducted a nationwide survey on out-of-school children and adolescents (known in DRC as *EADE*). This report highlighted that 7 million children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 17 were outside the education system and led to significant policy changes at the national level.[64] In DRC, the Ministry of Social Affairs, also known as *Division des Affaires Sociales* (DIVAS), traditionally provides institutional leadership for literacy and non-formal education activities. However, in response to UNICEF's study, DIVAS developed a Literacy and Non-Formal Education Development Strategy, which the Government officially adopted in November 2012.[65] This strategy was then integrated into the Education and Training Sector Strategy (2016-2025), adopted in October 2015 and endorsed by technical and financial partners in January 2016.[66] The two strategies above align with the 2030 agenda in its Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) dedicated to education, which emphasises 'the need to ensure inclusive, equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all.'[67]

AE in DRC is administered through two ministries. The Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS is responsible for providing the national non-formal education programmes and preparing learners to take national examinations. The examinations are set and administered by the Ministry of Education/*Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire and Technique* (EPST)/Primary, Secondary and Technical Education. The non-formal education system has three key areas:

1. *Programme National de Rattrapage Scolaire* (PNRS)/national school catch-up: The primary school catch-up for out-of-school youth aged 9 to 14 is in '*Centre de Ratrappage Scolaire*' (CRS). In DRC, AE programmes are commonly referred to as CRS, translated as AE centres. CRS is run by the state, although often with extensive support from implementing partners. For clarity, in this document going forward, 'AE/CRS' will be used when referring to AE programmes specifically supporting primary level learners.[68] The duration of a PNRS programme is three years, condensing the six-year formal primary education cycle by half. After passing the national primary school leaving test, learners receive a certificate issued by the MoE/EPST (commonly known as *TENAFEP*). Learners who pass this test can transition into the formal secondary education system. Depending on their grade, other learners may be directed to vocational training.
2. *Centre d'Apprentissage Professionnel* (CAP): The CAP prepares young people to enter a profession through vocational training and apprenticeships. CAP centres are also used for social protection activities for the vulnerable population. Training is three years, and upon completion, a certificate is issued to the recipients who have passed a test in their chosen profession.

64 UIS/UKAid/UNICEF. (2012). Tous les enfants a l'école d'ici 2015. Initiative mondiale en faveur des enfants non scolarisés. Rapport de l'enquete nationale sur les enfants et adolescents en dehors de l'école. UIS/UKAid/UNICEF.

65 Government of DRC (2012) DRC's Literacy and Non-formal Education Strategy

66 Government of DRC (2019) *PROGRAMME NATIONAL DE RATTRAPAGE SCOLAIRE DU NIVEAU PRIMAIRE* (Juillet 2019)

67 Ibid

68 The author uses the acronym AE/CRS for Accelerated Education/*Centre de Ratrappage Scolaires* as the latter is the term used and understood by partners in DRC when referring to primary-level AE programmes.

3. *Alphabetisation*/literacy and numeracy skills: Within the non-formal education strategy, a distinction is made between the traditional, functional, and schooling literacy programmes.

    i. **The traditional literacy programme** consists of activities aimed at acquiring reading, writing and arithmetic skills—these programmes, which last from 6 to 9 months, target illiterate youth and adults.

    ii. **The functional literacy programme targets** illiterate adults who are already in the workforce. Depending on the needs of the learners, the duration of the literacy programme varies between four months and three years. At the end of the programme, a certificate of professional aptitude is issued to learners who pass an approved test.

    iii. The **schooling literacy programme** is aimed at children and youth between 15 and 24 years of age who are too old to enter the formal primary education system. Instead, they can access a three-year literacy training to support their subsequent engagement in a professional training programme. The objective of the schooling literacy programme is to enable children who have never had access to formal education by the age of enrollment (15-25 years) to acquire primary level skills and abilities that will enable them to continue with vocational training. In addition, this 3-year programme prepares children and youth for a nationally recognised literacy certificate.

The table below highlights the multiple pathways within and across the formal and non-formal education system.

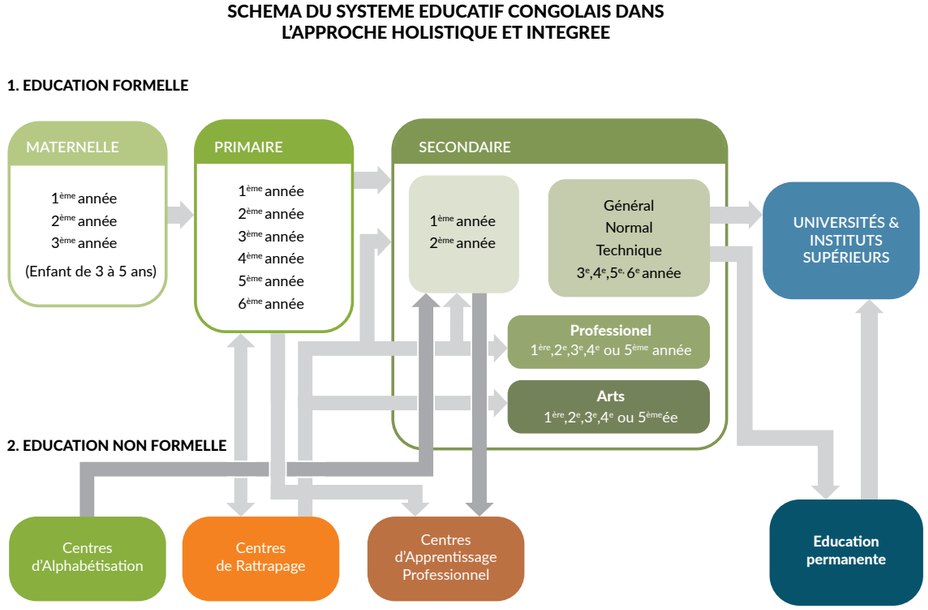


Figure 3 *Non-formal Education reintegration routes- source non-Formal education strategy (2012)*[69]

69 Ministry of Social Affairs (2012) STRATEGIE NATIONALE POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'ALPHABETISATION ET DE L'EDUCATION NON FORMELLE 2012 A 2016-2020, available at http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/8d4d95b46d36fcf747a025f0b62e5059d85f9b6d.pdf

The non-formal education system is structured in morning or afternoon shifts. Literacy classes are usually 1.5 hours in length. AE/CRS and vocational studies usually are longer and typically start at 7:30amc, with classes until 12:30 pm[70]

In addition to the aforementioned non-formal education programmes, there is also provision for further adult and lifelong learning opportunities within the non-formal education strategy, including cultural activities such as conferences, debates, cinemas, and libraries.

Institutional Coordination of Non-formal Education

As described in the previous section, the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS is mandated to manage and coordinate non-formal education nationally. However, at the provincial level, non-formal education is managed by the divisions of MoE/EPST and the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS, each with its responsibilities and offices at the district, city, and territory levels. However, adding a layer of complexity, Level 3 AE/CRS students fall under the total management of the MoE/EPST, which is responsible for administering the TENAFAP.

Although the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS is mandated to supervise all the centres directly and establish learning centres, including vocational education programmes, non-governmental (NGO) partners also directly support or run many AE/CRS centres. The teachers in state-run non-formal education services are not qualified teachers but often from a social assistant/social worker background. Consequently, teachers in the non-formal education system have not been integrated into the free education policy reform, which raises questions about the long-term sustainability of and funding for AE and the broader non-formal education system. The issue of sustainability is highlighted in the AEWG principles.

In summary, the political economy of non-formal education in DRC involves multiple stakeholders. However, a detailed national strategy has enabled more overall consistency in approaches to AE modalities and non-formal education services. The following section explores the curriculum content for the *Programme National de Rattrapage Scolaire* (PNRS)/national school catch-up for primary AE programmes.

70 Key informant and scanned document of the PNRS curriculum, shared by NORCAP deployee to the Ministry of Education, South Kivu.

The PNRS Curriculum

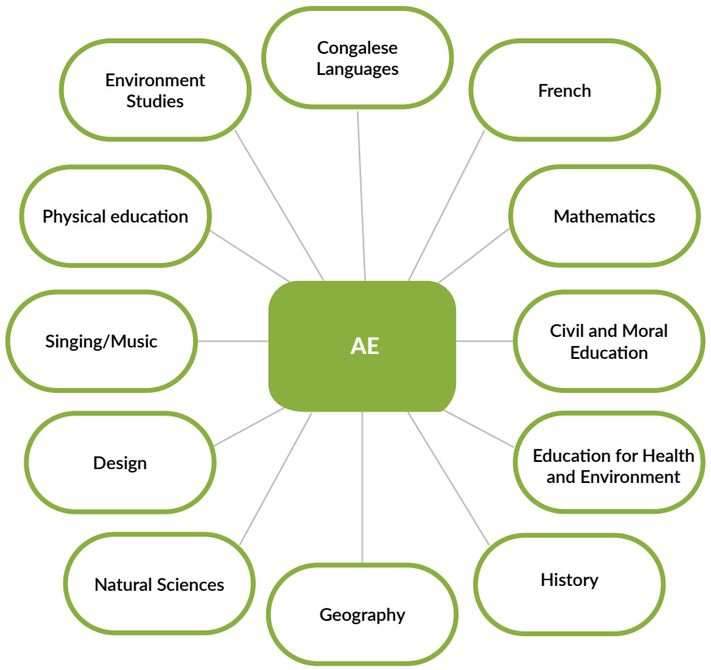
The national curriculum for accelerated primary education, known as the *Programme National de Rattrapage Scolaire* (PNRS), is based on the formal school curriculum but compresses six years into three. The table below underlines how the *primary AE programme's* PNRS is divided by level.

Each AE level represented two traditional in-school grades:

AE Level	Grade equivalent
Level 1	Grades 1 and 2 (typically for students with no prior schooling)
Level 2	Grades 3 and 4
Level 3	Grades 5 and 6

The PNRS is open to children who have not entered the formal schooling system by the time they are 6 or 7, and youth dropouts between 9-14 years old so that they may re-enter formal secondary schooling.

The PNRS enables students to re-enter formal primary schools after completing Level 1 or Level 2. After completing accelerated primary schooling (Level 3), students can sit the national End of Primary Studies (TENAFEP) exam held at the end of primary school. If successful, an AE/CRS student can enter formal secondary school as long as they will complete the process before age 24. Alternatively, learners may enter a formal professional training or non-formal skills-training programme.Following an evaluation study conducted jointly by a team of experts from the MoE/EPST and the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS, in July 2019, the AE/CRS education curriculum, educator guides and a training module for educators were updated.[71] The diagram below includes all the subjects that AE/CRS must cover in preparation for the TENAFEP.



71 Ibid

The following bullet points (*directly translated from original text*), The revised and condensed PNRS curriculum for each level, outlines:

1. A final integration objective for the cycle or level;
2. Subject themes that each learner must acquire with mastery;
3. The integration of life skills will enable each learner to face the many challenges he/she faces everywhere in everyday life. The new curriculum also indicates the skills to be inferred to the learner by selected theme;
4. The primary pedagogical skills to be exercised for a set of specific objectives;
5. The contents/subjects related to each specific objective or each ability required of the learner;
6. Clear guidance on the activities that the educator will progressively develop on the one hand and those that the learner will develop;
7. Evaluation activities, i.e., learning through simple, semi-complex and complex situations.[72]

THE NUMBER OF LEARNERS ENROLLED IN PNRS/AE PROVISION NATIONWIDE.

According to the last available annual nationwide statistics (from 2015), 151, 979 learners, of which 52% were female, were enrolled in AE/CRS.

Province	Apprenants		Indice de parité F/G
	G	F	
Kinshasa	3821	6749	1,8
Kasaï-Oriental	13202	17175	1,3
Nord-Kivu	1916	2458	1,3
Orientale	4243	5366	1,3
Kasaï-Ocidental	3848	4697	1,2
Bas-Congo	1774	1872	1,1
Sud-Kivu	4536	4784	1,1
Bandundu	20721	21847	1,1
Maniema	2799	2722	1,0
Katanga	3930	3710	0,9
Equateur	11501	8308	0,7
RDC	**72291**	**79688**	**1,1**

Source: *ANNUAIRE STATISTIQUE DE L'EDUCATION NON FORMELLE Réalisé par la Cellule Technique des Statistiques de l'Education (CTSE) avec l'appui technico-financier de l'UNESCO 2014/2015 (not available online)*

72 Ibid

This figure represents around 5% of the total number of the 3.5 million out-of-school learners, which is surprisingly low given that DRC has such a robust national framework and strategies to address and support alternative pathways and routes back into formal education. However, it is worth noting that the last annual statistics on PNRS learners come from six years ago, and there has not been a nationwide compilation of enrolment since this period.

Most recently, the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS in North Kivu province compiled the following information in 2020, highlighting that CRA remains a significant education modality in different regions of the DRC.

LOCATION	LITERACY CENTRES	VOCATIONAL CENTRES	CRS (AE CENTRES)
Province of North Kivu	103 centres, 6,525 learners, including 3,920 girls 246 supervisors, including 117 women.	122 Vocational Training Centres where 7068 learners are trained, including 4940 girls and 411 supervisors, including 196 women.	228 CRS with 28375 learners, including 14856 girls and 13519 boys, 841 supervisors including 519 men and 322 women.

Although across the province of North Kivu, there are 60 CAP centres explicitly belonging to the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS. A recent survey found that only 20 of the CAP centres are considered good, with the remaining two-thirds of centres in advanced stages of dilapidation. In contrast, others have been destroyed as a result of the conflict.[73]

For this study, the author could not confirm if these statistics also included the most up-to-date statistics from non-governmental AE providers. For example, under NRC's BRICE project, 3,702 children (2,065 girls and 1,637 boys) are currently enrolled in an accelerated education programme in Rutshuru (North Kivu, DRC). In addition, for the current school year (2020-2021), NRC is targeting 6,980 children (including 5,280 girls) for accelerated education programmes in North Kivu (2,000 learners including 1,000 girls), South Kivu (1,180 learners including 680 girls), Tanganyika (400 learners including 200 girls) and Ituri (3,400 learners including 1,700 girls). Over the past three years, EDC has supported more than 15,000 learners (2018-2019; 2010-2020; 2020-2021). Currently, 25,000 learners are enrolled in accelerated learning programmes and non-formal vocational training.

In summary, this section has highlighted that non-formal education is present throughout the DRC, and state-certified modalities exist to support out-of-school children. However, the scale of AE remains unclear due to outdated statistics and lack of clarity over state statistics vis-a-vis NGOs. The following section will examine how non-formal education is funded in DRC and the key stakeholders engaged in the AE space.

73 Notes taken from provincial report on non-formal education in the province of North Kivu (April 2021).

Funding and Key Stakeholders

Link to AEWG Principle 2)AEPs better resourced by all key stakeholders for scale and quality

Despite the previous section's discussion of how AE is fully integrated into the national education framework and policies, AE/CRS teachers are rarely paid by the public service and have not been included in the free school reform policy. Therefore, they are primarily dependent on external aid, churches, development partners, or individual benefactors. As one of the key informant interviewees (KII) noted, the lack of consistent funding from the Government is problematic. 'What is observed in the field is that few accelerated education centres operate with funding from parents and even learners. This makes them unviable two or three years later because of the financial problem and the quality of education (for example, there is no follow-up, little accountability, and limited to no control by the Government in the daily operations of AEs/CRSs)'.[74]

However, international donors have made considerable investments in non-formal education over the last decade. The two following examples of critical donor investments represent the most prominent actors. Other significant donors supporting AE include NORAD and DEVCO/INTPA through the BRICE project.[75]

ACCELERE!1 *(Accès, Lecture, Rétention et Redevabilité or access, reading, retention and accountability)*:

Until recently, ACCELERE!1 was the most extensive single education intervention in the DRC, aimed at improving the reading outcomes of 1.5 million grade 1-4 students in French and their local language in eight target provinces including Haut -Katanga, Lualaba, Kasaï Central, Kasaï Oriental, Equateur, Sud-Ubangi, Nord-Kivu and Sud-Kivu.[76] In 2015- 2021, the programme aimed to reach more than 575,000 students in approximately 1,200 non-formal schools, including CRS. The project aims to support learners to 'improve their lives through non-formal educational approaches, improve retention in primary grades by 30% in target schools, and work at the provincial level to improve education governance and accountability.' [77] ACCELERE!1 is a $180 million, five-year programme jointly funded by USAID and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID), now known as the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO). Whilst there are multiple components to the grant, a key part (Activity 1) aims to support non-formal alternative/ accelerated learning programmes (ALPs), including CRS/AEs in 25 subdivisions nationally as well as in targeted areas of North and South Kivu provinces, and in vocational centres/*d'apprentissage Professionnel* (CAPs) in target areas of the Kivus and conflict-affected zones in Haut-Katanga and Lualaba[78]. *ACCELERE!* Activity 1 also aims to ensure that girls and boys benefit equally from project activities and that all assistance is conflict-sensitive and disability-inclusive.[79]

74 Interview notes from a key informant interview, May 5th 2021.

75 More information about DEVCO/INTPA investment in AE can be found in the introduction section of this report.

76 See Education Fact Sheet | Fact Sheet | Democratic Republic of the Congo | U.S. Agency for International Development (usaid.gov)

77 See PA00TKJQ.pdf (usaid.gov)

78 Ibid

79 USAID.(publication date unknown) IMPROVING READING, ACCESS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE DRC (ACCELERE!) PROJECT FINAL GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY Available at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TQFQ.pdf

According to the programmatic documentation, FHI 360 and Chemonics are the main partners working on the CRS components of the project.

Chemonics and its ACCELERE!1 subcontractor FHI360 are responsible for supporting the DRC government in its efforts to enhance its national reading curriculum, targeting French and three national languages – Kiswahili, Tshiluba, and Lingala – from Grades 1-4 in formal primary schools and the equivalent (Levels 1 and 2) in AE/CRS[80]. This includes developing new and adapting existing teaching and learning materials, including reading texts, grounded in an evidence-based approach to reading instruction that uses explicit, structured, and systematic phonics-based methodologies. To do so, the implementing partners are developing scopes and sequences for each grade level crafted from the linguistic specificities of each language.[81] The importance of supporting AE/CRS learners' ability to learn in their preferred language of instruction is a critical step in enabling a conducive learning environment, particularly for out-of-school learners, who in many parts of the country may have had limited access to formal French.

Secondly, as part of the project, ACCELERE!1 also aimed to provide grants to local NGOs, first in 13 sub-provinces and then, from the 2017-2018 school year, in all 25 sub-provinces to support the operation of primary level AE/CRSs, establish new AE/CRSs, and strengthen their management. In addition, in the Kivus and conflict-affected areas of Haut Katanga and Lualaba, grants will also be made to local NGOs to support their work with vocation CAP centres for youth.[82]

One of the critical components of the ACCELERE!1 the project has been integrating sustainable models into CRS. Including community savings groups (CSGs) as part of ACCELERE!1's microfinance package is essential to making this approach sustainable. The ACCELERE!1 project helps remove the financial barriers to education by applying a community savings model. The project awards civil society organisations (CSOs) grants, providing seed kits and ongoing support to qualifying parents. These kits consist of oil, flour, sugar, legumes, smoked fish, or other local staples with a consistent supply-and-demand cycle. Parents then use the kits to establish income-generating activities (IGAs), like an open-air roadside store.[83]

1) La Valorisation de la Scholarisation de la Fille/VAS-Y Fille! / REALISE project

Between 2013 and 2017, the Vas- Y- Fille! As part of the FCDO- (then known as DFID) funded Girl's Education Challenge, programme supported another government-accredited AE programme, explicitly targeting over-age girls. The three-year course was a government-accredited 'compressed' version of the primary school curriculum, designed to prepare 9–15-year-old children to take the national end-of-primary exam, which, if passed, would allow them to enrol in secondary school. This initiative, led by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) with partners Save the Children and Catholic Relief Services through the Girl's Education Challenge, targeted 100,768 marginalised girls in primary and lower secondary schools, with a budget of £25 million. **Key achievements included:**

- 29 remedial education centres with 120 remedial classes were set up.
- 3,983 students (including 1,945 girls and 2,038 boys) enrolled in TENAFEP, with 3,215 successful (1,490 girls and 1,725 boys).
- 24,669 students (12,823 girls and 11,846 boys) enrolled in remedial education.
- 154 educators were trained in math, reading, and positive discipline.
- 3,215 children completed their primary education in remedial education centres.[84]
- 87.66% of girls who completed their final L3 were enrolled in the first year of secondary school the following year.

At the end of the Vas-Y-Fille project, FCDO/DfID opened a five-year 'transition' window in 2017 to support the cohort of girls transitioning to the 'next stage,' which might be from primary to secondary or from secondary into work, for example. This transition window, named REALISE, is still ongoing as of 2021. It will help up to 60,000 girls in six provinces access the primary and secondary school through a suite of interrelated interventions detailed in Table 1. These interventions involve working with various groups, from families and communities to teachers, school directors, and girls. Together, these interventions seek to address the wide range of restraining and enabling factors that prevent or assist girls from doing well in school.[85]

Table 1: Core project activities in REALISE

Activities with Teachers	Activities with School Directors
• Cycles of **professional development to Improve specific teacher competences, based on best practice**. • Support for **school clubs** - wellbeing, Sexual & Reproductive Health (SRH)	• A set of **economic support** activities:- school supplies, Literacy & Numeracy resources, Accelerated (non-formal) Education Centres, Bursaries
Activities with Community	**Cross cutting activites**
• **Literacy & numeracy** clubs/activites • **Wellbeing / SRH** activities • Support to existing **committees** Citizen Voice and Action, Savings & Loans	• Child **protection and** safeguarding • **SRH and gender** awareness • **Research**

Source of table: *Save the Children (2020) REUSSITE ET EPANOUISSEMENT VIA L'APPRENTISSAGE ET L'INSERTION AU SYSTEME EDUCATIF (REALISE) brief*[86]

80 SIL Lead (2018). DRC project. Available at https://www.sil-lead.org/drc-project

81 Ibid

82 Marchais, G. *et al.* (2021). *Marginalisation from Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Learning from Tanganyika and Ituri in the DR Congo*, IDS Working Paper 544. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/IDS.2021.017

83 Chemonics, 'Breaking Finacial Barriers to Education in the DRC', available at https://www.chemonics.com/impact-story/breaking-financial-barriers-to-education-in-the-drc/

84 Save the Children (2017) Rapport Final du Programme: Valorisation de la scolarisation de la fille, available at https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/16799/pdf/vas-y_fille_final_report_for_education_authorities_in_drc_1.pdf

85 Save the Children (2020) REUSSITE ET EPANOUISSEMENT VIA L'APPRENTISSAGE ET L'INSERTION AU SYSTEME EDUCATIF (REALISE), available at https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/16844/pdf/drc_realise_2_pager_v2km.pdf

86 Ibid

COST PER LEARNER IN AE CENTRES

As highlighted by EDC, there is no central system evaluating the cost of these programmes in DRC. Apart from the AE/CRS programmes supported by INGOs, churches, or private foundations, most programmes source their operating costs (e.g. maintenance of classrooms, learning inputs, salaries of supervisors and directors) from parent contributions (about $5 per month).

The Vas- Y-Fille project had an average annual unit cost of about US$90 per child ; however, the cost per AE cycle has increased significantly. One partner shared that on average, it costs $200 per year, totalling $600 if a child completes an entire primary school cycle through an AE/CRS[87]. This figure included materials, school equipment, uniform and payment of AE teachers. In comparison, $200 per annum is similar to the Education Cluster's complete package of education support (including WASH in schools) which averages US$179 per child.

As previously mentioned, until 2019, the cost of primary education was around $150 per annum per child (with the majority covered by parents). At first glance, the cost of AE appears significantly higher than the annual cost per child spent by the state. However, as government investment in education is set to increase substantially through the *Gratuité*/free school policy, this disparity evens out. However, one of the significant obstacles to the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of AE/CRS programmes remains that they will not be easy to scale up unless supported by, among other things, the incorporation of ESPT teachers (and, therefore, state funding) in AE/CRS centres. Furthermore, the Government charges fees for participating in the TENAFEP (which costs approximately $20) and other assessments. Partners suggest that this also hinders completion and the transition to secondary school.

In summary, this section aimed to provide a brief overview of the primary donors engaged in funding AE nationally. Their areas of focus include quality, value for money, and sustainability. Before delving further into the quality of AE in DRC, the following section looks at national level coordination, which provides both the foundation for and the obstacles to further strengthening the quality, harmonisation and standardisation of AE/CRS across key stakeholders' efforts.

87 FCDO. 'DRC Education Business Case: Improving access, quality and governance in education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo' available *at* https://iati.fcdo.gov.uk/iati_documents/4651987.odt

National-Level Coordination

Link to AEWG: AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

In recent years, AE coordination has been significantly strengthened at the national level. UNICEF and Save the Children are the Education Cluster Lead Agencies at the national level, led by the Directorate General of Non-Formal Education. Every month, the Education Cluster brings together a variety of stakeholders, including civil society experts, teachers, the Ministry of Education, academics, and project staff, to share information about security issues and communities of internally displaced people. This information is used to launch new programmes in areas where children have missed out on education.[88]

One of the most recent AE coordination in DRC stems from the AEWG. In 2018, the AEWG held a regional AE workshop in Kampala. and brought together 10 countries' teams from DRC, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Somalia, Burundi, South Sudan, Uganda, Liberia, Sierra Leone. This five-day training focused on building participants' knowledge and skills in the fundamentals of accelerated education programming.[89]

The DRC country team (MoE/EPST staff and implementing partners) set up several initiatives to improve coordination and education quality across AE/CRS upon their return. These included:

- The creation of the National AEWG. It is worth noting here that there are no regional or provincial-level AE working groups to date. However, one partner highlighted that the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS and MoE/EPST are the technical and institutional reference points for all AE/CRS activities at the provincial level.
- Disseminating the AE workshop training at the provincial level, specifically focusing on the AEWG's ten principles for AE programming.
- The development of AE/CRS improvement action Plans (per centre and at a national level), based on the AEWG quality checklist.[90]

The significant outputs and subsequent activities led by the DRC country team that participated in the AE regional workshop underline the massive role training, networking, and knowledge sharing can play in driving sector-specific change at a national level. More details of the outputs of this workshop are shared in the section below.

88 USAID (2020) 'Three Best Practices for Accelerated Education Programmes from DRC', available at | Education Links (edu-links.org)

89 AEWG (2020) 'Workshop Policy and Practice', available at https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-workshop-policy-and-practice-accelerated-education

90 AEWG(2017) Accelerated Education Checklist. Available at https://www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/AEWG-Accelerated-Education-Checklist-2017-eng.pdf

Quality of Teaching and Learning in Non-formal Education Spaces

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs improved

As identified by one of the partners, one of the critical challenges to the AE/CRS is teaching quality. Aforementioned, the AE/CRS teachers often come from a social protection background and do not necessarily have a background in education. Concerns over teaching quality are not unique to the AE system. In the formal primary education system in DRC, over 30% of teachers lack the high school degree necessary to be certified to teach.[91] Furthermore, since the introduction of the free-school policy, schools across the country have noted an increase in class size, putting pressure on already strained resources and infrastructure and teachers' morale. This policy has compounded existing overcrowding issues in schools hosting significant displaced students. Reports from Ituri province repeatedly highlight this issue, stating that student-teacher ratios are reaching highs of 92 to 1 and are preventing the delivery of quality education.[92]

Partners shared concerns that due to the free school policy, increased enrolment, and subsequent teacher strikes within the formal education system, there could be an increase in learners seeking to enrol in AE/CRSs. However, AE/CRS has not seen teacher strikes because external agencies and partners pay most teachers in AE/CRS.

To mitigate the issue of non-qualified teachers teaching AE, implementing partners have rolled out numerous training modules to improve teaching and learning standards over the years. For example, Save the Children, which has been supporting AE across the six conflict-affected provinces for several years (initially as part of the Vas-Y-Fille! programme and now thorough REALISE), designed and developed a module on Classroom Management, as well as a teachers' guide to support the teaching of the national remedial education programme in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS.[93]In addition, Save the Children uses the globally developed inter-agency Teachers in Crisis Contexts (TiCC) training package and INEE's conflict-sensitive education training for all AE/CRS teachers[94]. Save the Children also uses their agency-specific Literacy and Numeracy Boost model, implemented in 30 countries.[95] In 2021, the AEG will also be releasing a global guidance document focusing on AE teacher training.

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In 2018, following Save the Children's participation in the AEWG regional workshop, the organisation audited all of the 16 AE/CRA centres that Save the Children supports in DRC to see if they aligned with the AEWG's ten principles for effective practice.[96] As a result, Save the Children's country team adapted the AEWG checklist below to assess their AE centres[97].

	A	B	C	D
1	**Principle**	**Principles Score**	**Points possible**	**% score**
2	**LEARNER**			
3	**1: AEP is flexible and for older learners**			
4	a. Target over-age, out of school learners (AEPs are typically for children and youth aged approx. 10-18)	0.5	1.0	50%
5	b. Define, communicate, and assist national authorities to regulate age range for student enrolment in collaboration with the	0.5	1.0	50%
6	c. Provide age-appropriate introductory level course for learners who have never been to school to improve readiness skills	0.0	1.0	0%
7	d. Make AEP class time, and location flexible, as required by the community, teacher, and above all, the specific needs of both	0.5	1.0	50%
8	***1. Principle Cumulative Score***	***1.5***	***4.0***	***38%***
9	**2. AEP is a legitimate, credible education option that results in learner certification in primary education**			
10	a. Include strategy and resources that ensure AEP learners can register for and sit examinations that provide a nationally	0.5	1.0	50%
11	b. Develop clear pathways that enable children and youth to reintegrate in a corresponding level in the formal system, vocational	1.0	1.0	100%
12	c. If national and annual examinations do not exist, develop assessment systems with the Ministry of Education/ relevant	1.0	1.0	100%
13	***2. Principle Cumulative Score***	***2.5***	***3.0***	***83%***
14	**SYSTEM/POLICY**			

The initial evaluation results of the different centres were very similar on each principle. The implementing partner suggested that this highlighted that the tool was well developed and accurate. The findings showed:

- Many of the centres had a low overall score.
- Lower scores on the principles' teachers participate in continuous professional development (5), 'community is engaged and accountable' (8), and 'AEP is aligned with the national education system and relevant humanitarian architecture' (10)

Based on the findings, the centres were able to identify gaps and developed contextualised, centre-specific improvement plans for each AE centre/CRS. As a result, all the centres focused on principles 5, 8 and 10 to improve their centres.

91 USAID. IMPROVING READING, ACCESS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE DRC (ACCELERE!) PROJECT FINAL GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, available at PA00TKJQ.pdf (usaid.gov)

92 Save the Children (2017) Rapport Final du Programme: Valorisation de la scolarisation de la fille, available at https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/16799/pdf/vas-y_fille_final_report_for_education_authorities_in_drc_1.pdf

93 Key informant interview (2021)

94 INEE (2012) Conflict Sensitive Education Package, available at https://inee.org/collections/conflict-sensitive-education

95 'Literacy and Numeracy Boost's approach to teacher training is built on five essential principles. Teacher training should be: regular; short (each session not more than half a day); local to the teachers' place of work; reflective; and practical. The Literacy Boost programme places emphasis on the value of teachers' understanding of, and reflection on, their own practice. It provides teachers with the skills to design their own lessons, as opposed to offering pre-prepared scripts, aiming to support professional development and cultivate skills that can be applied to any curriculum. It also uses a balanced scorecard approach to formative assessment in the classroom, to support teachers to understand and respond to pupils' individual learning needs.'

96 AEWG (2017) 10 Principles for Effective Practice, available at https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-10-principles-effective-practice

97 AWEG (2017) AEWG Checklist, available at https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-programme-checklist

Currently, the organisation is finalising a report documenting these improvements, which will be submitted to the Ministers of Social Affairs/DIVAS and EPST and hopefully inform national plans regarding AE.

Similarly, NRC also initiated a wide range of targeted activities to strive for quality teaching in the AE/CRS centres that it supports under the BRICE project. Extensive work was done at the provincial level to use ASER as a harmonised learning assessment tool for AE. The educational provinces of North Kivu 1 and 3 planned to pilot the adoption of the contextualised ASER tool in the 2020-2021 school year. During 2020, local EPST and Social Affairs supervisors conducted three rounds of joint supervision. The classes were monitored using NRC's teacher and classroom observation tool.

A score of 1 (low) to 5 (high) was given for each of the four teaching skills:

1. Methodology, preparation, and planning
2. Knowledge of the subject
3. Classroom management
4. Evaluation

In March 2020, 62 teachers were observed. Out of those teachers, 7% received a score of 1, 40% at a score of 2, 40% a score of 3, 13% a score of 4, and 1% a score of 5. The majority of teachers received a score of 2 and 3, suggesting room for significant improvement. Following the assessment, NRC developed individual support plans for each teacher, building on the gaps identified by the inspectors. In June 2020, another round of joint supervision for 19 randomly selected teachers was undertaken. Based on this sample, there was a clear improvement in the skills of the teachers assessed as no teachers received 1 or 2 for any of the four competencies. Finally, in November 2020, 12 teachers were scored on the same skills. 92% of them were assessed to have reached a score of 4 for the four skills, demonstrating that the individualised teacher support plans had resulted in significant improvements in NRC AE/CRS programmes.

In the past, USAID has supported the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS in assembling a working group of teachers from formal and non-formal education, civil society experts, and academics to review, revise, update and produce new accelerated education teaching and learning materials.[98.] Under the new Accelere!1 programme, Chemonics, supports various activities to improve quality, including revising books and training materials for teachers. This is an important initiative to support AE/CRS programmes since, as previously mentioned, most teaching staff in these centres do not have a formal teaching background.

98 USAID (2020),Three Best Practices for Accelerated Education Programmes from DRC | Education Links (edu-links.org)

QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Partners reported several different modalities for managing and supporting AE/CRAs, including supporting government-run AE/CRA centres, housing classes in formal schools (resulting in collaborative management by EPST and DIVAS), and community spaces such as church halls.

In summary, this section has outlined numerous initiatives underway to enhance the quality of AE/CRS. In addition to numerous funding initiatives, the AEWG's regional working in 2018, the national Education strategy has significantly contributed to key stakeholders' continuous ambitions to strengthen AE/CRS teaching and learning environments. However, the lack of qualified teachers in AE/CRS centres could undermine efforts. Additionally, the lack of state funding for AE/CRS spaces sets up a precarious, potentially unsustainable and donor-reliant political economy for this modality in DRC. As the following section underlines, this is worrying because ample evidence suggests that AE/CRS positively impacts enrolment and retention rates for the most marginalised learners.

Research and Evidence: What Works

Link to AEWG: Evidence

Besides the current research conducted by the BRICE consortium members in DRC, the Vas-Y-Fille! the project offers the most extensive research on the impact of accelerated education on learners in DRC to date. It was noted that there was a high demand for accelerated education. According to qualitative research, there were two reasons for this: the lack of tuition for parents and teachers associations and the perceived quality of AE/CRSs teaching and learning environment.[99]

99 Randall, J., O'Donnell, F., & Botha, S.M. (2020). Accelerated Learning Programs for Out-of-School Girls: The Impact on Student Achievement and Traditional School Enrollment. Available at EJ1248094.pdf (ed.gov)

The Vas-Y-Fille! research data supports this perception of quality, demonstrating that AE/CRS had a robust positive effect on student learning outcomes. Researchers found that AE/CRS centres contributed to significant improvements in reading, writing, and math skills among out-of-school children. For example, evidence from Early Grade Maths Assessments (EGMA) and Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) suggests math scores doubled on average while reading scores showed a five-fold increase compared to the girls who remained out of school.[100]

The Vas-Y-Fille! programmes sought to examine the extent to which girls progressed through the ALP levels as expected (research question 1). The study focused on girls who participated in two data collection waves (N = 497). It found that 80% of those girls did, in fact, advance as expected. However, it is essential to note that 64% of the girls in the total sample (N = 1364) were only present for one wave. These results suggest that most girls who persisted for more than one data collection made enough progress to be considered ready for the next level. However, there was substantial attrition (in part due to students returning to a traditional school, but also due to unexpected reasons).[101]

Enrolment, progression, and transition rates

LINK TO AEWG PRINCIPLE 9. AEP IS A LEGITIMATE, CREDIBLE EDUCATION OPTION THAT RESULTS IN LEARNER CERTIFICATION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Several AE partners' challenges related to the difficulties tracking student transition to formal education, particularly in highly volatile areas with frequent displacement.

However, NRC, under the DEVCO/INTPA project, showed that of the 3702 children enrolled, 2785 students are continuing their education as follows: 2196 were integrated into formal schools at the start of the 2020-2021 school year, and 589 are continuing in level 3 of accelerated education, for a retention rate of 75.2%. This is a laudable retention rate given the high degree of repetition and drop-out as students' progress through the school system. Between 26 to 27 August 2020, the TENAFEP exam marking the end of primary education was organised by MoE/EPSP at the national level. Within NRC's programme, 305 (140 girls and 165 boys) out of 329 learners completed the L3 programme and were expected to participate in this national exam, a 93% participation rate. As a result, 231 (109 girls and 122 boys) participated in the national exam, of whom 144 (69 girls and 75 boys) passed the exam for grade 7.

Of the learners that failed the exam they remained in L3. 52 (25 girls and 17 boys, older than 15 years) others have been integrated into grade 6 (formal education) for the current school year (2020-2021).

100 Ibid

101 Ibid

Evidence exploring parents' and communities' roles in AE

LINK TO AEWG PRINCIPLE 8, COMMUNITY IS ENGAGED AND ACCOUNTABLE

As outlined by AEWG Principle 8, *ensuring that the community is engaged and accountable* with shared ownership is vital, especially as it has been noted that AE/CRS programmes can be seen as unsustainable given their lack of funding from the state. At national level, in line with the educational convention 1977/78, there are Parent Associations affiliated to the state (*Association Nationale des Parents des Elèves du Congo*, ANAPECO) and faith-based Parent Associations (e.g. *Association Nationale des Parents d'Elèves Catholiques*, APEC). Similar to other administrative bodies in the DRC, they have been mainly funded through parents' financial contributions[102].

At the school level, the General Assembly of Parents (Assemblée Générale des Parents), which includes all parents with school children of a respective school, elects the parent committees (*comités des parents d'élèves* (COPA)[103]. The COPA aims to ensure parent and community participation in school management. In contrast, the management councils (*Conseils de Gestion* (COGES)) seek to ensure management decisions for facilities are taken in consultation with representatives of parents, teachers, and students. Strengthening school level management bodies is a loosely defined goal in the National Education Sector Strategy 2016-25.[104] Although partners noted that these governance structures have their shortcomings, including generally weak management capacities, they are deeply embedded in the institutional structure of schools and AEs/CRSs and offer opportunities for strengthening local accountability mechanisms.

For example, under the Accelere!1 project, 315 schools and school communities (directors, parents, parent committees, school management committees) have a critical role in partnership with sub-provincial school administrations to assess school performance, develop school improvement plans, decide how change can happen and who should participate.[105]

Furthermore, community participation can be an additional avenue to strengthen learning outcomes. For example, in the Vas-Y-Fille! programme, 7,500 parents of first and second grade AE learners participated in Save the Children's Literacy Boost community action approaches. Furthermore, parents developed local 'Book Banks' and organised public reading events, supported 'Back to School' campaigns, and informed gender-specific school improvements and community action activities. [106] The COPAs were vital project partners for introducing School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and included activities to honour student and teacher performance throughout the year. Girls Education Champions were selected from civil society organisations, the private sector, and the Government and were also trained and supported to advocate for girls' education in regional and national policy forums[107]. During the Vas-Y-Fille! In the study, when asked about who decided

102 Brandt, Cyril. (2020). 'Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: What works?', available at (5) (PDF) Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: What works? (researchgate.net)

103 ibid

104 ibid

105 Cambridge Education (2021).'No sustainable change to DRC education without robust governance', available at ACCELERE - Camb-Ed

106 Randall, J., O'Donnell, F., & Botha, S.M. (2020). Accelerated Learning Programs for Out-of-School Girls: The Impact on Student Achievement and Traditional School Enrollment. Available at EJ1248094.pdf (ed.gov)

107 Ibid

to enrol them in an ALP, 89% to 93% of girls also reported that their head of household or guardian had made the decision, and 4% to 9% reported they decided to enrol themselves.[108] This emphasises the critical role communities play in children's education decision-making.

Finally, anecdotal evidence suggests that AE is popular. For this report, several AE partners noted that one of the consequences of the well-resourced programmes was that school-age children were being sent to AE/CRSs rather than formal education. As a result, partners emphasised that it was essential to continue to converse with communities to outline the purpose of the AE/CRS programme and explain that they were not there to replace the formal school system. This is particularly important in a country where students would be considered above their grade age by almost half the formal primary education system. As such, the partner underlined with teachers the importance of ensuring that vulnerability and age criteria are met to avoid overcrowded classes and emphasised that 'out-of-school' students who wish to enrol should be above age and should have spent at least two years out of school.

In summary, there is evidence that AE/CRS results in promising enrolment and progression rates. Furthermore, communities, caregivers, and parents play critical roles in supporting learners and centres. Their role has become increasingly evidenced over the past year as AE/CRS stakeholders had to adapt in the wake of COVID-19. However, as Brandt highlights in a recent paper, there is little direct evidence about school management committees or CoPa's roles in improving learning outcomes in the DRC[109]. The following section discusses their roles and the wider programmatic and national strategies used to enable AE learners to continue their education despite national school closures.

COVID-19 Adaptations

Link to AEWG: Support to Covid- 19 response

The COVID19 pandemic has caused severe disruptions to education systems globally. In the DRC, schools were initially closed from 19 March until August 2020 for all students. In fact, during the 2019-2020 school year, there was no real reopening of the schools. However, school activities officially resumed on 24 July 2020 with the preparation and organisation of end-of-year exams in August 2020. At the national level, the end-of-year results for intermediate classes were validated based on the learner's grades before the closure in March 2020.

In December 2020, a second COVID wave impacted DRC. As a result, schools closed from 18 December 2020 to 7 February 2021. Schools reopened on 8 February, and on 18 February, the Ministry of Education adopted a new school calendar. According to this revised school calendar, schools officially reopen ed from 22 February to 8 September 2021.

From the onset of nationwide school closures, the national Education Cluster identified 76 partners ready to mobilise, of which 53 had experience with distance learning. UNICEF was actively engaged in COVID-19 response in schools in all 26 provinces, providing school materials and distributing handwashing materials.[110] As part of the cluster response, partners agreed to implement and disseminate distance learning programmes based on the national curriculum, applying contextually appropriate distance education approaches including instruction via radio, television, IRI, SMS, and internet (when possible), as well as paper materials, booklets, and learning packets. Save the Children, for example, put together home learning packages and distributed materials to AE/CRS learners enrolled in the 16 centres that they support. Community engagement was a key part of the COVID-19 home-based learning response. In addition, the Cluster developed and provided remote orientation for parents and parent and teacher associations/COPAs on distance learning, emphasising the importance of educational continuity (especially for vulnerable groups) and providing guidance for facilitating children's learning. Cluster partners distributed 225,424 workbooks in 11 provinces and 6,708 solar-powered radios to children of vulnerable households in 17 provinces.[111] Since the resumption of formal schools, the education cluster has also provided 8.891 learners with catch-up classes.[112]

RADIO LEARNING FOR AE/CRS LEARNERS

For AE/CRS learners, this additional disruption to an already fragmented education pathway has resulted in organisations swiftly adapting their programming efforts. The MoE developed an 'education through radio' programme with UNICEF and the UN radio/Okapi. The *Direction des Programmes et Matériels Didactique* (DIPROMAD) has been the central pillar of content design in French and some national languages. In addition, 22 of 26 provinces were covered by some form of distance learning programmes, with 327 daily radio programmes and 25 television channels used for these purposes.[113] Several national radio stations, private and community radio stations supported distance learning in many provinces. As radio Okapi did not cover the target communities in which the NRC BRICE project was being implemented, NRC established a partnership with Radio Colombe, a local radio station, to rebroadcast the 'education through radio' programme.

© UNHCR/Sanne Biesmans

108 Ibid

109 Brandt, Cyril. (2020). 'Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: What works?', available at (5) (PDF) Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo: What works? (researchgate.net)

110 UNICEF (2021) 'Democratic Republic of the Congo Humanitarian Situation Report No. 02 February' https://www.unicef.org/media/98151/file/DRC-Humanitarian-SitRep-February-2021.pdf

111 ACAPS (2020) ' Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform', available at https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf

112 Education Cluster (2021) '3 WS, Qui Fait Quoi, où', available at 3W Cluster Education - Qui Fait Quoi Où | HumanitarianResponse

113 ACAPS. (October 2020). *Education & child protection challenges in Eastern DRC Impact of COVID-19, conflict and policy reform*. https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20201019_acaps_covid-19_thematic_series_on_education_drc_eastern_provinces.pdf

Radio education is one of stakeholders' most frequently proposed solutions (ACCELERE! 1, UNESCO, War Child Canada, AVSI, MEPST, UNICEF).[114]As a result, several education partners opted to organise children's listening groups around a radio station, respecting the two-metre distance rule, with a teacher available to answer questions. As described by the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS, South Kivu, 'In terms of our support for these initiatives, we had initiated in partnership with War Child Canada, a project to support AE/CRS children with radios that could enable them to follow the teachings remotely by radio, by level in the AE/CRS Kadutu and Bagira. The teachers had been trained in distance education, and children came in small numbers to the AE/CRS.'[115]

Partners, aware that many households do not have a radio, have donated radios and batteries. For example, during the school closures, NRC distributed radios to 256 AE/CRS learning groups established to ensure small groups of 5-6 learners could meet outside and continue to learn.

In Bukavu, where the AE/CRA is funded through by income-generating activities organised in the AVEC (Village Savings and Credit Association), and supported by USAID/UKAID donors through two projects, ACCELERE! and ADIJ, the AVEC community group were able to fund three teachers who provided door-to-door coaching for AE/CRS learners, with booklets provided by ACCELERE!

ACCELERE!1 also developed distance learning radio programmes in the nationally spoken languages of Kiswahili, Lingala, and Ciluba.*116* The '*Lecture pour la vie*' multigrade instruction programme focused on extending vocabularies, introducing new words, reviewing essential lessons from previous years, and building social and emotional skills through distance learning. The programme also added new information on preventing COVID-19, stopping and reporting sexual exploitation and abuse, and ending gender-based violence. The ACCELERE!1 implementing partners collaborated directly with the *Direction des Programmes et Matériel Didactique* (DIPROMAD), community radio stations, and community organisations to broadcast lessons for all grade levels three times per week each local language.[117] Depending on the grade level, these 30-minute lessons were rebroadcast the following day or week on national radio and 100 community radio stations.*118*

Whilst there have been limited studies on the impact of radio learning programmes, monitoring data from NRC shows favourable retention rates. At the pandemic's start, NRC established 256 study groups in 10 communities. This activity reached 2,886 learners (1,478 girls and 1,408 boys) who attended the AE/CRS in Rutshuru. Based on this news, school authorities provided appropriate follow-up and support to 64 teachers. Throughout the course sessions, monitoring shows that 2,762 learners (1,457 girls and 1,305 boys) out of 2,886 students (1,478 girls and 1,408 boys) who participated in learning through home-based schooling approach completed the programme, 90% of the overall number of learners enrolled at the beginning of the school year. For all levels, learners' end-of-year grade validations were based on the learner's progress with the adapted home-based school approach.

114 Mott Macdonald (2021)

115 Ibid

116 Chemonics. Accelerating Access Learning in DRC, available at https://www.chemonics.com/projects/accelerating-access-learning-democratic-republic-congo/

117 USAID, 2021.The DRC's Accelere!1 Pilots Remote Reading Programme During COVID-19 | Education Links (edu-links.org)

118 Ibid

DROP-OUT AS A RESULT OF COVID-19

Whilst there is inadequate data to assess the impact of COVID-19 on AE/CRS retention rates since schools only reopened in February 2021, some partners raised concerns that participants might struggle to return due to recruitment into armed groups, engagement in the labour market, and a rise in pregnancy rates.[119] Furthermore, since the closure of schools in 2020, there have been ongoing displacements caused by conflict. The volcano eruption in Goma caused further disruption, population movement, and socio-economic impacts on families and livelihoods. One partner noted that they had seen a significant number of learners drop out of their programmes due to the ripple effects of the pandemic, because of which parents were unable to pay school fees and the TENAFEP examination fees.

However, other partners such as NRC, which introduced home-based education early in the pandemic, credit the ongoing engagement to a relatively lower number of drop-outs (5%-15%) once AE/CRAs resumed in February 2021. In addition, partners such as Save the Children and other comprehensive education cluster partners rolled out safe back to school campaigns, community outreach, and covid-19 messaging with local community leaders to ensure that families felt safe sending learners back to school.

Conclusion

Accelerated Education is firmly established within national policy frameworks, institutions, and structures. The Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS manages all non-formal education, including the AE programme, in partnership with the Ministry of Education. However, despite several institutional frameworks and structures, two departments that support AE, and evidence that AE works for out-of-school children, partners reported that AE is underfunded and relies almost entirely on external funding. This is particularly problematic in a post-COVID climate where Western donors, such as FCDO, one of the biggest AE donors for the DRC, are retracting education funding agreements globally. Furthermore, AE centres have not benefited from the free school policy as teachers in AE/CRAs fall under the Ministry of Social Affairs/DIVAS mandate. Key stakeholders have suggested that AE will only receive the state funding and teaching training support needed to address shortcomings in teaching quality and address long-term sustainability goals if it is put under the supervision of the EPST. However, merging firmly established ministries and departments is political, and more evidence of the benefits of doing this needs to be examined and explored in depth.

Given the significant number of out-of-school children and youth in the DRC, accelerated education and other non-formal education pathways offer a route to return to learning. The consequences of the free school policy (and subsequent issues of overcrowding and strikes), alongside the past year of school closure, may impact demand for and enrolment in AE programmes. Despite numerous challenges and recurring displacement in conflict-affected areas of the country, the past year has seen AE programmes pivot, adapt, and strengthen community involvement and ownership over learning. With added investment, AE could play a critical role in addressing educational inequity in the DRC.

119 Ministry of Education (2021)Report on non-formal education, from Province of North Kivu. Not available online.

Key recommendations

For Governments

Advocacy for renewed state funding for AE/CRS: As the Accelere!1 and BRICE programmes are drawing to a close over the next couple of years, the government's long-term commitment is required to ensure sustainability and reduce dependency on educational aid. While the free education policy has resulted in significant upheaval and faces many teething issues, the long-term vision that the state will assume responsibility for teachers' fees is promising. However, as AE does not fall under this policy, it seems like a missed opportunity for a sustainable state-funded approach to accelerated education. Given the high number of out-of-school children and youth in DRC, coupled with recurring displacement, school closures, and delays in completing primary education, there is demonstrated evidence that AE offers a tangible way to complete primary education (for girls in particular).

Standardising teacher professional development for AE: Teacher professional development (TPD) was a prominent feature across AE interventions. Different partners noted that various packages enhance teaching and learning in AE spaces. For example, Accelere! 1 will develop consolidated textbooks and training materials, and partners mentioned that training is often in conjunction with teachers in the formal education system. However, as many of the teachers in CRAs do not necessarily have a teaching qualification, a streamlined approach aligned with the national teacher competencies framework could support the delivery of a comprehensive and standardised approach to AE TPD. As aforementioned, the AEWG will also be releasing an AE teacher training package in 2021.

Strengthening the evidence base around what works in AE: Given the high level of investment in AE programmes, more evidence is critically needed to find out the number of learners enrolled nationally and what is working. For example, if AE centres are reaching the most marginalised, the ESPS and implementing partners should explore disaggregated transition rates and tracer studies of students who have returned to the formal primary or secondary education system. As this report has highlighted, education inequity is a huge issue in the DRC. Data and evidence could provide critical insight into what is working for male/female learners, teachers, and different locations. Explicitly including AE in the Education Cluster's response plans would be one tangible way of collecting data on AE in conflict and crisis-affected areas of DRC.

Furthermore, updated national-wide AE data on learners with disabilities, refugee students, or EGRA/EGMA outcomes in mother-tongue languages could not be located for this study. Addressing this lack of data will require a provincial/regional education-level management information System (EMIS) focusing on accelerated education—the last non-formal nationwide non-formal education overview was published in 2015. While regional circulars have outlined AE enrolment, the total number of AE learners in DRC is hard to establish because AE/CRAs are often funded and supported by external partners. One way to address this would be to compile AE data at a provincial level.

The AEWG has recently developed a monitoring and evaluation toolkit to support learning and accountability. This should be disseminated, alongside the AEWGs suite of tools and guidance, to all AE partners as a concise and systematic programmatic monitoring and evaluation approach.

For Donors

Until AE is prioritised and subsidised by the Government, multi-year funding for AEP is needed, alongside partnership approaches that advocate for AE to transition to being funded directly by the national Government. As in most contexts, it takes between three to four years for a learner to complete an entire primary AE cycle and, on average, two to three years for a learner to complete secondary AE. It is essential to consider that funding cycles do not necessarily correlate with the traditional school calendar, and this needs to be considered. donors and high-level stakeholders will have an essential role in advocating for AE programmes to be better funded and included under the MoE/ESPS.

For Implementing Agencies

Strengthening coordination and harmonisation between and amongst AE providers: While there is a national AEWG, several implementing partners noted that AE provision at the provincial level and between donors could be strengthened. This could enable contextualised, specific coordination and training to address localised issues relating to implementation, quality, evidence, and COVID-19 response adaptations.

Building on lessons learned during COVID-19: Across all partners and projects, COVIDCOVID-19 caused significant changes to programmes, with distance-learning and home learning kits being distributed to thousands of AE learners. Community engagement and parental buy-in and support were critical to ensuring that students continued to learn during school closures. Given some of the tentative findings around a decrease in school drop-out, AE implementers should look to continue some of these activities even as schools reopen. Distance learning radio and TV programmes, community learning circles, and home learning kits could offer another modality for reinforcing skills and competencies for young people who have missed a significant amount of school. The AEWG COVID-19 Pathways for the Return to Learning guidance brief can be used to help partners decide on the most appropriate response.[120]

Incorporate a conflict-sensitive lens when designing AEPs Due to the cyclical nature of violence in many areas where partners implement AE, conflict-sensitive education should be seen as a critical element of programme design and be embedded in teacher and community participation training.

120 AEWG (2020) 'COVID-19: Pathways for the Return to Learning', available at https://inee.org/system/files/resources/AEWG_COVID19_Pathways%20for%20the%20Return%20to%20Learning-screen_1.pdf

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ACCELERATED EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

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EDUCATION SITUATION ANALYSIS:

SOUTH SUDAN

Background

South Sudan is the newest country in the world. It gained its independence from Sudan in July 2011 when its citizens voted for separation from the north. However, the cumulative effects of years of prolonged conflict, chronic vulnerabilities, and weak essential services have left 7.5 million people in the country—more than two-thirds of the population—in need of humanitarian assistance.[121] Furthermore, limited availability and a lack of access to health services have contributed to one of the highest under-five mortality rates (90.7 deaths per 1,000 live births) and maternal mortality rates (789 deaths per 100,000 live births) worldwide. According to the 2019 humanitarian needs overview, one out of three people has been displaced, five out of ten children are out of school, six out of ten people are food insecure, one out of five health facilities is non-functional, and 66 % of the population does not have access to safe and clean drinking water.[122] In addition, years of armed conflict have escalated mental and physical health issues over the years. As a result, the number of persons with disabilities is estimated to be 1.2 million, meaning every tenth person has a disability in South Sudan[123]. There is no doubt that the humanitarian needs are complex, multifaceted, and affect most of the country's population.

Most recently, South Sudan was embroiled in a civil war from mid-December 2013 to mid-September 2018. Nearly 400,000 people died, and several million were displaced.[124] However, before this, the country had a turbulent history of conflict over decades. This environment has resulted in widespread insecurity, large-scale internal displacement, increased refugee outflow to Sudan and Uganda, and deteriorating food security. As of January 2021, 8.3 million people in South Sudan required humanitarian assistance.[125] The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) indicates that since 2013, almost 3.7 million people have remained displaced: 1.5 million internally and 2.2 million refugees in neighbouring countries. South Sudan hosts about 319,000 refugees from Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and the Central African Republic.

Tens of thousands of children have been affected by incidents of grave violations against children in armed conflict situations since December 2013. These include thousands of children who have been recruited into armed forces and armed groups, with some released as young as eight years of age. Children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups paint a picture of violent recruitment campaigns, harsh military training, inhumane living conditions, frequent abuse and ill-treatment, and the denial of education, adequate medical care, and communication with parents or relatives. Girls as well as boys are recruited. In addition, children, particularly those without appropriate care, are vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation or child labour, mainly through abduction. The Government of South Sudan notes that a long-term solution to child trafficking is needed to strengthen the socioeconomic and political conditions of individual children, their families, and the communities in which they live.

Whilst recruitment into armed groups is one of the worst forms of child labour in South Sudan, child labour is also widespread in the formal sector, which nearly 46% of children aged 10-14 worked in during 2019. About 60% of these children work in agriculture, over 38%% in industry and nearly 2% in services.[126] Although there is limited data available, a survey by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) found that only 10.4% of children aged 10-14 who work also attend school, meaning that child labour is a significant obstacle to education.[127]Education is not seen as a viable alternative to working for many people because there is inadequate school access in many parts of South Sudan. Furthermore, children's incomes are often necessary for the household's survival, since 91.9% of the population of South Sudan lives in multidimensional poverty.[128]

Child labour is increasing during COVID-19 due to the loss of household income, with children as young as 6-8 years selling groundnuts and polishing shoes.[129] In 2017, the government enacted the Labour Act of 2017 to prohibit the worst forms of child labour.

The administrative boundaries and names shown and designations used on this map and subsequent maps and tables in the document do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of Abyei area is not determined.

121 HRP (2020) South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan. Retrieved from (https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/20191210_hrp_2020_south_sudan.pdf)

122 ibid

123 ibid

124 Ting, M. A,. (2020) "War and Schooling in South Sudan, 2013-2016." *Journal on Education in Emergencies*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.33682/0m69-xf0p

125 ACAPS (2021). South Sudan Complex Crisis. Available at South Sudan Complex crisis | ACAPS

126 UNICEF (2020) Child Labour in South Sudan, available at:https://borgenproject.org/child-labor-in-south-sudan/

127 Bureau of international labour affairs (2020). 2020 Findings on the Worse Forms of Child Labour, South Sudan. Available at www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/south-sudan

128 UNICEF (2020) Child Labour in South Sudan. Available at https://borgenproject.org/child-labor-in-south-sudan/

129 UNICEF South Sudan. The Situation of Children and Women in South Sudan 2018–2020. United Nations Children's Fund, Juba, July 2021

Education in South Sudan: Government Plans and Policies

Link to AEWG: AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

Education in South Sudan is organised into two ministries, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MoHEST). MoGEI is responsible for the following sub-sectors: ECDE, primary, secondary, alternative education systems (AES), teacher training, and post-primary technical and vocational education and training (TVET).[130]

In South Sudan, the Constitution and the Child Act provide free primary education, yet only 31.5% of children aged 6-14 were enrolled in school in 2019.[131] Moreover, even though education is free, many families must contribute school fees to pay teacher salaries and other related costs in practice. To date, the rate of primary school completion sits at just 25.7%.[132] Consequently, as of 2019, only about 27% of the adult population in South Sudan is literate.[133]

Undoubtedly, education has been severely impacted by successive years of conflict, economic instability, displacement, and widespread flooding. At the time of independence in 2011, most South Sudanese had never had the opportunity to enrol in school, and less than 35% of school-going children were girls. In addition, fewer than 10% of primary school learners remained at school for the complete cycle, long enough to attain functional literacy and numeracy.[134] As a result, church and private schools opened, mainly in the urban centres and rural communities. However, the number of faith-based and low-cost private schools is still minimal. Moreover, faith-based schools, private schools, community and public schools charge school fees, which often can become an additional burden to parents to send their children to school.[135]

Children and youth aged between 3 and 17 represent 44% of South Sudan's population. Therefore, MoGEIhas pledged to enrol all children of school-going age over the next five years in line with the General Education Sector Plan (GESP) 2017-2022, which prioritises expanding access to children and adults who have not had the chance to go to school[136]. To fulfil the goals of the GESP, four priority programmes have been selected and structured by educational sub-sectors to reflect the objectives and strategies of the MoGEI.

130 MoGEI (2016) General Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022 , Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

131 UNICEF (2020) Child Labour in South Sudan https://borgenproject.org/child-labor-in-south-sudan/

132 Ibid

133 UNDP (2020) Human Development Report- South Sudan. Available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SSD

134 UNICEF (2019) South Sudan BTL Education Initiative Evaluation Report. Available at https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media/2206/file/South-Sudan-BTL-Education-Initiative-Evaluation-report-2019.pdf

135 UNICEF (2019) South Sudan BTL Education Initiative Evaluation Report. Available at https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media/2206/file/South-Sudan-BTL-Education-Initiative-Evaluation-report-2019.pdf

136 MoGEI is mandated to develop appropriate policies and strategies and to ensure that other related roles such as oversight and equity issues are dealt with appropriately. These tasks are to be delivered by the seven directorates of the Ministry, one secretariat, two centres, and a teachers' development and management service and their respective departments through the stewardship of the Honourable Minister and Honourable Undersecretary.

The priority programmes focus on:

1. Access and equity
2. Quality
3. Overall management of general education
4. Post-primary technical and vocational education and training (TVET)[137]

HARMONISING THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

On 8 September 2015, the MoGEI launched the first comprehensive national education curriculum for South Sudan. The curriculum framework is considered by the MoGEI to be 'a complete, harmonised, and recognised curriculum in line with regional and international education standards.'[138] It was launched under the theme 'Harmonised Education Service Delivery for Nation-building, Peaceful Co-existence and Lifelong Learning for All'[139]

One of the critical parts of the GESP focuses on harmonising the education curriculum. Multiple curriculums from around the region have been used in schools for many years[140]. However, in May of 2016, the MOGEI announced the phasing-out of the foreign education curricula in schools, replacing them with the country's national education curriculum. The decision aligns with the General Education Act, 2012 Chapter IV, Article 12, which states that the Ministry shall establish a unified secular curriculum for public and private schools[141] The curriculum was also promoted as legitimised through its grounding in key South Sudan documents, including the 2011 interim Constitution of South Sudan, the 2012 Education Act, and the 2012-2017 General Education Strategic Plan.[142]

The new South Sudan curriculum framework is comprehensive, with the four key aims of creating:

(1) Good citizens of South Sudan

(2) Successful life-long learners

(3) Creative and productive individuals

(4) Environmentally responsible members of society.

137 Nicholson, S. (2019) Review of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Training in Oxfam projects in South Sudan. Available at https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/review_fal_oxfam_south_sudan.pdf

138 Carsillo, T. (2017) The First South Sudan National Curriculum. Available at https://www.beyondintractability.org/casestudy/carsillo-south-sudan

139 UNICEF (2015) Education Initiative Evaluation Report. Available at https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media/2206/file/South-Sudan-BTL-Education-Initiative-Evaluation-report-2019.pdf

140 MoGEI (2017) General Education Strategic Plan South Sudan 2017-2022. Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

141 Maphalala, T. (2015, October 13*). South Sudan celebrates its first comprehensive curriculum.* [Web log comment]. Retrieved from http://www.globalpartnership.org /blog/south-sudan-celebrates-its-first-comprehensive-curriculum

142 ibid

The phases of education are early childhood, ages 3-5; primary, grades 1-8; and secondary, grades 1-4.

The 2012 South Sudan Language Policy and the General Education Act (Section 13) adopted by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan stipulates the learner's mother tongue, selected by the school to best fit with local needs and circumstances, be used as the medium of instruction from Primary 1 through Primary 3, with English, taught as a subject. In Primary 4, the medium of instruction officially changes to English. At the same time, the learner's mother tongue is taught as a subject through to Primary 8, the final year of primary education. English continues as the medium of instruction through secondary school and university.[143] Optional language offerings of Kiswahili and Arabic are e available at the secondary education level[144].

However, there are multiple challenges to positioning English as the official language of instruction for post-Primary 4 education levels throughout the country. Firstly, South Sudan is ethnically and linguistically diverse, with some 60 languages spoken by dozens of ethnic groups in a population of around 11 million. The majority of South Sudanese also speak what is known as Juba Arabic. Under the Education Act 2012, 'All indigenous languages of South Sudan are national languages and shall be respected, developed and promoted.'[145] Despite a progressive policy framework supporting mother-tongue instruction, teaching in the learner's mother tongue becomes more complicated and politically sensitive in a context where civil war has caused mass displacement and in areas with one or more dominant languages.[146] Furthermore, the transition to English as the language of instruction is challenging in a context where trained, fluent English-speaking teachers are scarce, and trained personnel may not be fluent.[147] This latter point is unpacked further in this report, under 'Quality and Learning in Teaching.'

National Overview of Education Access and Inequity

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs improved

As the previous sections have highlighted, South Sudan faces significant educational access and quality challenges. Factors that significantly contribute to low enrolment and retention figures at the meso and micro levels are the consistent lack of places to learn, especially upcountry, lack of qualified teachers in primary and secondary education (in particular a lack of female teachers), few ECD centres in general, most limited to the urban centres, and a complete lack of learning materials.[148]In addition, the cyclical nature of the civil conflict has impacted the education sector gravely, causing 70% of schools to close in Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Unity by 2016. As many as 400,000 children dropped out of school.[149] Evidence suggests that schools in the South Sudanese war zones lost 85 children per year on average, or 18.5% of total enrolment[150]. The estimated overall gross enrolment rate (GER) for primary (including AES) decreased from 81% to 62%. For AES alone, the coverage fell by half to 1,282 learners per 100,000 inhabitants in 2015[151].

Whilst the MoGEI education information management system (EMIS) has not been updated since 2019, according to figures by USAID, approximately 68% of the country's children and youth remain out of school. Furthermore, as outlined by Odur Nelson Hussein, then Director Alternative Education Systems (AES), during an AEWG meeting, multiple groups of children are excluded from education in South Sudan, including:

- children with disabilities;
- pastoralist and fishing communities;
- IDPs;
- refugees;
- street children;
- girls and women;
- youth and adults
- security forces and their families, including wounded soldiers and disarmed child soldiers and adults,
- prison inmates.

Girls are disproportionately affected, with an overwhelming 76% not attending school. In 2021, COVID-19 further exacerbated the number of children out of school. As a result, an estimated 3.4 million (51% of girls) school-aged children will lack or inadequate access to education services in 2021. This is a slight increase from the 3.1 million girls and boys in need in 2020.

Before the pandemic, there were deep gender disparities with the children that do not attend school. In 2019, about 17% of girls were enrolled in pre-primary and 58% primary. According to a report by the Windle Trust, the secondary sector in South Sudan is relatively tiny, with enrolment in 2017 totalling about 80,000 and an enrolment rate of approximately 5%. This figure hides gender-based and regional disparities, which mean that in some parts of South Sudan, secondary enrolment may be as low as 1% for young women. Low enrolment rates are compounded by high dropout rates and provide clear evidence that the current system is not working equitably or efficiently.[152] Fewer than 20% of women in South Sudan are literate. The 2018 Education Cluster Assessment found that child and early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and pregnancy is critical drivers of dropout

143 Spronk, T. (2014). Addressing the challenges of language choice in the implementation of mother-tongue based bilingual education in South Sudan. *Multiling.Ed. 4* (16) https://doi.org/10.1186/s13616-014-0016-z

144 Nicholson, S (2018). Review of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Training in Oxfam projects in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/review_fal_oxfam_south_sudan.pdf

145 MOGEI . Ministry of General Education and Instruction- South Sudan. Retrieved from http://mogei.org/about-us/#about-6

146 Momo, E. (2021) The Language Policy in South Sudan: Implications for Educational Development . Retrieved from m http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/108614/1/Momo_the_language_policy_in_south_sudan_published.pdf

147 ibid

148 Cambridge Education (2019) Evaluation of the Back to Learning Initiative in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media/2206/file/South-Sudan-BTL-Education-Initiative-Evaluation-report-2019.pdf

149 Hodgkin &Thomas (2016). Education and Conflict in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://odihpn.org/blog/education-and-conflict-in-south-sudan/

150 Ting, M. A,. (2020) "War and Schooling in South Sudan, 2013-2016." *Journal on Education in Emergencies*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.33682/0m69-xf0p

151 Ibid

152 Windle Trust (2017). Secondary Schools in South Sudan, A Neglected Priority. Retrieved from Secondary Schools in South Sudan.. pdf (windle.org.uk)

from primary school for girls (compared to cattle rearing, cost of education, and hunger for boys). As such, very few girls make the transition to secondary school. Even fewer complete secondary education. In 2017, less than 3,500 girls completed four years of secondary schooling.[153]

REFUGEE AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED POPULATIONS ACCESS TO EDUCATION

South Sudan also hosts refugees, predominantly Sudanese refugees from the Western Nile and Nuba mountains, and many internally displaced people, many of whom live in Protection of Civilian sites.[154]

Despite the encouraging improvements in the quality of education where refugee children excelled in national examination and refugee education is aligned with the national education curriculum, significant attainment gaps remain. For example; i) out-of-school children, due to high dropout rate caused by child labour and child recruitment, ii) forced/early marriage and teenage pregnancy, and iii) inadequate infrastructures and lack of educational material and uniforms. Early childhood development (ECD) centres are inadequately equipped; primary and accelerated learning program (ALP) school enrolment stands at 70,823 (34,442 girls, 36,381 boys) across all the refugee camps in 2019, while the average attendance fluctuates between 45% and 71%. About 22% of school-aged refugee children are out of school, and secondary schools are far fewer than primary schools, with limited capacity to enrol all the successful primary school students. Post-secondary opportunities remain limited. The average pupil/teacher ratio stands at 1:92, and the pupil to classroom ratio is above the national standard of 1:45. Inadequate sanitation facilities in schools in refugee camps also need to be addressed.

Figure 1 UNHCR South Sudan 2020 Year-End figures155

Impact Indicator	Baseline	Year-End	Target
% of primary school-aged children enrolled in primary education	78.7	62.8	100
% of secondary school-aged young people enrolled in secondary education	59.7	50.4	75

Output	Performance Indicator	Year-End	Target
Primary education provided or supported	# of PoC enrolled in accelerated education programmes	9,033	-
Primary education provided or supported	# of children enrolled in primary education	41,872	-
Educational infrastructure constructed, improved or maintained	# of educational facilities constructed or improved	21	-
Secondary education provided or supported	# of students enrolled in upper secondary education	5,070	-

In addition, there are 98,500 school-aged refugee children, of whom 18,000 children are out of school.[156]

153 Ibid

154 The Protection of Civilian sites exist first and foremost as a means of providing protection from fighting between government and opposition forces and violence from other armed actors.

155 Note PoC is an acronym for People of Concern

156 UNHCR (2021) Global Operations Dashboard- South Sudan. Retrieved from South Sudan | Global Focus (unhcr.org)

Almost all primary and secondary school students are over age in South Sudan. In the refugee hosting areas of Ruweng and Maban, LWF emphasised that despite supporting 70,000 refugee and host community learners, more than 40% of children and youth of school-going age remain out of school in the camps. At the same time, one-fifth of the enrolled learners are over age.[157] As the graphs highlight, as of 2018, more than 89% of primary school students and 93% of secondary school students were overage for their grade level across all states and children, irrespective of sex or the wealth of their family. Most secondary school-aged children were still in primary school, with only about 1% of 14-year-olds and less than 4% of 15-year-olds in secondary school – with an even lower percentage for girls.[158]

Figure: *Percentage of overage students at primary school*

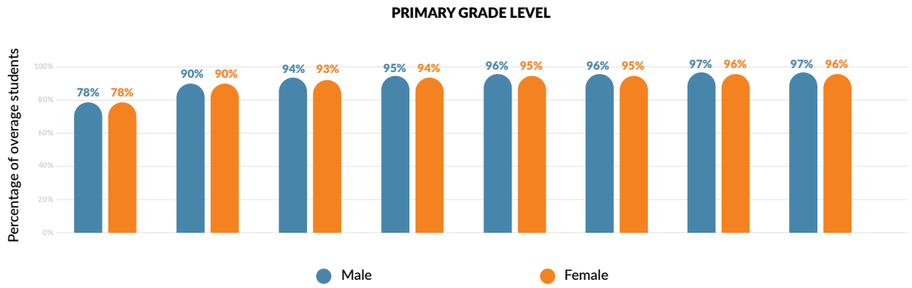
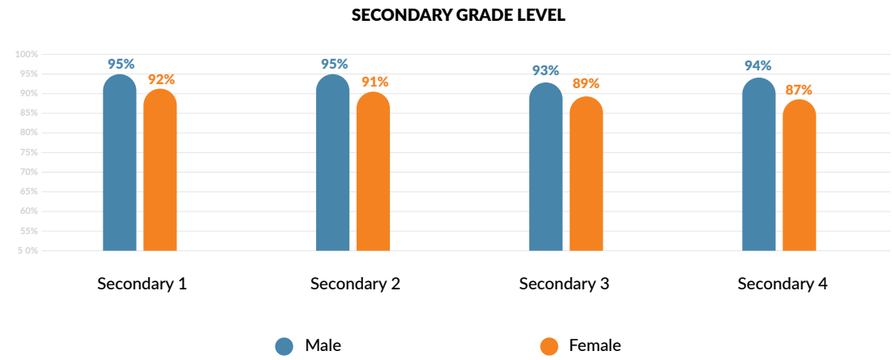


Figure: *Percentage of overage students at secondary school*



157 Lutheran World Federation (2021) Education in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/south-sudan

158 Hewison, M. (2018) UNHCR-AEWG AE South Sudan workshop (internal report).

Quality of Teaching and Learning in Non-formal Education Spaces

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs improved

In South Sudan, almost 63% of the teaching force is unqualified, with varying levels of education.[159] In addition, according to a recent report, only one-third of South Sudan's teachers have been trained.[160] This has a significant impact on teaching quality. Furthermore, while there are experienced teachers, many were educated and trained before independence in Arabic language institutions. As a result, they may not be fluent in English, which further impedes the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Additionally, the minimal familiarity of the population with the English language does not bode well for its use as the language of instruction from Grade 4.[161] Juba Arabic is the preferred and most widely used language across the population. Evidence on the ineffectiveness of English instruction in the country has been forthcoming in recent years.[162] Developing and using South Sudanese language instruction within the classroom could have far-reaching effects beyond learning and provide a powerful tool for building an effective national education system. However, as a report by UNICEF clearly outlines, the 'ethnic nature of conflict in the country has heightened the challenges of establishing local language-based education systems, since inter-ethnic tension is not a supportive environment for the development of community languages on a national scale.'[163]

Non-formal Education and AE in South Sudan: Government Structures

Link to AEWG: AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

AE has been long established in South Sudan. Before independence, as early as 2003, the then Secretariat of Education and its development partners decided to create an alternative education system strategy to address educational access in the emerging new country. The plan was adopted after a team from the Secretariat took a study tour to Bangladesh, a country that had adopted the same strategy in the past.[164] Today, AE is a recognised component of the Alternative Education Directorate (AES) of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) in South Sudan. There is an AES Directorate at the national level with AES director, plus AES directors in each state ministry of education (SMoGEI). There is also an AES advisory group at the national level (which replaced the AES working group) led by MOGEI, UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The AES advisory group calls partners for meetings bi-monthly.[165]

The MoGEI has developed an accelerated education strategy. The strategy is embedded into key policy documents, including the South Sudan General Education Plan 2017-2022, and the directorate has developed various implementation guidance. Due to the diversity of potential AE learners in South Sudan, the AES describes six different programmes; however, since the strategy's development, additional programmes have been developed, described in the following section.[166]

The following section is adapted but predominantly taken from Sue Nicholson's 2018 and 2019 reports, Evaluation of Oxfam Ibis Accelerated Education 2014-2018 and Technical, Vocational Education in South Sudan.

Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP): The ALP condenses eight years of primary into four levels and is designed for children aged 12-18 (though youth in organised forces up to age 30 are allowed to participate). ALP classes provide a pathway to enter (or re-enter) primary education or complete the Primary Certificate of Education (PCE). The ALP is fully developed with an ALP training manual, ALP teacher's handbook and Level 1-4 textbooks in four subjects (language, maths, science, social studies). A new ALP curriculum has been developed and textbooks have been produced according to the new primary curriculum, including P1 in national languages. ALP classes are frequently conducted in the afternoon shift of primary schools and follow the academic calendar. ALP is supported by the GPE and is included in the GESP for 2020. The flexible nature of ALP allows multiple entry and exit points at appropriate levels, determined by age and performance at each level[167].

PRIMARY SYLLABUS	ALP SYLLABUS
1	Level 1
2	
3	Level 2
4	
5	Level 3
6	
7	Level 4
8	

Figure: *SEQ Figure * ARABIC2 MoGEI ALP 20?*

2. Community Girls Schools (CGS) work to locate schools closer to children's villages, so parents feel safer sending their young children, especially girls, to school. CGS condenses the first four years of primary school into three. After that, children are expected to enrol in P5 in the nearest primary school. Children can join between the ages of 8 and 12. A new CGS curriculum has been developed as part of the new primary curriculum, and textbooks are in the pipeline. The INGO Brac previously implemented CGS successfully before 2015 and has pledged to implement CGS in Rumbek in 2019

3. Pastoralist Education Programme (PEP) In Sept 2017, the AES Directorate, with UNESCO and other partners, developed the Pastoral Education Program (PEP) Strategy Framework 2017-2022 in line with the GESP 2017-2022. As this population has not been included in any census, and no census of South Sudan has been conducted since 2008, only scant demographic information is available on these groups. Nonetheless, it is estimated that pastoralist

159 Global Partnerships for Education (2017) General Education Strategic Plan South Sudan. Available at https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

160 USAID report- find reference!

161 UNICEF (2016) Language and Learning in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org.esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2016-Language-and-Learning-South-Sudan-Case-Study.pdf

162 ibid

163 UNICEF (2016) Language and Learning in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org.esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2016-Language-and-Learning-South-Sudan-Case-Study.pdf

164 Awuok, H. (2013) Successful Education Alternative Education Strategy : The Case of South Sudan. Retrieved from https://atlascorps.org/successful-alternative-education-system-strategy-the-case-of-south-sudan

165 Hewison, M. (2018) UNHCR AEWG AE South Sudan workshop (internal notes).

166 Nicholson, S. (2018) Review of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Training in Oxf am projects in South Sudan. https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/pdf_global/evaluation_report_oxfam_alp_ganyliel_south_sudan_2018.pdf

167 MoGEI (2017) General Education Strategic Plan South Sudan 2017-2022. Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

communities represent approximately 67% of the total South Sudanese population and the PEP programme is designed to reach both children and adults in pastoral areas. Mobile schools, were introduced to South Sudan in 2011 through PEP, and by 2013 there were an estimated 108 mobile pastoralist schools with an approximate total of between 4,000 and 12,000 students. PEP provides mobile primary education with teachers that travel with the community. PEP uses the formal primary curriculum to transition children to formal primary schools[168]. UNESCO has also developed a Pastoralist Education Livelihoods programme (PELP), with a curriculum, teacher training guide, and resources. The South Sudanese MoGEI has set a target of educating 100,000 children through this mobile schooling education delivery system. According to a government report, pastoralists' children enrolment and literacy rates have significantly improved. Livelihood is a key component of PEP ,with relevant life skills incorporated and identified by need. For example, fishing communities may learn new life skills like smoking and preserving fish. In contrast, pastoralist communities may prefer skills like processing butter and contemporary techniques of using animal leather. However, the main weaknesses of PEP are mainly similar to other projects, namely the lack of facilities for teachers, lack of food, inadequate materials, delays in paying teachers' salaries, logistical challenges in getting resources to communities due to remoteness, and the long distance travelled by teachers.[169]

4. Basic Adult Literacy Programme (BALP) targets youth and adults aged 18 and above who have had few or no opportunities for literacy and numeracy due to civil war or traditional barriers of socio-economic status. Before 2013, the BALP was organised in four levels and took four years. After Level 4 (equivalent to ALP Level 2), learners could transfer to Level 3 or vocational education. BALP had a handbook and textbooks covering six subjects (English, maths, science, social studies, home science, business education). However, this programme fell into disuse when a literacy policy, implementation guidelines, and functional adult literacy (FAL) programme were developed by UNESCO in 2013. The AES Handbook states that the BALP programme will be reviewed with the approval of the National Literacy Policy, which has yet to take place.

5. Intensive English Courses (IECs) are designed to address people lacking English language proficiency. IECs have been used predominantly to upgrade the English language skills of Arabic pattern teachers, learners, and civil servants who acquired their education in other languages. The GESP 2017-2022 states that a needs analysis needs to be conducted with an updated strategy for implementing IEC at the field level. The plan will identify the intended IEC learners, the methodologies to be used, the length of the course, and the method of certification for IEC learning.

6. Interactive radio instruction (IRI)[170] Three interactive radio programmes under the South Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction (SSIRI) programme were developed by the MoGEI with support from USAID: Learning Village, which supplements classroom teaching in lower primary classes; Radio Based Education for All (RABEA), based on the BALP curriculum for youth and adults; and Professional Studies for Teachers (PST), which aims to upgrade teachers' skills through in-service teacher training topics. MP3 players are loaded with the programmes and used in the classroom as and when required or the programmes are broadcast from local radio stations. The use of radio broadcasts and MP3 players increases the ability of IRI programmes to reach a large audience of learners without dramatically increasing the cost so that IRI can improve educational quality on a large scale. For example, final evaluations of the RABEA programmes in primary school indicated a 10% increase in maths and English. Unfortunately, the lack of funding and changes in the curriculum have meant that Learning Village, RABEA, and PST are no longer used.

168 Forcier consulting (2016) Room to Learn: South Sudan- Pastoral Education Program Study Report. Retrieved from https://winrock.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ANNEX-4-RtL-PEP-Study-Report.pdf

169 Ibid

170 Nicholson, S. (2018) Review of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Training in Oxfam projects in South Sudan. https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/pdf_global/evaluation_report_oxfam_alp_ganyliel_south_sudan_2018.pdf

7. Accelerated Secondary Education for Women (ASEW) AE Secondary education is a new AE programme for select targeted groups in South Sudan. In Yambio, the African Education Trust (AET) initiated an Accelerated Secondary Education for Women (ASEW) in 2018. ASEW supports 50 young women who have not attended secondary school due to conflict, poverty, and early pregnancy in completing their secondary education in 2.5 years[171]. The ASEW was developed in response to South Sudan having one of the lowest rates for girls' enrolment and completion of secondary school globally. All young women attending the course have completed primary school but been out of school for two years. Most students need to simultaneously earn income or take care of their family whilst getting an education.[172]To ensure that the programme is accessible to young mothers or carers with childcare duties, early childhood daycare centres are available next to the ASEW site.

8. Accelerated Secondary Education Programme for Teachers (ASEP). In 2017, the Windle Trust and the Ministry of Education began collaborating on designing an AE programme that specifically targeted teachers who had finished Primary 8 but had not completed secondary education. In South Sudan, less than 50 % of teachers are trained teachers. Moreover, as most primary school teachers have not finished their secondary education, they are excluded from teacher training institutions.

With funding from UK Aid as part of the Girls Education South Sudan (GESS), the ASEP was designed to support the AE system through the provision of capitation grants, cash transfers and schemes of work to the ALP programmes and the establishment of the ASEP for teachers, operationalising 50 Accelerated Secondary Education Centres (across ten states, with five centres per state) and implementing intensive English course for teachers registered in ASEP. This was intended to support a higher quality in primary teaching andincrease the number of teachers who meet the minimum requirements for teacher qualification courses and qualify for payroll enrolment.[173]

The ASEP condensed the four-year secondary education curriculum into 2.5 years. The MoGEI validated the condensed curriculum as follows: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171 Accelerated Education Secondary Education. (2018). ASEW: Accelerated Secondary Education for Women. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aG8pRuXMELo

172 African Educational Trust. (2018) Accelerated Secondary Education for Women. Retrieved fromhttps://africaeducationaltrust.org/accelerated-secondary-education-for-women/

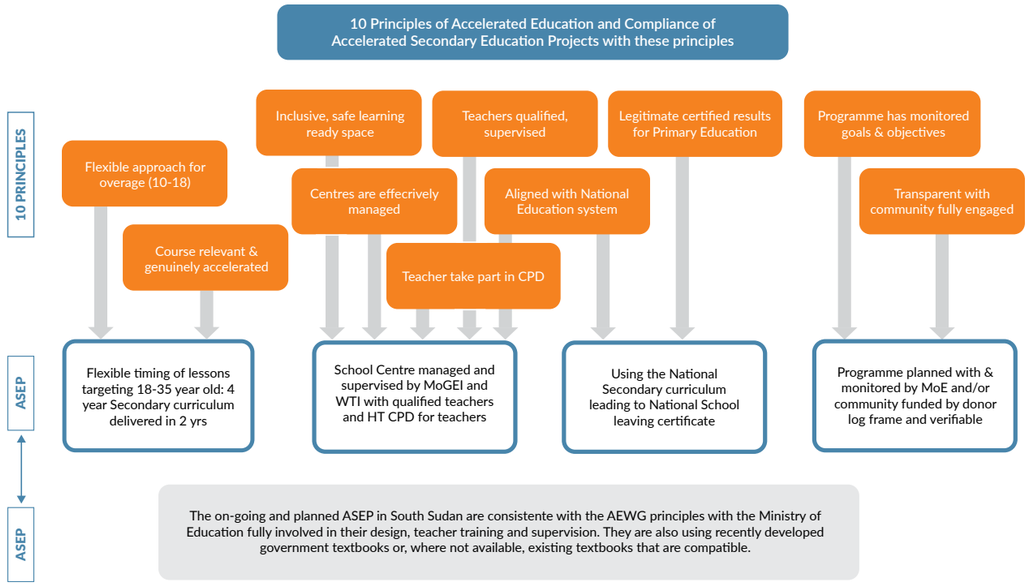
173 UKAID (2020) Girls Education in South Sudan Phase II. Retrieved from https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300449/documents

Intensive English preparation	
Senior 1 and 2	Level 5
Senior 3 and 4	Level 6

Nine subjects are part of the condensed curriculum, and there are optional subjects such as French and Swahili, which are dependent on the ASEP tutors' subject knowledge area.

While the ASEP was designed to focus on primary school teachers predominantly, women who worked in other government sectors were also eligible to attend. The MoGEI and Windle Trust established other criteria, including:

- Eligible learners must be above 18 years of age.
- Eligible learners must be teachers recommended by a head teacher.
- Eligible learners must have previously studied up to Senior 2 or Primary.
- Eligible learners must commit to teaching morning classes (ALP primary) and attending AE secondary learning in the afternoon.
- Eligible learners must have been out of school for at least three years.



The AE programme was designed in alignment with the AEWG guiding principles.

In 2020, The ASEP began with an accelerated six-week intensive English language course. Teachers (558 female/1400 men) then started their ASEP studies. However, despite the programme being enthusiastically and actively promoted by the MoGEI, who saw it as central to their plans for improved quality in education, the recent UKAID cuts drastically impacted the project, and all teaching has stalled.

In summary, the seven AES programmes provide a pathway to enter (or re-enter) formal education and are part of the government's commitment to providing (formal or non-formal) education for all children in the country.[174] However, AES, especially ALP and CGS programmes, while positively contributing to universal primary enrolment (UPE), has not been provided in all states/counties and remains insufficient with its enrolment of 111,000 students (as of 2016).

Community engagement

Link to AEWG Principle 8: Community is engaged and accountable

Communities have a very active role in education provision in South Sudan. One partner highlighted that communities were often the first to establish and set up schools. Some schools identified volunteer teachers, paid for by students' parents.

According to the AES guidelines, school management committees (SMCs) should play an integral role in the functioning of AE programmes.[175] Each PEP, ALP, and CGS should have a school management committee (SMC) of between three and seven members including the teacher, women, youth, and children. As UNESCO shared, communities have an essential role within the PEP project, are involved in planning, and participate in community mobilisation activities as community facilitators (CFs). The CFs are paid an incentive to support the AE activity.

World Vision highlighted that communities have a vital role in running ALP. They are involved in several ways, from mobilising students to back to school campaigns and school governance. In some locations, communities have constructed classrooms and supported volunteer teachers through in-kind support, such as providing breakfast and lunch.

The AEWG Ten Principles for Effective Practice underline the importance of community engagement and accountability in AE programmes.[176] As these examples have illustrated, communities play an active role in supporting AE programmes in South Sudan.

Institutional Coordination of Non-Formal Education

Link to AEWG: AEPs better resourced by all key stakeholders for scale and quality.

Whilst there is an AE Directorate, four out of five partners who participated in this study were unaware of a thematic working group, suggesting that state-level thematic groups are not necessarily functioning in every state. However, since the conflict started in 2013, an Education Cluster has coordinated education responses in communities most affected by displacement, including in Protection of Civilians camps and IDP communities in Greater Upper Nile states. The Education

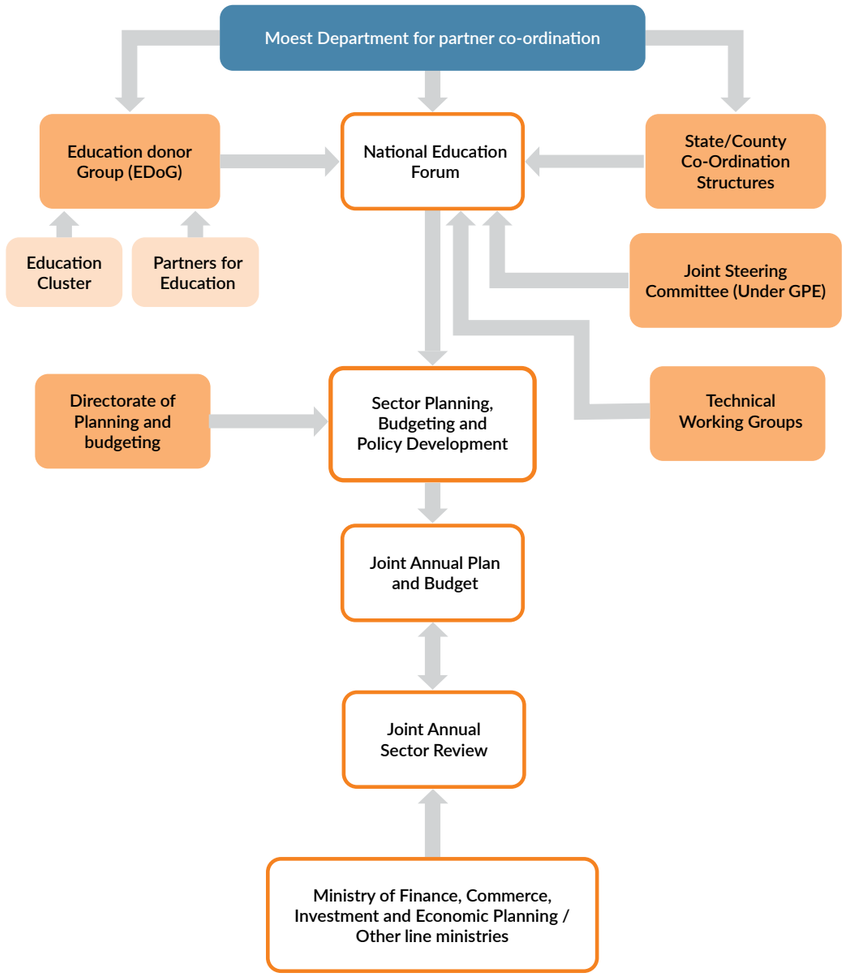
174 MoGEI (2016) General Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022. Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

175 AES (2014) South Sudan AES Implementation Guide. Retrieved from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/south_sudan_-_aes_implementation_guide_2014.pdf

176 AEWG (2017) .10 Principles for Effective Practice. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/uk/59ce4f727.pdf

Cluster is co-led by MOGEI and UNICEF/Save the Children.[177] ALP materials, policies, and guidelines are available on the South Sudan Education Cluster page, and the cluster tracks partners who are implementing AE programmes. In the refugee-hosting areas of Jamjang and Maban, education sector working group meetings are held regularly, although LWF remains the leading AE provider in the camps.

Figure 3 MOEST Education Sector Coordination Manual 2015[178]



Besides the education and education donor group meetings, there are a range of other coordination groups in which AE is discussed. Those include the Back to Learning (BTL) initiative of the South Sudan MoGEI, supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). MoGEI, closely supported by UNICEF, led the BTL rollout between 2015 and 2017. The estimated cost of the initiative's rollout was 190 million US dollars. Over the three years, BTL was supported by contributions from Canada, the European Union, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the USAID. In addition, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) provided a sizable grant managed by UNICEF. UNICEF brought its network of 12 national and nine international implementing partners under the BTL umbrella to provide complementary humanitarian and education development services to the children of South Sudan. National and state-level BTL committees were established to coordinate implementation by the partner agencies.

Funding and Key Stakeholders

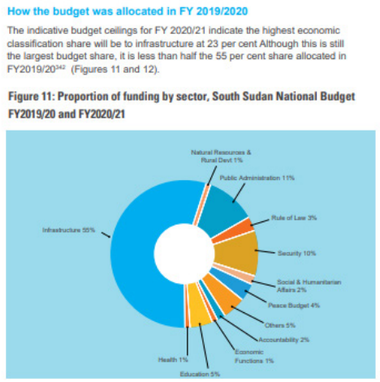
Link to AEWG : AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality

In February 2019, Vice President Wani Igga announced that education would account for 10–15% of the budget, and the country signed up for the Incheon Declaration target of 15–20%.[179] . In recent years, donors have accounted for roughly a third of total education spending (36% in 2014/15, which did not include humanitarian education funding).[180] For example, in 2017, the EU IMPACT project provided a monthly salary of USD 40 for up to 30,000 primary teachers and headteachers for 18 months[181].

Whilst education has been poorly funded, other social sectors remain severely underfunded. For example, only 1% of the FY2019/20 national budget is allocated to health, and there is no funding for child protection, social protection, or water, sanitation, and hygiene services.[182]

AE provision is almost entirely implemented by international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and faith-based organisations.

According to the Education Cluster's overview (and responses to this study), the main partners supporting AES include:



Source of image: *UNICEF (2020) Education Budget Brief: South Sudan*

177 MoGEI (2016) General Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022. Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

178 Ministry of General Education and Instruction.(2015). Education Sector Coordination Manual. Retrieved from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/education_sector_coordination_manual.pdf

179 UNICEF South Sudan. The Situation of Children and Women in South Sudan 2018–2020. United Nations Children's Fund, Juba, July 2021

180 MoGEI (2016) General Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022 https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

181 Ibid

182 UNICEF (2020) Education Budget Brief. UNICEF-South-Sudan-2019-2020-Education-Budget-Brief.pdf

- **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA):** Supports 8,858 ALP learners in Upper Nile, Warrap and Eastern Equatoria states.

- **AVSI Foundation:** Collaborates with the MoE and improves the resilience of teachers, learners, and systems through the following programs:
  - Provision of teacher's education and professional development for 16 primary schools and four ALP centres
  - Provision of schools and recreational materials to four host primary schools/ALP centres
  - Provision of incentives to 16 teachers
  - Training students on life skills
  - Training PTAS and SMCs
  - Training teachers on GRP
  - Training teachers on PSS.
  - Their ALP centres in Torit and Ikwoto enrol 738 students (269 male 469 female)This project is part of the Oxfam IBIS-led BRICE consortium.

- **Plan International:** Plan International, with funding from ECHO, is implementing a 24 month-long AEP in Yei, South Sudan. The programme targets out-of-school adolescents and youth with a particular focus on young mothers/pregnant adolescents, children associated with armed conflict and armed groups (CAFAAG), and other vulnerable children and youth who missed school for several reasons. The population stargeted are IDPs, returnees, refugees, and host communities in Yei. In South Sudan, the AE programme runs for four years. In addition, Plan International also supports other AE programmes in other locations, namely the pastoral education programme and community girls' schools.

- **World Vision International:** Implements accelerated education programmes alongside basic primary education programming. World Vision follows the existing Ministry of General Education's general instruction curriculum in South Sudan. The programme spans four years of primary education. World Vision is currently the ALP in the same classroom spaces, especially in the afternoon shifts in Yambio, Warrap (Tonj North and Tonj East), using funds from the multi-year resilience fund and ECW seed fund. They are also funded by UNHCR and support ALP in the Makpandu refugee camp. In addition, ALP programmes are supported through a UNICEF grant across several states. Key activities include teacher capacity building, curriculum materials, school supplies (teachers kits, learner kits), and training of PTA and school management committees to run programmes and support. In addition, World Vision facilitates examinations in hard-to-reach areas.

- Through the PELP project, **UNESCO** supports 3,000 school pastoral children with the PEP programme in the Lakes and the Terekeka States. This programme, including a culturally-responsive curriculum, based on the needs and interests of the pastoralist communities. The PELP programme also provides teacher guides and learner books. The curriculum integrates cross-cutting gender, HIV, climate change, health and hygiene, peacebuilding, and life skills.

- **Lutheran World Federation (LWF):** Implements education programmes for 70,000 learners in Upper Nile and Ruweng states, hosting Sudanese refugees. Besides managing early childhood development (ECD) and primary and secondary schools in Ruweng state, LWF supports seven ALP centres with 3,537 students. In Maban, Upper Nile, LWF manages nine ALP centres with 26,098 students.

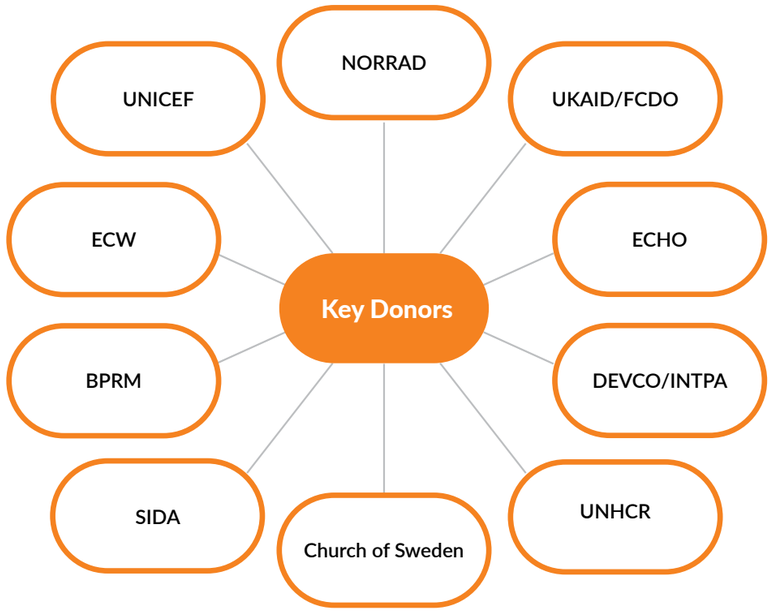
- **Oxfam IBIS:** Runs an ALP programme ass a cross-border project funded through BRICE. It aims to ensure high-quality, sustainable, and resilient educational opportunities for refugees in Northern Uganda and IDPs in South Sudan, along with school-aged children in the respective host countries. The primary aim is to improve access to quality primary education for learners between the ages of 6–25 years in both non-formal and formal education systems to build resilience and prepare them with technical skills to lead a productive life and be active citizens. This will be achieved through the ALP model for learners and by addressing the capacity needs for teacher professional development at the primary school level. In South Sudan, Oxfam works with AVSI in 18 ALP centres spread within the states of Torit/Imatong, Kapoeta, and Jubek/greater Juba. Related to the implementation of ALP, the project focuses on raising teachers' professional competencies through a continuous teacher training and supervision programme that targets both AEP teachers and teachers in the primary schools hosting the ALP centres.

- **The Windle Trust:** Manages the ASEP mentioned in the previous section. However, the programme is currently suspended due to UKAID's aid cuts.

- **Save the Children:** Provide ALP programmes in Magwi, Kapoeta North, Awerial, Yirol East, Duk, Nyirol, Baliet, Panijiyar, Guit, Tonj North, Gogrial West, and Tonj East. The organisation targets children who are ten years and above and who have never been to school.

In addition to INGOs, national organisations such as Christian Mission for Development (CMD), Nile Hope (NH) and Peace Corps Organisation Sudan also implement ALP.

Nearly all AE programmes are funded by foreign donors, philanthropy, trusts and foundations. In 2020-2021, partners reported the following donors as funders of AE.



Partners noted that other stakeholders such as the Japan platform, World Vision Korea, and DANIDA have also funded AE initiatives in recent years.

Relying on foreign aid for education services can have negative repercussions. For example, UKAID (formerly DFID) was one of the biggest funders of AE. The Girls Education South Sudan (GESS), £60 million was invested in education initiatives. The programme's intended impact was to transform the lives of a generation of girls in South Sudan through education through the expected outcome of improved girls' enrolment, retention, and learning at primary and secondary school. However, in April 2021, the UK government drastically cut its aid budget, and the Windle Trust, which was two years into supporting the AESP, lost £460,000.[183] The programme, which offered a critical approach to upskilling teachers, has stalled. In an independent evaluation of an Oxfam AEP in Greater Genyliel, South Sudan, Nicholson identified long bureaucratic delays and funding gaps as causes of the closure of AEP centres[184].

183 Sparks, J. (1st June 2020) This impoverished school shows how cuts to UK's foreign aid budget hurt those most in need. Retrieved from https://news.sky.com/story/this-impoverished-school-shows-how-cuts-to-uks-foreign-aid-budget-hurt-those-most-in-need-12321522

184 Nicholson, S. (2018). *Evaluation of Oxfam's accelerated education programme in greater Ganyliel, South Sudan 2014-2018 against global best practice.* Oxfam. Retrieved from https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/pdf_global/evaluation_report_oxfam_alp_ganyliel_so uth_sudan_2018.pdf

Level 2 to 4 learners were left stranded when ten centres closed. Through qualitative interviews, Nicholson also identified the lack of resources to demotivate teachers and disruptive learners.

In addition, funding rounds have implications for teacher retention. Teachers often leave at the end of funding cycles, which may be one year, and new teachers are recruited when funding is secured for the following year. This can result in teacher training challenges and leads to programme inefficiencies. The AEP in South Sudan noted that high teacher turnover challenged its ability to delivercapacity building exercises for teachers in gender sensitivity.[185]

The example above reflects criticism that the South Sudanese education system is too donor-dependent. [186] According to a 2018 report, 'erratic funding further impacts education provision. The flow of the recurrent budget, including salaries, is unpredictable due to liquidity issues, and the development budget has been very limited or non-existent. This has caused unintended consequences such as the imposition of school fees, which further limits educational opportunities for low-income families, and months of arrears in unpaid teaching salaries.'[187] Indeed, the budget for general education has never reached more than 7% of the total GoRSS budget of domestic revenues since independence.[188] One of the many negative repercussions of the underfunding of education is that families cannot afford primary education. In addition, schools close due to teachers not turning up due to salary delays, resulting in more children remaining out of school and becoming eligible for AE.

It was hard to gather an average cost for AE programmes from discussions with partners due to the diversity of AE programmes across the country. However, one partner reported supporting the programme in collaboration with the MoGEI. The partner provides teaching and learning materials, rehabilitates the school facilities where needed, and provides school furniture, training, and payment of teacher's incentives. The organisation budgets 10$ per child (paying for five books, two pens, two pencils, eraser, and school bag). In addition to this, they also provide dignity kits for girls.

In conflict-affected areas, teachers are paid an incentive of $40 per month.

Regarding teacher payments, the education cluster has standardised the teachers' incentives rate at 40$ per teacher. However, this report could not get the latest up-to-date teacher payment scale for teachers employed and on the government payroll. Furthermore, it was unclear how incentive payments differed regarding benefits to teachers on the government payroll.

185 Nicholson, S. (2018). *Evaluation of Oxfam's accelerated education programme in greater Ganyliel, South Sudan 2014-2018 against global best practice.* Oxfam. Retrieved from https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/pdf_global/evaluation_report_oxfam_alp_ganyliel_so uth_sudan_2018.pdf

186 Ibid

187 UNICEF (2020) Education Budget brief. Retrieved from UNICEF-South-Sudan-2019-2020-Education-Budget-Brief.pdf

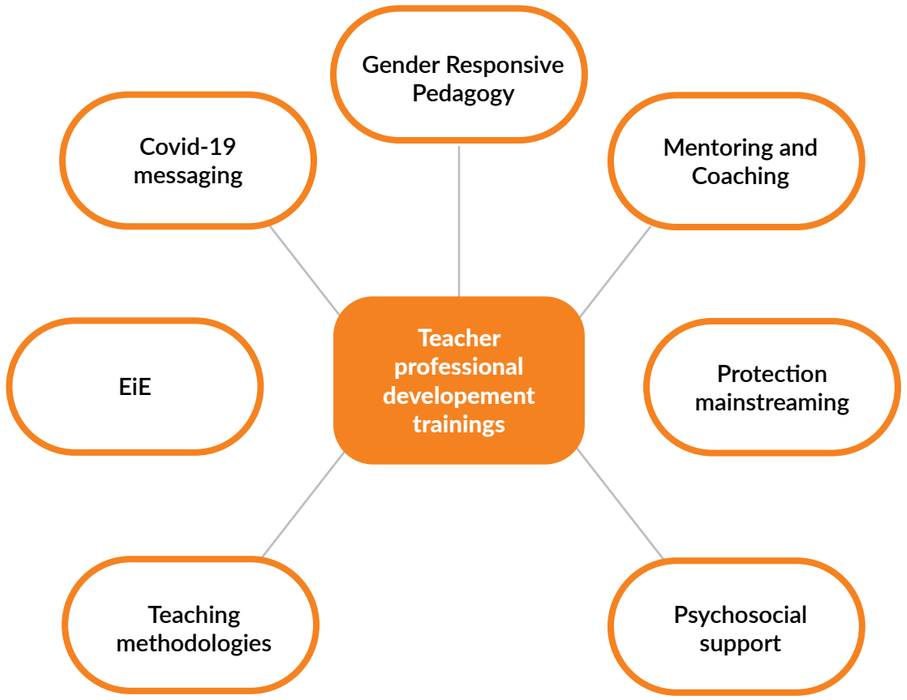
188 Ibid

Quality of Teaching and Learning in Non-formal Education Spaces

Link to AEWG 3) Quality of AEPs improved

The quality of teaching and learning in AES programmes has long been a concern of the MoGEI, INGOs and NGOs implementing programmes. Aforementioned, over half of the teachers in South Sudanese primary schools are unqualified. Moreover, primary school teachers in the formal primary school are often designated teachers on AES programmes, packing ALP and other AES offerings into the afternoon shift after a morning of teaching in the traditional primary school. As a result, many teachers have yet to finish secondary education, impacting the quality of the subject knowledge content taught in schools.

To supplement the lack of teaching experience, many AES implementing partners build teacher professional development components into programmes. Besides the Windle Trust ASEP, other continuous development opportunities covered by partners included:



Despite a wide range of teacher professional development training programmes, studies show that children are not necessarily learning even when they are enrolled in school. For example, a survey of students in Primary 3 found that both in English and the national language, it was evident that average scores were low, particularly when learners were required to demonstrate the critical task of reading comprehension (where they are asked to 'read with meaning'). For example, the average learner scored 15% for reading comprehension in English and 3% in the national languages in the end-line study. Further study is needed to understand why children scored so low in their mother tongue. However, a 15% comprehension score in English is worrying, as at Primary 4, the language of instruction switches entirely to English.

Partners shared that there were several challenges to implementing AES programmes. One partner noted that in their location, ALP teachers attended class regularly. However, students' attendance was abysmal due to their other obligations. They also stated that the contact hours between teachers and students were often less than three hours per day, with students beginning their ALP lessons at 3:30 pm and ending classes at 5:00 pm. This does not meet the AES Directorate guidelines of a minimum of 18 hours per week. Nationwide, teacher retention is an issue; there is high teacher turnover due to school transfers, short contracts and late incentive payments, resulting in the movement of ALP teachers to other NGOs paying incentives.[189] In many programmes, particularly humanitarian response, teachers are paid daily rates and are not on secured contracts. Payments are often referred to as 'allowances' or 'incentives' instead of salaries.[190] Short contracts were a direct result of the short funding periods.[191]

ALP teachers often teach in challenging classroom environments. ALP centres, often housed in primary schools, can be poorly resourced, with few functioning latrines and a lack of water, soap, and doors.[192] The lack of safe, hygienic toilets and menstrual/dignity kits can impede girls' attendance to AE programmes. A nationwide survey, conducted to inform the national education plan, found that although most schools have toilets (85%) and 54% have separate toilets for males and females, fewer than half of primary schools have access to water (32%) and a health centre (9%).[193] Partners who participated in this research reported the lack of tables, chairs, chalk, and even classrooms. Several partners noted that MoGEI had not printed the new ALP curriculum textbooks yet. Teachers did not have manuals.

To mitigate this, teachers used new primary school textbooks to teach the ALP students, but in many centres, books were scarce. Teachers are expected to include regular assessments to track learners' progress within the ALP course. The MoGEI does not print individual, end-of-term assessments for students; therefore, in most centres, unless partners pay for printing, end-of-term assessments are written on the chalkboard. In the refugee-hosting areas of Ruweng and Maban, LWF noted that teachers continue to manage large classes, with an average of 89 learners sharing a classroom. This is almost twice the South Sudanese standard of 50 students per class. With the change in the curriculum, five students have to share a textbook. Only 57% of the teachers have been formally trained. More than 100 students share a toilet (more than double the required standard).

However, despite these challenging teaching and learning environments, many ALP learners continue their education trajectory, as the following case studies illustrate,. Therefore, the following section focuses on what works in AES.

189 Ibid

190 Fitzpatrick, R. (2020). *Enablers and Barriers to the Successful Delivery of Accelerated Learning Programmes*, K4D Helpdesk Report 859. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies. https://www.gov.uk/research-for-development-outputs/enablers-and-barriers-to-the-successful-delivery-of-accelerated-learning-programmes

191 Nicholson, S. (2018). *Evaluation of Oxfam's accelerated education programme in greater Ganyliel, South Sudan 2014-2018 against global best practice*. Oxfam. Retrieved from https://oxfamibis.dk/sites/default/files/media/pdf_global/evaluation_report_oxfam_alp_ganyliel_so uth_sudan_2018.pdf

192 Ibid

193 UNICEF (2016) The impact of language policy and practice on children's learning: Evidence from Eastern and Southern Africa. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org.esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2016-Language-and-Learning-South-Sudan-Case-Study.pdf

MoGEI (2017) General Education Strategic Plan South Sudan 2017-2022. Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/general_education_strategic_plan_south_sudan_2017-2022.pdf

Research and Evidence: What Works

Link to AEWG Evidence

Whilst this report has highlighted that AES has been an integral part of the South Sudanese Educational landscape for over a decade, there are few rigorous studies on different AES programmes. Quantitative data on school enrolment is available through an online monitoring database, namely the South Sudan School Attendance Monitoring System (SSSAMS). This database is used for capturing real-time data on pupil enrolment, pupil and teacher attendance, validation of girls for cash transfers (CTs), qualified schools for cash grants (CGs), schools receiving teacher professional development (TPD) training, and associated analyses. The SSSAMS uses mobile technology to collect and manage real-time, fully disaggregated data on every pupil enrolled in South Sudan. In theory, the SSSAMS collects data on AES programmes; however, this was not functioning as of August 2021. For this report, several AE partners' challenges related to the difficulties tracking student transition to formal education, particularly in highly volatile areas where displacement was standard. The data below is correct as of August 2021.

Org	UNESCO	Save the Children	Plan international	AVIS	ARDA	LWF	Windle Trust	World Vision
Type	PEP	ALP	ALP	ALP	ALP	ALP	ASEP	ALP
Number	2,941 learners (1,813 male, 1,128 female)	7000	1450	3,040 (1450 female, 1,592 male)	8,858	29,635	2000	970 (428 female, 542 male).

However, whilst data is essential in demonstrating the number of enrolled students, there is limited evidence on how teachers and learners experience AES programmes. One exception is a current research project by BRICE partner Oxfam IBIS and Teacher's College, New York University. They are concerned with:

1. How do project activities/programme interventions (specifically AE and TEPD) contribute to learner and teacher well-being?
2. How do learner well-being and teacher well-being interact with the broader community?

The BRICE-funded research study is one of the first known qualitative studies on ALP in South Sudan. Preliminary findings found a clear need for more psychosocial support and protection mechanisms for learners and teachers. Most learners and teachers experienced or witnessed violence, abuse, and loss; yet, many shared that they do not seek advice or support from others within the school to deal with their past or current challenges. In addition, poverty and struggling to cover basic needs added to teachers' stress levels. Learners highlighted how violence in their communities permeated the classrooms, and female learners highlighted gendered challenges to staying in ALP spaces. Notably, the study captures how ALP is seen as giving hope to young people and highlights the church's role in supporting their psychosocial well-being.[194]

Programmatic data also provides a rich source of evidence of what works in AES, particularly in the PEP and CGS programmes, of which there has been even less research than ALP. UNESCO shared that in 2020, 80 pastoralist learners (68 male, 12 female) from six older cattle camps (Ariu-Kar, Jokpel, Tar-Yier, Ayen, War-abiye, and Manyiel) enrolled in the formal primary schools located in nearby villages. The transition of the learners into the traditional primary schools was a welcome development that points to the longer-term impact of the project and the sustainability of its results as the learners join the mainstream official school system. Learning sessions occur daily, and attendance is monitored regularly and systematically. The enrolment updates have helped the team track learner attendance and register the increase in enrolment or dropout rates across the centres. The regular lessons were conducted by 63 community facilitators deployed across 21 cattle camps. The implementing partners conducted meetings to update the county supervisors on the directives to start the learning activities and ensure continued activities across the PEP centres while observing COVID-19 preventive measures. UNESCO coordinated with MoGEI to develop a back to school campaign document to communicate with implementing partners for the timely reopening of teaching/learning and other project activities in cattle camps. The PEP programme is an excellent example of an educational approach that embraces sustaining—rather than eradicating—the cultural ways of cattle communities.

Another partner, Plan International, shared that **establishing child care facilities in schools significantly contributed to retaining girls in schools.** As a result, 89 females AEP learners attended and sat national exams to transition to the next level of education. In a context where early and forced marriage is a significant barrier for girls' education, with 9% of women married by the age of 15 and 52% by 18, onsite child care enabled young women to complete their ALP. Plan International also highlighted that they integrated child protection and case management into their ALP approach to address the holistic needs of vulnerable learners. They set up child-friendly spaces and adolescent centres within schools; ALP teachers were trained on school-based psychosocial methodologies using play therapy techniques. WASH facilities were also improved, contributing to a more welcoming environment for ALP students and teachers.

WHAT WORKS IN AEP?

1. Child care facilities in schools significantly contributed to retaining girls in schools.
2. AEP programmes that are contextualised to local needs. The community Facilitators that were deployed across 21 cattle camps enabled children in pastoralists and cattle communities to access an alternative educational pathway, with the option of integrating into ALPs
3. ALP students become teachers, addressing the critical shortage of teachers with primary school leaving certificates in South Sudan.

AVSI highlighted that 420 ALP students had taken the primary leaving examinations for the last three years, with a 90% pass rate. LWF also reported that more than 70% of the students sitting on the national examinations in 2020 passed across its ALP and formal primary education models. In

194 Interview notes from key informant interview.

addition, the majority of them sat the Certificate of Primary Education examinations, qualifying to join secondary school. In the Ajuong Thok Refugee camp, two female ALP students were on the top ten list of best-performing girls in South Sudan. The two refugee girls gained the 8th highest marks nationally among female candidates as they garnered 458 out of 500 marks in their PLC.

Several partners mentioned that some ALP learners sit the final examination and then find primary school teachers in AEPs. Given the shortage of teachers in South Sudan, these positions provide ALP leavers with dignified livelihood opportunities, yet this highlights the need for the re-establishment of the ASEP to ensure teachers can continue on their educational pathway.

In summary, there is limited research on AES, but what are available highlights high pass rates. More nuanced data is needed on enrollment, retention, and transition, particularly around marginalised groups. For example, there is no readily available data on ALP or PEP completion rates for children formerly associated with armed groups (CAFAAG), the diverse group of refugees residing in Makpandu camp, or on the impacts of language discrepancies, ethnicity, location, and gender. Reflecting wider global gaps around disability and education in conflict-affected settings, there is little information on how ALP providers support learners with additional needs to progress and thrive.

COVID-19 Adaptations

Link to AEWG: Support to Covid-19 response

All of the partners interviewed for this report adapted their programmes in light of COVID-19. With the declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic and the subsequent outbreak in South Sudan in April 2020, the national government implemented preventative measures to mitigate its spread throughout the country, including shutting down all schools nationwide. During the General Education Annual Review (GEAR) conference in Juba in mid-April 2021, the 13 state ministers of education, including those from the Abyei, Pibor and Ruweng administrative areas, were in attendance and, led by Hon. Deng Awut Achuil, the Republic of South Sudan Minister of Education, decided that all schools in South Sudan should reopen on 3 May 2021. By this point, schools had reopened and closed sporadically in response to the virus for 14 months.

Primary 8 candidates' classes reopened for one AE partner in May 2021 and lower-level classes restarted in October 2020. Although many partners did not have up-to-date data, it is evident that many of the previously enrolled learners, particularly girls, did not return due to marriages and pregnancy. As a result, one partner noted that enrolment in 2021 has been low. To support the Primary 8 students, when schools reopened in September after six-month closures, schools had less than six months to prepare Primary 8 candidates for national exams. To address this challenge, ADRA recruited 22 educational mentors from Juba, who mentored the teachers and other education officials at the county level and introduced remedial teaching for the Primary 8 candidates so that students could catch up on the content they had missed during the school closures.

Several partners, including Plan International and AVSI, developed home-based and distance-learning modalities during the COVID-19 lockdown period. For example, Plan International set up small group learning groups facilitated by teachers and integrated the educational radio programs designed by the MoGEI. In addition, they procured learning devices and solar radios used to record lessons and distribute to learners in hard-to-reach, rural locations where there was no radio coverage. Notwithstanding these efforts, the retention rate was 42%, and the drop-out rate was 58%.

AVSI also provided home-based learning packages for 526 students during the closure of schools from May 2020 to December 2020. Their distributed home-based learning packages set up a Saturday school for Primary 8 students to prepare for PLC examinations. AVSI also typed and printed termly examination papers for Levels 1–4 for four ALP centres. Implementing partners credited this continuous support for relatively high re-enrolment figures once the GRSS lifted restrictions throughout the pandemic.

Oxfam noted that teachers themselves stepped up to prepare home learning packages for learners to complete at home in line with the national curricula. In addition, Oxfam supported teachers by providing bicycles in some locations to visit community-based learning groups more efficiently and provide individual home visits for vulnerable learners.

Conclusion

The GoRSS has one of the most diverse and inclusive AE systems globally. From designing culturally relevant PEP to amending the AES framework to include accelerated secondary education, the AES directorate oversees an impressive and inclusive range of programmes designed to get a diverse group of out of school children, youth, and adults back onto accredited education pathways. AES programmes are available at Protection of Civilian sites, refugee camps, rural and urban areas, and models such as Plan International's ALP programme specifically target significantly marginalised groups like CAAFAG.

Nearly all the partners mentioned how AES was particularly effective at reaching girls, and targeted, contextualised AES programmes support harder-to-research with educational opportunities. For example, the PEP offers pastoralist communities (who make up over 60% of the population) an accessible educational model that incorporates culturally relevant approaches and a pathway towards an accredited PLC.

However, despite the array of promising practices and policies, the underinvestment in education services by the GoRSS and the over-dependence on foreign educational aid has made AE an unsustainable programme in many locations. The GoRSS has an ambitious but achievable vision for education. However, this vision will not be accomplished unless a sustained approach to investing in teacher professional development and training. One of the key barriers to education quality is that most teaching professionals have not completed secondary education. The AESW and ASAP offer two cost-effective and in-demand approaches to support secondary school teachers whilst teaching in the primary ALP.

Furthermore, they provide an opportunity to help more females complete education and potentially return to the classroom as teachers and role models. A second barrier to teacher retention is the incentive payment scale, and given the fluctuating inflation, teachers can feel demotivated as their salaries decrease in value. Whilst all partners mentioned a wealth of teacher professional development opportunities, the current incentive payment system does not reimburse teachers based on their years in the profession.

In the forthcoming recommendations below, this report outlines key areas of focus to support and strengthen the AES system in South Sudan.

Key Recommendations:

Review and support multilingual instruction. More concerted efforts are needed to examine why many children struggle to progress through the South Sudanese education system. As more global evidence indicates the importance of mother-tongue and multilingual instruction, the South Sudanese education system, with its transition to English language beyond grade four/Level 3 ALP, may have a significant and negative impact on teaching quality and learning. As suggested by UNICEF, international agencies helping build South Sudan's education system could be instrumental in bringing about vital mother tongue-based multilingual education if they were to prioritize and support it unanimously.[195]

Urgent funding is needed to restart the ASEP. This would enable the existing cohort to continue and complete their secondary education next year. Additionally, a revised AES policy document must be developed and circulated to include secondary education.

Further funding would also support printing the condensed ASEP curriculum. At present, teachers only have a scheme of work available.

Recruit DAFI UNHCR graduates for funded Teacher Training Institutes. UNHCR and the Teach For All global network have recently teamed up to support employment in education for refugee university graduates through a network of teaching fellowship programmes. Eighty-seven Sudanese refugees are currently studying tertiary education through the DAFI UNHCR scholarship. Upon graduation, the Sudanese university graduates could be offered teaching fellowships to address South Sudan's chronic teacher shortage whilst providing the teachers with a dignified livelihood.

Review and standardise ALP teacher professional development. Teachers and other education personnel should receive continuous support to ensure learning, pedagogy, and materials are differentiated and support different learners' needs. The AES directorate has developed an AES teacher guidebook. However, a newly revised document is needed in light of the recent conflict, the addition of ASEP to the AES system, and several years of AES programmes being implemented across the country. Given the cyclical nature of conflict in South Sudan, **any comprehensive ALP training should be conflict-sensitive.** For example, in areas with language, ethnic and religious diversity, it is essential that culturally, socially, and linguistically relevant curricula are used. In multilingual settings, community-informed decisions will need to be made on the most appropriate primary language of instruction for the lower levels of ALP.

Extensive data and evidence mapping are needed to understand the current AE needs in South Sudan. Whilst there are a variety of EMIS systems, there is little up-to-date data on AE. This mapping exercise would support the GoRSS education vision for 2030.

195 UNICEF (2016) Language and Learning in South Sudan. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org.esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2016-Language-and-Learning-South-Sudan-Case-Study.pdf

ACCELERATED EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

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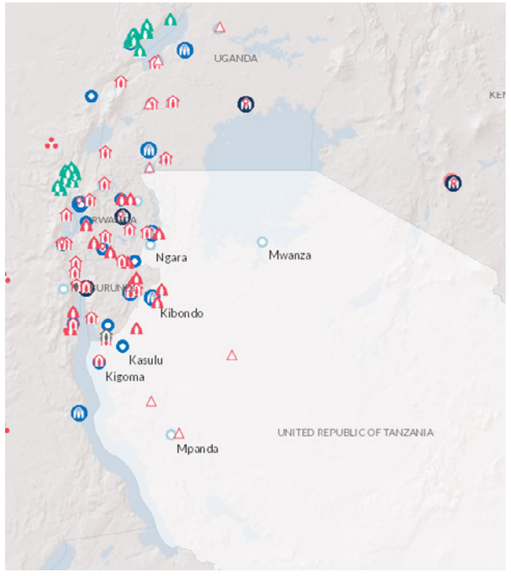
EDUCATION SITUATION ANALYSIS:
TANZANIA

Background

Tanzania has given refuge to Burundian, Congolese, and Rwandese refugees in the last two decades, with the highest number at 1.5 million in 1995. However, from April 2015, Tanzania experienced a new influx of refugees from Burundi, adding to the current population of refugees who fled the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the 1990s.[196] Tanzania is a signatory of the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Related Protocol (the Refugee Convention) and of the 1969 Organisation of African Union (OAU) Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugees Problems in Africa, which both provide the legal framework for hosting refugees.[197] However, despite Tanzania's long history of hosting refugees fleeing from conflict, political unrest, and insecurity in the region, recent policy changes have meant that Tanzania is no longer the most hospitable place to be displaced, as will be discussed further in this section.



Nevertheless, in 2014, Tanzania made a landmark decision to naturalise some 162,000 Burundian refugees who fled to Tanzania in 1972 as a solution to decades in exile. [198]The table below, provided by UNHCR, gives an overview of the Congolese population distribution across the camps.

Source: UNHCR Tanzania Dashboard, October 2021[199]

Breakdown by Location JSON

Location name	Source	Data date	Population	
Nyarugusu Camp	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	52.1%	128,285
Nduta	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	24.2%	59,534
Other	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	8.7%	21,507
Mtendeli	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	7.2%	17,777
Katumba	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	4.4%	10,844
Ulyankulu	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	2.0%	4,907
Mishamo	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	1.3%	3,199
Dar es Salaam	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	0.1%	196
Chogo	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	0.1%	150

196 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

197 Internal AE curriculum inception report, August 2021

198 UNHCR (2021) UNHCR Dashboard- Tanzania. Retrieved from https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/tza

199 ibid

Breakdown by Country of Origin CSV JSON

Country of origin	Source	Data date	Population	
Burundi	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	64.7%	145,451
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	35.1%	78,996
Others	UNHCR, Government	30 Sep 2021	0.2%	445

While the Congolese refugees have been in the Nyarugusu camp since the 1990s, the fast-growing population of refugees from Burundi made it necessary to open new camps; Nduta (2015) in Kibondo district Mtendeli (2016) in Kakonko district to decongest the Nyarugusu camp. Nyarugusu hosts Burundian and Congolese refugees, while Nduta and Mtendeli host Burundian refugees. By the end of 2020, the United Republic of Tanzania hosted 263,393 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Burundi (73%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (27%) and a small number of refugees from other countries. Nearly seven years after the 2015 crisis in Burundi, the United Republic of Tanzania (hereafter, Tanzania) hosts 245,964 refugees from Burundi in the northwest Kigoma region across three camps (Nduta, Mtendeli and Nyarugusu).[200] Of the total registered population, 50% were female, and 55% were children. Most refugees and asylum-seekers lived in three refugee camps, with a small urban population in Dar es Salaam.[201]

However, the Government of Tanzania seeks to repatriate the refugee population. Since September 2017, the Tripartite Commission (the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Burundi and UNHCR) has facilitated the voluntary repatriation of those Burundian refugees who wish to return to Burundi.[202] Furthermore, within the context of global refugee policy, the Government of Tanzania has affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) but has not applied the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).[203]

According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), between September 2017 and October 2019, 78,380 Burundians – about 725 a week – left Tanzania under an agreement between Burundi, Tanzania, and the UNHCR, which tasked UNHCR with conducting detailed interviews with refugees to ensure they were leaving Tanzania voluntarily. An August 2019 agreement between Tanzania and Burundi said all the refugees were 'to return to their country of origin whether voluntarily or not' by December 31[204]. Despite this deadline, the camps remain open. However, following the election of President Ndayishimiye in June 2020 and his call for Burundians living in exile to return, an increase in interest in voluntary return has been observed in various countries hosting Burundian refugees.[205] For those that remain, a strict encampment policy, coupled with restrictions on livelihood and self-reliance initiatives for refugees, has contributed to their increased dependency on internationalhumanitarian

200 UNHCR (2021) Global Focus- United Republic of Tanzania. Retrieved from United Republic of Tanzania | Global Focus (unhcr.org)

201 Ibid

202 Ibid

203 Ibid

204 Human Rights Watch (2019) Tanzania: Burundians Pressured into Leaving. Retrieved from https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/12/12/tanzania-burundians-pressured-leaving

205 UNHCR (2021) Burundi: Refugee return and reintegration plan (January - December 2021). Available from https://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/burundi-refugee-return-and-reintegration-plan-january-december-2021

assistance.[206] Restrictions on access to territory and asylum procedures remained unchanged, with border entry points closed and UNHCR unable to access them. In addition, the GCR has not been implemented.

In summary, Tanzania is challenging for forcibly displaced populations as there are few opportunities to integrate into the local society, including the education system. The following section will discuss education in Tanzania and how policy changes towards refugees impact the education types available to learners.

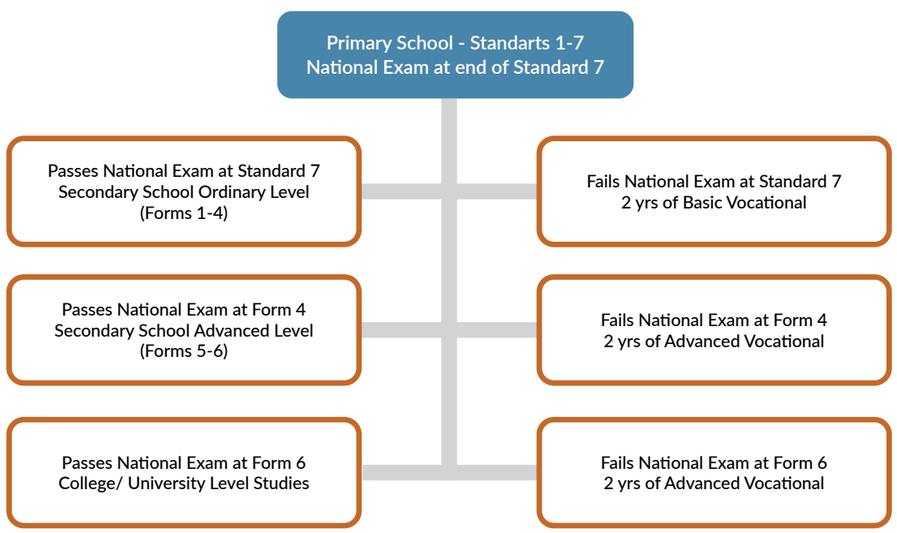
Education in Tanzania: Government Plans and Policies

Link to AEWG: AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

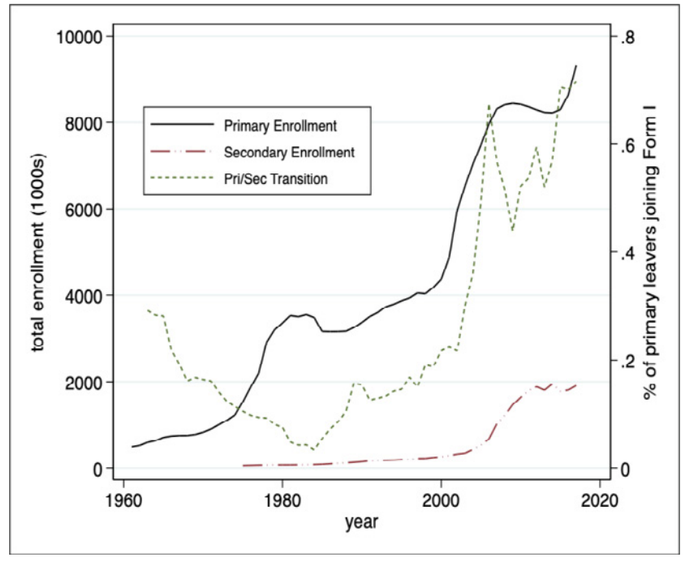
Before discussing the education situation for displaced learners, it is crucial to consider the domestic educational landscape. The Tanzanian government's goal to become a middle-income country by 2025 led to significant changes to the education system. First, the Tanzanian government committed to providing free, accessible, compulsory primary education. This commitment coincided with a 12-year plan and a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) grant to strengthen its education system.[207]

The Tanzanian educational system operates on the 7-4-2-3 system: seven years of primary school, followed by four years of secondary school (Ordinary Level) leading to two years of Advanced Level education. After the 13th year of secondary school, students may take the Advanced Certificate exam and attend college for three to four years. While the national language in Tanzania is Swahili, English is taught in primary schools and Swahili, maths, and science. Secondary school students are only taught in English.[208]

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS FLOW CHART



According to UNICEF, in 2007, Tanzania achieved nearly universal access to primary education. However, as the table below highlights, there remain significant challenges to access and transition.



Source: Brookings, The Politics of Educational Access in Tanzania, 2020[209]

An estimated 2 million primary school children between the ages of 7 and 13 years are out-of-school[210]. Almost 70% of children aged 14–17 years are not enrolled in secondary education. Whilst Secondary school enrolment in Tanzania has increased to 31.6%. A mere 3.2% are registered for the final two years of schooling.[211] This underlines a highly high attrition rate and suggests issues with the quality of teaching and learning within the public education system. Despite the Tanzanian government eliminating the school fees required for all lower-secondary schools in 2015. The implementation of this practice emerged from Tanzania's 2014 education and training policy, which aimed to improve the overall quality of education in Tanzania.[212] In 2015, Tanzania also adopted Swahili as the official language of instruction in both primary and secondary schools in Tanzania.]

As the secondary school attrition rate indicates, there are significant challenges to completing an entire education cycle. Based on Education Management Information System (EMIS) data published by the Tanzanian government, the UNICEF State of Education Tanzania report found that assuming

206 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

207 The Borgen Project. Eight Faces about Education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://borgenproject.org/8-facts-about-education-in-tanzania

208 Asanta Sana Education.Tanzania Education System. Retrieved from https://www.asantesanaforeducation.com/tanzania-education-system-

209 Habyariman, J.& Opalo, K. (2020). The politics of education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2020/10/14/the-politics-of-education-access-in-tanzania/

210 UNICEF (2018). Global Initiative for Out of School Children Report. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/media/596/file/Tanzania-2018-Global-Initiative-Out-of-School-Children-Country-Report.pdf

211 UNICEF (2020) What we do- Education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/what-we-do/education

212 Global Partnerships for Education (2020) .Tanzania. Retrieved from https://www.globalpartnership.org/where-we-work/tanzania

100 children enrol in primary Standard I, about 30 will drop out of school, 35 will fail the primary school leaving examination, and only 35 will complete primary education successfully and qualify for further instruction. Of these 35 successful children, assuming they all enrol in lower secondary education, only 15 will complete the education and qualify for further A-Level education. For every 100 children enrolled in Standard I, only 15 finish the basic education and qualify for further study.[213] Inequity within education is further highlighted by the high dropout/exclusion rate of children with disabilities. However, Tanzania issued the Persons with Disabilities Act, which guarantees education and training services to children with disabilities, in 2010.[214]

There is also a discrepancy with girls' enrolment, attainment, and completion of education cycles. Data suggests that adolescent pregnancy led to almost 3,700 girls dropping out of primary and secondary education in 2016. More than one-third of all girls are married by 18, but girls from low-income families are twice as likely to be married early than girls from wealthier homes.[215] Under President John Magufuli, pregnant girls were banned from returning to public schools, a return to a ban initiated in 1961 that prevented pregnant girls from attending state primary and secondary schools.[216] This has been semi-reversed (which will be discussed further in the next section); however, even if married students wish to return to school, they must pay an $18-23 re-entry fee after pregnancy, which ultimately deters them from returning.[217] The average yearly cost of an education in Tanzania totals 100,000 Tanzanian shillings (TZS). This cost is equal to US $50. However, many families cannot afford the fees accompanying their children's education.

In summary, Tanzanian citizens face several challenges in accessing quality education. The following section illustrates the additional barriers faced by displaced learners. As the BRICE programme operates in refugee camps, in a context where the policy dictates following a country of origin curriculum, the focus will be on education access within the refugee camps specifically.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213 UNICEF (2018). Global Initiative for Out of School Children Report. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/media/596/file/Tanzania-2018-Global-Initiative-Out-of-School-Children-Country-Report.pdf

214 The Borgen Project. Eight Faces about Education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://borgenproject.org/8-facts-about-education-in-tanzania

215 UNICEF (2020) What we do- Education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/what-we-do/education

216 Reuters (2017) Tanzanian leader reaffirms ban on pregnant girls attending state schools. Retrieved from https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-tanzania-education-idUKKBN19E19F

217 The Borgen Project. Eight Faces about Education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://borgenproject.org/8-facts-about-education-in-tanzania

Non-Formal Education and AE in Tanzania: Government Structures

Link to AEWG: AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

Tanzania has implemented accelerated education (AEP) models for several years.

Primary Grade	MEMKWA levels	Duration- years
1 & 2	1	1
3 & 4	2	1
5 & 6	3	1
7	4	1
Total number of years		**4**

The MEMKWA (Mpango kwa Elimu Maalum kwa Watoto waliokosa) curriculum is a nationally recognised curriculum in Tanzania developed by the MoE that condenses the primary curriculum, which generally takes seven years, into four years (as illustrated in the table below). MEMKWA is aimed at children aged 11-17 who have missed out on their primary education or dropped out. At the end of the AEP MEMKWA, students sit for the same primary school leaving examination as those in the formal primary. It is multiple entry and exit, meaning that if a child catches up after the first or second level, they can transition into the formal system. The MEMKWA curriculum condenses some subjects, and some are merged (e.g. Kiswahili and English are combined into one subject known as communication skills; health and nutrition, social science, and science are combined into general knowledge). As a result, there are six subjects altogether rather than seven in the formal primary school curriculum.[218]

In addition to the MEMKWA, there is also an alternative pathway for students who drop out of secondary school. Learners have two options to continue their education and take the same national examinations as students attending public secondary school: 1) they can either enrol in private secondary school or open schools and folk development colleges (FDCs). The latter options are referred to as alternative education pathways. Open schools are education centres that teach the secondary school curriculum through a face-to-face and self-study program. They often use public secondary school teachers and community facilities (e.g. schools, community centres). According to a recent survey by the World Bank, about 151 government alternative education pathways centres in Tanzania, 25 of which are in the Dar es Salaam region, with the remainder spread across the country. Folk development colleges are similar to open schools and provide residential programs for young mothers. There are 30 FDCs under MoEST's *Elimu haina mwisho*, Kiswahili for 'education has no end,' which provide secondary education in mostly peri-urban and semi-rural areas and often offer daycare services for young children.[219] The FDC-based programme currently enrols 531 young mothers; however, the MoEST aims to expand this programme to 1,500 young mothers.[220]

218 Key informant interview notes in addition to an internal educational brief written by Martha Hewison.

219 World Bank (2020) Tanzania Secondary Education Quality Improvement Program. Retrieved from https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/factsheet/2020/03/31/tanzania-secondary-education-quality-improvement-program-sequip

220 Ibid

Currently, alternative education pathways centres provide educational opportunities for less than one% of girls that drop out of secondary school[221]. However, this figure may change as the World Bank will invest $500 million in the Tanzania Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project (SEQUIP) in partnership with the government of Tanzania. As a result, alternative education pathways will be scaled up, the US $150 annual fees for vulnerable students will be subsidised, and the programme will be based on flexible, self-paced learning arrangements and follow a blended approach, which will include a combination of centre-based learning and self-learning at times of day convenient to young mothers and out of school girls.[222] In addition, SEQUIP includes strong incentives to help ensure that girls enrolled in alternative education pathways return to the public education system. Substantial project funds (the US $80 million) are tied to results to expand access, improve the quality of alternative education pathways, and help ensure that girls re-enter the public education system at the start of the next cycle.[223] Life skills education will also form a core component of the alternative educational pathways programme. The World Bank is building on the successes of BRAC's accelerated education work in Tanzania, which introduced Life skills components covering general health and hygiene; sexual and reproductive health; HIV, sexual abuse, and discrimination; and rights and negotiation skills. Data from the BRAC AEP programme demonstrated positive results. For example, evidence suggested that it raised pass rates in national examinations and lowered early marriage and pregnancy rates among participating, adolescent girls.[224] According to the project documentation, the project will build on this success, review the curriculum and teaching materials, and use best practices from other countries to strengthen the alternative educational pathways programmes.[225] SEQUIP will also include an impact evaluation of the scale-up of AEPs to allow for adaptation or improvements if needed.

Unfortunately, as refugee students are not permitted to live outside of the camps, and Tanzania's refugee policy supports the principle of using the country of origin's curriculum, refugee students have not benefited from accessing the nationally accredited AEP education provision[226]. Furthermore, all NGOs working in the refugee camps focus on education aligned with their home countries. Therefore, whilst there is an AEP curriculum in DRC, in the case of Burundi, there is no national AEP model that partners can draw upon to implement in the camp. In summary, whilst this section has highlighted critical alternative educational pathways for Tanzanian children and youth, the following section explores the educational landscape for refugees.

221 Ibid

222 ibid

223 ibid

224 Ibid

225 Ibid

226 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

Overview of Education Access and Inequity for Refugees Specifically

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs improved

One of the main targets of the UNHCR Refugee Education 2030 framework is to reduce the disparity between national and refugee education so that 'children and youth have access to all levels of formal and non-formal education within national education systems and under the same conditions as nationals.'[227] Tanzanian legislation also includes provisions for inclusion. For example, according to the 1977 Constitution, as amended in 2005, every person has the right to access education. It further mandates the state to ensure that all persons have equal and sufficient opportunities to pursue education and vocational training. In addition, the 1978 Education Act enshrines compulsory schooling at the primary level of education. Furthermore, it states that 'no person may be denied the opportunity to obtain... an education for the reason only of his race, religion or political or ideological beliefs.'[228]. The 1998 Refugees Act protects the right to access education.

65,260 school-aged children (3-17 year) had access to formal education (UNHCR, 2021)

Regardless, forcibly displaced students do not have access to education outside of the camps in northwest Tanzania, highlighting that the Government of Tanzania is not aligned with GCR Outcome 2.2 (refugee and host community self-reliance is strengthened), which emphasises that refugee children and youth should have access to the national education system. Enabling the right to education depends strictly on humanitarian aid to operate and manage education institutions within the camps. Due to the encampment policy and restrictive livelihood environment, the children of Burundian refugees and asylum-seekers remain highly dependent on humanitarian assistance in the three refugee camps.[229] However, short-term interventions do not respond to the realities of many refugee children and youth; more attention to medium and longer-term 'development perspectives and opportunities for knowledge and skills acquisition [is needed] to lead to economic inclusion well beyond the margins of informal economies.' [230]

Displacement has had a significant impact on the participation and achievement of Congolese and Burundian children and youth in education in Tanzania. In 2018, education stakeholders in Tanzania coordinated a Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA). The findings from the JENA assessment indicate that becoming and being a refugee-led to both disruption and delay in the resumption of classes for most children. Sixty-one per cent of households consulted said that their children's education was disrupted during the move from Burundi or DRC to Tanzania. Refugees experienced disruption at all levels of education, including delay at the end of term examinations; delay or lack of certification at the end of primary and secondary levels; disruption in transitioning to the next

227 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2019). *Refugee education 2030: A strategy for refugee inclusion.* .

228 UNESCO. (2020) Education Profile- Tanzania. Retrieved from https://education-profiles.org/sub-saharan-africa/united-republic-of-tanzania/~inclusion

229 UNHCR (2021) 2021 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan: January-December 2021. Nairobi: UNHCR, Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes

230 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2019). *Refugee education 2030: A strategy for refugee inclusion.* .

level, especially to post-secondary education; and limited or no opportunities for tertiary and higher education. It took on average one month (33 days) from when children arrived in the camp until they resumed school. Nearly 41% of all students had to repeat grades due to their displacement.[231] These statistics are troubling, particularly as fifty% of the camp is under 18 years.

NGOs deliver education in the camps using the Burundian and Congolese curriculums in formal and informal schools. The 2018 Joint Education Needs Assessment provides a comprehensive overview of the Education systems in DRC and Burundi, stating that:

> *Education systems in Burundi and the DRC were structured based on the Belgian education system. This includes 6 years of primary school, 4 years of junior secondary and 3 years of senior secondary education. At the secondary school level, there were 2 pathways: Cycle court, including Ecole d'arts et metiers and Ecole professionelles. The other pathway was Cycle longue which leads to tertiary education, including Ecole techniques, Ecole generals and Ecole normales. Students completing pedagogical studies of the professional strand under the Cycle court were qualified to be teachers. The language of instruction was French in both countries. However, the education system in Burundi has undergone significant changes. Kirundi, the national language, is now the language of instruction until Grade 5 of Primary education. After that, French is taught as a second language and becomes the language of instruction at the higher levels of education. French remains the language of instruction for the DRC. Burundi is undergoing a curriculum reform that has involved restructuring the school system. The 6 years of primary have been combined with 3 years of secondary to form 9 years of Ecole Fondamentale (ECOFO) or basic education. Therefore, the system has changed from 6-3-3 to 9-3-3/4, with 3 years (or more for some courses) of university education.*

Disparities also exist between Congolese and Burundian refugees. According to the JENA assessment, out of the 145,052 school-age children, only 56.07% (Net Enrolment Rate) are enrolled in school from pre-primary to secondary level. 21% attend pre-school, 78% are in primary education, and 3% participate in secondary school for the Burundian population. For the Congolese, 45% of girls and boys are pre-primary, 98% attend primary school, and 60% are secondary.[232]There are significant differences in enrolment numbers among the camps, with the Congolese population in Nyarugusu benefiting most from education (with a 77.66% net enrolment rate (NER) across all levels). This can be linked to the protracted Congolese situation and that refugees from DRC have been in Tanzania a long time. In the Nduta camp, which has the highest number of recent arrivals, only 43.20% (NER at all levels) participate in education.[233]

In 2019, statistics highlighted that 78% of Burundian children were enrolled in primary school across all camps. However, lower secondary enrolment was at 7% and 1% for upper secondary across all camps.[234] Unfortunately, consolidated data on enrolment versus attendance rates were not available. Thus, there is a significant retention issue, the transition between the final levels of primary school to lower secondary. Further research needs to be explored to understand why the attrition rate is high.

231 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

232 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

233 Ibid

234 UNHCR (2021) Global Focus- United Republic of Tanzania. Retrieved from United Republic of Tanzania | Global Focus (unhcr.org)

As discussed with UNHCR in Burundi, for secondary education, finalists (those in the last year of secondary school) can sit for an exam which is supervised by the NECTA (The National Examinations Council of Tanzania) and get certificates. However, as the statistics mentioned above highlight, most Burundian students do not participate in secondary education in the camps. Furthermore, whilst discussions with an agency based in Burundi suggested that these certificates are recognised, other partners in Tanzania have suggested that learners certificates are not recognised upon return. However, promisingly, there are some opportunities for education outside of the camp. For example, 94 Burundian refugees were admitted to higher education in 2021.[235] In addition, there has been a consistent working relationship with the provincial government of South Kivu in aid to the Congolese refugees, making it possible for the examinations and tests to be set and administered from DRC. However, this arrangement is not without challenges. For example, since 2013, Congolese students have sat the external, end of term examinations, and results have been announced, but they have not been awarded certificates.[236]

The principal languages of instruction in primary education are Kirundi and French. The language of instruction is Kirundi across Grades 1 to 4, with a transition to French as the language of instruction after that (in Grades 5 and beyond). English is taught as a language from Grade 3 through to Grade 6. Kiswahili is taught in grades 5 and 6. Teachers and inspectors, who are refugees themselves, are expected to teach in Kirundi and French for all levels, with some coursework in English and Kiswahili as of Levels 2 and 3, respectively.

While Kirundi is the mother-tongue language for all Burundian participants, most participants also speak and understand French. Unfortunately, the author could not find information on the languages spoken by the Congolese learners.

Since 2017, Save the Children and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) have provided AEP in the camps (see key stakeholders section for more details). The rationale of AEP was to address many out-of-school and overage learners. However, there have been multiple issues with the quality and recognition of the curriculums taught in the camps. In 2016, the Ministry of Education in Burundi was asked to support education in the camps by providing access to the Burundi curriculum and exams. However, this raised protection and security concerns as they wanted to visit the camps.


© UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin

235 UNHCR (2021) Regional Refugee Response Plan- Mid Year report, Retrieved from Regional_BDI_RRP_2021_MY Report.pdf (reliefweb.int)

236 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

As there was no formal agreement between the Burundian and Tanzanian ministries of education, this was not a sustainable plan. Partners reported that the Congolese Ministry of Education has been more supportive and provides the exams and supports assessments in the camps; however, there are still issues obtaining the certificates.

As aforementioned, according to partners, Burundian students were not placed in the correct grades, or their certificates were not recognised upon return to Burundi. In recent years, there had been discussions led by UNHCR aimed at a tri-partied agreement for the government of Burundi to accept the certificates given in the camp. However, learning assessments and certificates are stamped by an NGO and not permanently by NECTA, the accredited body. Therefore, the certificates are not recognised. It is at the discretion of schools in Burundi to accept the certificate as proof of study. Recent statistics show that 52% of returnee children are out of school three months after returning to Burundi.[237] The number of returnees who remain out of school could be due to several factors, including unrecognised certificates, returning after the term began, and being considered overage. A few refresher courses are supported by UNICEF in a small number of locations to address this issue. In the past, Refugee Education Trust (RET) and Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) have supported classes for repatriated students. However, at the date of this report, it was not possible to get further information on where these courses were run and the content of the curriculum. Partners also noted that returnees might also struggle with the education system upon returning to Burundi because of the poor quality of education they received in Tanzania. This is discussed in further detail in the following section.

AEP Curriculum Development

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs Improved

Due to the high number of children and adolescents who have missed school due to displacement, over-aged and out-of-school children and youth of Burundian origin have access to an Accelerated Education Programme (AEP) operated by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in the Nduta and Mtendeli camps and by Save the Children in Nduta and Nyarugusu camps in addition to formal education. The AEP aims to improve access to quality primary education for children who have been affected by their displacement and refugee status in an accelerated timeframe. The programme is flexible and age-appropriate, considering that many children have had their education interrupted or did not access education in a timely fashion.

The need for a new AEP curriculum has been predicted; as in 2015, the Burundian basic education curriculum was revised. Despite existing efforts and investment on education stakeholders and teachers to adapt to the new Burundi curriculum, the current AEP covers the early years of primary education (Grades 1-4) in the Tanzanian camps and is based on the former Burundi curriculum. The AEP curriculum would expand the current education supply to provide the entire basic education cycle of Grade 6. Thus, the complete cycle of AEP would offer the possible transition into upper primary grades where classes are less crowded.

To address the particular needs of the Burundian students, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) began consulting with education stakeholders in the Kibondo refugee camps (namely teachers, inspectors, and Save the Children), identifying concerns about the current AEP. Firstly, they found that the current AEP curriculum is irrelevant as it is outdated and not aligned with the revised 2015 Burundian basic education curriculum. In addition, the existing curriculum is not contextualised.

237 UNHCR (2021) 2021 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan: January-December 2021. Nairobi: UNHCR, Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes

As such, AEP teachers create their curriculum. Secondly, there is a lack of teaching and learning materials, including modules and teachers' guides. Finally, NRC's consultations found that teachers lack the necessary training to teach multi-grade classrooms and learners with different needs.

Furthermore, learners held a negative perception around the AEP, leading to absenteeism, dropouts and general lack of motivation among students. Finally, the existing AEP operated by Save the Children are limited to level 1 only (Leve1 1 AEP covers Grades 1 and 2) in the Nduta and Nyarugusu camps. Learners are then expected to transition back into the formal primary education system.

To date, AEP learners focus on the core subjects of the Burundi curriculum, including mathematics, Kirundi, French, environment, civic and human sciences, and science and technology. Partners distribute textbooks to teachers at the beginning of the school year and follow the locally developed AEP curriculum guidance by level and subject in the preparation of their

In 2021, NRC hired a consultancy team to lead the AEP curriculum development process. The consultancy team worked with NRC's education staff and many other stakeholders, including teachers, educational officials, and NRC's regional advisors, to develop an overview of what to include in the AEP curriculum. The table below highlights the new AEP curriculum taught in the AEP centres. As the table below highlights, two years of primary education will be condensed into one year. Thus, learners can complete their primary education cycle in three years instead of six years.

Aep Level	Grade	Subjects	Language of Instruction
Level 1	1 and 2	1. Kirundi 2. Mathematics 3. Human Sciences 4. French	Kirundi French
Level 2	3 and 4	1. Kirundi 2. Mathematics 3. Human Sciences	Kirundi
		4. French	French
		5. English	English
Level 3	5 and 6	1. Kirundi 2. Mathematics 3. Human Sciences 4. French	Kirundi French
		5. English	English
		6. Kiswahili	Kiswahili

The table below provides an overview of the sessions per week within the AEP curriculum.

Level	Kirundi	Kiswahili	French	English	Maths	Natural Sciences	Total	
1	18		10		7	Interdisciplinary	35	35 sessions of 30 min
2	10		15	3	7		35	35 sessions of 30 min
3	2	3	7	4	5	4	**25**	25 sessions of 45 min

The consultancy team leading the curriculum development worked with educational stakeholders to revise the existing AEP curriculum and ensure it was developed and aligned to the new Burundian curriculum. Additionally, the human sciences subjects will be integrated into literacy classes. In levels 1 and 2, students will read texts from the human sciences, which address the most relevant human sciences topics). In level 3, human sciences will be taught as a standalone subject. In addition, social-emotional learning (SEL) activities will be integrated across the curriculum. The SEL activities will be sourced from IRC's Safe Healing Life Skills (SHLS) toolkit, which includes social-emotional programming developed for children, youth and adults affected by humanitarian crises. These lessons will be implemented in an interdisciplinary manner.

Whilst the curriculum development process is ongoing; it highlights the complexities of developing a rigorous accelerated education curriculum that must cover the core requirements of a complete cycle of primary education in half the time.

Institutional Coordination of Non-Formal Education

Link to AEWG: AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality

The Tanzanian MoEST and the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) are responsible for education. An education working group, Development Partners Group (EDPG), has donors and civil society networks. In addition, a refugee education working group (EWG) meets at the field level. However, there is no education coordination nationally and limited policy dialogue with the national MOE and the District Education Office. The implementing partners under the umbrella of the EWG steer the coordination and standardisation of the education services on offer to the refugees.

UNHCR and Save the Children co-chair the education working group within the refugee camps. The EWG provides the mechanism that partners coordinate education and consists of UN agencies and NGOs involved in education for the refugees. The NRC operates the AEP in the Nduta and Mtendeli camps, and AEP is offered in Nduta and Nyarugusu camps by Save the Children. In addition, UNHCR provides funding to implementing partners for operating the formal schools: International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Nyarugusu and Mtendeli and CARITAS in Nduta.[238] UNICEF provides support for procurement and distribution of education supplies in all camps. As part of curriculum implementation, UNICEF is concerned with the in-service training of teachers and the organisation and conduct of examinations and certification by the National Exams Council of Tanzania. UNICEF also contributes to the Joint UN Programme in Kigoma (focusing on special needs and alternative learning for school children and adolescents), targeting host communities.

Funding and Key Stakeholders

Link to AEWG: AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality

- **Save the Children** works in six schools in Nduti and two in Mtendeli, supporting Congolese and Burundian learners. As of May 2021, 1200 children were enrolled in Save the Children-supported AEP spaces. The goal of the AEP is for children and youth to obtain necessary competencies, with the ultimate goal of reintegrating the formal education system. Aforementioned, the existing AEP programme only covers the first two years of primary education. The language of instruction is Kirundi, with a transition to French as the language of instruction after that (higher grades not currently offered). Students are expected to transition into the formal schools managed by IRC. Education is delivered using the formal Burundian curriculum.

- **International Rescue Committee (IRC)** has been supporting refugee education in Tanzania since 2014. IRC focus on formal primary education in Ngaguso and Mtendeli and, more recently, Nduta. In the IRC-supported schools, teachers follow the national curriculum for DRC and Burundi. AEP students, depending on age/ grade appropriateness, transition into traditional education schools. IRC plays a crucial role in supporting transition. This is done in several ways. IRC and NRC share educational spaces in the Nyarugusu camp, supporting learners' smoothly transition. Additionally, in response to the school closures due to the pandemic., IRC started a catch-up education programme. This programme is aimed at learners in their final years of study, focusing on girls. It focuses on the end of year examinations that students will take (whether the NECTA exams for Burundian students or the Congolese primary leaving exam, known as the *TENAFEP*). There is no outcome documentation as this is a new programme initiated in response to COVID-19.

- **UNICEF** supports over 78,786 refugee school children (37,888 girls, 40,898 boys) and 2,500 refugee teachers in three refugee camps, collaborating with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Caritas.[239] As many refugee teachers and learners share the same space as the AEP learners, UNICEF indirectly contributes to the AE programmes.

- **Through the BRICE consortium, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)** aims to support 2700 learners. As part of the programme design, out-of-school, over-aged children and youth (14-17) will have the opportunity to attend an accelerated programme that enables them to finish six years of primary education in three years. Children not attending school will indicate their level (when they drop out of education). NRC will organise a placement test, supervised by the education authorities, to evaluate their actual level (AEP 1, 2 or 3). At the end of the school year, an official evaluation will be conducted to assess the upper level, including final exams at the end of Level 3. After Year 1, the learners from Level 1 should pass

238 *Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA.* https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

239 UNICEF (2021) Tanzanian Humanitarian Situation Report. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/media/91381/file/UNICEF%20Tanzania%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%204%20-%20January%20-%20December%202020.pdf

to Level 2, those from Level 2 to Level 3 and those from Level 3 should enter formal school or vocational training. Each academic year, the enrolment of new learners into Levels 1, 2 and 3 will replace those who have transitioned into formal schools or training. AEP learners aged 10-15 who reach AEP level 3 in Tanzania will be integrated into traditional upper primary schools. The NRC Tanzania education programs target out-of-school children and youth for AEP, youth education and training, teachers and not teaching education personnel.

In 2020, NRC and Save the Children collaborated and developed one examination across the AEP centres, highlighting the increasing coordination between AEP actors in the camp.

Other key AEP stakeholders include :

1. Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Department of Refugee Education is responsible for the supervision of refugee education in the Tanzania context
2. United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) led the Education in Emergencies (EiE) working group.

Several prominent donors that contribute towards AEP in the camps.

Firstly, INTPA/DEVCO funds NRC's education programmes in the camp as part of the BRICE project.

ECHO is funding a consortium (Plan International Tanzania, Save the Children International and International Rescue Committee) to ensure Burundian refugees can access lifesaving protection and education services in refugee camps in Nduta, Mtendeli and Nyarugusu in Tanzania.

UNHCR also committed US $2,605,129 towards education in 2020.[240]

However, overall, the education response for refugees in Tanzania is grossly underfunded. James Onyango, UNHCR's Education Officer in Kibondo, highlighted in 2018 that it costs US $12,000 to build a classroom, each exam costs US $250, a teacher's allowance costs US $27 per month, and sending one child to school for a year costs US $35.241[241] In addition, the Regional Refugee Response Plan to assist Burundian refugees in Tanzania is grossly underfunded, with just 25% of funding received. Consequently, with limited funding and a restrictive enabling environment, infrastructure is chronically under-funded and as such, classes take place outside and in less than optimal classrooms. The lack of funding also impacts the quality of teaching, which is discussed further in the next section.

Quality of Teaching and Learning in Non-formal Education Spaces

Link to AEWG 3) Quality of AEPs improved

Save the Children and NRC are the leading providers of AEP in the camps. Teachers have been hired and trained by these organisations and continue to receive professional training as much as possible. In addition, education and all school-related materials in the AEP schools are accessible to students.

240 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2018). JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT TANZANIA REPORT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE KIGOMA REGION, TANZANIA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67763.pdf

241 UNHCR. (2018). Refugee Children battle for Education in Tanzania. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/stories/2018/1/5a37ac6d4/refugee-children-battle-education-tanzania.html

However, the Tanzania Refugee Response Plan (RRP) states that less than 30% of secondary school teachers and 65% of primary education teachers in the refugee camps are professionally trained.[242] As formal employment is prohibited, teachers in the camps are paid an incentive. The teachers, who are from the displaced population, earn less than $2 a day. One partner highlighted that the low payment for teachers was very demotivating, particularly when coupled with poor working conditions, lack of textbooks and poor or no classrooms. For this study, the author could not get detailed information about teaching quality or their perceptions of teaching AEP. However, the consultants tasked with developing the AEP curriculum conducted a virtual workshop in August 2021 and determined that 70% of teachers are male. While Kirundi is the mother-tongue language for all participants, they noted that most participants also speak and understand French.

As part of the BRICE project, NRC facilitated a four-day AEP pedagogy training in November 2020. The training targeted AEP and formal school teachers and was conducted with IRC, including 21 AEP teachers, three school inspectors, and one refugee education coordinator. Teachers were trained on classroom management and active engagement of learners in the teaching and learning process. The training methodologies used include discussions, role play, presentation, individual and group assignments and demonstrations. Based on a pre-test assessment, 87% of participants (20) demonstrated enhanced knowledge on the topic in their post-test. On average, participants showed a 15% increase in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores. In addition, NRC observed 18 teachers (5 women, 13 men), using the teacher observation tool during the reporting period. They were assessed on teacher preparation, the structure and content of the lesson, teaching methodology, and the teacher-student relationships. The results of the observation tool highlighted that 83% (15 teachers: 3 women, 12 men) demonstrated the ability to replicate the skills taught in training. The new AE curriculum will integrate the teacher observation and the ASER learning assessment tools.

Transition from AE

As previously mentioned, UNHCR, along with partners, has continued collaboration with NECTA to provide a special examination for Burundian students. In 2020, two exam sessions took place. As a result, 1,098 students took a special examination equivalent to the Burundian national examination, and among them, 665 (60.79%) passed the exams. In November 2020, NECTA administered the Burundian Special Examination to 1,067 (381 female) candidates, and results are still pending.[243] Some of the challenges related to these exams include the high cost of exams (US $198-220 per child), high dropout of registered students, and lack of synchronisation of the refugee school examination calendar with the government's. Therefore, UNICEF and UNHCR are exploring a sustainable medium- and long-term plan for Burundian refugees' examination and certification with government partners.[244]

NRC's programmatic data highlights that in 2019-2020, 64% of students who completed and sat for exams passed the final AEP exams and either transitioned and registered in formal school or were promoted to the next AEP grade; 118 children (71 girls and 47 boys) met the criteria and were

242 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2019). *Refugee education 2030: A strategy for refugee inclusion.*

243 UNHCR (2021) Global Focus- United Republic of Tanzania. Retrieved from United Republic of Tanzania | Global Focus (unhcr.org)

244 UNICEF (2021) Tanzania Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/media/91381/file/UNICEF%20Tanzania%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%204%20-%20January%20-%20December%202020.pdf

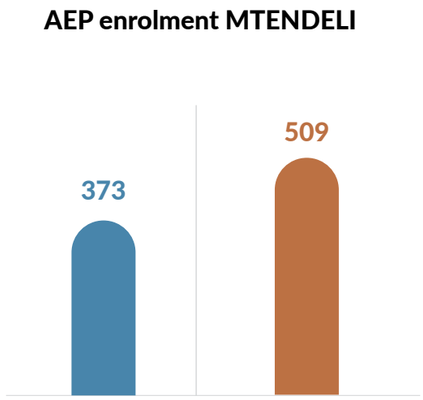
recommended and supported to transition to formal school. Within three months of AE completion, 117 learners – 99% (70 girls, 47 boys) were successfully transited and enrolled into the formal school system and were distributed with transitional kits. Criteria for transition include:

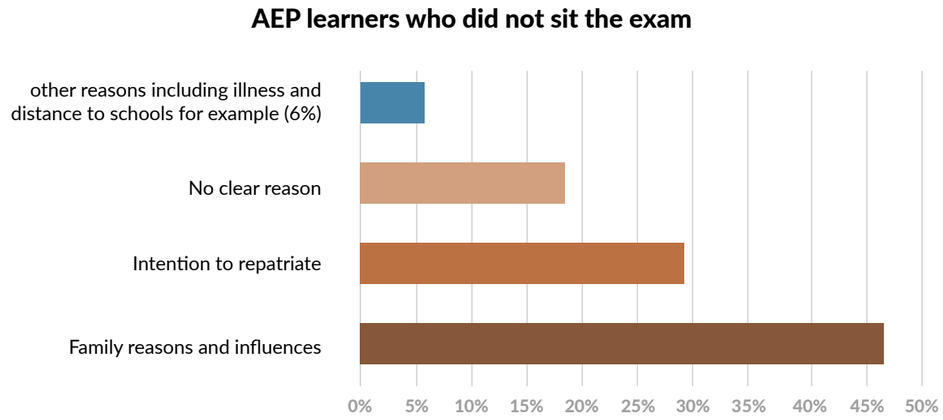
1. completion of a given AE level
2. a passing grade in the final exam and
3. age appropriateness for the next grade level in formal school

Eight hundred and eighty-two children participated in the AEP in Mtendeli for the 2019/2020 academic year.

Of the 882 learners enrolled, 673 (76%) completed their AEP level (82% girls, 69% boys). As a result, 446 (270 girls, 176 boys) sat the 2019/2020 exams. Of the 446 who sat the exam, 287 learners – 64% (165 girls and 122 boys) passed the final examination, while 159 learners (105 girls, 54 boys) did not pass and were advised to repeat the AEP levels.

Reasons for not passing the AEP target level exams include irregular attendance, children missing mid-term exams, lack of support from parents of children learning at home, and engaging children in extra chores and duties instead of having them attend school or work on their homework. In addition, interruptions to the school calendar due to COVID-19 also affected school attendance and performance, given that schools were closed for three months between March and June 2021. During this time, children were supported with home-based learning by distributing learning materials and follow-up support to parents. However, of the 882 children enrolled before COVID-19 closures, only 617 (240 boys, 377 girls) returned to classes.





Thus, some children are transitioning through AEP cycles despite challenging teaching and learning conditions. The following section will discuss what seems to be working.

Research and Evidence: What Works

Link to AEWG: Evidence

There is a shortage of research and evidence on AEP in the refugee camps in Tanzania. However, programme data provides insight into some of the learning outcomes for students attending AEPs. For example, Save the Children stated that all AEP learners sit an end of year exam. Almost 80% pass the standardised exams. For the 20% who do not pass, students either repeat the year or offer catch-up classes. The catch-up classes are to accommodate new arrivals. These students often fail the end of year assessment as they have missed school. Save the Children asks each student to assess their learning needs and competencies for new arrivals.

NRC has conducted learner's assessments in its current AEP project, for example placement assessments for new students and formative and summative assessments. The students learning assessment used the ASER, an easy-to-use tool adapted to the Tanzanian context, a global standardised foundational skills assessment. It is a simple and rigorous methodology for assessing learning outcomes at lower grades of the education system. It assesses students' progress and level in the language (reading, writing, comprehension) and arithmetic (maths).

This assessment is intended to accompany and not replace exams to verify student learning and compare learning across the country over the project period. NRC conducted the training and assessments of AEP learners in Mtendeli using the ASER tool. The evaluation was conducted by school inspectors and teachers who were on the administration of the ASER methodology in assessing students' competencies in reading and comprehension of Kirundi language and math competencies. This exercise was done in two phases: training and testing trainees' reliability in administering the ASER, and scoring students' performance. The team then conducted the ASER assessments, including interviews from the AEP learners. Over three days, 23 evaluators assessed students, each one evaluating at least four to five students.

Aser result findings 2019-2020 As expected, there is a clear need to focus on core competencies in literacy and numeracy within AE programmes.

The table highlights the total findings from the ASER assessment.

The ASER assessment showed that in literacy, 23.42% of the AEP learners in Level 1 were not able to read, identify the letter and story reading, 23.63% of the AEP learners were able to identify letters, and 8.02% of learners in Level 2 were able to read words.

Learning assessment results with ASER tool					
Assessed Skills	Assessment Level	Girls	Boys	Total	%
Reading	Story Level	20	29	49	29%
	Paragraph Level	16	14	30	18%
	Word Level	6	9	15	9%
	Letter Level	32	10	42	25%
	Nothing	17	15	32	19%
	Total	**91**	**77**	**168**	**100%**
Arithmetic	Subtraction Level	18	22	40	24%
	Addition Level	29	26	55	33%
	Double numbers level	17	10	27	16%
	Single digit number level	20	14	34	20%
	Nothing level	7	5	12	7%
	Total	**91**	**77**	**168**	**100%**

In comparison, 7.17% of the AEP learners could read paragraphs at level 3, and 37.76% could read the story. In numeracy, 8.70%, (42 learners), were not in any of the levels, while 20.91% (101 learners) were in single number level or number identification levels, 17.39% (84 learners) were in the level of double number, 10.97% (53 learners) were in the level of addition, and 42.03% (203 learners) were in the subtraction level. In addition, none of the learners could divide.

The ASER scores identified a notable difference in the literacy and numeracy scores between girls and boys. For example, 65.7% of girls could not identify anything in the ASER assessment, whereas only 34.2% of boys could not identify anything. It is essential to understand the gender differences better to address this imbalance. Reasons could be related to the longer period girls might have been out of school or having never attended school in Tanzania or their country of origin due to cultural norms. Alternatively, girls might not participate in the AEP sessions (despite enrolling) as frequently as boys. It may also be that the teaching in the AEP Centre is not gender-responsive. Further qualitative research is needed to examine the different experiences of girls and boys in AEP centres and whether there is a divergence between Kirundi reading comprehension and French language comprehension.

In summary, this section has highlighted that whilst there is quantitative data, there is a dearth of qualitative data that would help policymakers and practitioners understand more about the experiences of teachers, learners and parents. For this report, the author could not find any data on community engagement or the nuanced needs and challenges reflective of the diverse group of camp learners.

COVID-19 Adaptations

Link to AEWG: Support to Covid-19 response

Over the past year, due to COVID-19, the government of Tanzania imposed restrictions on public gatherings, including closing schools in the camps for three months between March 18 and June 29, 2020. As a result, over 16,878 children and youth below 18 years in Mtendeli alone had their learning interrupted. Furthermore, COVID-19 mitigation measures such as lockdowns and school closures introduced new and compound existing obstacles to delivering education in humanitarian settings.[245] Similarly, there was a concern, particularly in low resource refugee camps, that the learning gap would only widen as COVID-19 drives school closures where remote alternatives are limited or do not exist at scale. Estimates suggest that more than half of all refugee girls will not return when schools open.[246]

During the school closures, implementing agencies were not permitted to enter the refugee camps. As a result, all AEP and related and supporting activities came to a standstill, causing a significant disruption to the delivery of essential services and programme planning. The implementing partners offered several approaches to continue education during this period.

- Between March and June 2020, NRC distributed home-learning kits to 693 learners (408 girls, 288 boys) during the school closure period. These included exercise and activity sheets. In total, four packages per learner were prepared and distributed.
- NRC reported that 617 AE children (240 boys, 377 girls) received learning resources and materials upon return to AE after the COVID-19 closure between March and June 2020.
- NRC reported that 21 AEP incentive workers (13 men, 8 women) participated in COVID-19 awareness and prevention training.
- 24 individuals (14 men, 10 women) facilitated NRC's AE home-based learning. This includes 21 teachers (13 men, 8 women) and three outreach workers (one man, two women).
- Save the Children also provided awareness-raising sessions about COVID-19, training for teachers, and spent time strengthening its children's clubs, with children playing a pivotal role in health messaging.
- Once schools reopened, Save the Children continued to raise awareness. During teacher training, the organisation ensured disinfected handwashing stations at the main gate and tested temperatures. At each classroom door, handwashing stations are provided, and students are requested to wash their hands. In addition, teachers have to wash their hands before entering the teacher's staff room. Save the Children also distributes sanitiser to all teachers.

245 IRC (2021) Learning in a Covid-19 World: The Unique Risks of Falling Behind for Children in Humanitarian Settings. Retrieved from https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/5166/learninginacovidworldvf090120.pdf

246 Ibid

As a result of ongoing awareness-raising and outreach, UNICEF estimated that approximately 90% of the refugee schoolchildren returned to formal school by the end of November 2020. In addition, in collaboration with the education working group partners, verification of school attendance and school children in the refugee camp is ongoing across the three camps.[247]

Despite efforts to continue learning during school closures, fewer children returned to AE upon reopening activities in late June. NRC noted that of the 882 children (373 boys, 509 girls) enrolled in AE, 617 (240 boys, 377 girls) returned to classes. In addition, upon reopening school and learning activities, education stakeholders decided collectively to amend the school calendar. This resulted in a shorter than usual summer break of 10 days instead of the standard 40 days and rescheduled the end of the school year to October. The progress of children receiving psychosocial support services was also affected.

However, between the initial return to school after COVID-19 closures and the end of the school year, an additional 56 learners (40 girls, 16 boys) returned to school. Therefore, fewer than expected children sat the final exam, which impacted transition rates to formal school.

In the formal schools, IRC adapted by converting classroom-based lesson plans into worksheets and at-home activities focusing on developing literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills. Parents and caregivers with minimal free time and limited literacy skills can quickly implement these lessons. In addition, IRC took advantage of cross-sectoral distribution mechanisms by bundling them with food and medicines for distribution to 78,000 children ages 6 to 14 in an estimated 37,624 homes.[248] Once schools reopened, IRC started a catch-up programme to support learners in formal schools in catching up on missed classes.

Like other contexts, radio education programmes were implemented to support learners in continuing their education during school closures. Over 8,000 refugee children in Grades 7, 8 and 9 in Burundian and Grades 5, 6 and 8 Congolese camps benefitted from catch-up lessons broadcasted through Jesuit Refugee Services-Radio Kwizera (JRS-RK) with the support of UNICEF. In addition, 2,500 refugee teachers were trained to support children who benefit from the radio programme complementary to the radio programmes while providing extra lessons to compensate for the reduced classroom time due to double shifts. In addition, COVID-19 prevention messages around school reopening targeting school children, their teachers and parents/caregivers continue to be broadcast.[249] To date, no data is available on the impact of these programmes.

247 UNICEF (2021) Tanzania Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/media/91381/file/UNICEF%20Tanzania%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%204%20-%20January%20-%20December%202020.pdf

248 Ibid

249 UNICEF (2021) Tanzania Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/media/91381/file/UNICEF%20Tanzania%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%204%20-%20January%20-%20December%202020.pdf

Conclusion

As this report has highlighted, children and young people face multiple challenges in accessing quality education. Barriers are compounded further in the refugee camp contexts. As the study has highlighted, the education situation for refugees continues to be affected by the acute shortage of classrooms, lack of qualified teachers, accreditation issues, a fragmented curriculum and reduced funding. The refugee policy in Tanzania and the different learning outcomes between Congolese and Burundian learners highlights the importance of having access to a solid country-of-origin curriculum, services, and infrastructure due to the longevity of the Nyarugusu camp. Notwithstanding, all refugees live in a context where there is a push for repatriation. Given the cyclical nature of displacement in the Kivus (where the Congolese refugees come from) and some hesitancy by Burundian refugees around repatriation, it is likely that families will remain in the refugee camps for at least the near future. Hence, there is a need for increased investment and support for learning, coupled with ongoing advocacy with the government of Tanzania for the integration ofe refugees into the national education system.

Developing the AEP curriculum in 2021 wa a commendable initiative to address the camp's quality, teaching, and learning issues. Since the curriculum was developedin collaboration with many stakeholders, it will be taught to thousands of children across the camps. Equally, it could serve as a valuable resource for returnees to Burundi and potentially the Burundian MoE itself if an AE curriculum does not exist. Furthermore, the inclusion of SEL is a welcome addition to the curriculum, as studies from BRAC's AEPs in Tanzania suggest that a robust, contextualised SEL and life skills curriculum can positively impact the school learning environment. As the new AEP curriculum is implemented, it will be critical to monitor, evaluate and research to measure its impact closely.

Still, all partners noted the precarious funding climate. Therefore, it will be critical for the international community to continue increasing contributions over the next year. Furthermore, ongoing advocacy with the Government of Tanzania must encourage it to reexamine its stance on allowing all those residing in its territory to access quality education.

Key Recommendations

Continued advocacy for CRRP: International organisations should continue to advocate for the government of Tanzania to reconfirm its commitments to the CRRP and include refugees in the national education system.

Collaboration with partners working across borders: While mindful of protection concerns, partners should continue to connect with their cross-border counterparts. The 2021 Burundi Refugee return and reintegration plan aims to address existing and anticipated challenges to ensure the reintegration of refugee returnee children into primary, secondary and tertiary education.[250] Catch up sessions will be offered, and learning programs will be established for out-of-school children. In addition, the education materials, assessments, and challenges could be shared with partners operating in DRC and Burundi to support returnees' reintegration into their country of origin's school system.

Collaboration to improve teaching and learning: Upon finalising the AE curriculum, partners should continue to work collaboratively, including teacher training. In addition, more advocacy is needed to revise teachers terms, benefits, and conditions and increase staff psychosocial and well-being support services.

Research and evidence on what works, specifically research that empowers children, young people, and communities: AEP aims to support the most marginalised children, but without improved monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning practices and conducting longitudinal research, implementers will lack the knowledge required to make sound decisions about the most effective programmes in which to invest scarce time and resources.

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250 UNHCR (2021) 2021 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan: January-December 2021. Nairobi: UNHCR, Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes

ACCELERATED EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

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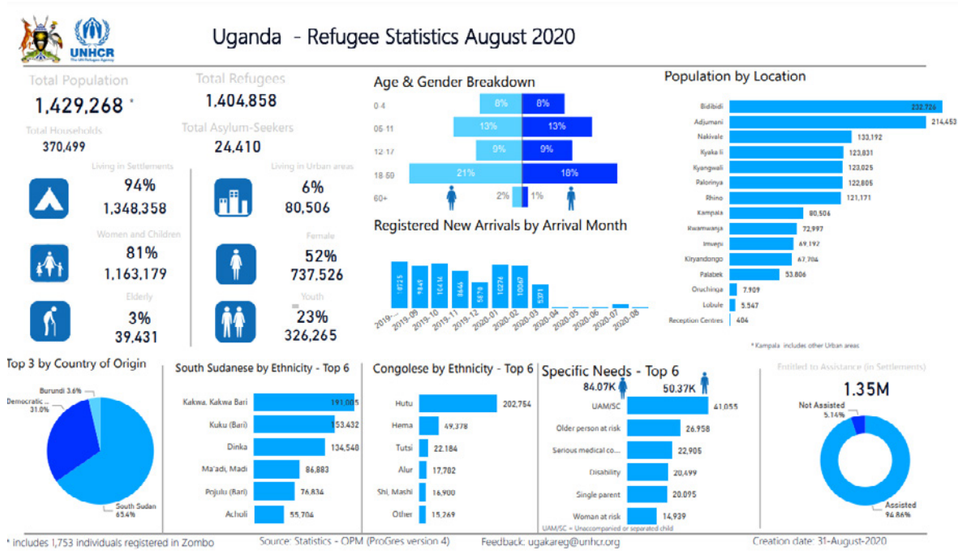
EDUCATION SITUATION ANALYSIS:
UGANDA

Background

Throughout 2016 and 2017, Uganda was affected by three parallel emergencies from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Burundi. Today, with over 1.1 million refugees, Uganda hosts the most significant number of refugees in Africa and is one of the top five refugee-hosting countries globally. At least 61% of the total refugee population is children under 18.[251]



Uganda's policies have long been lauded as some of the most welcoming and progressive towards refugees. Uganda's 2006 Refugee provide a solid legal and regulatory framework for refugee rights, including the right to work and freedom of movement Act[252] and 2010 Refugee regulations.[253][254] In addition, the application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), which began in 2017, provided an impetus for whole-of-government ownership and leadership of the refugee response in Uganda. The CRRF provided an unprecedented and novel national arrangement, allowing humanitarian and development actors to come together to improve coordination for the support of refugees and host communities.

National Overview of Education Access and Inequity

Link to AEWG: Quality of AEPs improved

Education in Uganda is guided and regulated by The Education (Pre-Primary, Primary and Post-Primary) Act of2008. This defines four levels of education: (a) pre-primary education, (b) primary education, which is seven years in length, (c) post-primary education and training, and (d) tertiary and university education.

251 Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports. (2018). *Education Response Plan for Refugees.* Retrieved from Microsoft Word - Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda_May 18 2018_FINAL (unesco.org)

252 Refworld | Uganda: The Refugee Act 2006

253 STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS (refworld.org)

254 see Uganda has a remarkable history of hosting refugees, but its efforts are underfunded (theconversation.com)

Uganda is a multilingual country, and schools in Uganda follow an explicit language policy formulated in the White Paper of 1996 and then adapted and implemented through the curriculum reforms rolled out in 2007. The curriculum states that children in nursery and Primary 1–3 should be taught in their first or home language (L1).[255] Primary 4 should be seen as a transition year in which children move gradually from learning the local language to learning English. This policy is now well established and accepted across Uganda; however, as shall be discussed later, this becomes complicated in multilingual and refugee-hosting areas.[256]

Although the Ugandan education system is widely respected, learning outcomes in primary schools were a significant challenge even before the refugee influx. In Uganda, the primary school entry age is six years, with an expected completion time of seven years. Children are expected to complete primary school between 12 and 13 years. However, it is common to find children as old as ten years who have not started primary school.[257] Nationally, only a third of all children in Uganda who start Primary 1 will reach Primary 7. Of those that reach Primary 7, the completion rate is between 61-69.6%, and the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) has a pass rate of 89 %.[258]

Only around half of the children in Primary 6 reached the expected literacy and numeracy assessments in 2015.[259] Drop-out rates remain high in upper primary, resulting in a low transition to secondary school, especially for girls. At present, secondary education in Uganda is not compulsory. Only learners who achieve specific grades in each of the four primary schools leaving core subjects can study free in public schools. Only a third of the children enrolled in secondary schools are female. In addition to gendered differences in attainment, there are gaps around children with disabilities. Promisingly, a high percentage of people with physical disabilities in an assessed area attended primary and secondary school. However, there is little data available on the percentage of learners with other disabilities

Non-Formal Education and AE in Uganda: Government Structures

Link to AEWG : AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) have increased access to education for both over age out-of-school national and refugee children and adolescents in Uganda since the mid-1990s. As stated in the Education Act of 2008, Part IV, 'Primary education shall be universal and compulsory for pupils…Government shall ensure that a child who drops out of school before completing primary education cycle attains basic education through alternative approaches to providing that

255 Maina,R. and Hicks, L. (2018) THE IMPACT OF REFUGEES ON SCHOOLS IN UGANDA. Retrieved from uganda_schools_language_for_resilience.pdf (britishcouncil.ug)

256 Ibid

257 Accelerated Education Task Team- Uganda (2021) AEP Guidelines Uganda.unpublished.

258 This data is drawn from p.13 and 34 from Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports. (2018). *Education Response Plan for Refugees.* Retrieved from Microsoft Word - Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda_May 18 2018_FINAL (unesco.org)

259 Oddy, J.(2019) Accelerated Education Programming (AEP): Children, families, teachers and educational stakeholders experiences of AEP in Uganda . Retrieved from https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/accelerated-education-programming-aep-children-families-teachers-and-educational/

education.'[260] The Education Act of 2008 recognises the role of accelerated education (AE). It has also been included as a critical intervention for overage out of school children and youth in the 2018 Emergency Response Plan (ERP).[261]

The Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education at the Ministry of Education and Sports is responsible for non-formal education (NFE) (led by the assistant commissioner of inclusive and non-formal education). NFE in Uganda is defined as alternative education programmes provided to children and adolescents who cannot access a formal education for various reasons. NFE programmes target disadvantaged communities, where schooling must co-exist with other demands and constraints placed upon children and adolescents, including labour and childcare. According to the national draft AEP guidelines, 'AE is aimed at ensuring a flexible, age-appropriate programme that promotes access to education in an accelerated timeframe for disadvantaged groups: overage, out of school children, adolescents and youth who missed out or had their education interrupted due to poverty, marginalisation, conflict, crisis, or other constraints. AEPs are designed to reduce and remove the barriers to accessing education that led to learners dropping out or never enrolling in school. AE recognises that older learners learn faster than younger learners and have broader background knowledge and prior experiences to draw upon in the learning process; hence, the accelerated curriculum allows them to catch up, complete a basic primary or lower secondary level education, and sit for the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) or Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations'.[262]

As aforementioned, the primary school curriculum in Uganda is seven years. The primary AE programme condenses the primary school curriculum into three levels (three years), allowing overage learners to catch up.

Learners in AE programmes can either transition back into formal primary school based on their completed levels and, if they are the right age for the correct grade, complete all three levels and sit for the Primary Leaving Exam (PLE) and transition into formal secondary education, vocational programmes, or livelihoods. As the table below highlights, there are multiple re-entry points into the formal education system.

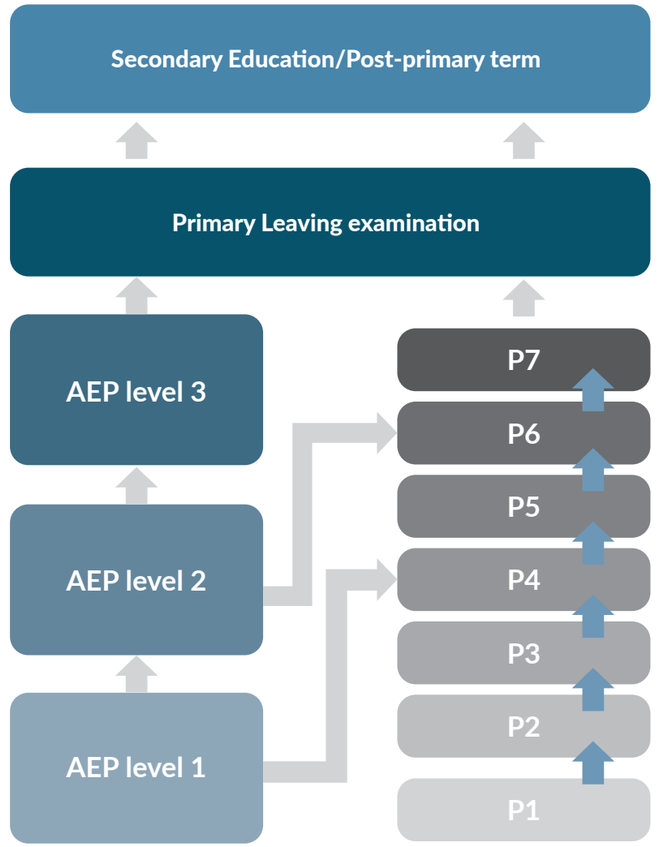
GRADE	LEVEL
(P1 to P3) Primary Grades one to three	Level 1
(P4 and P5) Primary Grades four to five	Level 2
(P6 and P7) Primary Grades six to seven	Level 3

Upon completing Primary 7, AE learners can sit the Primary Leaving Exam and transition into secondary education or other post-primary training.

260 Hewison, M. (May 2018) Development of the Guidelines for Accelerated Education in Uganda. Internal report.

261 Hewison, M (December 2020) Development of AE Guidelines Uganda: December 2020 Summary report

262 Talamoi, J. and Asiega, S.(September, 15,, 2021). Lessons learned and Best Practices in harmonising accelerated education programming in Kenya,Uganda and Somalia. Retrieved from their presentation at UKFIET. See for further details. https://www.ukfiet.org/2021/lessons-learned-and-best-practices-in-harmonising-accelerated-education-programming-in-kenya-uganda-and-somalia/



Upon completing Primary 7, AE learners can sit the Primary Leaving Exam and transition into secondary education or other post-primary training.

In line with the Government of Uganda's (GoU), 2006 Refugee Act and its Regulations, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) 2017 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a core principle of the Education Response Plan (ERP) is to ensure that refugee children and adolescents as well as children within host communities in refugee hosting districts have access to good quality education at all levels, irrespective of thecountry of origin of the refugees and their location within Uganda. At a cost of USD 389 million, implementation and funding of the ERP is done by GoU, Education in Emergencies Sector Working Group (EiESWG) partners and Education Development Partners (EDPs) among others. The ERP is implemented in all 13-refugee hosting districts and covers 100% of refugee settlement schools and 20% of host community schools.

Source: The Baseline Survey Report for the Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (ERP)- June 2021

Refugee Learners' Access to Education

The Government of Uganda (GoU)'s supportive policies and frameworks aim to ensure that refugee children and children within host communities in refugee-hosting districts have access to quality education at all levels. These include the GoU's Refugee Policy, the CRRF 2017, the ERP (2018) and Universal Primary Education (UPE), 1997.[263] As part of the CRRF, the GoU in September 2018 launched the Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (ERP). The plan is designed to be 'a realistic and implementable plan to ensure improved learning outcomes for increasing numbers of refugee and host community children and adolescents across Uganda.' It represents a critical milestone in substantial planning for education in refugee situations. If the plan had been fully funded, it would have provided quality education for thousands of Uganda's refugee and host community children[264]. The Education Response Plan is the first of its kind worldwide and represents a huge policy step forward for refugee education globally.

Notably, many displaced children have already spent prolonged periods outside school. Even before the conflict in South Sudan erupted in 2013, the country had some of the world's worst education indicators, along with some of the broadest gender disparities in school attendance: the latest estimates show the primary completion rate was only 30% for girls and almost double at 58% for boys, while the lower secondary rates were 8% and 24% respectively. The situation has deteriorated rapidly from this low base, and in 2018, an estimated 1.2 million children lost access to education.

The second-largest displaced group arriving in Uganda in 2018 came from the DRC, with the majority from Ituri province and North Kivu. Similar to South Sudan, the DRC education system faces severe challenges. A recent report found that: 'Three and a half million children of primary school age are not in school. Of those who do attend, 44% start school late, after the age of six. For those in primary school, learning levels are abysmal: an early grade reading assessment showed that 68% of grades 3 and 4 students could not read a single word of simple text. National data indicate that only 67% of children who enter first grade will complete sixth grade. Of those who reach 6th grade, only 75% will pass the exit exam.'[265] Thus, these forcibly displaced students entering the Ugandan school system will likely have fragmented education experiences. Many would not have the prior formal education background to enter the school system at an age-appropriate level.

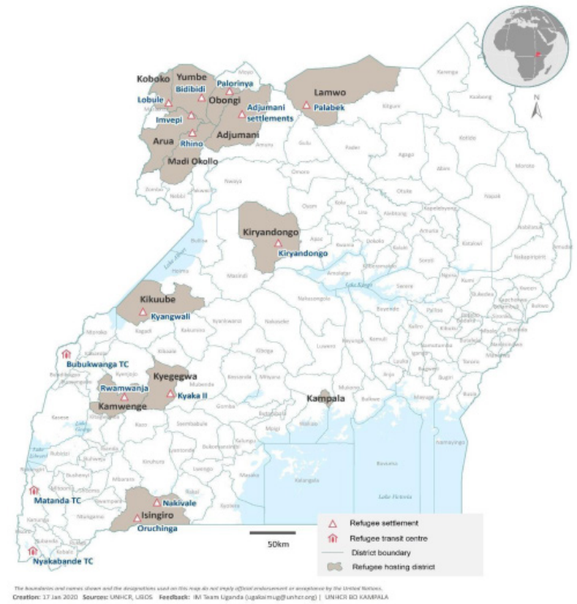
Uganda is committed to UPE, and all refugee children are allowed free access. Furthermore, there is no upper age limit for UPE, which is an interesting concept, as accelerated education programmes and pathways are often designed on the premise of children and youth being considered overage for the formal primary education system.[266]

In June 2021, a baseline survey was conducted in 13 refugee-hosting districts across the country to inform the Emergency Response Plan (ERP). In addition, a learning outcomes assessment was conducted among learners in Primary 3 and Primary 6 to assess learning achievements in literacy and numeracy using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) tools.

The key findings indicate that in both AE and non-AE primary schools, Primary 3 (P.3) performance in Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) was deficient, in that only 4% (n=3,031) scored 70% and above, 3% scored 60-69%, 5% scored 50-59%, and 27% scored 25-49% while 61% scored 0-24%, which implies that most learners did not attain competence in reading. However, it is worth considering that the time lag between the last term in 2020 and March 2021 without attending classes following the COVID-19 lockdown could have contributed to the poor performance. The best performing district was Kampala, with 27% of learners scoring 70% and above while 19% scored below 25%. The higher performance in Kampala was attributed to better education services including facilities, better teacher staffing levels, access to instructional materials, and access to media.[267] This suggests that there are regional disparities in the quality of education provision.

The ERP baseline report raised significant issues around equity and inclusion in the Ugandan education system. Regarding gender, more females scored significantly (p-value 0.018) below 25% than males; hence females had very low competencies in reading proficiency. Qualitative findings from FGDs attributed the low performance among female learners to heavy household chores at home, limited time for revision and regular school attendance, sexual harassment and abuse, and early marriages, which were notable in Yumbe Isingiro, Kampala and Kiryandongo districts.[268] This indicates a critical need to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in schools.

Figure 2: Map of Uganda Showing Refugee Host Districts



Source: Draft Monitoring and Evaluation Guide for ERP for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda 2018-2021

263 The ERP Baseline Survey 2021 (not available online to date)

264 The ERP is an ambitious plan that highlighted that an average of 567,500 learners per year can be reached with improved education services, at a total cost of $389 million over 3.5 year. However, despite commitments in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016, and the Global Compact for Refugees – Programme of Action, the refugee response remains critically underfunded. See https://www.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/NGO%20Call%20to%20Action%20-%20Uganda%27s%20Education%20Response%20Plan%20-FINAL%20140918.pdf and https://www.opml.co.uk/files/Publications/A2241-maintains/maintains-uge-phase-1-report-revised-feb2021.pdf?noredirect=1

265 Oddy, J.(2019) Accelerated Education Programming (AEP): Children, families, teachers and educational stakeholders experiences of AEP in Uganda . Retrieved from Accelerated Education Programming (AEP): Children, families, teachers and educational stakeholders experiences of AEP in Uganda | Resource Centre (savethechildren.net)

266 Ibid

267 The Emergency Response Plan- Education Baseline Survey 2021(not available online to date).

268 Ibid

Within the ERP, there was no data on children with disabilities attending AEP, highlighting the need for AE partners to improve their monitoring and evaluation practices to capture equity markers. Whilst the report noted that there had been an improvement in recent years on accessibility for learners with disabilities, findings still highlighted that discrimination remains. The ERP underlined that stigmatisation and fear of abuse from peers, negative attitudes from peers, teachers and communities, lack of disability-friendly infrastructure, assisted devices, and special education needs teachers hindered attendance for learners living with disabilities.[269]

Language of instruction also has an impact on educational equity. As mentioned earlier, Uganda has a clear policy on language of instruction. In addition, there is ample evidence globally that, ideally, children should be taught in their mother tongue. However, recent arrivals of refugee children from South Sudan belong to the Kakwa and Pojulu ethnic groups from Central Equatoria and the Madi and Lotuko groups from Eastern Equatoria with up to ten different langagues spoken by the refugees. In addition, there are host communities that also speak Madi and Kakwa. However, refugees do not necessarily arrive in areas with a matching language of instruction. For example, many refugee children were previously taught in a mixture of Arabic and their home language. Thus, they struggled to transition to Uganda's English language curriculum (from Primary 4 onwards) or the local language used as a language of instruction when different from their own.

Children from the DRC also have a mix of languages, with many speaking Swahili or Lingala as a first language, depending on the area of origin. They have been taught in a combination of these two languages, with French as the international language for upper primary, thus increasing the incompatibility with the languages they meet in school.[270] In summary, whilst it is laudable that Uganda has promoted integration and refugees are encouraged to attend host community schools, the complexity around the language of instruction remains.

War Child Canada and Finn Church Aid (FCA) have been implementing lower secondary AEP. Support for refugees in Uganda primarily focuses on providing pre-primary and primary education, with 76%, or 254,442, of school-aged refugee children enrolled in primary schools by the end of 2019 with a boy to girl proportion 54 to 46%. War Child Canada and FCA's secondary AEP attempts to address the critical gap in access to secondary education for refugee and host communities, especially girls. As of 2020, only around 11% of refugees and 18% of host community secondary school-age adolescents and youth are enrolled in secondary schools compared to 27% of learners nationally.[271] The lower secondary AEP combines four years of ordinary secondary formal education into two years.

- AEP learners sit the Secondary Uganda Certificate of Education examinations and get UNEB Certificates.
- There are provisions for transition to formal secondary schools, higher secondary education, and vocational training.

269 Ibid

270 Maina,R. and Hicks, L. (2018) THE IMPACT OF REFUGEES ON SCHOOLS IN UGANDA. Retrieved from uganda_schools_language_for_resilience.pdf (britishcouncil.ug)

271 Data taken from a Presentation to AEWG Uganda by War Child Canada, November 2020

The AEP Curriculum (Primary AEP)

The development of the 'original' primary AEP curriculum was facilitated by NRC and the technical work led by technical experts from the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MoESTTS) in collaboration with Guru and Kitgum Core Primary Teachers' Colleges. The curriculum was first introduced and rolled out in 2011 in Northern Uganda. Between 2011 and 2013, the curriculum was implemented in 48 centres across seven districts of the Acholi sub-region of Northern Uganda. It targeted children and youth between the ages of 10 and 18 years affected by the Lord's Resistance Army war. Out of school children and youth affected by the war and living in hard-to-reach areas with limited access to education services were prioritised. However, the AEP curriculum developed in 2011 had not gone through the due approval process. Therefore, when it was agreed that a new approved curriculum should be developed, this period was used as a pilot phase of the curriculum implementation.

With the increase of refugees to Uganda in 2017, there was a renewed demand for AEP.

Following on from the innovative ERP, Education Cannot Wait (ECW) introduced its first Multi-Year Resilience Programme to support it, heralding a new way of working more collaboratively, inclusively and sustainably. The programme, for which ECW provided $11 million for the first year, worked in nine of Uganda's 12 refugee-hosting districts. It was run through a consortium – hosted and coordinated by Save the Children – made up of multiple partners who brought their varied strengths to the table. This way of working aims to maximise the strength of each of these individual partners and achieve synergy between them.[272] In 2018, a series of national-level workshops supported by the AEWG were held to develop national AE Guidelines based around the AEWG's 10 Principles for Effective Practice.[273] An AE task team, made up of multiple actors and MoE representatives, was also formed in 2019 to drive the harmonisation agenda. Joyce Adoch Talamoi (Norwegian Refugee Council, based in Uganda) and Sarah Ayseiga (Ministry of Education and Sports, Uganda), representatives of the AE task team, explained the success of the AE task team, which includes to date :

- A curriculum revision process was kickstarted, initially by partners reviewing an end evaluation report, which documented vital issues concerning the curriculum to consider.[274]
- Follow up discussions and recommendations derived from the country level AEP workshop in February 2018 facilitated by the AEWG.
- An inception report with inputs from partners who had interacted with the AEP curriculum was created.

272 Save the Children (2018) Education Cannot Wait- Uganda. Retrieved from https://uganda.savethechildren.net/news/uganda-education-cannot-wait

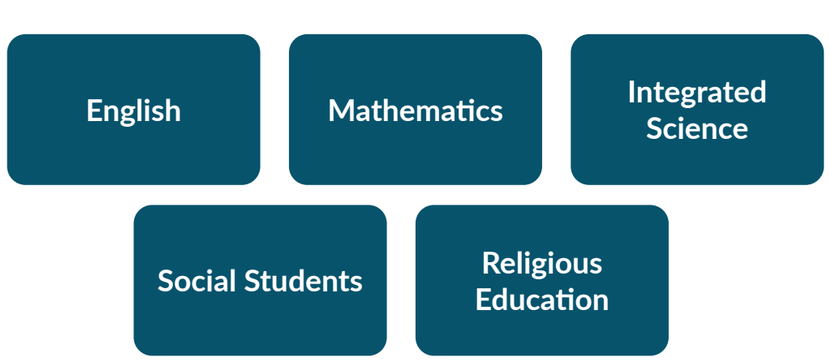
273 Talamoi, J. and Asiega, S.(September, 15,, 2021). Lessons learned and Best Practices in harmonising accelerated education programming in Kenya,Uganda and Somalia. Retrieved from their presentation at UKFIET. See for further details. https://www.ukfiet.org/2021/lessons-learned-and-best-practices-in-harmonising-accelerated-education-programming-in-kenya-uganda-and-somalia/

274 Talamoi, J. and Asiega, S.(September, 15,, 2021). Lessons learned and Best Practices in harmonising accelerated education programming in Kenya,Uganda and Somalia. Retrieved from their presentation at UKFIET. See for further details. https://www.ukfiet.org/2021/lessons-learned-and-best-practices-in-harmonising-accelerated-education-programming-in-kenya-uganda-and-somalia/

- Gaps were identified as the team reviewed the current curriculum document at the start of the review process.
- A field visit to the AEP centres in West Nile was conducted at the start of the AEP curriculum review
- Feedback from the field teams is integrated into the review process.
- Contextualised AEP guidelines for Uganda are developed. The approval process is in the second last stage of approval by the Ministry of Education and Sports
- The AEP curriculum revision was adopted in 2018, having passed through the Quality Assurance Committee of National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and been presented to the academic steering board in September 2018 before finally being presented to the governing council of the NCDC.

The curriculum revision process eliminated repetitions in content to create time, a more precise focus on relevant areas for the target group, proper guidance concerning each learning area, and guidance on special needs issues.[275]

The core subjects studied through the Primary AEP are:



The current primary AEP curriculum does not significantly differ from the formal curriculum, but instead condenses the formal primary school curriculum by merging the sub-topics into essential topics. This was done after considering the nature and developmental level of the targeted learners and the study time available.[276]

275 Ibid

276 Norwegian Refugee Council internal report on curriculum.

Lower Secondary AEP

War Child Canada (WCC) developed the curriculum for lower secondary with the support of NCDC, which was first tested by 169 learners and 12 teachers in Adjumani before it launched in October 2019.

The curriculum covers the lower secondary education curriculum from senior one to senior four with eight examinable subjects (maths, English, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, history and CRE), plus two non-examinable subjects (counselling, physical education and social health) and is condensed into two years.

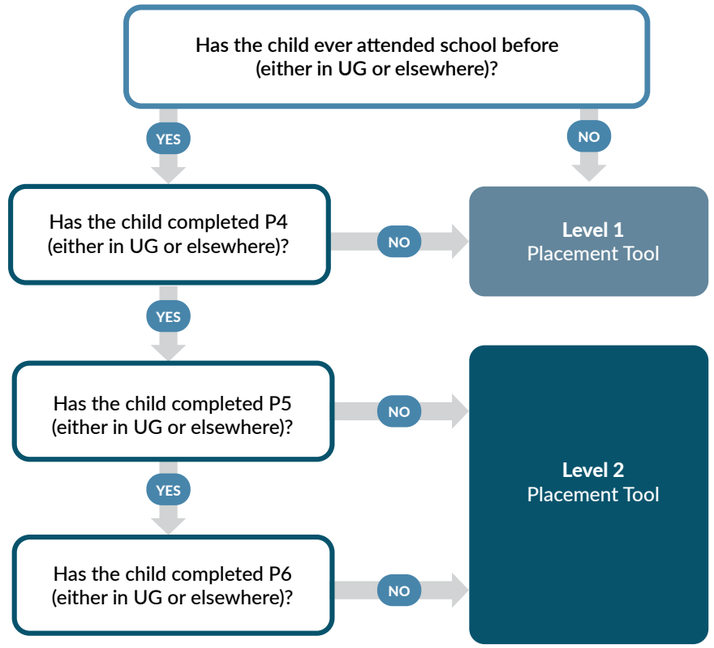
In 2020, Windle International Uganda (WIU) started an AEP secondary intervention.

WHO ARE AEP LEARNERS?

According to the AE task team's guidelines for AE, the AE programme at the primary level should target out-of-school children between the ages of 10 and 18. Therefore, the minimum entry age is ten years old for primary, and the maximum entry age is 18. Learners over 18 years are referred to other opportunities such as vocational education, adult literacy/numeracy programs, and livelihood opportunities appropriate for their age and ambition.

When AEP started in refugee-hosting districts, partners reported that many students wished to join primary AEP. This was due to multiple factors, including a perception of better resources in AEP centres, smaller classroom sizes, and more welcoming environments for learners. As a result, the AE task team developed several tools to support partners in placing students at the correct level.

AEP PLACEMENT TOOL FLOWCHART



According to the National AE Guidelines ,(which are still in the approval process), when enrolling, the target age is 19-25 for lower secondary AE (for secondary, the minimum age is 19, and the maximum is 24. Learners above the maximum age can be considered in exceptional circumstances).

According to the ERP baseline survey, as of June 2021, a total of 22,350 learners (10,625 female and 11,725 male) were enrolled in the AEP programme.[277] The table below provides an overview of the reach of different partners implementing AEP.

War Child Canada	4,229 learners for primary AEP funded by Wellspring, 719 for a lower secondary pilot project funded by Master Card Foundation, and 200 learners under lower secondary AEP funded by Wellspring. **Location**: Adjumani district based in eight secondary schools; Adjumani SS, Alere SS, Ofua SS, Lewa SS, Maaji II SS, Pagirinya SS, Dzaipi SS and Mungula SS **Target beneficiaries**: Planned 1,750 learners, 48 teachers; current enrolment, 1,119 learners and 40 teachers. Level II: 719 learners; 330 (247 male, 83 female refugees and 389 (269 male, 120 female) Ugandans Level I: 400 learners; 150 (95 male and 55 female) refugees and 250 (150 male and 100 female) Ugandans
NRC	Over the last two years, NRC has reached over 8,000 children. However, NRC has reached 60,000 plus (schools in Uganda have been closed for close to 18 months now).
Save the Children	Over 10,000 refugees and children from host communities were enrolled before the COVID-19 outbreak.
UNICEF	1500 AEP learners are supported through UNICEF funding.
AVSIS	766 (458 male, 308 female) AEP learners have been supported cumulatively from 2019
FCA	At the Primary AEP level FCA continues to work in AEP centres, where a total of 6,537 (2,769 males, 3,768 females) formerly out-of-school and overaged children were enrolled back in primary school since 2017 This is funded through several donors.1) Under ECHO INCLUDE - 5,828 learners (2510 males and 3318 females), and under ECW - 709 learners there (259 males and 450 females). FCA Lower Secondary Accelerated Education programme is funded through Mastercard Foundation.
Geneva Global Speed schools	Geneva Global Speed Schools presently include 6,900 learners, and 230 facilitators.

277 ERP Baseline Survey 2021 (not available online)

Institutional Coordination of Non-formal Education

Link to AEWG: AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality

Civil society and INGOs play a crucial role in collaborating with the MoEST in supporting non-formal education coordination. As mentioned, Education Can't Wait awarded a grant to a consortium to ensure that appropriate and standardised policies and curriculum were in place for quality implementation and scale-up by AEP actors. The ECW project emphasises harmonising AE programmes (AEPs) to improve quality. One of the key deliverables is the development of AEP guidelines in line with the global AEWG aims and agenda, highlighting institutional partnerships, collaboration, and coordination both nationally and globally.

Another example of institutional and partner coordination of non-formal education within Uganda is FCA's role as the co-lead of the EiE Sector Working Group (ESWG) and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoEST) UNHCR. FCA has a full-time Coordinator to support this work. In this position, FCA, MoEST and UNHCR have been critical coordinators of the Education Response Plan (ERP) implementation and COVID-19 home learning response through home learning package distribution, small group learning support, and radio learning. FCA is also a member of the secondary task team under the EiE SWG, advocating for harmonisation of secondary teacher salaries across settlements, providing evidence-based recommendations, and lobbying for investments in secondary education. FCA also participates in the AE task team and can inform the AE actors of comprehensive non-formal education initiatives.

As mentioned in the previous section on curriculum development, AETT was formed to develop the AE curriculum and coordinate actors. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and FCA co-convene the AE Task team alongside a MoEST representative.[278] The AE Task Team was formed in Uganda in early 2019 to drive forward the harmonisation agenda and lead the approval process of the AE guidelines with the MoEST.

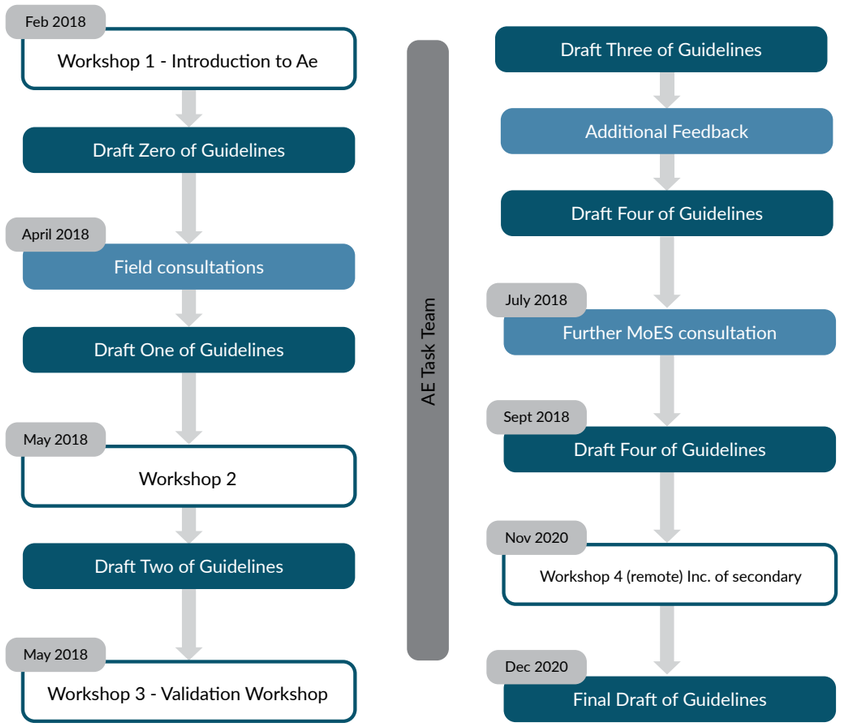

©UNHCR/Yonna Tukundane

278 Talamoi, J. and Asiega, S.(September, 15,, 2021). Lessons learned and Best Practices in harmonising accelerated education programming in Kenya,Uganda and Somalia. Retrieved from their presentation at UKFIET. See for further details. https://www.ukfiet.org/2021/lessons-learned-and-best-practices-in-harmonising-accelerated-education-programming-in-kenya-uganda-and-somalia/

The process of developing the guidelines has been lengthy. It was carried out through a series of workshops and consultations as outlined below between 2018 to present.

To ensure the development of the guidelines were based on globally agreed good practice, Uganda used the accelerated education working group (AEWG)'s 10 Principles for Effective Practice as a foundation.[279] The MoEST plays an integral part in leading the development of AEP guidelines. The Accelerated Education Programme Guidelines for Uganda have been organised into seven unique areas. Underneath each area, there is a principle that identifies the critical targets within each area. Underneath the principles, guidance statements are provided to elaborate upon the conditions necessary for the respective principle to be fully achieved.

PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AE GUIDELINES



Area 1	Area 1: Learner Identification, Enrolment, Retention, and Support Principle: AEPs in Uganda target overaged out of school children, adolescents, and youth to support the transition to formal education and other learning and livelihood opportunities.
Area 2	Area 2: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment Principle: An approved, accelerated and condensed curriculum aligned to government curriculum that is gender-sensitive, age-appropriate, and uses relevant teaching pedagogies and assessments to meet the needs of the target beneficiaries is implemented in all AEP centres in Uganda.
Area 3	Area 3: Teaching and Learning Environment Principle: The AEP learning environment is inclusive, safe, and learner-friendly.
Area 4	Area 4: Teacher Recruitment, Professional Development and Support Principle: All AEP teachers are recruited, trained, and qualified with continuous mentoring support to meet the unique demands and challenges of the AEP teaching context.
Area 5	Area 5: Management and Community Participation and Ownership Principle: AEP centres are effectively managed, and communities participate in the planning, implementing, and monitoring AEPs to ensure transparency and ownership.
Area 6	Area 6: Monitoring and Evaluation, Research, and Evidence Principle: AEPs use a harmonised monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in line with Education Management Information System (EMIS) to collect, analyse, report, and use relevant data for programme improvement.
Area 7	Area 7: Policy, Funding and Sustainability Principle: AE programmes are supported by an enabling policy framework and are adequately funded to meet the learning needs of out-of-school, overage, and vulnerable children, adolescents, and youth.

The final draft of the guidelines is due for submission and final approval towards the end of 2021.

The AE guidelines have been presented to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoEST) and are currently with the Monitoring and Evaluation Department. In 2020 the task team worked with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) to train and roll out the AE curriculum. This included developing a guidance note on transition, supporting the preparation of teaching guides and textbooks, harmonising placement tests, harmonising teachers' salaries, and sharing good practices.[280] Whilst the AE task team is at the national level; one partner mentioned that there is also a district-level AE task team.

279 Hewison, M. (May 2018) Development of the Guidelines for Accelerated Education in Uganda. Internal notes.

280 Martha Hewison (2020) Development of AE Guidelines Uganda December 2020 Summary report. Internal notes.

In summary, institutional coordination has been significant to the progression of AE in Uganda. Partners highlighted the importance of relationships, collaboration, and dedicated expertise to drive sustainable and harmonised AE. Furthermore, it has led to other developments, such as Kenya and Somalia drawing upon the good practices in coordination structures and ways of working seen in Uganda[281]. Although this section has lightly touched on consortium funding structures, the following section will delve deeper into the financing of AE.

Funding and Key Stakeholders

Link to AEWG 2)AEPs better resourced by all critical stakeholders for scale and quality.

Three major consortiums have played an integral role in shaping AE for forcibly displaced populations and host communities in Uganda.

- **The BRiCE/Education for Life Project** is a four-year (2018-2022) intervention implemented in the Palabek Refugee Settlement in northern Uganda and Greater Kapoeta, Torit, Ikwotos, and Juba in South Sudan. The project is managed by a consortium led by Oxfam IBIS, Education International, Oxfam Novib, Oxfam South Sudan, Oxfam in Uganda, AVSI (both in Uganda and South Sudan), Community Development Initiatives, Columbia Global Centres, Uganda National Teachers' Union, Forum for African Women Educationists Uganda, and the Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education (LGIHE). Within the consortium, LgiHE leads the teacher professional development work.

- The **INCLUDE** (INnovative and inCLUsive accelerated eDucation programmE for refugee and host community children) project is funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Assistance Office (ECHO). The INCLUDE project and the Uganda Education Consortium is implemented by Save the Children, Finn Church Aid, Norwegian Refugee Council, War Child Holland, and Humanity and Inclusion under the leadership of the Uganda Education Consortium Management unit. Partners will work in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Office of the Prime Minister, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, and district governments.

- **Education Can't Wait** awarded a grant in 2017 to a consortium led by the Norwegian Refugee Council with Save the Children International as a partner to ensure that appropriate and standardised policies were in place for quality implementation and scale-up by AEP actors.

The section below provides an overview of the stakeholders who participated in this study; however, this is not an exhaustive list of all partners implementing AE in Uganda. Notwithstanding, their programmes provide a snapshot of how AE is implemented.

Windle International Uganda (WIU) implements AEP for Primary and (lower) secondary school learners. The primary programme started in 2016, while the secondary intervention began in 2020. WIU also supports other partners who implement AEP in the Adjumani refugee camp.

Geneva Global has operated 'Speed School' in Northern Uganda since 2016. An accelerated education program, Speed School, provides out-of-school children aged 8 to 14 the first three years of primary schooling in ten months, readying them to transition to Grade 4 in conventional classes the following year. As such, this model differs from the other AE models. The model combines two components. First, Speed School classes feature play-based instruction and contextualised lessons to cover a condensed version of the official curriculum with 30 girls and boys. Second, a self-help group is associated with each class. This organises every pupil's mother (or other guardians) to operate income-generating activities and group savings to meet schooling costs after their children transition to a conventional class. Thus, the Speed School accelerated education model delivers the first three years of a national curriculum in just ten months to out-of-school children aged 9 to 14. In addition, the learning and skills fostered through Speed School prepare children to join government schools at the Grade 4 level.[282] In Uganda, they operate in Kitgum, Loro, Otuke, Omoro, Amuru, Nwoya and Gulu. Further, Geneva Global works with three collaborating partners and government officials to implement the program.[283]

Finn Church Aid (FCA): Since 2017, FCA has supported the establishment of AE learning centres in three refugee settlements in Uganda (Bidibidi, Omugo in West Nile, and Kyaka II in the southwestern part of Uganda). FCA supports the identification, registration, and enrolment of refugee and host community children and youth into the program. Identified out-of-school children are assessed, placement tests are conducted, and children are placed in the correct levels of education, either in AE or formal education.

FCA implements AE based on the approved condensed primary and lower secondary curriculum for AE in Uganda. FCA is piloting AE for lower secondary in Imvepi, Rhino and Kyaka II Settlement in 2021 with support from ECHO INCLUDE. The AEP guidelines (that align with the AEWG 10 Principles for Effective Practice guidelines), developed by the AE task team in Uganda, guide FCA's programme.

War Child Canada implemented AEP for primary education with funding by Wellspring from 2015 to 2021 in ten primary host schools in Adjumani District. The organisation also piloted Quality Secondary School Education in Emergency (Q-SEE) for lower secondary refugees using an AEP in Adjumani District from 2018 to 2020 in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation. The AEP programme allowed children who dropped out of school because of circumstances beyond their control to rejoin education. The programme was implemented in eight secondary school centres: Alere SS, Adjumani SS, Maaji SS, Ofua Seed SS, Mungula SS, Dzaipi SS, Pagirinya Progressive SS, and Lewa SS, and registered a total of 171 AEP candidates (116 female, 55 male) who sat UCE exams in March this year 2021. In addition, War Child Canada is currently implementing an AEP Wellspring-funded project for the lower secondary AEP project titled 'Securing the Future of South Sudanese Children through Education' for three years (2020–2023), covering two AEP centres, Dzaipi and Adjumani secondary schools.

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC): NRC implements primary AEP per the harmonised AEP guidelines for Uganda, targeting out of school children 10-18 years. The length of AEP is based on the primary AEP curriculum that has condensed seven years into three years, Level 1 condensing Primary 1 to 3, Level 2 condensing Primary 4 and 5, and Level 3 condensing Primary 6 7. NRC has implemented AEP in Uganda since 2014, working with internally displaced persons and refugees.

281 Talamoi, J. and Asiega, S.(September, 15,, 2021). Lessons learned and Best Practices in harmonising accelerated education programming in Kenya,Uganda and Somalia. Retrieved from their presentation at UKFIET. See for further details. https://www.ukfiet.org/2021/lessons-learned-and-best-practices-in-harmonising-accelerated-education-programming-in-kenya-uganda-and-somalia/

282 Geneva Global (2020) Speed School Program recognised for two innovation awards. Retrieved from https://www.genevaglobal.com/news-press/speed-school-program-recognized-two-innovation-awards

283 Geneva Global (2021) Setting up Speed Schools Students Up for Success with SMS Learning. Retrieved from Geneva Global: Setting Speed School Students Up For Success With SMS Learning — FrontlineSMS

AVSI: AVSI implements AEP in four AEP Centres in Palabek-Lamwo District (attached to Awich, Ogili Hill, Canaan and Lugwar primary schools). AVSI focuses on over-aged school children and youths and those who have never been to school, aged 10-18 years. AVSI focuses on primary school. The project life is four years (March 2018-February 2022). AVSI's primary target is 10-14 years out of school adolescent girls and boys from refugee and host communities. AVSI also works with AEP teachers and volunteers, district education departments, community service, primary teachers colleges, parents, and community members.

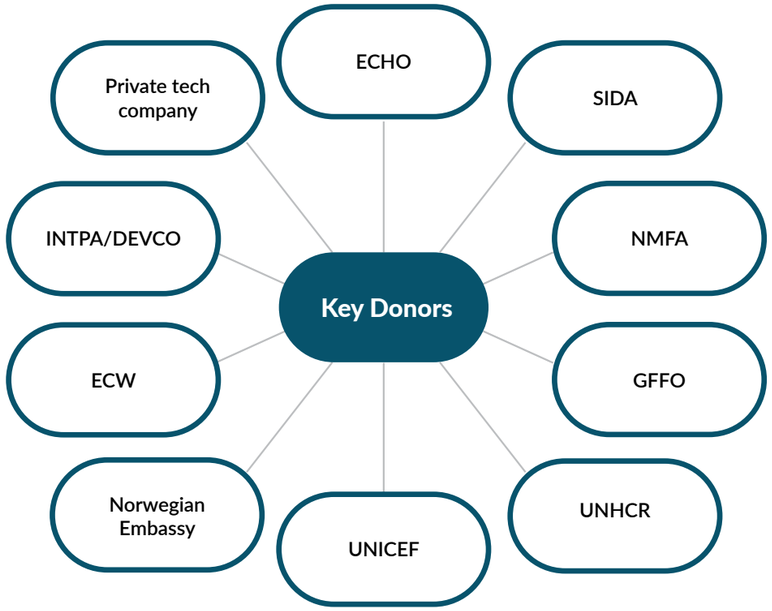
UNICEF: Supports AE through technical guidance and participation in the AEWG and provides funds for implementing partners, starting in 2014 implemented by NRC and WCC in West Nile and western refugee-hosting districts. UNICEF focuses on interventions that support adolescent girls and boys aged 10-14 from refugee and host communities, AEP teachers and volunteers, district education departments, primary teachers, colleges, parents, and community members.

As noted by one partner, the Uganda education consortium has designed and implemented an integrated programme over the last two years through which partners have together achieved significant progress towards the Education Response Plan. Milestones include:

- Reached over 240,000 children (41% refugee males; 36% refugee females; 11% national males; 12% national females) through continued and improved access to education
- Distributed scholastic materials to over 110,000 children
- Trained over 2,000 teachers on special needs education
- Supported over 44,000 girls with menstrual hygiene activities
- Completed construction of 18 classrooms and three admin blocks in five schools
- Completed construction of gender-sensitive and inclusive WASH facilities, including168 latrines and 139 handwashing facilities
- Distributed home learning packs to over 140,000 learners in response to COVID-19-related school closures;
- Provided educational materials to over 115,000 learners

COST AND FINANCING

AE programmes are primarily funded by international donors.



From discussions with partners, it was hard to gather an average cost for AE programmes due to the diversity of AE programmes across the country. Partners used various methods to assess the costs. Several partners emphasised that the cost was not standardised. They looked at critical activities required to implement the AE programme and the cost of each of these activities for each location based on the market costs at that particular time. Due to price variations, there may be slight variations in costs across different locations. The costs may vary for new centres with no infrastructure. One partner said that the cost per child was estimated at $100 per year.

Geneva Global shared a unique approach to funding the Speed School in Uganda, for which the primary donor is a private tech company contributing through corporate social responsibility funding. As a result, implementation of the Speed School programme has mainly been the responsibility of civil society organisations (primarily local) operating across different regions and districts. Geneva Global provides the organisations with grants to apply the full model for each component and continuous oversight and technical guidance to ensure successful performance. The grantee organisations, or 'collaborating partners,' hire the Speed School facilitators, self-help group assistants, and the agents responsible for supervising, training, and monitoring these front-line staff. Geneva Global Uganda's implementation strategy has recently shifted to include implementing Speed School programmes through the district education offices. In this model, Geneva Global Uganda manages the finances for the government.

There are several different approaches to funding AEPs; however, it is evident that international donors currently fund all AEPs, which indicates a level of risk to the sustainability of AEPs in refugee camps and hosting areas.

Quality of Teaching and Learning in Non-formal Education Spaces

Link to AEWG 3) Quality of AEPs improved

The quality of teaching and learning in AE programmes has long been a concern of the MoEST INGOs and NGOs implementing programmes. However, by December 2019, only 123 AEP teachers (46 females, 77 males) were on the government payroll.[284]

There are challenges in finding qualified teachers to teach in the refugee camps. One partner highlighted that to run the AEP, they had built teacher accommodation and recruited nationwide to find 28 teachers for the four AE centres.

According to the ERP survey, AEP teachers did not access government-led, continuous education professional development[285] (CEP) in-service training in 2019. However, implementing partners mentioned ongoing teacher training throughout the year. This suggests that the teacher training provided by partners is not officially endorsed, and monitoring and evaluation need to be more closely tied to national education management information systems (EMIS).

TYPES OF TEACHER TRAINING PROVIDED BY INGO PARTNERS

Teacher circles, mentorship, and coaching	Conflict sensitive education	Child Participation
Child Protection	Peer coaching	AEP pedagogy
Gender-responsive and child friendly approaches	Child-Centred pedagogies	Psychosocial Support

As the table illustrates, partners reported a wide range of training that they implemented to improve teaching and learning, either facilitated by agency staff or in conjunction with MoEST partners.

Across the partners, there were broad ranges of training and delivery methods.

One partner noted that teachers received continuous professional support ranging from training, mentoring and supervision on relevant themes covering pedagogical skills, AEP curriculum, and teaching approaches like remedial teaching, community small group teaching and learning, child protection, and psychosocial support.

284 The ERP Baseline Survey 2021 (not available online to date)

285 Ibid

One partner noted that after teachers were recruited and inducted, they were provided with textbooks and other scholastic materials to prepare their lessons. The training was tailored to new teachers and refreshers. They introduced a 'Teachers and Educators Professional Development Training' programme. AE teachers received support, supervision and mentorship through teacher learning circles with Kitgum Core Primary Teachers' College (PTC). Some teachers had participated in an exchange learning visit to the Kakuma Refugee Settlement in Kenya.

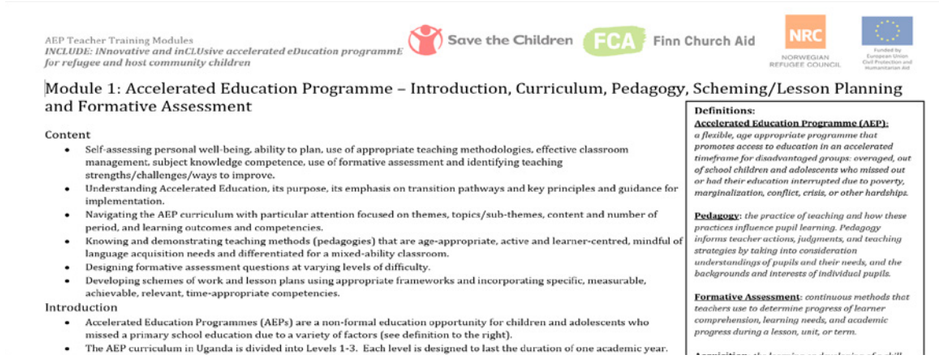
War Child Canada noted that teachers are trained on the customised curriculum by NCDC trainees in its AE programmes with the organisation's support. Other training includes content on how to provide essential psychosocial and emotional support.

Oxfam Ibis partnered with Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education (LGIHE), a teacher training specialist college, for the BRICE funded consortium's teacher professional development (TPD) component and Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATO), with other consortium members contributing. In designing the TPD, the consortium tried to look at the global best practice and take it to the project level. The TPD developed builds on the Teachers in Crisis Contexts (TCIC) contextualised for East Africa.FAWO wrote the modules on gender, protection, and the Teacher's Code of Conduct. The TPD is accredited and counts towards two-thirds of college credit. The modules are also new to the teachers who train the AE teachers. They will continue to train other teachers who come to the college, which will result in many teachers beyond those working on AE programmes being trained in the methodology.

It was noted that in Uganda, most teachers are not members of the union, particularly those working in emergencies. Oxfam IBIS noted that collaborating with UNATO has been vital in advocating for teachers who work in refugee camps to be paid the same as teachers in government schools. As a result, in 2020, the salaries were increased, and teachers were paid. However, this does not extend to refugee teachers who are not on the government payroll.

Under the Speed School model, Primary Teacher College (PTC) officials have been training facilitators since 2017. Speed School facilitators are often local community members who speak the same mother tongue as their students. Facilitators are expected to have at least a lower secondary level of education. They receive 21 days of intense training in the Speed School model and create learning tasks. Furthermore, Geneva Global is developing formal pathways for facilitators to become trained teachers.[286]

In summary, none of these methods highlights a standardised approach to training AEP teachers. This, of course, can lead to diverging standards in practice. The AE task team in Uganda has developed teacher training modules to address this. The sample extract below of module one provides insight into the comprehensive approach to AE teaching.



AEP Teacher Training Modules
INCLUDE: iNnovative and inCLUsive accelerated eDucation programmE for refugee and host community children

Save the Children · FCA Finn Church Aid · NRC Norwegian Refugee Council

Module 1: Accelerated Education Programme – Introduction, Curriculum, Pedagogy, Scheming/Lesson Planning and Formative Assessment

Content

- Self-assessing personal well-being, ability to plan, use of appropriate teaching methodologies, effective classroom management, subject knowledge competence, use of formative assessment and identifying teaching strengths/challenges/ways to improve.
- Understanding Accelerated Education, its purpose, its emphasis on transition pathways and key principles and guidance for implementation.
- Navigating the AEP curriculum with particular attention focused on themes, topics/sub-themes, content and number of period, and learning outcomes and competencies.
- Knowing and demonstrating teaching methods (pedagogies) that are age-appropriate, active and learner-centred, mindful of language acquisition needs and differentiated for a mixed-ability classroom.
- Designing formative assessment questions at varying levels of difficulty.
- Developing schemes of work and lesson plans using appropriate frameworks and incorporating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-appropriate competencies.

Introduction

- Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) are a non-formal education opportunity for children and adolescents who missed a primary school education due to a variety of factors (see definition to the right).
- The AEP curriculum in Uganda is divided into Levels 1-3. Each level is designed to last the duration of one academic year.

Definitions:

Accelerated Education Programme (AEP): *a flexible, age appropriate programme that promotes access to education in an accelerated timeframe for disadvantaged groups: overaged, out of school children and adolescents who missed out or had their education interrupted due to poverty, marginalization, conflict, crisis, or other hardships.*

Pedagogy: *the practice of teaching and how these practices influence pupil learning. Pedagogy informs teacher actions, judgments, and teaching strategies by taking into consideration understandings of pupils and their needs, and the backgrounds and interests of individual pupils.*

Formative Assessment: *continuous methods that teachers use to determine progress of learner comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a lesson, unit, or term.*

286 Lowden, J. (2019) Geneva Global's Speed School Program. Retrieved from https://inee.org/system/files/resources/Geneva%20Global_CIES2019_1.pdf

The module includes relevant strategies/approaches/teaching methodologies, a sample timetable to guide teachers, time allocation for each learning area. At present, there is a teacher guidebook to accompany the AE specific textbooks. There will be proper orientation and training of teachers and resource books for teachers in the future.

In recent years, the AE task team has developed tools to track transition as an indication of teaching and learning quality could potentially be gathered through the number of children who complete AEP and transition to formal education (either returning to primary or secondary/post-primary education).

INCLUDE Project
Transition and Referral Pathway Mapping Tool

Name of partner organisation:						Settlement where partner works:			
Name of staff(s) conducting the mapping excercise:						School/centre where partner works:			
1									
2									
	Name of the institution	Location village	Location zone	Distance from intervention School (.....)	Type of institution (primary/secondary/vocational)	Level of institution	Ownership status (government/private)	Contact person (for the institution)	Telephone contacts (for the institution/contact person)
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									

The ERP baseline highlighted that the transition rate from AEP to formal education (primary and secondary) was meagre (32%, n=2,971) based on a survey conducted in three refugee-hosting areas of Arua, Yumbe and Moyo. Most of the AEP transitions were to primary schools (74%), followed by secondary schools (13%), AEP higher levels (12%), and vocational programs (1%). The transition rate of male learners from AEP into secondary schools was meagre, only about two out of ten learners. This meagre transition rate for female learners contrasts starkly with the wishes and aspirations of many young women. In 2018, Save the Children conducted participatory consultations with AEP learners and found that 100% of girls in Rhino and Adjumani said they would prefer to stay in AEP after completing their level. All wanted to attend secondary education.[287] Female AE learners' poor transition rate can be attributed to having fewer secondary and vocational schools in the settlements and host communities, as well as issues of school-based gender-based violence, early marriage, and engagement in the informal market, as well as childcare commitments, all of which were noted in the consultations.*288*

The low transition rates to secondary education also result in lower completion rates. Secondary school completion rates were even much lower, with only 9% of refugees aged 21-23 years completing secondary education compared to 27% among their host community counterparts. The low completion rates were reportedly a consequence of the delayed entry into a given level of education, high drop-out or repetition rates, late completion, or a combination of these factors[289].

However, the low transition rates cannot be assumed to result from poor teaching and learning alone. According to Fulgence Nturanabo, the headteacher of Kashojwa Primary School, which hosts two UNICEF learning centres, class attendance is significantly affected on weekly market days, food days and fishing seasons.[290] In addition, attendance is problematic when AEP curriculums already condense seven years of primary school into three years. As noted by one partner, War Child Canada, one of the biggest challenges is the limited support by parents for covering other basics that are not covered by the secondary education AEP project, like boarding facilities, uniforms, meals, and medical treatment.

One of the factors driving low attendance by learners in primary level AEP is that many of them double as mothers or fathers and thus have heavy demands on them that affect attendance and performance. Several partners cited the need for child care facilities to the AE centres to enable young parents to attend AEP and fully immerse themselves in learning. Flexibility is highlighted in Principle 1 of the AEWG's 10 Principles for Effective Practice.

One partner also noted that students in some areas go back to South Sudan frequently, causing them to miss out on substantial amounts of schooling.

A partner outlined that AE delivery was not uniform across agencies and that overcrowding and limited coverage impacted quality; hence, the AE mentioned guideline development and implementation above. Another partner highlighted that for students who had started their education in a different language of instruction, whether their mother tongue, French, or Arabic, it was extremely challenging to support them in gaining English fluency during a condensed curriculum. The importance of language for teaching and learning outcomes is discussed further in the next section.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287 Oddy, J.(2019) Accelerated Education Programming (AEP): Children, families, teachers and educational stakeholders experiences of AEP in Uganda . Retrieved from https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/accelerated-education-programming-aep-children-families-teachers-and-educational/

288 ERP Baseline Survey 2021(not available online at time of publication)

289 World Bank (2018)

290 Muzungu , H. (2019). Restoring Lost Hope- UNICEF's Accelerated Learning Program for Refugees in Uganda. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/restoring-lost-opportunity

Research and Evidence: What Works

Link to AEWG: AE Evidence

The recent ERP highlighted that there was no significant variation between the performance of AEP learners (n=776) at an aggregate level compared to non-AEP learners (n=2,255) in P.3 EGRA. Those who scored 70% and above were (5% AEP and 4% non-AEP), 60-69% (3% AEP and 3% non-AEP), 50-59% (6% AEP and 4% non-AEP), 25-49% (39% AEP and 23% non-AEP) and 0-24% (47% AEP and 65% non-AEP). This shows that performance in EGRA was similar for AEP and non-AEP learners. At the Primary 6 early grade math assessment (EGMA), the ERP baseline study found that AEP learners performed significantly better (54%, n=790) than non-AEP learners (27%, n=2,263).

The higher performance in EGMA by AEP learners was attributed to their age, similar to overall performance, where learners aged 15 years and above performed better in EGMA than those below 15 years. In addition, more learners in refugee settlement schools (37%) performed significantly better than learners in host community schools (25%).

The results from the ERP suggest that for many learners, AEP is working, and higher EGRA/EGMA data in AE centres could indicate better teaching and learning support. This would correlate with findings from a 2018 study commissioned by Save the Children on its AE programmes across three camps. The key findings highlighted that: :

- All the children who participated in the study stated that they did not want to transition back into the formal primary school system once enrolled in AEP programmes. The transition back into primary school fails to account for all the dominant socio-economic factors that contributed towards a student enrolling in AEP in the first place, which from the children's perspective, supersede being of the 'right age'.
- 50% of teachers interviewed across the three locations stated that language was a massive challenge to teaching and learning, especially at Level 1.
- 100% of teachers stated that girls were most at risk of not completing AEP due to early marriage, pregnancies, cultural beliefs that place a higher value on boys' education than girls', and perceived risk of exposure to sexual exploitation and abuse through the school environment. This corroborated findings shared by children and families.[291]

Save the Children sought to make AEPs a more welcoming environment for female learners in several ways. Firstly, menstrual health and hygiene management are embedded within all AEPs. They work with a local partner to train school management committees, parent-teacher associations, child protection committees, and formal primary and AEP teachers (both male and female) on supporting menstrual hygiene and health in the schools. The approach involves engaging males and boys on MHM issues so that they are champions on behalf of girls to ensure school attendance. In addition, Save the Children used a variety of menstrual hygiene options across programmes in the country, ranging from teaching learners how to make reusable menstrual pads, providing factory-made reusable menstrual hygiene pads, and piloting the use of menstrual cups.[292]

291 Maina,R. and Hicks, L. (2018) The Impact of Refugees on Schools in Uganda. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.ug/sites/default/files/uganda_schools_language_for_resilience.pdf

292 Save the Children (2019). Accelerated Education; Experiences from Uganda. Webinar. Retrieved from https://inee.org/system/files/resources/AEWG_AEP%20Experiences%20from%20Uganda%20Webinar%20Slides_2019.pdf

Finding up-to-date data on AEP is a common challenge across most countries with AEP programmes. According to the ERP and reports by partners, the National Education Management Information System (EMIS) is not regularly updated. The district education officers (DEOs) and district inspectors (DIS) routinely monitor educational activities at the district level. However, over 54% of the districts surveyed in the ERP reported not having a refugee-inclusive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system with functional databases, while others mentioned limited capacities.

In addition, there is a critical lack of data on what happens post-AE. For example, one partner reported that two female learners, upon completion of PLE, were trained and employed by Don Bosco VTC as a tractor driver and a language translator. Windle Trust noted that AEP brings hope to those who would have otherwise found it impossible to return to school. They noted that five joined secondary education out of the 13 learners who registered for PLE in 2018 in Kiryandongo, while the other eight joined vocational courses. However, there are limited case studies available on post-AE pathways. Many partners did not conduct follow up studies of where students went upon completing or dropping out of AE programmes. COVID-19 has no doubt compounded this further. Anecdotally, one partner noted that it is challenging for primary AEP learners to transition smoothly to secondary education because a newly rolled out e-registration for secondary education makes it impossible for learners who sat PLE in less than four years to complete registration online. Additionally, it is a challenge to equate learners' qualifications from other countries to the Ugandan National Education Board (UNEB) (e.g. South Sudan's Primary Leaving Examination), which is needed to be registered for the Secondary Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE). More data is needed to determine if this impacts students' transition to post-AEP options.

Pedagogically, AEPs are designed to include learners who have never attended school. However, in designing AEPs, there is often an assumption that learners are already fluent in the language of instruction within the class, which makes condensing a curriculum feasible. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the impact of not being fluent in English and how this impacts AE retention, attainment, and progression is needed at the national and global levels. In July 2018, the British Council funded two studies exploring language and education were carried out. The multilingual language situation in schools was described as very complex, with over 19 different languages represented by significant speakers. In addition, most refugee children were trying to learn a language different from the one they had used in their home country and, as a result, were having difficulties understanding.[293] Therefore, language may or may not affect the transition between levels and the eligibility of Level 3 students to sit the Primary Leaving Exam and transition to post-AEP vocational or secondary school options. This also highlights the need to contextualise acceleration rates, e.g. condensing three years into one may not be the best model in contexts where students are still learning the language of instruction.

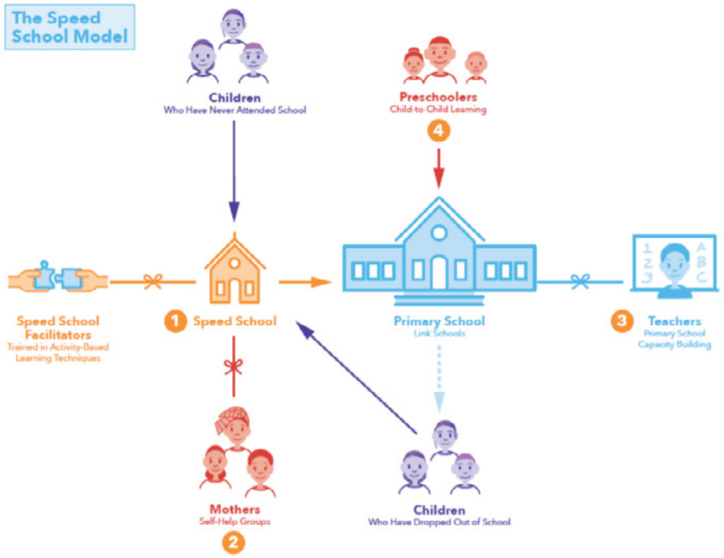
Several partners also noted that many AEP students are caregivers, heads of households, and parents. WCC highlighted that almost all lower secondary AEP learners are parents with young children requiring early childhood education (ECE) within its programmes. Consequently, students' access to childcare provisions will be critical to continuing their education. However, to date, no studies specifically focus on the AEP experiences of caregivers and whether the availability of ECE centres impacts students' ability to continue their education.

293 Maina,R. and Hicks, L. (2018) The Impact of Refugees on Schools in Uganda. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.ug/sites/default/files/uganda_schools_language_for_resilience.pdf

ROLE OF COMMUNITY

All partners highlighted that communities play essential roles in the governance of AEPs. **For example, War Child Canada** works with community groups called centre education committees. Their roles include conducting community awareness and supporting protection monitoring with the teachers to mitigate protection violations. The MoEST also noted that communities had formed working groups such as centre management committees (CMCs), which oversees the centre's operations. These are representatives from the students' communities (including refugee settlements and host communities), critical in ensuring cohesion.

UNICEF noted that often local communities donate space for learning centres, manage and monitor the centres, contribute in-kind in construction of learning spaces and teacher housing, support out-of-school adolescents in enrolling, create a safe learning environment, and support learning activities. In addition, the school management committees (SMCs) and parent and teacher associations (PTAs) are very active members, including drafting school improvement plans and supporting mobilisation and school governance through centre management committees. Furthermore, community members form SMC/PTA bodies, identify and report protection concerns against children to the relevant bodies, support school feeding programmes, provide educational materials to their children, and engage with parents who block their children from attending school.



Source: *Geneva Global Speed School Model*

Community engagement is a vital part of the Speed School model. One parent from each household is enrolled in a community-based self-help group that aims to strengthen capacity among parents, specifically concerning financial literacy and economic security.[294] In 2020, 6,900 mothers were enrolled in the SHG. As noted in the following section, their engagement with the programme helped with the rollout of the home learning model as COVID-19 resulted in nationwide school closures.

294 Geneva Global (2021) Setting up Speed Schools Students Up for Success with SMS Learning. Retrieved from Geneva Global: Setting Speed School Students Up For Success With SMS Learning — FrontlineSMS

© UNHCR/Yonna Tukundane

All FCA's AE centres are located within existing schools in the community. Management of the AE centres is put under the management structure of the host school. AE learners receive support through the host schools, and as a result, FCA argues that transition barriers are significantly reduced through this model. Through the school committees, learners and their families are fully informed about the availability of accelerated education opportunities, including transition within the AEP levels, transition from AEP to formal primary education, transition from AEP to vocational education, and transition from AEP to secondary education.

Save the Children highlighted that due to the ongoing sensitisation meetings with learners, parents and communities, enrolment of learners, including girls', young parents and caregivers, and child-headed households, increased in AEP centres. They also created a good entry point into the community. In addition, it developed community engagement strategies, which led to increased access to quality, protective and safe education for refugees and host communities' children. Furthermore, the use of assistant teachers with a dedicated role in providing language interpretation and translation, especially in Level I and II due to multilingual communities among refugee and host communities, enhances AEP learners' active participation and learning in class and promotes retention.

The following section examines communities' role in supporting AEP amid a pandemic underlines the need for education to be deeply entrenched in communities to ensure sustainability and localised approaches to educational aid.

COVID-19 Adaptations

Link to AEWG: Support to Covid-19 response

The COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the challenges of educating refugee children and youth. All schools in the country closed on 20 March 2020, leaving 15 million children out of school, including those from Uganda's most deprived communities spread across five regions (of which over 1 million are refugees).[295] A survey showed that only 15% of learners had a radio or mobile phone during the lockdown.[296] In response, the MoEST developed packages that included ten pages of work and used government structures to distribute the home learning materials to learners. The government relied on partner contributions for automobiles, fuel, and cash contributions.[297]

The following section shares some innovative approaches to continuing learning during the pandemic and some of the challenges, which are not unique to AE programmes alone. As the MoEST representative noted, condensing the already condensed curriculum with home learning content has been very challenging.

Save the Children adopted community delivery of learning through a small group learning model in which teachers follow up with learners in the communities and support their learning in small groups of 4–10 in line with Ministry of Health guidelines and other standard operational procedures. Remote learning support is also provided via community radios, and Save the Children works to help parents support their children's continued learning.

NRC shared that AE programmes shifted to home learning methods like radio, printed materials, and small group learning led by teachers due to school closures. In 2020, NRC also worked with NCDC to prepare radio and printed home learning materials specifically for AEP, as well as other materials prepared by the government.

However, like other partners, they noted that the two years of school closures heavily and negatively impacted the provision of AE. Whilst programmes have integrated alternative educational approaches through community radio, newspaper pull-outs for Level 3, developing and printing home learning materials in collaboration with NCDC, and providing home visits from teachers, all school-going children are out of school, and it is not easy to estimate the proportion of those able to study from home.

Oxfam IBIS noted that radios had been distributed, enabling learners to gather in smaller groups to receive teaching via government-supported radio programs. PTA members and other community members have come together to support this community learning. Additionally, home learning materials were distributed, approved by the Ministry of Education in Uganda.[298] AVSI (a member of the Education for Life Consortium) produced and distributed home learning materials to nearly 20,000 learners. However, Primary 1 to 3 students could not use the materials since they were in English only.[299] Teachers taught children in the village where they reside regardless of the schools

295 Save the Children (2021) Safe Back to School Cast Studies. Retrieved from https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/sb2s_case_study_1_-_uganda_-_home_learning_packs_.pdf/

296 Nwokeocha, S. (2021) Obstacles to Education of the Children of Refugees and IDP: Lessons and Policy Options from the European Union's 'Education for Life' Project in Uganda and South Sudan. European Journal of Education and Pedagogy.

297 Ibid

298 Beyer, C & Benson, A.(2021) Brice- Education for Life. Retrieved from https://globalcompactrefugees.org/article/brice-education-life

299 Nwokeocha, S. (2021) Obstacles to Education of the Children of Refugees and IDP: Lessons and Policy Options from the European Union's 'Education for Life' Project in Uganda and South Sudan. European Journal of Education and Pedagogy

the students come from, so a teacher could teach learners from other schools and across classes. Also, every week, AVSI provided about 30 teachers (four of whom were teachers in mainstream primary schools) with bicycles to enable them to travel, teach and distribute materials.[300] Teachers were provided with PSS and training to adapt to the new teaching methods and to be able to offer adequate support to learners. This included building teachers' capacity for providing PSS, particularly guidance and counselling, to learners and peers experiencing trauma.[301]

Furthermore, a life skills intervention is being rolled to AEP learners in Pabek to provide sexual and reproductive education due to a significant increase in teenage pregnancies. AVSI also hopes that their life skills education will help learners address their psychosocial needs and help them cope with the negative emotions caused by stress, anxiety, and being idle during school closures.

War Child Canada used live radio teaching and supported by creating learning 'pod' groups and encouraged peer learning in select locations; such groups sat and listened to radio learning and discussed amongst themselves. In addition, the organisation provided materials, home-based learning materials, hand wash facilities, and information education communications (IEC) materials.

FCA noted that COVID-19 pushed programmatic adaptations and ways of working to enable continuity of AE activities, such as conducting small group training, meetings, and community-based learning, to ensure continued learning. The project team worked with other partners, the district, NCDC, and MoEST to continue supporting the AE learners and implementing other AE activities while adhering to COVID-19 standard operating procedures (SOP), including;

- Use of home learning packs/self-study materials and community-based small group learning
- Small group training and meetings with teachers, assistant teachers, child protection committees (CPCs), PTAs, village education committees (VECs), and SMCs members

© UNHCR/Yonna Tukundane

300 Ibid

301 Ibid

The small group learning (SGL) approach was recommended as the best tactic for learning continuity (innovation and adoption) since it engaged teachers, assistant teachers, CPCs, PTAs, VECs, and SMC members. In addition, the home learning material for AEP approved by NCDC was used as reference material. Home learning packs have facilitated peer to peer learning and self-discovery learning, and parent and teacher involvement, commitment, and cooperation.

Geneva Global also adapted its programme to respond to COVID-19. During school closures, in conjunction with collaborating partners and with the support of local COVID-19 government task forces, Geneva Global initiated an innovative micro-class approach that allowed Speed School students to get back to learning. Learners were engaged in one of two strategies that permitted learning to continue with socially distant measures. One was a micro-class comprising three to five children who met with a facilitator for around two hours twice a week with the consent of their parents. The other was home-based instruction, with facilitators travelling to pupils' homes. In both cases, lessons were further condensed versions of the Speed School curriculum. For brief periods when schools were allowed to reopen, classes met in shifts of 15 students for half days; however, due to rises in COVID-19 cases, schools were shut down again, and home-learning strategies were resumed.

In October 2020, Geneva Global launched a home-based implementation of the Speed School programme. According to their site, 'Facilitators began meeting regularly with pupils in small groups at home or in a public space in their community to deliver accelerated lessons. SMS messaging was pivotal to the rollout of this program, which has finally brought learners back to the Speed School programme after more than seven months. SMS was used to guide facilitators in their planning and delivery of home-based instruction and to inform parents of the exciting new development.'[302] In addition, small groups of parents continued to meet to work on income-generating activities amidst the pandemic. In almost all self-help groups, at least one mother or guardian had access to a cell phone and was functionally literate. Geneva Global, therefore, launched SMS messaging to parents in October, recognising that since not all parents have cell phones, the content of SMS messages can be spread by word of mouth throughout the community.[303] In Uganda, Geneva Global uses the FrontlineSync system to connect 230 Speed Schools, reaching 230 Speed School facilitators and nearly 7,000 Speed School learners and beneficiaries. To cover the cost of messaging to facilitators and parents, the team purchases airtime bundles bi-weekly to ensure no cost is passed on to the recipients. SMS was used to assign readings and projects. Facilitators utilised the survey function to follow up with meaningful and thought-provoking questions to reinforce the Speed School pedagogy and deepen learners' confidence with different classroom strategies, even though they could not be in the classroom.

In light of the complex challenges facing AE learners, the MoEST representative to the AE task team outlined ongoing actions to support AEP learners as schools reopen in January 2022.

1. Instructional time for all AEP learners will be extended once schools resume
2. AE learners will stay on track with their corresponding formal school system counterparts and transion accordingly.
3. The Ministry will identify all previously trained NF education teachers and engage them again (government proposal).
4. Teachers/instructors will be re-oriented for multi-grade adaptation skills.
5. AEP providers will submit AEP home learning and post-COVID-19 plans for harmonisation.
6. With partners supporting AEP and other NFE programs, the department plans to conduct radio/TV sensitisation programs to increase the opportunity of all over-age out-of-school learners.
7. Teachers will be trained in handling and teaching condensed content
8. WASH facilities in schools should be prioritised because COVID-19 numbers are bound to surge.
9. Learners, families, and communities will be informed, consulted, engaged, and accountable.
10. Approval of the AE guidelines will be prioritised and an ongoing process. The guidelines have been so far presented at three levels and approved. The following critical level is the Education Sector Consultative Committee (ESCC).

In summary, all partners noted a wide range of adaptations to support learning in light of national school closures. Many of these practices could be continued when schools resume in January 2022. Even so, a coordinated COVID-19 AEP standardised response has been challenging despite the wide range of programmatic adaptions to AE in Uganda. As the MoEST representative noted, some levels (e.g. Level 1 for primary) have not gone back to school since the first lockdown because their counterparts in the formal system (i.e. Primary 1, 2, and 3) have never returned. Furthermore, condensing the already condensed curriculum to develop home learning content has been very challenging. Doing so may require additional funding, and it has been difficult to monitor and measure impact.

302 Genva Global (2020) Speed School Program recognised for two innovation awards. Retrieved from https://www.genevaglobal.com/news-press/speed-school-program-recognized-two-innovation-awards

303 Geneva Global (2021) Setting up Speed Schools Students Up for Success with SMS Learning. Retrieved from Geneva Global: Setting Speed School Students Up For Success With SMS Learning — FrontlineSMS

Conclusion

Uganda has a well-established and well-coordinated approach to AE, with partners working in consortiums to streamline practices and develop sector-wide standards. The impact of COVID-19 has highlighted the key roles that communities have in supporting AEPs, and the range of initiatives across the partners has meant AE learners have been able to access some education, despite country-wide school closures. The development of the AE guidelines, stemming from the AEWG workshop in 2018, demonstrates a wide range of stakeholders commitments to delivering high-quality AE responses. However, there are still challenges with transitions and disparities between female and male learners. More needs to be done to ensure AEPs are gender-responsive and inclusive of children with a wide range of disabilities. Nevertheless, the introduction of lower secondary AEP offers an opportunity for learners to transition and continue their educational journey and may serve as a model both nationally and internationally.

Key Recommendations:

Adoption and rollout of the AEP guidelines are a welcome step in harmonising and standardising AE provisions across Uganda. However, to ensure maximum impact, the AEWG Uganda task team should consider a series of workshops to ensure all stakeholders are familiar with the endorsed and approved guidelines. Furthermore, the progress made by the AEWG highlighted the importance of institutional coordination and how the Ministry of Education's engagement and participation in this has led to a robust and harmonised approach to AE.

Post-primary AEP opportunities: Two of the partners, War Child Canada and FCA, have started a lower secondary AEP to address the chronic shortage of secondary education provision and the vast demand from students wishing to continue their education. Other partners have suggested that AEP centres should also be linked to vocational institutions or Business Technical Vocational, Education and Training centres (BTVETs). Learners need employability skills, ICT, and life skills integrated into AE provision. The issue with e-registration highlights another barrier that can prevent young people from continuing their education smoothly.

Language bridging programmes are needed to ensure that the multilingual, multi-ethnic AEP cohorts have the language skills necessary to complete the AEP curriculum. AEP partners should conduct language mapping to identify the home languages represented within AEP centres and seek to recruit teachers and assistants who can support and nurture a multilingual classroom environment. In particular, there is a need for a language bridging programme for secondary AEP learners who were previously taught in French or Arabic. Without additional language support and intentional instruction, learners' educational trajectories are delayed even longer as they seek to gain fluency in English.

Parental and caregiver engagement is vital. COVID-19 has highlighted the critical role parents, caregivers and the wider community play in keeping students learning. Implementing partners should work with schools to enhance PTA/SMC roles and responsibilities, provide training, and share examples of best practices. Through engagement with community elders, women's groups, and critical community influencers from the different displaced ethnic groups, agencies will understand better the norms and values placed around girls' and boys' participation in education, resulting in more effective, participatory, and accountable responses.

Recruitment and attainment of teachers must be prioritized. As of October 2021, schools remain closed in Uganda due to the pandemic. There have been reports that many teachers have left the profession. Partners noted that there is a need for the MoEST to take the lead on recruiting, training and paying AE teachers for sustainability.

Sustainable funding for AE is needed. It takes two to three years (three for primary, two for secondary) to complete a cycle. The GoU must explore other financing models to ensure the sustainability of AE. Partners highlighted that the AEP teachers' salaries needed to be aligned with the government scale. Furthermore, there is a risk of relying on INGO and donors to fund most AE interventions. Funding cycles do not necessarily correlate with the traditional school calendar, and this needs to be considered.

Investment in infrastructure is needed. Funding for permanent classroom structures should be permitted. With the global average period of exile increasing, poor physical infrastructure is detrimental to teaching and learning. Partners also suggest that AEP learners will not transition back into formal education (primary/secondary schools) or vocational institutions without significant investment in the infrastructure to make it more conducive for transition.

Continued advocacy is needed to support children with disabilities in AEP programmes and for the certification and equating foreign academic certificates for refugee children.

An equity-centred approach to AEP is drastically needed. This would entail taking a gender-and disability responsive approach to education design, looking into the specific barriers that different groups of boys and girls face in AEP, and seeking to address the issues. For example, many AE learners are mothers who still breastfeed. Creating an early years nursery close to the AE centre would enable parents to concentrate on their studies without disruptions. In addition, investment in training teachers, integrating community facilitators into AE spaces to support multi-lingual learning and working alongside community groups to sustain and strengthen formal learning outside of the AE would contribute towards ensuring AE is inclusive.

Final Discussion

To conclude, this report has sought to provide an overview of AE in BRICE supported contexts.

Each context revealed similarities in high numbers of out-of-school children and overage learners, with deep disparities in access and quality within national school systems.

The situational analysis in each context shows that AE provides a route for some of the most marginalised children and youth to continue their education. However, significant challenges remain in ensuring children and youth complete and transition through the AEPs.

Issues around the sustainability of AEPs also surfaced across contexts. Whilst the BRiCE offers much needed multi-year funding, governments also need to bridge funding gaps for resilience and sustainability. Having AE in national policies is an important step; however, if systems are to be strengthened, AEP needs to be co-funded by national governments. This would also shift power from INGOs and consolidate the national education institutions and civil society as the leading providers of education for marginalised learners.

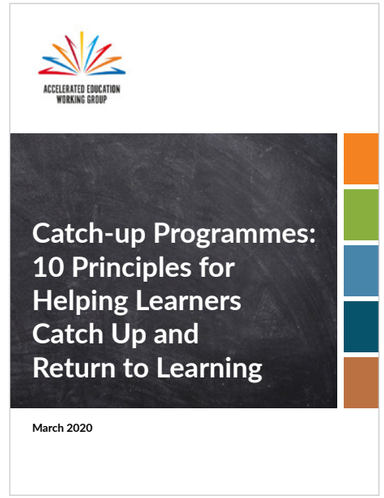
Teachers and other education personnel should receive continuous support to ensure learning, pedagogy, and materials are differentiated and support different learners' needs. Across all contexts, partners noted a range of different teacher training and professional development approaches. For example, the launch of the AEWG teacher training package in 2021 will offer a standardised package adapted to the local context. In addition, examples from South Sudan and Uganda emphasised how collaboration with teacher training institutions and teachers unions can maximise the number of accelerated learning pedagogical skills. However, the issue of low incentive payments due to national policies that prohibit the payment of refugees means that in contexts like Tanzania, teachers earn less than $2 a day. At a global level, perhaps it is time to review incentive payments, which are noted as demotivating for teachers working in incredibly challenging environments across contexts.

As partners in South Sudan and Uganda highlighted, AEPs no longer just condenses primary education. There is a demand and need for AE programmes for secondary education. The ASEP addresses the chronic shortage of teachers and women with secondary education certificates in South Sudan. In addition, the secondary AEP enables refugee learners to continue their education pathway in Uganda. However, across the four BRiCE country contexts, only three partners, Windle Trust, War Child Canada and FCA, implement Secondary AEP. Evidence suggests that this is a service in demand, and there is a need for more programmes that support young people transitioning from primary AEP. This will only be possible with multi-year funding, co-ownership, and accreditation by the national government.

There is a clear need to review, strengthen, and support multilingual instruction in all contexts. This is challenging, as often, the language of instruction is intricately linked to the political. While global evidence indicates the importance of mother-tongue and multilingual instruction, decisions must be informed through a conflict-sensitive lens in multi-ethnic and multilingual contexts. However, the learning assessments in all contexts highlight that even though children may be accessing education, EGMA and EGRA statistic suggests that many children are falling behind. More concerted efforts need to examine why many children struggle to progress through AEPs. However, there is very little consideration on the part the language of instruction may play in the learning crisis.

Evidence of enrolment, retention, and transition between primary levels and post-primary opportunities was lacking across all contexts. Partners need to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation within AEP programmes. Donors should also consider building funds for tracer studies as there is a severe lack of information on post-AEP pathways. Understanding how many students can continue their education or vocation training would provide insights into how AEPs are and should be structured.

Finally, COVID-19 significantly impacted the provision of education globally. AEPs adapted with home learning packages, radio instruction, and peer- and communityled learning circles emerging to continue education. The AEWG Pathways for the Return to Learning brief has also recently been published to support education stakeholders design appropriate pathways and help learners catch up and return to learning.



Despite numerous challenges and recurring displacement in conflict-affected areas of the country, the past year has seen AE programmes pivot, adapt, and strengthen community involvement and ownership over learning. These community-centred learning modals have highlighted how important it is for education programmes to be built with the communities they serve. Going forward, AEP implementors should continue to examine how AEPs can be strengthened by community engagement.

The AEWG Principle 8 on Community Engagement support strengthening community participation in AE programmes. Continuous and meaningful engagement with communities would result in contextualised, culturally relevant and sustaining AE programmes. Collobarating with teachers, learners and communities could inform many of the steps and approaches to AE, which in turn could have a positive impact in mitigating learners being pushed out [304] of education

Key Recommendations

For Governments

Prioritise embedding AE in national systems, institutions and budgets. Given the high number of out-of-school children and youth in many conflict-affected contexts, coupled with recurring displacement, school closures, and delays in completing primary and secondary education, there is demonstrated evidence that AE offers a tangible way (for girls in particular) to complete their education.

Integrating AE into teacher training. Teachers and other education personnel should receive continuous support to ensure learning, pedagogy, and materials are differentiated and support various learners' needs. **Any comprehensive AEP training should be conflict-sensitive**. For example, in areas with language, ethnic, and religious diversity, it is essential that culturally, socially, and linguistically relevant curricula are used. In multilingual settings, community-informed decisions will need to be made about the most appropriate primary language of instruction for the lower levels of AEP.

Institutional coordination and partnerships are critical to ensure AE programmes are harmonised and standardised. Ministries should establish AE task teams or working groups in conjunction with broader education stakeholders.

304 The turn 'push out' instead of 'drop-out ' is used increasingly by equity-centred education practitioners. This is to recognised that students are often forced to discontinue their studies for a multitude of reasons, and the onus on them leaving education should be refocused on the education provider.

For donors

For the interim, multi-year funding for AEP is needed, alongside partnership approaches that advocate for national governments to transition to directly funding AE. This would increase sustainability and reduce dependency on educational aid. However, given the scale of learners needing AE, multi-year funding is needed for the interim. As in most contexts, it takes between three to four years for a learner to complete an entire primary AE cycle, and, on average, two to three years for a learner to complete secondary AE. Therefore, it is essential to consider that funding cycles do not necessarily correlate with the traditional school calendar.

Fund research and evidence to determine what works and where learners transition after completing AE. Given the high level of investment in AE programmes, more evidence is critically needed to ascertain the number of learners enrolled nationally and identify what is working. In addition, donors should encourage research that empowers children, young people, and communities. In recent years, there has been a rise in EGMA and ERGA assessments in AEP. However, there is little qualitative data to unpack the challenges and success children, teachers, and families encounter when navigating AEPs. AEP aims to support the most marginalised children. However, implementers will lack the knowledge to make sound decisions about the most effective programmes to invest scarce time and resources without improved monitoring, evaluation, accountability, learning practices, and longitudinal research. As this report has highlighted, educational inequity is a huge issue, and disaggregated transition rates and tracer studies of students who have returned to the formal primary or secondary education system are desperately needed to measure the impact of AE on educational trajectories. In addition, data and evidence could provide critical insight into what is working for male/female learners and teachers in different locations.

For implementors

Parental and caregiver engagement is vital. COVID-19 has highlighted the critical role parents, caregivers, and the wider community play in keeping students learning. Implementing partners should work with schools to enhance PTA/SMC roles and responsibilities, provide training, and share examples of best practices. Through engagement with community elders, women's groups, and critical community influencers from different displaced ethnic groups, agencies will understand the norms and values placed around girls' and boys' participation in education, resulting in more effective, participatory, and accountable responses.

Language bridging programmes are needed to ensure that the multilingual, multi-ethnic AEP cohorts have the language skills necessary to complete the AEP curriculum. AEP partners should conduct language mapping to identify the home languages represented within AEP centres and seek to recruit teachers and assistants who can support and nurture a multilingual classroom environment. In particular, there is a need for a language bridging programme for secondary AEP learners who were previously taught in another language. Without additional language support and intentional instruction, learners' educational trajectories are delayed even longer as they seek to gain fluency in English.

An equity-centred approach to AEP is drastically needed. This would entail implementing gender-responsive and conflic-sensitive approaches to education design, looking into the specific barriers that boys and girls face in AEP, and seeking to address the issues, in addition to more comprehensive markers that can lead to exclusion from AE.

Annexe 1: List of key informant interviews

DRC

Name	Organisation
Sarah Hartigan	War Child UK
Richard Vernet	War Child UK/War Child Holland
Adrien Baguma	War Child UK/War Child Holland
Steward Kutiyote	UNESCO
Yaya Diarassouba	NRC
Joseph Mange Mahula Mashanja	Save the Children/AE WG, Chair DRC
Gautier Marchais	IDS- BRICE research (Institute of Development Studies (IDS), in partnership with Save the Children, with the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu in DRC
Cyril Brandt	IDS-BRICE research (Institute of Development Studies (IDS), in partnership with Save the Children, with the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu in DRC
Neil Boothby	Notre Dame/BRICE research partner
Nina Weisenhorn	USAID
Virginie Briandt	Matt McDonald

South Sudan

Organisation	Name of Key Informant
World Vision International	Mario NGBARI Sumbe, education officer
AVSI	Hastings Lemi Surur, education specialist
Plan International	Harriet Tino
UNESCO	Viola Muhangi Kuhaisa
World Vision International	Frank Lomoro
Windle Trust	David Masua
Adventist Development and Relief Agency	Namana Simon
Oxfam Ibis	Charlotte Beyer
Teachers College NYU	Daniel Shephard and Danni Falk
LWF	Gabriel Waithaka

Uganda

Save the Children	Edison Nsubuga, senior education advisor
NRC	Joyce Talomoi and Melchizedek Malile
UNICEF	Night Candiru
Geneva Global	Ellen Carney, associate program director
War Child Canada	Joe Lakony, project manager
Oxfam IBIS	Benedict Lokiru and Charlotte Beyer
Windle Trust	Simon Daale
Finn Church Aid	Alfred Thomas Echodu, AEP program officer
AVSI Foundation	Agaba Alfred Biribonwa, program manager
Ministry of Education (Inclusive and Non-Formal Education)	Sarah Ayesiga, assistant commissioner, inclusive and non-formal education

In Tanzania and Burundi, the author consulted with colleagues from IRC, Save the Children, NRC, UNHCR Burundi, and UNHCR Tanzania.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