



COVER PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAADIA ALI: TWIN LATRINES IN ALIYOW MARAYLE IDP ABE CENTER (TEMPORARY LEARNING SPACE), BAIDOA, BAY REGION (LEFT) AND MOQOR II MANYOW ABE CENTER, BAIDOA, BAY REGION (RIGHT).

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION IN SOMALIA EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE ENDLINE EVALUATION

February 2021

Prepared under Contract No.: GS-I0F-0033M/AID-OAA-M-13-00010

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Integrity Global, Inc. and NORC at the University of Chicago. The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

ABSTRACT

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Somalia launched its five-year Alternative Basic Education (ABE) program in 2015. This program provided a combination of flexible, basic educational approaches to respond to the needs of pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, urban, and other out-of-school children 6 to 14 years old in south and central Somalia. The targeted areas for these interventions were Jubaland and the South West State of Somalia: Bay, Bakool, and Gedo.

The main feature of ABE is its condensed curriculum which accelerates eight grades of formal primary school learning into four levels of alternative basic education over a five-year period. With this approach, the program has proven effective in supporting over 20,000 children across 96 communities in obtaining basic education. In addition to the specialized, condensed curriculum under non-formal education (NFE), ABE has a range of other interventions, which include the delivery of the curriculum through flexible approaches such as: temporary learning spaces along migration paths, mobile libraries, flexible timetables, and the provision of teaching and learning materials.

ABE structures its activities under three purposes: (1) access to quality alternative basic education, (2) quality and reading, and (3) system strengthening. In late 2019, Integrity Global Inc. conducted an endline (end of project) performance evaluation across the three targeted regions. The evaluation included a desk review complemented by qualitative data collection focusing on four key evaluation questions:

1. How did ABE contribute to its intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes as prescribed in the initial Scope of Work and modifications?
2. How did the ABE program theory of change adapt (or fail to adapt) to internal programmatic shifts and modifications, such as the expanding communities in Gedo, transitioning from pilot to program, amending the teacher instruction strategy, and extending the age range of ABE learners?
3. What aspects of ABE's design, delivery, and operations helped or hindered progress and/or the ability of the program to adapt in timely ways to challenging external conditions?
4. What internal or external conditions appear to be most influential to the sustained functionality of the ABE interventions, such as the education hubs, teacher quality, community education committees, child-to-child groups, teaching and learning materials, and institutional strengthening after USAID funding ends?

The main recommendations from the evaluation team are summarized as follows:

- Develop risk planning and sustainability planning in the design and implementation of the program;
- Improve system strengthening through the position of a NFE technical advisor embedded within the ministry of education; and
- Develop an effective monitoring, evaluation, and learning system to disaggregate data, measure progress, aid in decision-making for strategic shifts, and provide lessons learned.

ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION IN SOMALIA

EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE ENDLINE EVALUATION

February 2021

Submitted to:

Ms. Tina Byenkya, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Advisor
Program Office
USAID/Somalia

Submitted by:



Integrity Global, Inc.
2221 South Clark Street
Arlington, VA 22202
Attention: Ms. Kelly Skeith, Head of Programs
Email: Kelly.Skeith@integrityglobal.com
Tel: 571-919-6885

Contractor:



NORC at the University of Chicago
4350 East West Highway, 8th Floor
Bethesda, MD 20814
Attention: Varuni Dayaratna
Email: Dayaratna-varuni@norc.org
Tel: 301-634-9414

Authors: Martina Nicolls, Jelena Savic, and Saadia Ali

DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
TABLES.....	ii
FIGURES	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
ACRONYMS.....	v
MAP	vi
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	I
1. EVALUATION QUESTIONS.....	10
2. ABE PROGRAM BACKGROUND	11
3. EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS.....	17
4. FINDINGS	26
5. CONCLUSIONS	69
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	74
7. CASE STUDIES.....	78
CASE STUDY 1: INCLUSION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS.....	78
CASE STUDY 2: INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION.....	83
CASE STUDY 3: FEMALE TEACHERS.....	87
CASE STUDY 4: COVID-19 IN THE ABE PROGRAM.....	90
Annex A, EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK	93
Annex B, EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS	110
Annex C, DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS	125
Annex D, DOCUMENTS REVIEWED	136
Annex E, COVID-19 SURVEY RESULTS	140
Annex F, ADDITIONAL STATISTICAL TABLES	157
Annex G, DISCLOSURE CONFLICTS OF INTERES	158
Annex H, GLOSSARY	162

TABLES

Table 1: Planned target number of children and communities per year, 2016–2020	12
Table 2: ABE purposes 1–3: Planned objective and activities, 2016–2020	13
Table 3: Number of ABE temporary learning spaces by region.....	15

Table 4: ABE summary of implementation plan: Pilot and full program	16
Table 5: Summary of evaluation phases.....	17
Table 6: Summary of evaluation data sets.....	19
Table 7: Community KIIs & FGDs conducted by stakeholder, region, and sex	21
Table 8: Remote community KIIs & FGDs conducted by region and sex	22
Table 9: Total KIIs & FGDs by stakeholder, region, and sex	23
Table 10: ABE EGRA results, September 2020.....	31
Table 11: ABE gender targets and results (September 2020).....	34
Table 12: ABE Purpose 2: Summary of results against indicators and targets, September 2020	36
Table 13: ABE temporary learning spaces and enrollments by region, September 2020.....	37
Table 14: ABE enrollments by region, September 2020	38
Table 15: ABE learners attending ABE Centers every day	40
Table 16: ABE former learners: Where are they now?.....	40
Table 17: ABE Purpose 2: Summary of results against indicators and targets, September 2020	41
Table 18: ABE total distribution of textbooks, September 2020.....	43
Table 19: Unpacking teaching quality	47
Table 20: CEC and CtC members by region, September 2020	50
Table 21: ABE Purpose 3: Summary of results against indicators and targets, September 2020	52
Table 22: ABE enrollments by region, disability, and age, September 2020.....	55
Table 23: Number of ABE teachers by region and sex, September 2020	57
Table 24: Community perceptions of ABE’s advantages by stakeholders	61
Table 25: Most frequently expressed concerns about ABE by stakeholders	64

FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of ABE program implementation, by region	vi
Figure 2: ABE MEL Goal and Performance Indicator	28
Figure 3: Perception of teachers vs perception of ABE curriculum	63
Figure 5: ABE SWOT Analysis.....	73

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluators would like to express their sincere gratitude to those who provided support and advice throughout the USAID Alternative Basic Education evaluation.

We have sincere respect for the representatives of the Somali government and gratitude for their ongoing support to make this evaluation possible. We thank all government and line ministry officials, and agency staff who provided thoughtful insights.

We are grateful to USAID/Somalia. We would also like to acknowledge the cooperation of the implementing partner UNICEF at the national and regional levels, as well as all staff for their time and responses to the evaluators' requests for information. We also acknowledge UNICEF's local sub-partners—Baidoa Regional Education Committee, HIDIG Relief and Development Organization, and Himilo Relief and Development Association—who made themselves available for interviews, focus group discussions, and also assisted with accessing key beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Additionally, we are grateful to the program beneficiaries for their willingness to share their experiences and thoughts.

We appreciate the work of all members of our local partner firm, Tusmo, for their persistent attention to supporting this process, including evaluation planning, implementation, and supervision of the data collection process including the provision of regional-level enumerators.

The evaluators are also grateful for the home office support of Integrity Global, Inc. and NORC at the University of Chicago throughout all stages of the evaluation.

Martina Nicolls

Jelena Savic

Saadia Ali

ACRONYMS

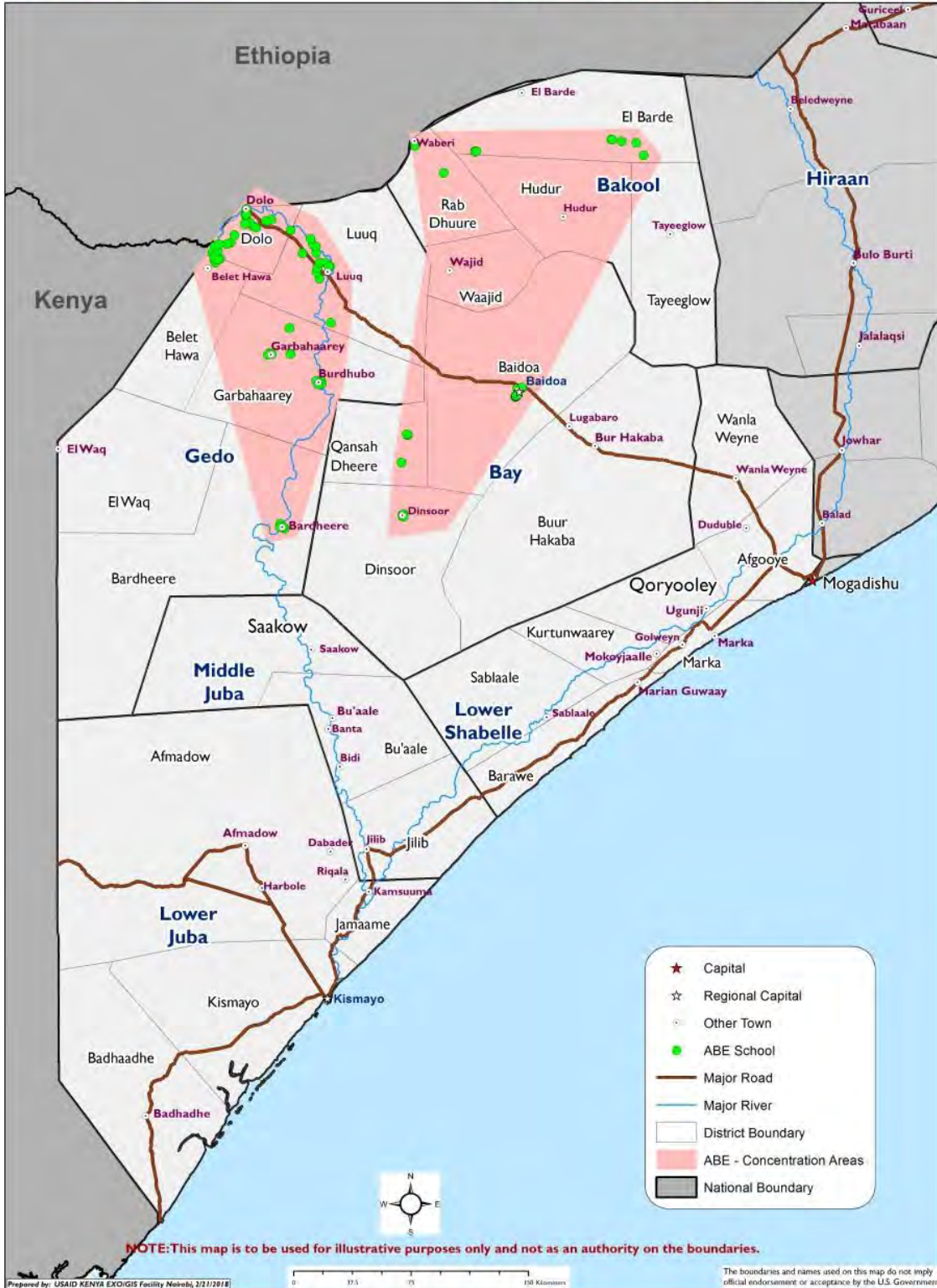
ABE	Alternative Basic Education
ADS	Automated Directives System
AMELP	Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan
BREC	Baidoa Regional Education Committee
CEC	Community Education Committees
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CtC	Child-to-Child
DFID	Department for International Development
EDR	Evaluation Design Report
EQ	Evaluation Question
ET	Evaluation Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
HIDIG	HIDIG Relief and Development Organization
HIRDA	Himilo Relief and Development
IBTCI	International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc.
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KfW	German Development Bank
KII	Key Informant Interview
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MoECHE	Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education
MVR	Monitoring, Verification and Reporting
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PIO	Public International Organization
SPSS	Somalia Program Support Services
SWS	South West State
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
TLS	Temporary Learning Space
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

MAP

Figure 1: Map of ABE program implementation, by region



Alternative Basic Education (ABE) Activity



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION PURPOSE

USAID/Somalia commissioned NORC at the University of Chicago and Integrity Global Inc., under the Reading & Access Evaluations contract, to conduct a performance evaluation of the \$10 million, five-year (2015–2020) Alternative Basic Education (ABE) program implemented in three regions of south and central Somalia: Gedo, Bay, and Bakool. UNICEF is the lead implementer with three local sub-partners: Baidoa Regional Education Committee (BREC), HIDIG Relief and Development Organization (HIDIG), and Himilo Relief and Development Association (HIRDA). The purpose of the ABE evaluation was to: (1) analyze the strategies and implementation of the program; (2) assess changes within the beneficiary communities related to access and quality of basic education; and (3) understand the prospect for sustainability of its interventions.

ABE PROGRAM GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

ABE's goal is to provide a viable alternative to formal schooling for pastoralists and other out-of-school children to ensure they complete a cycle of basic education. A combination of flexible educational approaches is used within the program which includes a specialized curriculum that condenses eight grades of formal primary schooling into four levels of ABE. Overall, the program has three purposes: (1) access to quality alternative basic education; (2) quality and reading; and (3) system strengthening.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was conducted from February to December 2020 with four weeks of field work in July and August. Primary data was collected from 60 telephone interviews, 31 in-person interviews, and 15 focus group discussions with a total of 179 respondents (of which 40% were female).

The four Evaluation Questions were as follows:

1. How did ABE contribute to its intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes as prescribed in the initial Scope of Work and subsequent modifications?
2. How did the ABE theory of change adapt (or fail to adapt) to internal programmatic shifts and modifications, such as the expanding communities in Gedo, transitioning from pilot to program, amending the teacher instruction strategy, and extending the age range of ABE learners?
3. What aspects of ABE's design, delivery, and operations helped or hindered progress and/or the ability of the program to adapt in timely ways to challenging external conditions?
4. What internal or external conditions appear to be most influential to the sustained functionality of the ABE interventions, such as the education hubs, teacher quality, community education committees, child-to-child groups, teaching and learning materials, and institutional strengthening after USAID funding ends?

EVALUATION CHALLENGES

There were several challenges over the evaluation period, including:

1. the extended time to complete the evaluation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding delays;
2. increased preparations for safe fieldwork; and
3. challenges with translation and incongruence in terminology used.

To comply with government requirements and reduce face-to-face interviews, the evaluation team used telephone calls, an online survey, and local enumerators to conduct data collection.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

ABE was moderately successful in contributing to its intended intermediate and ultimate outputs as prescribed in the Cooperative Agreement—greater achievements in its first purpose to provide access to alternative basic education to a wide range of marginalized learners and lesser achievements in its second and third purposes to deliver quality, reading, and system strengthening—but was challenged in its efforts toward achieving its ultimate outcome. The program goal was to *provide a viable alternative to formal school so that learners can complete a cycle of basic education*—where a cycle of education is the progression from Level 1 to Level 4 of ABE instruction and its completion (graduation) at the end of Level 4 after a government-administered examination. ABE used an inappropriate indicator to measure its goal. ABE used a reading indicator to measure a graduation goal. Both its reading results and its graduation results were lower than expected.

The outcome indicator, *percent of learners who demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade level text at the end of grade 2 (ABE Level 1)*, measured by an early grade reading assessment (EGRA) focused on the learners' ability to read at the end of their first year in ABE. ABE expected 75 percent of a sample of ABE Level 1 learners to be able to demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension during the EGRA. The EGRA Study Report shows that 58 percent of Level 1 learners demonstrated reading fluency and 55 percent demonstrated reading comprehension. Although these results are below target, in total they are comparable with grade 2 formal school children of the same age, except for girls—more formal school girls (69 percent) demonstrated reading fluency than ABE girls (56 percent).¹

In the program design, EGRA was intended to be the key measurement to determine the improvement of reading, and, therefore, one element to assess the program's success. However, EGRA's implementation was poor due to data quality vulnerabilities. Furthermore, because there was no baseline for reading performance, EGRA was a 'point-in-time' assessment, and not a measure of reading progress or improvement. The external, independent EGRA Study Report, and its reading fluency and comprehension results, were not available until December 2020, two months after the program closed-out. Therefore, the EGRA results could not be used to inform teachers during implementation; nor did the program devise alternative outcome indicators to measure reading performance, or learning performance.

ABE's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) system did not assign an indicator to its graduation goal. ABE's Cooperative Agreement expected 1,400 learners to sit for their Level 4 examinations and

¹ USAID. (2020). ABE Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report, September.

graduate by the end of the program in September 2020, but only 67 percent of the target was achieved. ABE's first cohort of Level 1 learners from the Gedo region was due to sit for the Level 4 examinations in June 2020. Due to COVID-19 school closures, examinations were conducted in September. A total of 937 learners (297 girls, 25 percent) sat the exam and graduated, including 558 learners from the first cohort. ABE documented that the challenges to reaching its graduation target were due to multiple factors, such as the curriculum not aligned to the Directorate of NFE curriculum; the diverse age range of learners in each class; two grades together in one ABE level; and its teachers.² These issues are addressed in this evaluation.

In ABE's final report, the graduation data is not disaggregated by age or by urban/rural learners, nor is the progress of learners tracked through the ABE levels year-by-year, such as tracking retention or drop-out rates. Furthermore, ABE did not acknowledge its challenging start. To achieve a target of 1,400 learners who graduate, ABE needed to ensure that at least 1,400 learners reached Level 4 or were enrolled in Level 4 by 2020. But, only 558 learners—with 223 girls (49 percent)—were enrolled in Year 1, 2016,³ which was only 37 percent of its target of 1,500 enrollments.

The low Year 1 enrollment was due to conflict in the Gedo region, which resulted in ABE changing its enrollment selection strategy from Year 2 onwards—transitioning from a pilot program to a full program. ABE followed the migrating population to capture more children, and therefore it expanded into two new regions, Bay and Bakool. In doing this, its unintended positive result was that ABE became more inclusive to more marginalized learners, particularly children of internally displaced persons (IDPs). However, its unintended negative result was that its original target of out-of-school migrating pastoralists in Gedo have not yet been reached because they remain in the Al-Shabab-controlled conflict-affected area.

More importantly, the ABE MEL system missed the opportunity to measure, monitor, and document change, such as improved learning, as well as individual, community, or institutional change. ABE missed the opportunity to conduct action research, as planned in the pilot phase, partly because funds were transferred to literacy activities. It also missed an opportunity to inform the wider non-formal education (NFE) sector in Somalia on its implementation learnings, particularly in relation to children of IDPs. ABE had a number of promising interventions to improve equity and inclusive access in the NFE sector, such as in the age-specific domain (including early childhood development), education resilience approaches, peer learning, the provision of recreation and fun learning experiences, and 'second chance' interventions for out-of-school children. Despite its outcome deficits mentioned above, this evaluation extensively focuses on its intended intermediate and ultimate outputs as prescribed in the Cooperative Agreement,

SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM RESULTS

ABE provided access and benefits to alternative basic education for 20,248 learners. It supported a total of 96 communities with the construction or rehabilitation of 96 temporary learning spaces (TLS, also

² UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report*. April 01–September 29, p. 23.

³ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016, p. 7, although it is not confirmed whether there were any drop-outs.

referred to as ABE Centers) and 192 classrooms. These TLS were rapidly built on community-owned and selected land within easy access for learners. ABE succeeded in providing gender-sensitive facilities and hygiene products for girls; conducting social mobilization campaigns; enrolling marginalized pastoralist and other out-of-school learners; and recruiting female teachers.

Although the program almost reached its 50% target for female learners, enrolling 8,666 girls (43%), it had challenges with enrolling girls in the Bakool region (37%). The program did not document specific reasons for the lower female enrollment in Bakool, but it did note the ongoing challenges in the remote region with distance, politics, and conflict. ABE had an ambitious gender target of 50% for teachers which it was unable to meet. However, it should be commended for attaining 27% of female teachers, which exceeded the government average of 11% of female teachers in rural formal primary schools in central south Somalia in 2015.⁴ The evaluation found that female teachers were change agents and role models for girls in the program. Communities indicated that teachers were a factor in providing a positive learning environment, strong linkages with parents and households, and influencing learning ambitions, which facilitated a change in parents' attitudes towards education, resulting in increased enrollments.

ABE hired and trained a total of 447 community teachers, which was 297 teachers above its target. This resulted in three to six subject-based teachers per ABE Center in Bay and Bakool, exceeding the program target of two level-based teachers per center. An unintended result was that students were exposed to a diversity of teaching styles, although its benefits were not documented in terms of improved learning or learner perceptions.

This evaluation indicates an overall positive response to the program, with a 96% positive response from the targeted communities. Learners and teachers highly praised the literacy-focused, learner-centered, individual development and interactive teaching methodologies. Parents and community members praised teachers because they instilled hope for the future. In fact, the quality of teachers (their personal traits and dedication to the program) was more highly regarded than the curriculum, but only because it was not yet aligned to the formal school curriculum. School inspectors, Community Education Committee (CEC) members, and sub-partners conducted joint monitoring visits to supervise teaching quality, and although these collaborative visits were regarded as an opportunity to gain knowledge about ABE's flexible program, the program missed the opportunity to use them for peer learning between regions.

ADAPTING THE PROGRAM

The program was initially designed as a pilot to test and research the condensed four-year ABE curriculum and flexible approaches for children of migrating pastoralist families only in the Gedo region, which was selected due to its accessibility at the time of the program design in 2015. After a needs assessment in January 2016, ABE had already expanded in Gedo from 15 pastoralist communities to 35⁵ pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities, as its targeted beneficiaries were scattered across the

⁴ FGS. MoECHE. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*, p. 30 – with 2015 figures. Updated information is not available to date.

⁵ The 2016 Needs Assessment indicated 37 communities, but 2 were inaccessible due to conflict. UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016, p. 8.

region. Conflict in the region, due to Al-Shabab activities, made it difficult to reach the target of 21,000 8-14-year-olds within the proposed 75 pastoralist communities (as part of its planned 15 communities each year for five years). Taking the pilot to a full program, ABE expanded to 96 communities in Gedo, Bay, and Bakool regions (where families were fleeing to), keeping its target of 21,000 children with no extra costs due to the implementer's low overheads.

The expansion from Gedo into the Bay and Bakool regions in 2017 resulted in the program becoming more inclusive of other beneficiary groups, such as urban learners, children of IDPs, younger children (6-8 years) and older children (15-19 years). By the end of the program, 14% of enrollments were older children, and an estimated 26% were children of IDPs (5,234 learners, of which 46% were girls), although this is extrapolated as not all data was disaggregated by demographics and beneficiary groups (e.g., children 6-14 years were not further disaggregated). ABE's initial theory of change assumption that learners aged 6-8 years had access to formal education did not hold true and the program changed in 2017 to allow their enrollment.

As a result of the program expansion, the government and development partners viewed the program positively, especially its support to IDP communities that the government has not been able to reach, thereby meeting the needs of this key population. Furthermore, there is anecdotal evidence of migrating families choosing routes where ABE's TLS were located, thereby enabling their children to access education where previously schools were not available or part of their decision making. Successful social mobilization campaigns were conducted to impart messages of the importance of education, and, during the COVID-19 pandemic, imparting health messages as well.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Unexpected challenges, risks, and shocks within Somalia affected project implementation. ABE was devised as a conflict-sensitive program, supporting the government's Safe Schools Declaration and the USAID Education in Crisis and Conflict Network. Its radio education programs, which commenced with its partner organization in 2019, also raised awareness of conflict management and resolution through dramatization and short stories. However, ABE had to respond to many external shocks which not only included conflict and security issues, but also included drought, flooding, locust plagues, windstorms, local disputes, an influx of migrating people and IDPs, and the COVID-19 crisis. These factors affected, hindered, or delayed implementation to varying degrees.

While one of the major successes of the program was its expansion, its MEL system did not evolve to fully disaggregate beneficiary data. This has made it difficult to truly evaluate the outputs and overall outcomes of the program for these additional beneficiaries, and for the program to contribute to wider, non-formal education knowledge-sharing, particularly IDP information.

ABE's program outcome for learners to attain reading fluency was challenging from the start, because there were issues with the initial program design and also with the distribution of supplementary reading materials. For example, to March 2020, only 25 percent of the target number of supplementary reading materials (due to a lack of existing readers in the local market) and 73 percent of planned textbooks (due to transport delays) were distributed to ABE Centers and mobile libraries. To address the shortage of existing market-place supplementary reading materials, ABE conducted a booklet-writing exercise in 2018 for 150 learners, which resulted in the program printing 9,000 copies of a story book in 2020 with stories from 23 learners. The concept was exceptional and fulfilled the remaining 75 percent of the

distribution of supplementary reading materials, but it initially benefitted less than 1 percent of learners (150), took time to develop, and they only arrived in August 2020 when the ABE Centers re-opened after being closed for five months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, eventually reaching 44 percent of learners (9,000). This meant that children lacked readers to take home during COVID-19 school closures. Nevertheless, students overwhelmingly reported enjoying literacy lessons and expressed a need (supported by teachers and parents) for more supplementary reading materials and more diversity of stories.

SUSTAINABILITY

The government and communities are not yet in a position to fully sustain the ABE Centers without the assistance of development partners. Of the 96 supported ABE Centers, 36 (38 percent) will continue in 2021 after the end of the program. This includes 24 CECs taking over management of their ABE Centers with a commitment to mobilize resources to maintain the same standard as ABE. KfW has taken over management of 12 ABE Centers under their program, Building Resilient School Communities in Somalia Through Basic Education. It is not known how many ABE learners will benefit because ABE did not provide further information. ABE states that 30 ABE Centers are not enrolling new learners and are currently continuing with limited functionality,⁶ and that 11 centers in IDP camps are likely to close due to lack of funds.

Although communities do not have funds to sustain ABE Centers, they confirmed that they could continue social mobilization campaigns to provide messages on the importance of education and to actively assist with learner enrollment in NFE programs. Although the government has prioritized formal education, it is on the threshold of making inroads into its NFE policy, curriculum alignment, teaching and learning materials, registration of NFE centers, and the establishment of a NFE Technical Working Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

The ABE evaluation has identified recommendations which can be used to guide future alternative basic education programming within Somalia for USAID.

RECOMMENDATION 1: RISK PROGRAMMING

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia implement risk programming in education programs (which encompasses, but goes beyond, conflict-sensitive programming)⁷ due to the many and continuous shocks in the Somalia context. Upon implementation, and updated regularly, this includes a risk assessment checklist and plan to gain an understanding of the probability and consequence of a range of potential risks by region/location, such as natural (flooding, drought, insect plague); economic (food and energy costs, lack of provisions such as food and water); health (disease and accident); infrastructure (road closure, transport restrictions, fuel shortage); and conflict (personal, demonstrations, military action, tribal, terrorism). It is recommended that risk programming includes an understanding of the operational

⁶ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 26.

⁷ USAID. (2013). Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs. November.

context, inter-group relationships, lines of communication, command and responsibility, action plans to minimize negative effects and maximize rapid responses and solutions, and contingency planning.

RECOMMENDATION 2: MEL SYSTEM TO MEASURE OUTCOMES

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia clearly define the *main* goal of a program—e.g., a reading-focused program *or* a holistic program that aims to ensure the graduation rate of its learners—and consequently design the program and its performance MEL system accordingly. Not all of the following suggested measurements require indicators, but they should all be monitored, disaggregated, and reported as part of the program’s progress toward its goal, with a focus on measuring change. To measure learner performance (i.e., improved learning), measurements should include enrollments, drop-out rates, retention rates, graduation rates, and reading (EGRA) and/or learning improvements. This could also include the monitoring and tracking of the progression of learners from level to level (grade to grade) to capture vulnerabilities in a timely way. In addition to an EGRA indicator measuring reading fluency and comprehension, alternative outcome indicators should be selected to measure improved learning outcomes, such as:

- Structured learner observations and checklists;
- Recording the results of teachers’ regular learner tests;
- Reading observations (how many books, how often, fluency, etc.); and
- Parental checklists of how often learners read at home.

To measure teaching performance (i.e., improved teaching), measurements could include the use of teaching and learning materials, and the use of teaching methodologies such as radio education programs and child-centered learning methods. Outcome indicators should be selected to measure improved teaching outcomes, such as:

- Structured teacher/classroom observations and checklists; and
- Assessments of teachers’ knowledge.

To measure community, parent, and teacher behavior change, it is recommended that the program use a before-and-after Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) survey or similar instrument. Similarly, there could be checklists for infrastructure and equipment safety, use, and hygiene.

It is recommended that the implementer provide MEL training and conduct joint monitoring visits—observations and supervision—with community leaders and government officials in a formal, structured way. It is recommended that the implementer document and disseminate lessons learned to contribute to the broader evidence base on NFE in Somalia, particularly in relation to children of IDPs due to the limited information about this population of learners.

RECOMMENDATION 3: QUALITY TEACHING METHODOLOGY

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia define and delineate between ‘quality education’ (overall effectiveness of a non-formal education program) and ‘teaching quality’ (more effective teaching and

learning). Teaching quality encompasses elements such as: the teacher, training (duration, frequency, etc.), teaching methodology, curriculum, and use of materials. It is recommended to continue funding literacy-focused, learner-centered, individual learning, and interactive teacher training, including training to support literacy, numeracy, sports, and games. To advance teaching quality, there could be regular government-led, program-guided, standardized and structured teacher observation checklists, with a feedback mechanism, to guide improved teaching instruction. Annual lessons learned could be used for further professional development and knowledge sharing.

RECOMMENDATION 4: QUALITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia continue to fund the establishment of safe, secure, and hygienic learning environments for all learners. This includes the construction of gender-sensitive learning spaces to facilitate increased female enrollment and retention in schooling. It includes up-scaling fun learning experiences, such as recreation and games, and booklet-writing or other literacy competitions and cooperative activities.

RECOMMENDATION 5: TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia fund interventions that lead to the output of teacher-student, parent-student, or community-generated story books, given the limited number of Somali readers in the local market. These could involve a media or education partner organization, and the distribution of the story books within ABE. It is recommended that activities are conducted from the onset of the program to ensure timely distribution.

RECOMMENDATION 6: GENDER EQUITY

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia continue to set high gender equity targets across all levels of programming, such as the recruitment of female teachers and committee members, to ensure the visibility of female role models and change agents. In addition to gender disaggregation of results, narrative reporting on gender issues should be a specific reporting requirement. It is recommended that programs regularly monitor the learning outcomes of both girls and boys to determine progress toward improvements as well as any gender inequities, to be addressed in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATION 7: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING NFE

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia (through its *Bar ama Baro*, “Teach or Learn” program) consider strengthening the engagement of the Non-Formal Education Directorate with other departments within the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE) in line with the Sustainable Development Goals in terms of policy development and a package of comprehensive non-policy interventions. This will facilitate ongoing support for the NFE policy, curriculum alignment, teaching and training materials, gender equity, and literacy and numeracy development, as well as the establishment of the NFE Technical Working Group, by also engaging the FGS for the certification/graduation of learners as part of the NFE policy framework. It is recommended that the NFE Directorate works at the federal and local levels to ensure a flow of communication and information. The main approach could cover: policy and results-based planning; decentralization management; institutional capacity development; critical reflection/debate workshops which are widely inclusive of a range of stakeholders; TLM development capacity building; and knowledge generation,

research, and dissemination. Emphasis could be placed on strengthening action research capacity. In addition, to strengthen the formation of the NFE Technical Working Group, the Directorate, it is recommended to consider connecting with the Working Group on Non-Formal Education of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa.⁸ Additionally, a technical advisor(s) could be embedded within the NFE Directorate and/or Regional Education Offices to strengthen NFE reforms, working in collaboration with curriculum, quality assurance, and other departments to advance sectoral efforts. Furthermore, it is recommended to have an effective system of monitoring, measuring, and reporting the progress of NFE strengthening activities against clearly defined goals, intended outputs and outcomes, indicators, and targets.

RECOMMENDATION 8: SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia advocate for sustainability planning (exit planning) from the commencement of programs that documents strategies for community and school development (particularly in rural and remote locations). It is recommended that sustainability planning use a community-led, inclusive, and participatory approach that strengthens the capacity of Community Education Committees, or similar bodies, to plan for handover of ABE Centers and some or all elements of the program in a gradual phased-in approach by the end of the program. This could build upon, and integrate members from, existing structures such as CECs, Child-to-Child groups, education authority planning units, and school inspectors, with donor-supported monitoring, reporting, and follow-up activities.

The formulation of written community-led, program-guided, joint sustainability plans at the local level could also include a risk assessment identifying potential risks to education (economic, environmental, conflict, etc.) and plans to mitigate them. Planning for sustainability needs to be practical and manageable for communities and consider such broad issues as: financing and fundraising, data collection, learner attendance, teacher attendance, cleanliness of classrooms and surrounding environments, inter-school teacher and learner knowledge-sharing, inter-school sporting teams and competitions, school gardens, community-led social mobilization campaigns on the importance of education, and community announcements.

⁸ Association for the Development of Education in Africa, formed in Dakar, Senegal in 1996 with the participation of the ministries of education in Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mauritania, Namibia, Senegal, Zanzibar, and the following development agencies: the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Association for the Promotion of Non-Formal Education in Burkina Faso, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, and the Club de Sahel. <http://www.adeanet.org/en/working-groups/non-formal-education>

I. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

BACKGROUND

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Somalia signed a \$10 million five-year (2015–2020) Cooperative Agreement with the Public International Organization (PIO) implementer, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Somalia. This agreement was to support the implementation of the Alternative Basic Education program (ABE)⁹ from September 30, 2015 to September 29, 2020. UNICEF Somalia worked with three local sub-partners to implement ABE: Baidoa Regional Education Committee (BREC), HIDIG Relief and Development Organization (HIDIG), and Himilo Relief and Development Association (HIRDA).

EVALUATION PURPOSE

To evaluate ABE’s success and efficacy, USAID contracted NORC at the University of Chicago and Integrity Global, Inc. to conduct an endline (end-of-project) performance evaluation from November 2019 to September 2020, which was extended to February 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. USAID’s Scope of Work (SOW) outlines the evaluation’s three objectives:¹⁰

1. Analyze the process and strategies of ABE implementation;
2. Assess changes that have occurred within beneficiary communities as they relate to education access and quality of education; and
3. Understand the prospect for sustainability of ABE interventions.

This report’s audience is USAID/Somalia, USAID/E3-ED, the implementer and its sub-partners, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), and other international donors and development partners.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQs)

This evaluation addresses four key questions which were agreed upon through a consultative process with USAID, the evaluation team, the implementer, and other project stakeholders. USAID formulated initial evaluation questions, which were discussed during a three-day evaluation design workshop in Mogadishu, Somalia (February 2-4, 2020) to allow all relevant stakeholders to contribute to the process and finalize the evaluation focus. As a result, it was agreed that EQ1 would focus on a review of ABE’s results; EQ2 on implementation and internal programmatic changes over time; EQ3 on contextual challenges and external conditions impacting success; and EQ4 on sustainability. A question matrix, with a list of sub-questions, is provided in Annex B, Evaluation Methods. The co-created evaluation questions are as follows:

⁹ ABE, formally, is the Alternative Basic Education Curriculum for Grades 1-8 Targeting Pastoralists and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia program.

¹⁰ USAID. (2019). *ABE evaluation Scope of Work*, December 6, p. 1.

EQ 1: How did the ABE program contribute to its intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes as prescribed in the initial SOW¹¹ and subsequent modifications?

EQ 2: How did the ABE program theory of change adapt (or fail to adapt) to internal programmatic shifts and modifications (e.g. expanding communities in Gedo, from pilot to program, amendment of the teacher instruction strategy, and extending the age range of ABE learners? [Internal Conditions]

EQ 3: What aspects of ABE program’s design, delivery, and operations helped or hindered progress and/or the ability of the ABE program to adapt in timely ways to challenging external conditions? [External Conditions]

EQ 4: What internal or external conditions appear to be most influential to the sustained functionality of the ABE interventions, such as the education hubs, teacher quality, community education committees, child to child groups, teaching and learning materials, and institutional strengthening after USAID funding ends?

EVALUATION SCOPE

USAID confirmed that ABE’s early grade reading assessments (EGRA) would not be included in the evaluation, except when mentioned by interviewees, due to the unavailability of results.¹² USAID provided the evaluation team with the September 2020 EGRA Study Report in December to incorporate into this report.¹³ Cost-sharing activities are not assessed as the funding was transferred to another program.

2. ABE PROGRAM BACKGROUND

ABE PILOT PROGRAM AND THEORY OF CHANGE

ABE was designed to be a \$10 million five-year pilot program in four districts of the Gedo region in Jubaland State ‘to improve access to equitable, quality education for pastoralists and other marginalized out-of-school children in the Central South Zone of Somalia.’ It was expected to be ‘a critical investment to expand the provision of education in Somalia, a key driver of peace, development and stability.’¹⁴ It was designed to implement and provide action research on a range of flexible education approaches for pastoralist children.

ABE’s development theory of change posits that: ‘If education services are delivered using flexible modalities for pastoralist children, adolescents and other out-of-school children, education will be seen as a gain within the pastoralist economy, and demand for, and contribution to education services will

¹¹ The initial Scope of Work refers to the PIO Cooperative Agreement between USAID and UNICEF signed on September 29, 2015. The interventions are outlined in Section 4.3 (9 ABE Interventions and 4 Institutional Strengthening Interventions). Refer to the glossary for a definition of terminology.

¹² USAID. (2019). *ABE evaluation Scope of Work*, December 6, p. 3, and ABE Weekly Meeting, July 14, 2020.

¹³ USAID. (2020). *ABE Program Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report*, September.

¹⁴ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15; and USAID. (2019). *ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work*, December 6, p. 11.

increase through expanded access to quality education that results in improved learning outcomes, safety and security for children and adolescents as well as increased government legitimacy.¹⁵

ABE’s goal is to provide a viable alternative to formal school for pastoralists and other out-of-school children to complete a cycle of basic education.¹⁶ A feature of ABE is its condensed, accelerated learning of eight grades of formal primary schooling into four levels of alternative basic education—i.e., a cycle of basic education—to phase-in support for about 21,000 learners (1,400 in an initial target of 15 communities per year in Gedo) to reach 75 communities (Table 1 below).¹⁷

- Grades 1 and 2 of formal primary school = ABE Level 1 in Years 1–5 (2016–2020).
- Grades 3 and 4 of formal primary school = ABE Level 2 in Years 2–5 (2017–2020).
- Grades 5 and 6 of formal primary school = ABE Level 3 in Years 3–5 (2018–2020).
- Grades 7 and 8 of formal primary school = ABE Level 4 in Years 4–5 (2019–2020).

Table 1: Planned target number of children and communities per year, 2016–2020

PLANNED ABE PROGRAM BY YEAR: NUMBER OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITIES						
GEDO REGION	YEAR 1 (2016)	YEAR 2 (2017)	YEAR 3 (2018)	YEAR 4 (2019)	YEAR 5 (2020)	TOTAL PLANNED
Level 1 ABE	100	100	100	100	100	500
Level 2 ABE		100	100	100	100	400
Level 3 ABE			100	100	100	300
Level 4 ABE				100	100	200
Subtotal	100	200	300	400	400	1,400
Communities	15	15	15	15	15	75
TOTAL	1,500	3,000	4,500	6,000	6,000	21,000

Source: USAID 2015 UNICEF PIO (ABE) Cooperative Agreement, p. 15.

¹⁵ USAID. (2019). *ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work*. December 6, p. 4. A theory of change diagram is provided in the SOW on p. 7, and in Annex I of this report. Note: ABE’s reports don’t reflect the theory of change exactly.

¹⁶ This is the ABE goal as it appears in its MEL plans.

¹⁷ USAID. (2015). UNICEF PIO (ABE) Cooperative Agreement, p. 15.

ABE’s objectives and activities (i.e., ultimate and intermediate outcomes and outputs) are structured under three implementation purposes (Table 2):¹⁸

1. Purpose 1: Access to Quality Alternative Basic Education
2. Purpose 2: Quality and Reading
3. Purpose 3: System Strengthening

Table 2: ABE purposes 1–3: Planned objective and activities, 2016–2020

ABE PURPOSE 1: ACCESS TO QUALITY ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION	
OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment & retention of up to 21,000 out-of-school girls & boys (aged 6-14) & graduation /certification of one cohort of 1,400 ABE learners. [Ultimate Output] 	Construction/rehabilitation of temporary learning spaces (TLS) (ABE Centers/hubs) <hr/> Provision of gender-sensitive facilities and sanitary towels for girls
ABE PURPOSE 2: QUALITY AND READING	
OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved reading outcomes for primary learners in target locations. [Ultimate Output] • Improved teacher professional development & improved learning environment. • Increased awareness of parents, community elders, & religious leaders to value and support their children’s education, especially for girls. • Enhanced capacity of community organizations to design and implement sustainable, relevant, and progressive basic education programs. 	Provision of ABE classrooms with adequate teaching & learning materials (TLM) (UNICEF does not mandate 1:1 student-textbook ratio, but 1:2) <hr/> Teachers are trained & supported in delivery & management of ABE curriculum <hr/> Teachers trained to use interactive radio instruction (IRI) to complement teaching (Actual: Teachers trained on media education awareness) <hr/> Professional development of education administrators and officials <hr/> ABE Centers/spaces are actively managed by engaged community education committees (CEC) and child-to-child (CtC) clubs <hr/> Mobile libraries are distributed to 21 highly mobile migrating communities among ABE Centers/spaces (Camel libraries changed to donkey carts) <hr/> 96 Centers/spaces supported with mini grants (32 Bay, 12 Bakool, 52 Gedo) <hr/> Public awareness & (community) social mobilization campaigns to enhance community oversight, ownership & sustainability

¹⁸ Adapted from USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15; and **the ABE Results Framework in** USAID. (2019). *ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work*, December 6, pp. 2-5.

ABE PURPOSE 3: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional development of education authorities to develop and enact a non-formal strategy. [Ultimate Output] 	Local authorities are engaged in school supervision & quality assurance of ABE Centers/spaces
	Placement of technical advisor to support development of Non-Formal Education policy
	Support for Non-Formal Education policy framework and standards development

Source: Adapted from the ABE Results Framework in USAID 2019 ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work.

YEAR ONE IMPLEMENTATION: SHIFT FROM PILOT TO FULL PROGRAM

In the program's first year of implementation there were significant political shifts in Somalia. These included preparations for national elections, the replacement of the Minister of Education for the FGS with the Honorable Abdulkadir Hashi¹⁹, a new position of Permanent Secretary for Education held by Mr. Ahmed Hassen Yussef, and a more devolved governance structure which included an emergence of new States in 2017: Jubaland, Galmudug, and South West.²⁰

In January 2016, ABE conducted an internal needs assessment. The program partnered with a Somali-based firm to conduct a rapid baseline survey in 10 regions to identify learners' access to learning environments, the type of education available and their organizational structure, the curriculum used, the number of teachers and their level of training, and the conditions of the school infrastructure.²¹ Knowledge gained from the needs assessment and the baseline survey, as well as the 2016-2017 drought that affected food crops that led to the movement of people out of the Gedo region, and conflict in the region, brought to light the difficulty for the program to reach 21,000 children from its intended target population. The program had already expanded in Gedo from 15 pastoralist communities to 35²² pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in the first year, ahead of its target of 75 total communities (15 communities each year for five years). This resulted in the decision to take the pilot program to a full program, and to expand into the Bakool and Bay regions to support the children from marginalized families on the move. Therefore, ABE expanded from 75 planned communities to 96 communities by the end of the program in 2020, while maintaining the number of children supported at approximately 21,000.

ABE'S DIRECT BENEFICIARIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

ABE's direct beneficiaries over the five years included: pastoralist and agro-pastoralist children, urban and rural learners, children of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other out-of-school children, aged

¹⁹ Minister of Education for the FGS from 2016 - 2020

²⁰ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, p. 4.

²¹ Forcier Consulting. (2017). *Somalia Education Baseline Study*. Somalia Education Cluster, p. 5.

²² The 2016 Needs Assessment indicated 37 communities, but 2 were inaccessible due to conflict in UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016, p. 8.

6 to 14 years old. From the end of 2017, ABE also targeted children aged 15 to 19 years old. Girls were targeted as a focus for inclusion from inception, stated in the Cooperative Agreement,²³ and an enrollment target of 50 percent was established in 2016. The program also aimed to enroll children with disabilities as part of its inclusion and access approach.²⁴

ABE’s stakeholders and indirect beneficiaries included: education officials at federal, district, and regional levels; head teachers and teachers; community members (CEC members and members of CtC clubs; elders, parents, and leaders); as well as UN and other agency members, and donors. A full list appears in the glossary of this report.

ABE’S GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS AND PARTNERS

ABE operated in 96 communities through 96 ABE Centers (temporary learning spaces) across three regions within two States of south and central Somalia. ABE commenced implementation in 2015 in the Gedo region of Jubaland State in partnership with HIRDA. BREC and HIDIG joined ABE when the program expanded into the Bay and Bakool regions in the South West Administration in 2017. Table 3 provides an overview of the regional coverage of the program and the number of temporary learning spaces per district.

Table 3: Number of ABE temporary learning spaces by region

ABE TEMPORARY LEARNING SPACES (TLS) IN SOMALIA			
REGION	SUB-PARTNER	DISTRICT	NUMBER OF TLS (ABE CENTERS)
GEDO Jubaland State	HIRDA – commenced from September 2015	Dolo	12
		Luuq	15
		Belet Hawa	13
		Garbaharey	8
		Bardheere	4
		TOTAL	52
BAY South West State	BREC – commenced from September 2017	Baidoa	23 (all in IDP sites accessible in & around town)
		Qansah Dheere	3 (all were public schools; no construction was undertaken)
		Dinsoor	6
		TOTAL	32

²³ USAID. (2015). UNICEF PIO (ABE) Cooperative Agreement, pp. 15 and 18-21.

²⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. November 15, 2016, p. 21.

BAKOOL South West State	HIDIG – commenced from September 2017	El Barde	6
		Rab Dhuure	6
		TOTAL	12
TOTAL			96 TLS

Source: USAID 2019 ABE Performance Tracking Sheets.

This evaluation assesses the program’s intended results while contextualizing the challenging internal and external factors in Somalia which influenced its implementation as it transitioned from a pilot program to a full program. Table 4 below summarizes the differences from its inception and 2015 Cooperative Agreement to full programming.

Table 4: ABE summary of implementation plan: Pilot and full program

ABE PROGRAM PLANNING			
	COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT 2015	PILOT PROGRAM 2016	FULL PROGRAM 2017–2020
Funding	\$9,999,999		
Duration	Sep. 30, 2015 – Sep. 29, 2020	Sep. 30, 2015 – Sep. 29, 2016	Sep. 30, 2016 – Sep. 29, 2020
Regions	1 Gedo	1 Gedo	3 Gedo, Bay, Bakool
Districts	4	4	Actual = 10
Communities & TLS	75 (15 x 5 years)	35	Actual = 96
Learners	Approx. 21,000	Approx. 21,000	Actual = 20,248
Beneficiary learners	Pastoralists; Age: 8-14 years; Girls	Pastoralists, Agro-pastoralists; Age: 8-14 years; Girls; Disability	Pastoralists, Agro-pastoralists; Girls; Disability; Urban; IDPs; Younger (6-8); Older (15-19)
Teachers	80	150 (2 per TLS) – level-based	Actual = 447 – subject-based
Activities	Education hubs	Education hubs (i.e., temporary learning spaces/ABE Centers)	
	Teacher training	Teacher training	
	Teacher incentives	Teacher incentives	
	Teaching/learning materials	Teaching/learning materials (TLM)	
	School micro-grants	School micro-grants	

Interactive radio instruction	Radio education programs
Camel libraries & SRM*	Donkey libraries with SRM
EGRA & math assessments	EGRA & math assessments
Training CECs, CtCs	Training CECs, CtCs
Social mobilization campaigns	Social mobilization campaigns
Policy support	Policy support
NFE technical advisor to Ministry of Education	NFE technical assistance to Ministry of Education
Support to regional education officers & Inspectorate	Support to regional education officers & Inspectorate
Research & documentation	Funds moved to Purpose 2**

Source: USAID 2015 *UNICEF PIO (ABE) Cooperative Agreement*, pp. 4-5.

* SRM = Supplementary reading materials

** UNICEF Somalia 2019 *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, 2019, p. 16.

3. EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

This section presents a brief outline of the methods used for the ABE evaluation in accordance with USAID’s Scope of Work (Annex 1). The detailed methodology is provided in Annex 2.

The evaluation team included three evaluators: an international principal investigator, an international evaluator, and a local Somali evaluation coordinator. Tusmo, a local partner organization, provided field interviewers, supervisors, and translators to support the data collection process. Further support was provided by NORC and Integrity Global staff based in Washington DC (USA) and London (UK) who assisted with project management, administration, and quality assurance.

The evaluation team used an evidence-based, co-creation, participatory approach in cooperation with USAID and the implementer. The evaluation was conducted in three phases: (1) inception phase, (2) data collection phase, and (3) analysis and report phase. The qualitative methodology for data collection involved key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). Table 5 provides details of the evaluation phases with the methods and tools used per phase.

Table 5: Summary of evaluation phases

INCEPTION	DATA COLLECTION	ANALYSIS & REPORT
-----------	-----------------	-------------------

METHODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID kick-off call • Desk review of ABE documents • Evaluation design and work plan • Evaluation tools development • Mogadishu co-creation evaluation design workshop to refine questions, field data collection plan, etc. • Translation of evaluation tools • Coronavirus pandemic approach (revision of evaluation design) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID in-brief (remote) • Training of data collectors and supervisors • Data collection: semi-structured KIIs (remote/telephone and face-to-face) • Data collection: semi-structured FGDs in field (in three regions) • KII and FGD transcriptions • Coronavirus protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID weekly progress updates (calls) • Preliminary analysis (KIIs and FGDs) • Data analysis • Triangulation of data • Preliminary findings • Case studies • Draft report • Final report • USAID presentations
TOOLS	TOOLS PROVIDED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABE program documents • Other related documents 	TOOLS DEVELOPED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KII guide (Annex C) • FGD guide (Annex C) 	TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative: NVivo • Quantitative: Stata
SUMMARY DATA ANALYSIS PLAN: Qualitative analysis (KIIs, FGDs): Content, key themes, trends, frequencies, comparisons, etc. Quantitative analysis (ABE Performance Tracking Sheet—indicator results against targets): Tables, charts, and graphs; comparative, trends, gaps, regional, gender, cross-cutting issues, etc.			

INCEPTION PHASE

The inception phase centered on contextualizing ABE and co-creating the evaluation methodology and tools with relevant stakeholders. Within the inception phase, the evaluation team conducted a thorough desk review of USAID-provided key program documents. This informed the development of a draft evaluation design report (EDR) which included the formulation of an evaluation question matrix summarizing the evaluation methods and data sources, a plan for data collection, scheduling, a data analysis plan, and a report dissemination plan.

During a two-day workshop with key stakeholders in Mogadishu, Somalia from February 2–4, 2020, the evaluation team presented the draft EDR and evaluation tools (a KII interview guide and an FGD guide). In collaboration with USAID, the implementer, sub-partners, government stakeholders, and other agencies, these key documents were tested and further refined. The evaluation team finalized the EDR based upon the workshop inputs and submitted it to USAID for approval. The evaluation question matrix and further information are provided in Annex 2.

DATA COLLECTION PHASE

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The outbreak of COVID-19, and the World Health Organization (WHO) declaration of a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, impacted the data collection and the report writing phases. With the catastrophic human and economic toll of the pandemic, a wide variety of public and private activities,

globally and in Somalia, have been impacted (and often limited) with strictly controlled lockdowns for varying, and uncertain, periods of time.

ABE was also affected, and in response to the crisis USAID led discussions to determine whether to proceed with the evaluation. With the decision to complete the evaluation, the evaluation team amended the methodology to reduce in-person data collection, where possible, in order to meet government and WHO health requirements.²⁵ Therefore, changes to the initial data collection phase included remote telephone interviewing, and face-to-face interviews only with community beneficiaries. The evaluation team also reduced the number of participants in focus group discussions from 8-10 participants to five participants to conform to social distancing protocols.

Table 6 provides a summary of the revised data collection methodology with the corresponding sampling, method, and target groups per data set. As evidenced below, the evaluation team conducted three types of qualitative data collection activities: (1) remote, (2) community in-person, and (3) COVID-19 (remote and community). Data sets 1 and 2 used a COVID-19-sensitive methodology to comply with government standards to minimize the risk of transmission of infections, whereas data set 3 (a mini-survey) was a part of the revised methodology to provide further insights into the local pandemic situation in the targeted communities. For the COVID-19 mini-survey, the evaluation team asked remote participants six COVID-19 questions during the telephone calls. In community face-to-face KIs and FGDs, the evaluation team included one COVID-19 question at the end of the session. The COVID-19 mini-survey methodology and responses are presented as a case study (Section 7) and in detail in Annex F.

Table 6: Summary of evaluation data sets

	DATA SET 1 ABE EVALUATION	DATA SET 2 ABE EVALUATION	DATA SET 3 ANNEX TO ABE EVALUATION
CATEGORY	REMOTE TELEPHONE	COMMUNITY IN-PERSON	COVID-19 REMOTE & COMMUNITY
Number	60 KIs with individuals	31 KIs with individuals 88 individuals in 15 FGDs	27 remote KIs, 31 community KIs 88 community individuals in 15 FGDs
Method	Remote, by telephone & teleconference	Face-to-face with social distancing, masks, etc.	Remote, by telephone; face-to-face with social distancing etc.
Target groups (Respondents)	Donors, implementer, sub-partners, government, UN agencies, & ABE teachers	CECs, CtCs, leaders, parents, elders, current ABE learners, and former ABE learners*	Remote govt. & teachers (six questions); Community KIs & FGDs as per data set 2 (one question)
TOTAL	60 individuals	119 individuals	146 individuals

²⁵ USAID. COVID-19 Guidance for Implementing Partners. <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/resources-for-partners/covid-19-guidance-implementing-partners>, accessed updates on July 11, 2020.

* Current ABE learners (pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, out-of-school urban and rural learners, IDPs, and older learners) and former ABE learners (dropped out, transferred to formal school or different location).

DATA SET 1: TELEPHONE KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

KII SAMPLING AND SELECTION

For data set 1, two evaluation team members conducted 60 telephone KIIs from May 7 to July 28 with 15 ABE teachers²⁶ and 45 representatives from ABE implementing staff, government, donors, and agencies (Tables 6-8).²⁷ To inform the random selection of 15 ABE teachers, the evaluation team used a USAID-endorsed list of 153 ABE teachers (which included 6 Quranic teachers). The participants included: 7 head teachers (2 female, 29 percent) and 8 teachers (7 female, 88 percent, and one male Quranic teacher from Bakool). Regionally, there were: 8 participants from Gedo, 3 from Bakool, and 4 from Bay. For the purposive (non-random) selection of 45 representatives, the evaluation team used a USAID-endorsed and pre-selected list of 55 potential participants according to organization, position, and involvement in the program; 45 were available for interview (7 female and 38 male).

The sampling was based upon position rather than gender, except where the evaluation team sought a representative sample of female teachers. The gender balance for data set 1 was: 15 head teachers, teachers, and Quranic teachers, of which 60 percent were female and 40 percent male; and 45 representatives, of which 16 percent were female and 84 percent male. The total gender balance was 27 percent female and 73 percent male.

DATA SET 2: COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FIELD PROCEDURES

Data collection for data set 2 was conducted from July 21 to August 18, after rigorous planning to comply with the Somali government, USAID, and WHO health and safety regulations and ethical interviewing requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This included adherence to a variety of safety measures including:

- Travel restrictions
- No physical contact with participants
- A supply of face coverings and gloves for interviewers and participants
- The use of sanitizing gel

²⁶ The evaluation team members were the locally based ABE Evaluation Coordinator (Somali and English speaker) and the International Evaluator (English speaker). The interviews were conducted in English.

²⁷ USAID-UNICEF. List of ABE Teachers-Selected, April 24, 2020. Total number of ABE teachers = 447.

- Social distancing to the required one meter
- Use of outdoor spaces where viable
- The reduction of participants in FGDs to five individuals (from the usual 8-10 participants).

The evaluation team’s local partner organization, Tusmo, selected local evaluation team–trained and supervised interviewers with regional language skills, prior experience, and local knowledge. The interviewers worked closely with ABE sub-partners to build trust, ensure health compliance, gain participants’ consent, navigate government support, plan logistics, and enable access to communities. In total, there were ten teams of male and female interviewers: five teams in Gedo, two in Bakool, and three in Bay. They used the TLS/ABE Centers to conduct the interviews in the local language, with all transcripts translated into English. Table 6 provides an overview of the data collection process for data set 2 with further information provided in Annex 2.

KII AND FGD SAMPLING AND SELECTION

The evaluation team’s local partner conducted 31 face-to-face KIIs (19 percent female respondents) with CEC members, CtC group members, religious leaders, community members, parents, and current ABE learners.²⁸ Three male religious leaders were also ABE Quranic teachers. Regionally, this included 11 individuals in the Gedo region, 10 in Bakool, and 10 in Bay. The local partner also conducted 15 FGDs (5 per region) with 88 individuals (57 percent female representation) (Table 7).

Cumulatively, there was 47 percent female representation across 119 KII and FGD respondents (and all stakeholders), with 33 percent female representation in each of the three regions. Where same-sex FGDs could not be arranged, FGDs were conducted with mixed groups with informed consent.

Table 7: Community KIIs & FGDs conducted by stakeholder, region, and sex

COMMUNITY DATA COLLECTION				
REGION	DISTRICT	KII	FGD	ABE TLS
GEDO	Garbaharey	CtC & CEC	Parents of abe learners	Taafaag
	Belet Hawa	Religious leader & elder	Current abe learners	Camp Ajuuran
	Bardheere	CtC, CEC & community leader	Female teachers	Camp Jirix
	Dolo	Parent & religious leader	Community	Sinai
	Luuq	Current learner & parent	Former abe learners	Jaziira
BAY	Baidoa	Current learner & parent	Former abe learners	Hiyaadho Yareey

²⁸ An explanation on the low percentage of female participants is mentioned in the Evaluation Challenges section.

	Baidoa	Religious leader & elder	Current abe learners	Aliyow Marayle
	Baidoa	Current learner & parent	Former abe learners	Moqor ii Manyow
	Dinsoor	CtC & CEC	Parents of abe learners	Sandaale
	Qansah Dheere	Parent & religious leader	Community	Fathurahman PS
BAKOOL	El Barde	CtC & CEC	Parents of ABE learners	Ugas Khalif
	El Barde	Parent & religious leader	Community	Qurac jomo IDP
	El Barde	Current learner & parent	Former abe learners	Fikta
	Rab Dhuure	Religious leader & elder	Current abe learners	Yed
	Rab Dhuure	Current learner & parent	Current abe learners	Ato
TOTAL	15 SITES	31 INDIVIDUALS	15 FGDs	

TOTAL DATA COLLECTION

Table 8 (below) includes the total data collection with 179 respondents (40 percent female), with 79 percent in regional areas and 21 percent in areas such as Mogadishu and Nairobi.²⁹

Table 8: Remote community KIIs & FGDs conducted by region and sex

REMOTE AND COMMUNITY DATA COLLECTION												
REGION	REMOTE KII			COMMUNITY KII			COMMUNITY FGD			TOTAL		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Gedo	5	5	10	10	1	11	12	16	28	27	22	49
Bay	3	3	6	7	3	10	11	19	30	21	25	46
Bakool	5	1	6	8	2	10	15	15	30	28	18	46
Others	31	7	38	0	0	0	0	0	28	31	7	38
TOTAL	44	16	60	25	6	31	38	50	88	107	72	179
%	73%	27%	100%	81%	19%	100%	43%	57%	100%	60%	40%	100%

Source: Tusmo, Somalia & evaluation team, July 21, 2020. Note: 'Others' includes locations such as Mogadishu and Nairobi.

²⁹ Information on the COVID-19 survey respondents is outlined in Annex F.

Table 9 provides an overview of the diversity of respondents across different demographics including teachers (15 percent), ABE learners (15 percent), parents (14 percent), community members (11 percent), and former ABE learners (10 percent).

Table 9: Total KIIs & FGDs by stakeholder, region, and sex

TOTAL DATA COLLECTION												
CATEGORY	OTHER		GEDO		BAY		BAKOOL		TOTAL			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	TOTAL	%
Donors	3	4							3	4	7	4%
UN agencies	2	1							2	1	3	2%
Other agencies	9	0							9	0	9	5%
IP & sub-partners*	7	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	13	2	15	8%
Government	10	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	0	11	6%
Teachers (remote)			3	5	1	3	2	1	6	9	27	15%
Teachers (female FGD)			0	6	0	6	0	0	0	12		
CEC members			2	0	1	0	0	1	3	1	4	2%
Child-to-Child members			2	0	0	1	1	0	3	1	4	2%
Religious leaders			2	0	2	0	2	0	6	0	6	4%
Community leaders			2	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	2%
Community (KII)			0	0	1	0	2	0	3	0	20	11%
Community (FGD)			3	2	4	2	3	3	10	7		
Parents (KII)			1	1	1	2	2	0	4	3	25	14%
Parents (FGD)			3	3	2	4	3	3	8	10		
ABE learners (KII)			1	0	2	0	1	0	4	0	27	15%
ABE learners (FGD)			3	2	3	3	6	6	12	11		
Former learners (FGD)			3	3	2	4	3	3	8	10	18	10%
TOTAL	31	7	27	22	21	25	28	18	107	72	179	100%
%									60%	40%	100%	

Date: August 31, 2020. Note: * The implementing partner is UNICEF, a public international organization (PIO).

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORT WRITING PHASE

The data analysis plan (Annex 2) included the analysis of qualitative data, as well as ABE's performance results against indicator targets (descriptive statistics). The evaluation team's international evaluator conducted a preliminary analysis of the qualitative data (KII and FGD transcripts) using NVivo software, and the principal investigator conducted further analysis to triangulate findings within the context of the desk review, theory of change, and ABE's performance results. Data was analyzed according to what the program intended to do, what the results were, what ABE's role was in achieving these results, and the influence of internal and external factors.

EVALUATION CHALLENGES

There were several challenges which the evaluation team addressed during the evaluation.

- **Female respondents:** The selection of female participants was low in some groups, including in telephone interviews (e.g., UN and other agencies) and face-to-face interviews (e.g., religious leaders and CECs), because the sampling was purposive (non-random) and based upon their position and involvement within the program as well as their availability. These groups had a high number of males in leadership positions. In remote communities, the random selection of female members and learners was low because some were not able to travel to the interview site or had family-related priorities. To increase female participation in the evaluation, the evaluation team selected more females through random sampling in FGDs where possible, including arranging a FGD of female teachers. Girl learners tended to arrive at the FGD location in pairs and participated together.
- **Lack of timely EGRA data:** The unavailability, until December 2020, of the EGRA Study Report, which measures and documents reading and comprehension outcomes, made it challenging for the evaluation team to measure program results toward ABE's performance goal (outcome) indicator: *Percent of learners who demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade-level text at the end of grade 2.*³⁰ The report authors and the ABE implementing partner were not available at the end of the program, preventing discussions for clarification. However, with its availability, the evaluation team incorporated relevant data.
- **Timing of the evaluation:** The COVID-19 pandemic extended the data collection period by four months, concluding in August instead of April 30. The availability of data and information requested from the implementing partner (such as statistical information) took time and also protracted the duration of the evaluation. Additionally, two key documents were not available until December 2020 that were finalized in September and October (the September EGRA Study Report and the UNICEF October Semi-Annual Performance Report, which contained end-of-program final results). Accordingly, this affected the timing of all deliverables, but it did not affect the quality of the evaluation. Working in collaboration with USAID and the implementers, the evaluation team was able to remain flexible and adaptable to these challenges.
- **Access to remote ABE Centers:** The evaluation team planned the evaluation logistics with sub-partners and head teachers to include travel time, especially to remote communities in the Bakool region. However, with some communities and families on the move, the evaluation team had to

³⁰ Grade 2 formal school is equivalent to ABE Level I. The indicator is ES.I/USAID Education Strategy Indicator.

reschedule interviews or select replacement respondents. While a challenge, this did not affect the quality of the evaluation.

- ***Translation and incongruence in terminology used:*** The evaluation team’s national evaluation coordinator, a native Somali speaker, cross-checked the transcripts of community interviews for quality and consistency of translation and terminology, and found 3 of 122 transcripts (2 percent) of poor quality—e.g., the interviewees responded to few questions, gave incomplete responses, or were not fully understood. They were subsequently classified as invalid. Removing these transcripts ensured the quality and consistency of transcripts across all data used in the reporting of findings.
- ***Use of personal protective equipment due to COVID-19:*** The evaluation team provided participants with personal protective equipment and COVID-19 information. Although participants understood the importance of safety measures, they were uncomfortable speaking through their face masks. Children struggled more than adults, and it is unclear whether this affected their responses.

4. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the desk review, and the responses of 179 individual stakeholders and community beneficiaries of ABE. Findings are analyzed and presented under each evaluation question (EQ).

The first section explores EQ1 and the performance of ABE across each of its three purposes: access; quality and reading; and system strengthening. Overall, it assesses the outputs and outcomes of the program and whether interventions led to the achievement of the program's goal. The second section presents findings for EQ2, evaluating the initial theory of change as well as the technical and operational programmatic shifts over the course of implementation. It provides insight into the internal conditions which positively or negatively influenced programming. Section three (EQ3) assesses the environmental challenges and external conditions affecting success. The last section (EQ4) provides an overview of the most influential conditions for the sustainability of the alternative basic education program.

EVALUATION QUESTION 1: HOW DID ABE CONTRIBUTE TO ITS INTENDED INTERMEDIATE AND ULTIMATE OUTCOMES?

ABE's reports to USAID omitted pertinent information on the progress of activities toward its ultimate outcome and goal. ABE's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) performance tracking table³¹ that tracks the program's objectives against its indicators and targets is not in complete alignment with its Results Framework (the logical implementation framework that depicts a step-by-step diagram of the theory of change from commencement to completion of the program). In addition, there is a lack of detail in the annual and semi-annual reports to USAID that should not only document indicator information, but should also document its progress from output to outcome to program goal. The Cooperative Agreement states that ABE is required to 'indicate any problems encountered, corrective actions taken, and any proposed means of resolution' and to disaggregate all data by gender and age.³² However, USAID noted concerns in January 2019 on the 'quality and timeliness of deliverables [reports],' particularly key omissions such as 'deviation narratives to explain achievement 10 percent above or below targets; the absence of gender disaggregation by various indicators; and reporting of exclusively cumulative achievements, rather than annual achievements.'³³ ABE took twenty months to address all concerns.³⁴ Nevertheless, the evaluation team noted continued weaknesses in the ABE reports, particularly in the program's final report and its annex on the MEL performance tracking table.

The weaknesses and lack of detail in the reports are due to the three main factors: (1) the poor quality of MEL, including the disaggregation of data, documentation, and reporting, (2) the protracted independent early grade reading assessment (EGRA) and its limited disaggregation of data, and (3) not

³¹ The MEL plan is called the Activity Monitoring & Evaluation Plan (AMEP) in the 2015 *Cooperative Agreement*, p. 6.

³² USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 6.

³³ USAID/Kenya and East Africa. (2019). Letter from the Regional Agreement Officer to UNICEF Representative. January 29, p. 2.

³⁴ UNICEF. (2020). Letter from UNICEF Representative to USAID Regional Agreement Officer. October 15.

updating the MEL system adequately to keep pace during ABE's transition from pilot program to full program as it added locations, beneficiaries, and implementation strategies.

As ABE expanded its geographic reach and beneficiaries, the disaggregation of reported data did not keep pace with its programmatic shifts. While programmatic changes were responsive to ongoing shocks and challenges, the program's MEL system remained relatively static. When the MEL system was developed at the beginning of the program, it disaggregated data for reporting to USAID into the vulnerable groups that it focused on: girls and districts, as well as noting information on children with disabilities. As the program expanded to include agro-pastoralists in addition to pastoralists, it did not disaggregate its data to differentiate between the beneficiaries. In 2017, when the program expanded into the Bay and Bakool regions, the MEL system included regionally disaggregated data and age-related data (6-14 years old and 15-19 years old). However, it did not disaggregate younger children 6 to 8 years old as a separate category, urban and rural data, or IDP data. Therefore, the program did not disaggregate data for reporting against pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, rural, urban, age, or IDPs, which was a significant limitation for reporting on findings and evaluating the outcomes of the program.

EQI will first address ABE's overarching contribution to its intended goal and outcomes, including its intended specific focus on girls.³⁵ Second, it will address the contribution of its activities under each of its three purposes to determine results against its indicators and targets.

CONTRIBUTION TOWARD OUTPUTS VERSUS OUTCOMES

Overall, ABE performed well in enabling more children to benefit from equitable alternative basic education, but it performed with mixed results at the output level (e.g., tangible products of its activities such as teaching and learning materials) and lacked appropriate indicators at the outcome level (i.e., quality education and improved learning resulting in a lack of information to determine individual and community behavior change or institutional capacity building).³⁶

ABE has one goal and one ultimate outcome as follows:

- **Goal:** (Cooperative Agreement): The overall goal of the ABE activity is to increase access to equitable, quality education for pastoralist and other out-of-school children through the provision of quality, relevant and flexible alternative basic education.³⁷

(ABE MEL): Alternative Basic Education provides a viable alternative to formal school for pastoralists and other out-of-school children to complete a cycle of basic education.

³⁵ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15.

³⁶ Outputs and outcomes are defined by: USAID. (2016). *ADS Chapter 201 Program Cycle Operational Policy*, p. 146. Outputs are 'what are produced as a direct result of inputs. They are tangible, immediate, and intended products or consequences of an activity,' while outcomes are 'the conditions of people, systems, or institutions that indicate progress or lack of progress toward achievement of project/program goals...any result higher than an output to which a given output contributes but for which it is not solely responsible.'

³⁷ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15.

- **Ultimate Outcome:** (Results Framework): By 2020, more children, particularly girls and out-of-school pastoralist children in South West State and Jubaland, access and benefit from equitable and quality alternative basic education and improved learning outcomes.

USAID defines a cycle of basic education as the successful progression from ABE Level 1 to Level 4 and its completion (graduation/certification) after an examination at the end of Level 4.³⁸ The Cooperative Agreement states that ‘at least 100 children per community should graduate with a primary education certificate at the end of the program, for a total of 1,400 children.’³⁹

ABE uses an inappropriate indicator to measure its goal. ABE uses a reading indicator to measure a graduation goal (a cycle of basic education). Figure 2 (below) shows the ABE MEL performance tracking sheet and ABE’s reading fluency and comprehension indicator, assessed by EGRA, which is a point-in-time assessment for a select sample of Level 1 learners. The graduation goal is measured by the government-administered examination for all Level 4 learners. ABE learners undertook the Level 4 examination in 2020, after four years (a cycle) of basic education, but ABE’s MEL does not assign an indicator to this graduation goal.

Figure 2: ABE MEL Goal and Performance Indicator

Narrative Summary of Results	Performance Indicator	Data Source
<p>Goal: Alternative Basic Education provides a viable alternative to formal school for pastoralist and other out of school children to complete a cycle of basic education.</p>	<p>Percent of learners who demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade level text at the end of grade 2 with USG assistance (ES.1-1)</p>	<p>EGRA enumerators training was conducted and the analytical report is being written</p>

ABE PROGRAM GOAL

Of the first cohort of ABE learners, 937 (67 percent) of the planned 1,400 learners completed a cycle of basic education and graduated. ABE’s program goal had no associated output indicator in the ABE MEL performance tracking table although it was measured by an official,

³⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁹ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15 and shown in Table 1 of this report (Planned target number of children and communities per year). It is not clear why the Cooperative Agreement targeted 1,400 graduates from the first cohort, since 100 enrollments in Year 1 multiplied by 15 communities is 1,500 learners (see Table 1).

standardized, government-administered Level 4 examination in 2020 (planned for June 2020 but postponed to September 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). In ABE's final September 2020 report, the graduation results were not disaggregated by age or urban/rural learners, nor was their year-by-year progress tracked in terms of retention or drop-out rates. However, by 2020 there were 937 Level 4 learners in the Gedo region who were eligible to undertake the examination, and all learners graduated: 402 girls (43 percent) and 535 boys (57 percent).⁴⁰

ABE documented that the challenges to reaching its graduation goal were due to multiple factors, such as the curriculum not aligned to the Directorate of NFE curriculum; the diverse age range of learners in each class; teaching the condensed ABE curriculum of two formal grades together in one ABE level; and the recruitment of under-qualified teachers.⁴¹ The evaluation team does not maintain this view, but does not have substantive evidence on the implications and effects of these factors on the performance of learners due to lack of ABE documentation.

The evaluation team points out, however, that to achieve a target of 1,400 learners who graduate, ABE needed to ensure that at least 1,400 learners reached Level 4 or were enrolled in Level 4 by 2020. This is why it is important to know retention and drop-out rates each year. Furthermore, only 558 learners were enrolled in Year 1, 2016⁴² which was only 37 percent of its target of 1,500 learners (see Table 1 of planned implementation).

The low Year 1 enrollment was due to Al-Shabab conflict in the Gedo region, which resulted in ABE changing its enrollment selection strategy from Year 2 onwards—transitioning from a pilot program to a full program. ABE followed the migrating population to capture more children, and therefore it expanded into two new regions, Bay and Bakool, and included younger children 6 to 8 years old, older children 15-19 years old, urban children, and children of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

ABE PROGRAM ULTIMATE OUTCOME

ABE enrolled 20,248 (96 percent) of its planned 21,000 out-of-school children, being extensively more inclusive than planned. Starting with the 2015 baseline of zero children enrolled in ABE's non-formal program, ABE increased access to 20,248 out-of-school children, by 2020, of which 8,666 (44 percent) were girls. Over time, the enrollments included children 6-8 years old and 15-19 years old (beyond its original scope of 8-14-year-olds), urban children, and children of IDPs. Access activities, and their associated indicators, are included under Purpose 1 discussed in this report below (e.g., social mobilization, the establishment of temporary learning spaces, and the provision of gender-sensitive facilities and hygiene products).

⁴⁰ On October 1, 2020, the implementer provided a figure of 937 first cohort Level 1 Gedo learners who were due to sit their Level 4 exams in September 2020, which is confirmed in the October 2020 *Semi-Annual Performance Report*, p. 23. By the end of the program in 2020, enrollments included: Level 1 = 7,402 learners (all regions), Level 2 = 6,836 (all regions), Level 3 = 4,932 (Gedo and Bakool), and Level 4 = 937 (Gedo). [The Directorate of NFE in the Jubaland Ministry of Education issues the certificates, and had not yet issued them at the time of writing this report.](#)

⁴¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report*. April 01–September 29, p. 23.

⁴² UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016, p. 7, although it is not confirmed whether there were any drop-outs.

The Results Framework's ultimate outcome essentially has two parts: 'more children ... access alternative basic education' and 'more children ... benefit from equitable and quality alternative basic education and improved learning outcomes.'⁴³ The Cooperative Agreement implies 'quality education' to include 'improved teacher professional development and improved learning environment' leading to 'improved reading outcomes for primary grade learners.'⁴⁴

ABE measured 'improved learning outcomes' through its narrow objective to 'improve reading outcomes for primary grade learners in target locations' under Purpose 2 (quality and reading). Its associated indicator is further narrowed to a reading measurement, using EGRA, that is only applicable to Level I ABE learners: *Percent of learners who demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade level text at the end of grade 2.*⁴⁵ ABE also used proxy output indicators to measure quality teaching and learning, such as the number of textbooks and supplementary reading materials, the number of teachers trained, and the number of teachers who use radio programs.

Therefore, with a reading indicator (not a learning outcome indicator) and output indicators that measure quantity (not quality), there is a lack of information to determine ABE's contribution to its intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes.

READING FLUENCY AND COMPREHENSION

EGRA results were published at the end of the program and could not be used during ABE's implementation to inform teachers and the community. ABE EGRA results show that 58 percent of Level I learners demonstrated reading fluency and 55 percent demonstrated reading comprehension, not achieving the target of 75 percent but achieving comparability with grade 2 formal school children. However, more formal schoolgirls (69 percent) demonstrated reading fluency than ABE girls (56 percent).

EGRA STUDY: INTENTION AND TIMELINE

ABE measured reading fluency and comprehension through an independent early grade reading assessment (EGRA), for a select number of learners, at the end of Level I, which is the equivalent of grade 2 in formal schools. In ABE's program design, EGRA aimed to be 'a simple recognized instrument that can report on the foundation levels of student learning ... the results will be used to inform community and schools on the quality of education and as an advocacy tool to raise awareness on the quality of education' and 'literacy outcomes will be measured under this program, the results of which will also feed into the teacher training program.'⁴⁶ The EGRA Study expected to publish results in 2018, but it was not finalized until September 2020 due to inconsistencies and the poor quality of its report. Therefore, the EGRA results are not documented in ABE's final report to USAID; they only appear in its Annex E, the performance tracking table.⁴⁷ More importantly, the reading results could not be used

⁴³ USAID. (2019). ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work. December 6, p. 7.

⁴⁴ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15.

⁴⁵ UNICEF Somalia 2020 Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report. April 01–September 29, Annex E. Grade 2 learners is equivalent to ABE Level I.

⁴⁶ USAID 2015 ABE Cooperative Agreement, p. 20.

⁴⁷ UNICEF Somalia 2020 Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report. April 01–September 29, Annex E.

during implementation to inform schools on the quality of education. The program did not devise additional learning outcome indicators or reading outcome indicators to monitor ‘improved learning outcomes’ for children in Level 1 or any other level.

ABE’s performance tracking table records a result of 75percent of learners who gained reading fluency and comprehension, showing that the program reached its target of 75 percent.⁴⁸ ABE’s calculation was the average of all literacy skills tested, including evaluative comprehension (82 percent). Table 10 provides a summary of EGRA results for 961 ABE learners (476 girls) in 40 ABE Centers, and 290 formal students (143 girls) in 9 GOS schools, with an average age of 12 for both ABE and FGS learners.⁴⁹

Table 10: ABE EGRA results, September 2020

SUMMARY OF ABE AND FGS READING SKILLS FOR LEVEL 1/GRADE 2										
Percent of learners who demonstrate reading fluency & comprehension of grade level text at the end of grade 2										
SKILLS	ALL			ABE			GOS			NOTES
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	EGRA REPORT
Letters CPM*	76	78	74	75	77	72	80	80	80	Figure 5, page 29
Non-word CPM	36	37	34	34	40	40	40	36	32	Figure 6, page 30**
Oral reading CPM	40	41	39	39	41	38	43	42	43	Figure 7, page 31
Reading fluency	59%	41%	39%	58%	61%	56%	63%	57%	69%	Figure 11, page 35
Gedo	66%	68%	63%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Bay	33%	34%	32%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Bakool	74%	72%	76%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Non-Readers	14%	11%	17%	16%	10%	20%	9%	8%	9%	Figure 12, page 36
Reading compr/n.	54%	53%	56%	55%	n/a	n/a	53%	n/a	n/a	Figure 8, page 32
Gedo	50%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Bay	56%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Bakool	65%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Listening compr/n	83%	83%	83%	80%	n/a	n/a	91%	n/a	n/a	Figure 9, page 33
Evaluative comp.	82%	82%	82%	82%	n/a	n/a	82%			Figure 10, page 34

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ USAID 2020 ABE Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report, September.

Source: USAID 2020 ABE Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report, September.

* CPM = Correct per minute.

** The gender figures are likely to be incorrect in the report (transposed)—e.g., ABE should be M=35%, F=32%.

EGRA results show that 58 percent of tested ABE Level I learners demonstrated reading fluency and 55 percent showed reading comprehension, both of which are under ABE's target of 75 percent, but are comparable with formal schools, at 63 percent reading fluency and 53 percent reading comprehension. There are no significant differences between boys and girls across both ABE and GOS learners. However, the results show that more formal school girls (69 percent) demonstrate reading fluency than ABE girls (56 percent).

The EGRA report notes that 'students in ABE schools were on average more likely to be absent from school than those from GOS schools' and girls were more likely than boys to be absent from school.⁵⁰ The study asked participants about absentee days for one term. The results showed 57 percent of ABE learners were absent compared with 56 percent of GOS learners; 57 percent of boys compared with 56 percent of girls (no disaggregation between ABE and GOS girls); with ABE learners absent for 1.45 days per term and GOS learners absent for 1.20 days per term; boys absent for 1.29 days per term and girls absent for 1.45 days per term (no disaggregation between ABE and GOS girls).⁵¹ The difference in absentee days between ABE and GOS total learners (1 percent difference) and between girls and boys (1 percent difference) per term, as shown in the EGRA report, does not appear to be a significant reason for the difference in girls' reading performance between ABE and GOS girls, but the EGRA data does not provide disaggregated data for demographic statistics to determine this. Hence, further research is required to determine the implications of the number of ABE girls' absentee days in comparison with GOS girls and their reading performance. The EGRA report also noted that more learners in Bay and Gedo were absent (67 percent and 60 percent respectively) compared with 38% of Bakool learners (no disaggregation by ABE and GOS or boys and girls).⁵²

USAID has conducted EGRA studies in over forty countries. In 2020, USAID notes that in the United States, learners at the end of grade 1 are expected to have 50 oral reading correct words per minute (CWPM) and in Africa's English-speaking countries the grade 2 oral fluency is 10-20 CWPM.⁵³ It is difficult to make comparisons with Somalia, who were tested in their local language, however, ABE learners achieved 39 CWPM and GOS learners achieved 43 CWPM.

Parents and community said that learners were improving their literacy levels, but there is no baseline data or other indicators for the comparison of improved literacy skills from 2016 to 2020. ABE based its measurement of literacy on the EGRA reading fluency and comprehension results for Level I learners, and did not devise and use alternative outcome indicators or other measures of literacy. Therefore, there is no comparison of literacy level improvements in the program between 2016 and 2020. Instead, the program used proxy output indicators as a measure of success

⁵⁰ USAID 2020 ABE Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report, September, p. ix.

⁵¹ USAID 2020 ABE Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report, September, p. 19.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ USAID. (2020). Early Grade Reading Barometer. https://earlygradereadingbarometer.org/pages/about_egra, accessed December 2, 2020.

(e.g., teacher training, provision of quality teaching and learning materials). Proxy output indicators do not measure learners' performance, an outcome measure. Output indicators measure the number of teachers trained and the number of TLM distributed, whereas outcome indicators would measure the extent of learning achieved. However, the majority of learners (82 percent) interviewed during the evaluation commented positively on learning literacy. A Gedo CEC member said, 'students and parents may not be able to write well, but currently they are reading and writing, and they have the best opportunity for learning.' In general, 54 percent of the community interviewed and 44 percent of teachers indicated that literacy was one of the main benefits of the program and that the program had reduced illiteracy (Table 24). Parents and community members requested additional support for adult literacy or adult learning programs.

GENDER

ABE's gender strategies set ambitious targets, proactively aiming to address inequalities in girls' education—a national challenge at all levels—but there was no documentation on the results of these strategies linking outputs to outcomes.

ABE had ambitious 50 percent targets for the enrollment of girls and the recruitment of female teachers and committee members, but it had proactive strategies to achieve its intended outputs. The objective (ultimate output) of Purpose 1 (access) emphasized the enrollment and retention of girls, and in Purpose 2 (quality and reading), it was implied. During the pilot phase of the program, ABE had a range of strategies to proactively enroll girls (social mobilization campaigns on the importance of education and the provision of gender-sensitive facilities—each TLS with twin latrines), and to retain girls (clean and safe learning spaces, the distribution of hygiene products, the recruitment of female teachers, teacher incentives, teaching methodologies to cater for girls, and specific Child-to-Child club events).⁵⁴

ABE enrolled 43 percent out-of-school girls, 27 percent female teachers, 43 percent female Community Education Committee members, and 40 percent Child-to-Child club members. The program aimed to reach approximately 50 percent girls in its target of 21,000 out-of-school children. It enrolled 8,666 (43 percent) out-of-school girls, aged 6-19 years old, with 3,619 girls in the Gedo region (44 percent), 2,921 girls (46 percent) in Bay, and 2,126 (37 percent) in Bakool. The program did not document specific reasons for the lower female enrollment in Bakool, but it did note the ongoing challenges in the remote region with distance, politics, and conflict: 'The enrollment and retention of out-of-school children was a challenge, but tremendous progress was made in terms of enrollment of children to 20,107 (11,145 males and 8,962 females by April 2019).'⁵⁵ There is no gender analysis in the ABE reports on the enrollment variabilities, but the evaluation team notes that, if 8,962 females were enrolled by April 2019, at least 296 dropped out (the final report in September 2020 states that enrollment ceased due to COVID-19, except for the addition of 19 girls). There is no indicator on drop-out rates, and there is limited documentation in the ABE reports. In 2019, the program documented 46 girls who dropped out in Baidoa in the Bay region, with no further details on

⁵⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. November 15, 2016, p. 21.

⁵⁵ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. May 30, p. 7.

age, ABE level, urban/rural, or IDP status.⁵⁶ The reasons were stated as ‘preliminary findings’ that found that the girls were ‘adversely affected by the drought and the water shortage ... or rains which forced them to migrate to other locations ... [or] support[ing] mothers with house chores, caring of siblings, partaking in income generating activities and early marriage as the probable causes for the drop out.’⁵⁷ By 2020, 937 ABE learners sat the Ministry of Education Level 4 examination—402 girls (43 percent) and 535 boys (57 percent)⁵⁸—and ABE documents that all of the girls graduated.

ABE set a target of 50 percent female teachers, and recruited a total of 447 teachers of which 121 were female (27 percent).⁵⁹ It proved the most difficult to achieve this target in Bakool, the most remote region, with 17 percent of teachers being female (compared with 29 percent in both Gedo and Bay regions) (see Section 7, Case Study 3, Female Teachers). The program established a CEC and a CtC club (a student board) in each ABE Center. CEC members were 43percent female and CtC members were 40 percent female.⁶⁰ The percentage of female CEC members was even across all regions at 43 percent, while the percentage of female CtC facilitators was 36 percent in both Gedo and Bakool, compared with 48 percent in the Bay region. Table 11 (below) summarizes the program’s contributions toward its intended gender targets as part of its intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes. Further discussions on gender issues are presented throughout this report.

Table 11: ABE gender targets and results (September 2020)

SUMMARY OF ABE GENDER RESULTS AGAINST TARGETS				
TARGET (ACCESS)	NUMBER	ABE		GOS
		M	F	F
50% enrollment of girls	Total=20,248, M=11,582, F=8,666	57%	43%	44%*
50% girls: Gedo			44%	
50% girls: Bay			46%	
50% girls: Bakool			37%	
50% recruitment of female teachers	Total=447, M=326, F=121	73%	27%	11%**
50% females: Gedo			29%	
50% females: Bay			29%	
50% females: Bakool			17%	

⁵⁶ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, May 30, Annex IV.

⁵⁷ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, Annex I, p. 1.

⁵⁸ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report. April 01–September 29, p. 23.

⁵⁹ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. November 15, 2016, p. 21.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

50% female CEC members	57%	43%			
50% females: Gedo		43%			
50% females: Bay		43%			
50% females: Bakool		43%			
50% female CtC Club members	60%	40%			
50% females: Gedo		36%			
50% females: Bay		48%			
50% females: Bakool		36%			
TARGET (QUALITY & READING)	NUMBER	ABE		GOS	
		M	F	M	F
75% gain reading fluency in EGRA 2019	Total=961, M=485, F=476	61%	56%	57%	69%^
75% gain reading comprehension in EGRA 2019	Total=961, M=485, F=476	55%		53%^^	
50% girls sit Level 4 MOE exam 2020	Total=937, M=535, F=402^^^ (all passed)	57%	43%		

* Source: FGS MoECHE 2017 *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*, p. iii. (USAID 2015 *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 11 indicates 36%, but no source/date was provided. Updated gender statistics are not available in the FGS National Development Plan 2020-2024.]

** Source: FGS MoECHE 2017 *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*, p. 30 states 11% female teachers in rural formal government primary schools in Central South Somalia in 2015.

^ USAID 2020 *ABE Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report*, September, p 35.

^^ Ibid., p. 32—there is no gender disaggregated figures for ABE, only for both FGS and ABE.

^^^ All students passed (graduated) according to UNICEF Somalia 2020 *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report*. September 29, p. 11.

PURPOSE I: ACCESS TO QUALITY ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION

Ultimate Objective: Enrollment & retention of up to 21,000 out-of-school girls & boys in Central South Somalia, & graduation/certification of one cohort of 1,400 ABE learners. (ABE Results Framework)

The program successfully completed the construction and rehabilitation of gender-sensitive temporary learning spaces, the enrollment of marginalized learners, and almost doubled the provision of feminine hygiene products, resulting in parity of girl enrollments with formal schools facing the same challenges to enroll girls. Although ABE did not achieve its girls' enrollment target, it achieved parity with formal schools facing the same challenge, and showed no gender differences among ABE learners in reading fluency, comprehension, or graduation rates, but there is no data on retention or drop-out rates, increased participation of girls, improved learning outcomes, or the retention rates of teachers.

PURPOSE I RESULTS

Purpose I includes the construction and rehabilitation of temporary learning spaces (TLS), and the provision of gender-sensitive facilities and hygiene products, with the ultimate output being the ‘enrollment and retention of up to 21,000 out-of-school girls and boys,’ with a particular focus on girls (shown in Table 2). The performance results are shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: ABE Purpose 2: Summary of results against indicators and targets, September 2020

SUMMARY OF ABE RESULTS AGAINST INDICATORS			
PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT	%
PURPOSE I: ACCESS TO QUALITY ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION			
1: # learners in primary schools or non-school based settings reached	21,000	20,248	96%
2: # primary or secondary classrooms built or repaired	192	192	100%
3: # gender-sensitive sanitation facilities provided by ABE	192	198	103%
4: # reusable sanitary towels provided to ABE Centers	20,000	38,453	192%

Source: Annex E to UNICEF Somalia’s Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 2020. Note: Green = significantly over target.

CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF TLS AND CLASSROOMS

The construction and rehabilitation of temporary learning spaces increased access to alternative basic education for out-of-school children, reaching 96 communities. ABE planned to reach 75 communities (15 communities per year for five years), but reached 96 communities. The construction and rehabilitation of TLS successfully increased access to education, particularly for rural and remote children. Table 13 provides a breakdown of TLS and classrooms with 52 in the Gedo region, 32 in the Bay region, and 12 in the Bakool region.⁶¹ Where the TLS was “the first school built in some remote villages ... this excited the parents.”⁶² Of the 96 TLS constructed, 86 were newly built, and 10 were established in existing facilities with 7 in El Barde and 3 in Qansah Dheere.⁶³ ABE established two classrooms per TLS for a total of 192 classrooms.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Excel spreadsheet of TLS sites, ABE Enrollment by Center, provided by UNICEF; and UNICEF Somalia *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report*, [September 30](#).

⁶² Remote KII interview, implementer, July 2020.

⁶³ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, p. 10.

⁶⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, p. 11 & p. 13.

Table 13: ABE temporary learning spaces and enrollments by region, September 2020

SUMMARY OF ABE TEMPORARY LEARNING SPACES						
REGION	COMMUNITIES	TLS	CLASSROOMS		GENDER FACILITIES	ENROLLMENTS
			TARGET	ACTUAL		
Gedo	52	52	104	104	104	8,225
Bay	32	32	64	64	64	6,291
Bakool	12	12	24	24	30	5,732
TOTAL	96	96	192	192	198	20,248

Source: UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, 2020.

ABE significantly over-achieved its target for the distribution of reusable hygiene products for girls, distributing 38,453—18,453 more than planned. There is no documented rationale in the ABE reports for the over-achievement of the distribution of hygiene products, but it was consistently 2 kits per adolescent girl to June 2018 and 4 kits per girl from June 2018. For example, in 2019, a total of 21,816 hygiene products were distributed to 5,454 girls (4 per girl) across all TLS, and during the final six months of the program, 3,675 girls benefited from the distribution of 7,026 hygiene products (2 per girl over 6 months). ABE states that ‘the provision of these reusable sanitary towels improved ABE girls’ participation in school.’⁶⁵ There is no evidence in the ABE reports, nor in the evaluation interviews, to substantiate this, as ABE did not monitor retention rates of girls (nor boys) or the participation of girl learners. However, in June 2018, the third-party Monitoring and Verification Report (MVR) team interviewed 16 community members (9 female) on the distribution of hygiene products, all of whom ‘observed positive changes’ including ‘improved menstrual hygiene, improved school attendance and interactions, improved girls’ self-confidence, and improved girl’s educational performance.’ The MVR team recommended ‘increasing the quantity of sanitary pads.’⁶⁶ It is likely that ABE adopted the MVR recommendations, which resulted in double the planned distribution results.

Community members selected and provided the land for the establishment of ABE Centers ‘in a central location [which] communities can access without excluding marginalized groups.’⁶⁷ The TLS were designed to be erected and dismantled easily and quickly, with ABE’s program team managing the community-assisted construction. In an estimated seven communities, the TLS had to be relocated due to land disputes with the landowners, but latrines had to be rebuilt as they were permanent structures which could not be moved.⁶⁸ Community members assisted with the

⁶⁵ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 15.

⁶⁶ USAID Somalia Program Support Services (SPSS). (2018). Year 4 Round 3 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited April 1 to June 30, p. 3.

⁶⁷ Community KII, Child-to-Child club member, Bay region, August 2020.

⁶⁸ The implementer estimated the number during the Virtual Close-Out Ceremony on September 9, 2020. The exact number and locations were not provided.

relocation. The program did not provide the exact number of relocated TLS, nor details of the land disputes.

ABE established 28 ABE Centers in IDP locations where the government had not previously reached. The program was able to reach IDPs through the establishment of TLS in regions with IDP camps. This included three TLS in the Gedo region, as well as two more in Bay and Bakool when the program expanded to these regions at the end of 2017. In the Bay region, the TLS was established in the urban capital Baidoa, and was able to serve 23 IDP communities. The extrapolated IDP enrollments shows that an estimated 5,234 girls (46 percent) were enrolled across these 28 centers, which represents 26 percent of all enrollments.

ENROLLMENT

ABE enrolled 20,248 children (96percent of its intended target of 21,000). The program aimed to reach ‘approximately 21,000 children,’ and enrolled 20,248 learners 6-19-years-old across its three targeted regions: 8,198 in Gedo (44 percent girls); 6,344 in Bay (46 percent girls), and 5,706 in Bakool (37 percent girls), as shown in Table 14. The Gedo region accounted for the highest proportion of enrollments (41percent), followed by Bay (31percent) and Bakool (28 percent). The largest percentage of female enrollments were in the Bay region with almost equal ratios of female (46 percent) to male learners (54 percent). ABE did not document the strategies that worked to improve the enrollment of girls in the Bay region. A CEC member in Bay said this was due to social mobilization activities, but did not specifically mention targeting girls: ‘[CEC members] promote school enrollment through raising the awareness of the community about the importance of education. They engage with community members to take their children to school.’⁶⁹ However, a Bakool Regional Education Officer said that the local sub-partners played a critical role in the enrollment of all children, as well as double-shift teaching and ‘the idea of recruiting more female teachers also ensured increased enrollment of girls into ABE Centers.’⁷⁰

Table 14: ABE enrollments by region, September 2020

SUMMARY OF ABE ENROLLMENTS						
REGION	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Gedo	4579	56%	3619	44%	8198	41%
Bay	3423	54%	2921	46%	6344	31%
Bakool	3580	63%	2126	37%	5706	28%
TOTAL	11,582	57%	8,666	43%	20,248	100%

Source: Annex E to UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 2020.

⁶⁹ Community KII, Dinsoor, Bay region CEC member, August 2020.

⁷⁰ Remote (telephone) government KII, South West State (SWS), Bakool Regional Education Officer, July 2020.

RETENTION RATES

Learner retention rates are not available as this data was not tracked, monitored, or documented, despite it being the objective of Purpose I, and therefore it cannot supplement the findings of this evaluation. Retention is the result of how many learners remained enrolled in each level from start to completion. To determine the success of an educational program, the most frequently used measurements are retention rates and associated drop-out and graduation rates. Typically, in NFE, transfer rates from NFE to formal school are also important. The program's MEL system did not include indicators to measure these rates, and subsequently the program's progress toward its ultimate outcome, nor did it include narrative information in its reports to USAID. In effect, there is no tracking of learners, in terms of total or disaggregated data. Annex I to the March 2020 Semi-Annual ABE Report indicates that in 2019 ABE followed up with 131 girls who left the program: 46 girls dropped out of schooling completely and 85 left ABE to attend a nearby formal government school (outlined below).⁷¹

DROP-OUT RATES

Learner drop-out rates are not available as this data was not tracked and therefore it cannot supplement the findings of this evaluation. In 2019, ABE documented 46 girls who dropped out in Baidoa in Bay region, with no further details on age, level, urban/rural, or IDP status.⁷² The reasons were stated as 'preliminary findings' that found that the girls were 'adversely affected by the drought and the water shortage ... or rains which forced them to migrate to other locations ... [or] support[ing] mothers with house chores, caring of siblings, partaking in income generating activities and early marriage as the probable causes for the drop out.'⁷³ There is no tracked data for other years on drop-out rates, and no data on the number of boys who dropped out of ABE. Female enrollments in Baidoa in 2019 were 1,629⁷⁴ which represented a 3 percent drop-out rate. By comparison, nationally, in 2015 (the most recent official educational data), government formal primary schools had a 16-23 percent drop-out rate in grade I for both boys and girls.⁷⁵

During the CEC/CtC FGDs, respondents said that girls often drop out 'because they lack parental encouragement' and due to 'early child marriage', while a CtC student confirmed CtC's role to mitigate drop-outs: 'Drop-out is prevented by monitoring the child's presence in the school by both teachers and parents. As the CtC, we help also with this by reporting the absentee and going to their houses to ask them why they are not in school.'⁷⁶ Data collected from 41 community members revealed that 90 percent said that their children attend school on time every day, with 4 percent saying that they sometimes send their children to school after they have completed home chores (Table 15).

⁷¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, Annex I.

⁷² UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, May 30, Annex IV.

⁷³ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, Annex I, p. I.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Annex I.

⁷⁵ UNICEF. (2017). Somalia Strategy Note 2018-2020, p. 6; and MoECHE. (2015). Somaliland/Puntland/Federal Government of Somalia, Education Statistical Yearbooks 2014-2015.

⁷⁶ Community CEC and CtC FGD, August 2020.

Table 15: ABE learners attending ABE Centers every day

LEARNER ATTENDANCE HABITS: SENDING CHILDREN TO ABE CENTER / TLS					
CATEGORY	NONE IN ABE TLS	NOT EVERY DAY	LATER AFTER HOME HELP	EVERY DAY ON TIME	TOTAL
Parents [KII & FGD N=25]	0	0	1	24	25
Religious Leaders [N=6]	1	1	0	4	6
Community Members [N=3]	0	0	0	3	3
Current ABE Learners [N=4]	0	0	1	3	4
Community Leaders [N=3]	0	0	0	3	3
TOTAL	1	1	2	37	41
%	2%	2%	4%	90%	100%

Source: KIIs and FGDs, July to August 2020. The figures correspond to the total number of people interviewed (Table 9).

TRANSFER RATES

In 2019, 85 girls transferred from ABE to formal primary schools, yet ABE did not recognize this as a successful result. The program reported that 85 girls from Levels 1 and 2 in four ABE Centers in Baidoa, Bay region transferred into three formal primary schools.⁷⁷ Four (5 percent) transferred into grade 1; 33 (39 percent) into grade 2; 27 (32 percent) into grade 3; 12 (14 percent) into grade 4; and 9 (10 percent) into grade 5. Although they were not retained in ABE, their transfer to formal schools is a positive move in their educational progression; but the program did not record this as a successful result.

The evaluation team interviewed 18 former ABE learners (6 from each region) in community FGDs, and asked what they were currently doing (Table 16). Three learners (17 percent) had transferred to a formal government school to continue their education, and six (33 percent) were at home helping their parents.

Table 16: ABE former learners: Where are they now?

FORMER ABE LEARNERS: WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY DOING?					
RESPONSE	GEDO	BAY	BAKOOL	TOTAL	%
Helping parents at home or on the farm	2	1	3	6	33%
In Quranic school/madrassa	1	2	0	3	17%

⁷⁷ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 9 and Annex I.

In formal government school (secular)	1	1	1	3	17%
Nothing	1	0	2	3	17%
No answer	0	2	0	2	11%
Working outside the household	1	0	0	1	5%
TOTAL	6	6	6	18	100%

Source: KIIs and FGDs, July to August 2020. The figures correspond to the total number of people interviewed (Table 9).

PURPOSE 2: QUALITY AND READING

Ultimate Objective: Improved reading outcomes for primary learners in target locations. (ABE Results Framework)

ABE achieved its targets for professional development training for teachers, administrators, CEC and CtC Club members, and the distribution of teacher and learning materials, but 75percent of the story books were distributed in late 2020.

PURPOSE 2 RESULTS

Purpose 2, Activity 2 is centered on quality education, which includes professional development and refresher training for teachers, administrators, and officials, as well as teacher incentives, the provision of teaching and learning materials (TLM), the formation and training of Community Education Committees and Child-to-Child clubs, the provision of micro-grants, and social mobilization (public awareness) campaigns. These activities aim to lead to the program's goal for learners to complete a cycle of education and its ultimate outcome for learners to access basic education and improved learning outcomes. Purpose 2 performance results are shown in Table 17.

Table 17: ABE Purpose 2: Summary of results against indicators and targets, September 2020

SUMMARY OF ABE RESULTS AGAINST INDICATORS			
PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT	% TARGET
PURPOSE 2: QUALITY AND READING			
5a: # primary or secondary textbooks	29,500	47,924	162%
5b: # textbooks and other TLM provided (ES-I.10) – supplementary reading	12,000	12,000	100%
5c: # textbooks and other TLM provided (ES-I.10) – school kits	292	633	217%
5d: # textbooks and other TLM provided (ES-I.10) – replenishment kits	292	771	264%
5e: # textbooks and TLM provided (ES-I.10) – recreation kits	292	577	198%
6: # people reached through radio education programs [75% of target population]	2,706,714	2,706,714	100%

7: # children benefitted from the artwork competition and booklet writing exercise	150	150 / F=72	100% / 48%
8: # education administrators/officials who complete professional development	26	28	108%
9: # educators who complete professional development activities	447	447 / F=121	100% / 27%
10: % surveyed ABE teachers reporting use of radio education programs 66% of 192	127	206	162%
11: # PTAs & CECs engaged in primary or secondary education	96	96	100%
12: # Child-to-Child clubs established	96	96	100%

Source: Annex E to UNICEF Somalia 2020 Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, September. Note: Green = significantly over target.

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS: TEXTBOOKS

From 2018, more textbooks were delivered than planned, and were in use, with one textbook for several Level 1 and 2 learners; but it is unclear whether Level 3 and 4 learners received their textbooks. The printing of the ABE curriculum and the consequent distribution of textbooks to Level 1 and 2 learners was at 21,424 (73 percent) of its target of 29,500 by March 2020.⁷⁸ During evaluation interviews, CEC, CtC and local school inspectors indicated that they had conducted monitoring visits with ABE sub-partners in 2018 and 2019 and confirmed the use of these textbooks in Level 1 and Level 2 classrooms.

Level 1 and 2 teachers also confirmed that they used the textbooks, but that there were not enough: ‘The types of teaching and learning materials available at our disposal at this Center are textbooks, school-in-a-box, replenishment kits and recreational kits for the children. All these materials have been useful in delivering the class sessions. However, I feel these materials are limited and not enough for the many students at the school. The effectiveness of these materials keeps reducing with the increase in the number of students’ and ‘I agree with my friend’s list of school materials available at the school. The limited number of textbooks is an issue. We normally give one textbook to say five students to use at the same time during class to ensure everyone has access to the textbook.’⁷⁹

ABE provided updated textbook distribution data to the evaluation team in October, stating that 45,116 textbooks (53 percent over target) were delivered to Level 1 and 2 students only: 26,467 to Level 1 and 18,649 to Level 2, supporting 7,402 and 6,836 learners respectively to total 14,238 learners (Table 18).

⁷⁸ Ibid., Annex E.

⁷⁹ FGD with female teachers from all three regions, July 2020. Both comments are from teachers in the Bay region.

UNICEF, globally, does not mandate a 1:1 student-textbook ratio, but a 1:2 ratio. The student-textbook ratio for ABE is shown in Table 18.⁸⁰

Table 18: ABE total distribution of textbooks, September 2020

ABE TEXTBOOK DISTRIBUTION (TOTAL, NOT SUBJECT-BASED)						
REGION	LEARNERS		TEXTBOOKS		TOTAL	RATIO
	Level 1	Level 2	L 1	L 2		
Gedo	1,694	1,947	14,184	4,980	19,164	1 student to 2.4 textbooks (1:2)
Bay	3,355	2,893	8,251	9,696	17,947	1 student to 2.9 textbooks (1:3)
Bakool	2,353	1,996	4,932	3,973	8,005	1 student to 1.4 textbooks (1:1)
TOTAL	7,402	6,836	26,467	18,649	45,116	1 student to 2.2 textbooks (1:2)

Source: UNICEF data provided to the evaluation team, on request, on October 1, 2020.

However, the final ABE report documented that the end result was 47,924 textbooks distributed (62 percent over target), but there was no disaggregated data. ABE reported that the target was amended after March 2020 from 29,500 to 41,500 (annual target: zero distribution in the first three years; 17,777 in 2018; 8,147 in 2019; and 12,000 in 2020), and distribution was pending the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions and school closures to August 15, 2020. The report states that 12,000 textbooks were distributed to ‘grade 3 and 4 of Math and English subjects’⁸¹ (equivalent to ABE Level 2), whereas the report’s narrative states that ‘11,742 textbooks for two subjects for Levels 3 and 4 were printed for distribution to schools.’⁸² ABE was expected to distribute textbooks to all four levels, according to the Cooperative Agreement,⁸³ but it is not clear whether Levels 3 and 4 received textbooks due to the discrepancy in the report and the close-out of the program. The MVR team’s third-party report for the end of 2020 was not yet published in order to verify textbook distribution by levels.

The MVR team’s previous reports verify that textbook distribution commenced from January 2018—but MVR data is not disaggregated by level of instruction. The distribution was on track until March 2020 (at 73 percent of its target)⁸⁴ until the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the printing and transport of textbooks, delaying distribution until after August. The MVR team noted that textbooks were in use, except in the reporting period April to June 2018 (only 38 percent of those surveyed said they were in

⁸⁰ The implementer, UNICEF, provided the information on textbook distribution on October 1, 2010, stating ‘the recommended ratio of the distribution of textbooks is one textbook for two students (1 textbook:2 students).’ Its global mandate is also stated on its website: https://www.unicef.org/somalia/education_114.html

⁸¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September, Annex E.

⁸² Ibid., p. 16

⁸³ USAID. (2015). ABE Cooperative Agreement, p. 19.

⁸⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, Annex E.

use), and from January to March 2019 (53percent of those surveyed said they were in use).⁸⁵ For example, in March 2018, 100percent of 60 respondents in Baidoa, Bay region, said textbooks were being used, with a field monitor observing ‘all students used one textbook apiece’⁸⁶ and in June in Gedo ‘20 girls and 23 boys were observed in the classroom visited, with each having one textbook.’⁸⁷

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS: KITS

ABE aimed to distribute a range of TLM directly to the ABE Centers (planned to distribute 292 school kits, 292 recreation kits, and 292 replenishment kits).

More of UNICEF’s standardized educational pre-packaged kits, designed for education in emergencies, were delivered than planned, with high rates of use. UNICEF’S globally pre-packaged kits are stored offshore and are purchased subject to availability, transport, and weather conditions. For 2020, these purchases were ordered and received before March, but their distribution was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic (transport restrictions, road closures, and school closures) but all exceeded their target: school kits by 117 percent, replenishment kits by 164 percent, and recreation kits by 98 percent. Each *school kit* (school-in-a-box) has equipment for 40 learners and includes: slates (mini chalkboards), a wooden clock, wooden counting cubes, a wind-up solar radio, and a set of three laminated alphabet and multiplication table posters. *Replenishment kits* are top-up items needed in the TLS. *Recreation kits* are designed for learners aged 7-19 to support recreational activity such as sports and games. They include: a metal box with handballs, volleyballs and a net, small footballs, a basketball, sponge balls, frisbees, skipping ropes, flagpoles with flags, bib-style sports vests, slates, whistles, air pumps to inflate balls, and measuring tape.⁸⁸

The MVR documents the delivery of kits from March 2017 with high rates of use, except in the reporting period April to June 2018 (38 percent of those surveyed said the kits were in use).⁸⁹ For example, usage rates for school kits ranged from 91-100 percent across MVR reports; usage rates for replenishment kits ranged from 98-100 percent; and usage rates for recreation kits was consistently 100 percent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS: SUPPLEMENTARY READING MATERIALS

ABE aimed to distribute 12,000 supplementary reading materials through two forms of distribution: (1) mobile schools—a teacher travelling with migrating families by camel loaded with TLM;⁹⁰ and (2) mobile camel libraries with story books moving between clusters of ABE Centers (referred to as education hubs).⁹¹ Insecurity in the region during the first year made it impossible for ABE to access roaming

⁸⁵ SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 3 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited April 1 to June 30, p. 15; and SPSS. (2019). Year 5 Round 2 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited January 1 to March 31, p. 2.

⁸⁶ SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 2 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited January 1 to March 31, p. 31.

⁸⁷ SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 3 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited April 1 to June 30, p. 15.

⁸⁸ UNICEF. (2013). UNICEF Education Kit Handbook: Recreation Kit Guidance, p. 5-6.

⁸⁹ SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 3 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited April 1 to June 30, p. 15.

⁹⁰ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 18.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

pastoralist communities,⁹² and therefore the strategies of mobile schools and mobile camel libraries were merged into mobile libraries (donkey carts) that travel between clusters of CECs that manage the ABE Centers. Therefore, as the program changed from pilot to full program, the TLM distribution was only to mobile libraries via donkey carts.

In 2016, a USAID-funded survey on children's reading books in African languages found that there were only 24 Somali language readers on the market (20 in Ethiopia and 4 in Kenya), with few titles available in Somalia as they were out-of-print and of poor quality.⁹³ ABE aimed to provide existing and new reading materials to learners to improve literacy levels. By Year 4, 2019, the program had only distributed 3,000 supplementary reading materials from local markets (25 percent of the target of 12,000 readers by March 2020). These supplementary reading materials are the only TLM items under ABE that are not standardized, pre-packaged items.

There were not enough existing supplementary reading materials in the local market with adequate Somali-based content. ABE equipped learners in 21 highly mobile communities with 3,000 existing and locally sourced supplementary reading materials, but not until early 2019. ABE provided CEC clusters (within a 50-kilometre/30-mile radius of a TLS) with donkey carts (mobile libraries with existing supplementary reading materials) to service 21 highly mobile communities, which included 10 communities in the Gedo region, 8 in Bay, and 3 in Bakool.⁹⁴ Although the program highlights the use of mobile libraries as an innovative intervention,⁹⁵ a community member from Bakool mentioned that they have been used in previous literacy and educational campaigns. "I am now 86 years old, and [with] the literacy campaign in the 1970s, the mobile libraries used to move with us and were part of our group."⁹⁶ The MVR team indicated that donkeys had not yet been procured by January 2018 due to the drought,⁹⁷ with donkey carts provided to 15 migrating communities by March 2019.⁹⁸

Community members, especially older members, favored this approach for migrating children, as the libraries play a role for some families in choosing their migration route: 'the ABE mobile library is great because it allows the majority of the population to have access to education wherever they go'; 'mobile libraries are great places because if there were no mobile libraries, the way to go would be out of ignorance'; and 'the nomads only move when they have explored whether the road is good or bad, but education is also important in decision making because no one wants their children to be uneducated. The mobile library is an important factor too.'⁹⁹ The program added that 'the communities also use the

⁹² UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 14.

⁹³ RTI. (2016). Survey of Children's Reading Materials in African Languages in Eleven Countries – Final Report. Research Triangle Institute, International (Reading Materials Survey); and UNICEF Somalia. (2016). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. November 15, 2016, p. 18.

⁹⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 17.

⁹⁵ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. September 30, p. 13.

⁹⁶ Community member FGD, Bakool, July 2020.

⁹⁷ SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 1 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2017, p. 1.

⁹⁸ SPSS. (2019). Year 5 Round 2 Monitoring and Verification Reports for ABE-UNICEF sites visited Jan. 1 to March 31, 2019, p. 46.

⁹⁹ Community member FGD, Bakool, July 2020.

donkeys to transport water to the ABE schools during the dry season, and as an ambulance to transport sick community members and families of the ABE students to the nearest health facility.¹⁰⁰

To address the shortage of existing Somali supplementary reading materials, ABE supported 150 learners to benefit from artwork and story-writing to improve their reading.

ABE targeted 150 learners (50 from each region) to undertake a literature and creative expression event (72 were girls – 48 percent) as part of the 2019 Mogadishu Book Forum. This was less than one percent of all learners. They were selected through the CtC reading circles and story-writing activities. The 2019 theme for the Mogadishu Book Forum was ‘Access to Learning’ through literature and creative expression, with three components: (1) the Abudwak Book Forum in Galmudug, (2) ABE learners’ artwork and creative writing workshops, and (3) the Mogadishu Book Forum festival in Mogadishu. From the 150 learners, 23 of the best stories during the booklet-writing exercise were selected for inclusion in the *Ila-Ahriso* story book being compiled for distribution. Hence, the 23 stories and illustrations were from 11 boys and 12 girls from 13 ABE Centers.¹⁰¹

ABE equipped learners in 21 highly mobile communities with 9,000 ABE learner-produced supplementary learning materials, but not until late 2020.

Because locally sourced supplementary learning materials were not readily available in the markets in Somalia, the program aimed to fill the gap with their own learner-produced story books. From 2018, ABE collected stories written by ABE learners during reading circles. Based on those stories, the program partnered with New Horizon to develop story books as part of the 2019 Mogadishu Book Forum activity, a local annual event to promote Somali literature. By September 2020—the end of the program—ABE printed and distributed 9,000 story books called “*Ila-Ahriso – Read with Me*,” with 23 stories and illustrations. These books, and the 3,000 existing supplementary reading materials previously distributed, supported 11,955 learners (4,432 girls – 37 percent).¹⁰² However, the usage and effectiveness of the supplementary reading materials could not be assessed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REFRESHER TRAINING

ABE recruited and trained 447 teachers in flexible teaching modalities and alternative basic education methodologies.

The program recruited community teachers—i.e., teachers within the target communities. ABE noted that ‘although they met the minimum education requirements, the majority did not have significant experience or specific training in teaching.’¹⁰³ The program trained 447 teachers (121 female – 27 percent) and 28 education administrators. It included initial induction training and annual refresher training of about ten days, using a ‘peer-to-peer based coaching and mentoring’ approach.¹⁰⁴ Teachers and administrators were trained in flexible teaching modes to teach the condensed curriculum—two levels in each classroom (i.e., Level 1 and 2 learners in one classroom and Level 3 and 4 learners in another classroom)—individualized, learner-centered (child-centered) pedagogy, interactive teaching, numeracy and literacy, education management information system tools,

¹⁰⁰ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 12.

¹⁰¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 23.

¹⁰² UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 10.

¹⁰³ UNICEF Somalia. (2017). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. May 31, p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, December, p. 12.

and the use of TLMs. Psychosocial support for teachers and learners was integrated into the training ‘to support children in emergencies, particularly girls and those in already vulnerable situations.’¹⁰⁵ During the evaluation FGD for female teachers, all teachers commented positively on the ABE training, with 42 percent specifically mentioning ABE’s methodology and 33 percent indicating that regular meetings with ABE’s sub-partners to discuss classroom issues were particularly helpful and useful (Table 24 in section EQ3). As the program shifted from the pilot program with a target of 80 teachers to the full program from 2017, the program hired more teachers and trained them to accommodate a change in strategy, which is discussed in EQ2 (shifts in the ABE strategy) and EQ3 (perception of quality) in this report.

For learners and stakeholders in ABE, the quality of teachers was more highly regarded than the quality of teaching. ‘Quality education’ and its related terms, ‘teaching quality’ and ‘learning quality,’ are complex and difficult to define. For example, USAID’s Education Policy does not define quality education; instead, it discusses priority principles of education, such as ‘teacher educators capable of using student-centered and proven training methodologies that can improve the quality of instruction where ‘measurable and sustainable improvements in student’s learning is our primary goal.’¹⁰⁶ During the evaluation, community members used different terminology when referring to ‘teaching quality’ which enabled the evaluation team to construct a deeper content analysis of their perceptions (Table 19).

Table 19: Unpacking teaching quality

UNPACKING TEACHING QUALITY				
ELEMENTS	EVALUATION TEAM DEFINITION	RESPONDENTS’ COMMENTS	COMMUNITY PERCEPTION	EVALUATION TEAM COMMENT
Teachers	Quality of personal traits	Caring, positive about future, advocating equality & safety	Excellent	Strength
Teacher training	Professional development, capacity building	Sub-partners & implementer provided useful training	Good	Short duration; lack of performance measures (e.g., number of supervised visits or evidence of teaching quality); no teacher performance checklists
Teaching materials	Textbooks, equipment, reading material	Limited readers, delayed textbooks & readers delivery	Great	More diversity & timely distribution needed
Teaching	Classroom management,	Teachers have no formal qualifications	Poor	Need experience, practice, more training

¹⁰⁵ UNICEF Somalia. (2017). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. May 31, p. 11.

¹⁰⁶ USAID. (2018). *USAID Education Policy*. November, p. 19 & p. 83.

	knowledge & material use			
Teaching - methodology	How content is delivered in the classroom	Learner-centered, individual development, interactive	Excellent	Strength
Teaching - curriculum	Content of subjects; policy development	In progress	Some advances	Needs alignment with government NFE

The alignment of the ABE four-year curriculum with the government NFE curriculum is dependent upon the progress of the MoECHE. The MoECHE’s first priority was the alignment of the new formal primary curriculum with textbooks for grades 1–8, which has recently concluded.¹⁰⁷ ABE contributed to these consultations from 2016 to 2018. The Ministry is now addressing the NFE policy and curriculum which will align with the formal education curriculum. When concluded, the plan is to ensure alignment of the ABE curriculum with the government’s NFE curriculum.¹⁰⁸ The progress is dependent upon the Ministry and further joint consultations. Therefore, ABE is currently using a curriculum that is not aligned to the formal or non-formal FGS curriculum.¹⁰⁹

Teacher incentives exceeded the program budget, but teachers viewed the monthly incentives as insufficient. Teacher incentives are usually the burden of parents and community members in the non-government school system. In ABE’s program design, it was noted that previous and current development partners implementing programs in Somalia provided teacher incentives as part of their programs, which resulted in the recruitment of ‘nearly 1,000 additional teachers throughout Somalia.’¹¹⁰ Adopting this approach, ABE provided the standard rate of USD \$100 per month on top of salary,¹¹¹ to assist CECs and ABE Centers with the recruitment of teachers, especially females.

ABE initially budgeted for teacher incentives to encourage cost sharing with CECs that were managing the school funds. The idea was to encourage sustainability, because incentives were eventually to become the full responsibility of the CECs. The teacher incentive plan involved ABE funding the full incentive for Year 1 and Year 2, half the incentive in Year 3, a quarter in Year 4 and none in Year 5. However, during implementation, the number of teachers hired surpassed expectations. Therefore, the cost-sharing plan was not possible for CECs and USAID re-aligned the existing program budget to manage the incentives. While incentives were an important mechanism used throughout ABE, teachers viewed them as ultimately insufficient or too low. During FGDs with female teachers, they commented

¹⁰⁷ The printing and distribution of primary textbooks for formal schools is ongoing.

¹⁰⁸ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, 2019, p. 28.

¹⁰⁹ UNICEF is using the Norwegian Refugee Council accelerated curriculum. Established in 2004, the Council currently operates in Somalia in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Dolo, Dhoble, Baidao, Hargeisa, Erigavo, Bassaso, Galkayo, Garowe, & Burao.

¹¹⁰ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 11.

¹¹¹ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 19. Standard rates established by Global Partnership for Education.

on the challenges: ‘teachers keep leaving’. Another added, ‘let me be honest with you, they are leaving for better paying jobs and also not feeling appreciated. We hope the teachers’ incentive can be revised.’

Due to the expansion of the program into the Bay and Bakool regions, the limited ability of communities to cost share, and the recruitment of 297 additional teachers (at no additional cost), the program expended 58 percent more on teacher incentives than planned, to March 2020.¹¹² In March 2020, the MoECHE issued a directive from the Director General’s Office advising all development partners to continue paying teacher incentives during the COVID-19 pandemic school closures.¹¹³ Although this was not part of ABE’s plan for 2020, the UNICEF-supported Resilient Education Program paid the monthly incentives for 39 teachers, while ABE continued payment for 408 teachers to ensure all teachers were paid in accordance to the directive.¹¹⁴

RADIO EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SOCIAL MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGNS

Interactive radio instruction was expected to assist teachers to enhance their quality of teaching, but it required specific pedagogical training that was difficult to source. There were three reasons why the interactive radio instruction was not implemented: (1) ABE teachers met minimum educational standards, however, were not formally trained in teaching, and therefore were not necessarily experienced teachers; (2) the identification of a specialized international or local partner to design the radio program proved challenging; and (3) the MoECHE expressed reservations about its potential effectiveness and requested its cancellation.¹¹⁵ Discussions between USAID and the government led to a program modification to deliver an alternative mode of teacher training—i.e., the awareness of life skills through radio education programs. Hence, the initial indicator, *Number of teachers who regularly use interactive radio instruction*, was amended to two indicators:

1. Estimated number of people reached through radio education programs, and
2. Percent surveyed ABE teachers reporting use of radio education programs.

ABE reached 2.7 million people through radio education programs to impart community messages on life skills and the importance of education. The program targeted 75 percent of the total population—i.e., 2.7 million people—through radio education programs.¹¹⁶ To reach this target, ABE partnered with Media INK in 2019 to launch two radio programs (“*Tisqaad – Maturing*” and “*Bidhaamiye*”) in early March 2020¹¹⁷ over nine weeks. These programs targeted children, youth, parents,

¹¹² UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, Annex A, Financial Utilization Report, p. 30. The planned budget was \$880,000 and in March 2020 the expenditure was \$1,403,530.

¹¹³ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, p. 9.

¹¹⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, p. 14.

¹¹⁵ UNICEF Somalia. (2017). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, p. 24; and UNICEF Somalia. (2018). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, p. 10.

¹¹⁶ 2.7 million people is based on estimated radio listenership across 4 local radio stations (radio antenna coverage cross-referenced with World Bank data), in UNICEF Somalia. (2018). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, p. 17.

¹¹⁷ Teacher training on life skills was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and it was implemented in September 2020.

teachers, and the public to raise awareness on life skills through drama and storytelling: 42 *Tisqaad* life skills plays and 24 *Bidhaamiye* educational radio plays.¹¹⁸ Topics included conflict management, problem solving, wellbeing, and stress management. From March 2020, the radio education programs included COVID-19 messages.¹¹⁹

ABE’s survey showed that 100 percent of 192 trained teachers in radio education reported using radio programs in their ABE Center in late 2020. ABE aimed to train 192 teachers on interactive learning methodologies, but included 14 Ministry officials to total 206 educators trained (54 females – 28 percent) between June and August 2020 from all three regions. ABE exceeded its target of 66 percent of trained teachers reporting use of the radio programs as part of their teaching methodology.¹²⁰ This was a new indicator in 2020, resulting in the new output of teachers trained in evidence-based radio instruction. However, due to the activity culminating at the end of the program, the effectiveness of radio education could not be assessed.

The program established and trained a Community Education Committee and a Child-to-Child club in each ABE Center. ABE established and trained each CEC and CtC, along with ABE teachers, head teachers, and education administrators, in the principles of the ABE condensed curriculum, and flexible teaching and learning methodologies. CEC members were 43percent female and CtC members were 40 percent female (Table 20).¹²¹

Table 20: CEC and CtC members by region, September 2020

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT									
REGION	TLS	CEC				CTC			
		M	F	T	% F	M	F	T	% F
Gedo	52	208	156	364	43%	67	37	104	36%
Bay	32	128	96	224	43%	33	31	64	48%
Bakool	12	48	36	84	43%	23	13	36	36%
TOTAL	96	384	288	672	43%	123	81	204	40%
Percent		57%	43%			60%	40%		

Source: Adapted from Annex E to UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, 2020.

Building the capacity of CEC and CtC members was an ongoing process and included training in school management and sustainability. Capacity building was also linked to radio

¹¹⁸ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 9.

¹¹⁹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 10.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

¹²¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. November 15, 2016, p. 21.

education programs for the second half of 2020. For example, the radio education programs included ABE social mobilization campaigns to promote education, improve the quality of education, and improve the capacity of ABE teachers to use media outlets as a tool for community announcements (in a consultative process between CECs, CtCs, teachers, and local authorities).¹²²

The distribution of micro-grants supported ABE Centers to provide feeding programs. ABE provided in-kind¹²³ micro-grants to sub-partners in Years 2-5 to distribute annually to all 96 CECs, based upon their determination of need. The end-of-program total per Center in USD was: \$5,000 in Gedo, \$7,500 in Bay, and \$2,700 in Bakool.¹²⁴ The micro-grants supported micro-feeding (small one-off meals) in Gedo, dry food in Bay, and breakfast in Bakool as requested by communities. The program did not provide further details.

Learners were encouraged to participate in ABE Center functions and decision making through CtC clubs. Each CtC club is a student board comprising nine to eleven ABE boys and girls. They have a chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer, and secretary. Learners are encouraged to participate in ABE Center activities such as keeping the Centers clean, working together with CECs, and supporting community activities. During the CEC and CtC focus group discussions conducted as part of the evaluation, a learner said: ‘The administration praises us very much and stands by us at all times. Our role is to encourage drop-outs and also shoe brushers [i.e., out-of-school children] to come to school, to contribute books and pens for those students who aren’t able to get them, and also to a certain level to bring issues to teachers in terms of conflict between students.’¹²⁵

ABE missed the opportunity to implement the concept of action-research into the full program. The design of the pilot program included action research to gather ‘robust data and inform a wider strategic framework on non-formal education’¹²⁶ to document ‘fit for purpose’ flexible approaches to alternative basic education, but funds were diverted to literacy activities during the full program.¹²⁷ Consequently, ABE missed the opportunity to document learnings, such as the inclusion of children from IDP families and the benefit of female teachers.

PURPOSE 3: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Ultimate Objective: Institutional development of education authorities to develop and enact a non-formal strategy.

The program surpassed the number of joint monitoring supervision visits, but the outcomes were not documented in ABE’s reports. The number of NFE technical advisor consultations toward the development of a draft NFE policy exceeded its target, and the policy is still in development.

¹²² UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 16.

¹²³ The implementer provided funds to each sub-partner, and each sub-partner contributed an additional 15-18 percent.

¹²⁴ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, p. 11 & 15. UNICEF provided further information on October 12, 2020.

¹²⁵ Community CEC and CtC FGD, August 2020.

¹²⁶ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 16.

¹²⁷ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, p. 16.

PURPOSE 3 RESULTS

Under Purpose 3, Activity 3 aims to strengthen local educational systems by supporting state and regional authorities to adopt policies that promote quality non-formal education. Table 21 shows the performance results for Purpose 3 to September 2020.

Table 21: ABE Purpose 3: Summary of results against indicators and targets, September 2020

SUMMARY OF ABE RESULTS AGAINST INDICATORS			
PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT	%
PURPOSE 3: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING			
I3: # joint monitoring visits to ABE Centers with government officials	16	38	238%
I4: # consultations held on NFE draft policy – output	5	8	160%

Source: Annex E to UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 2020. Note: Green = significantly over target.

JOINT SUPERVISION AND MONITORING VISITS TO ABE CENTERS

Local authorities and CECs expressed interest, and participated extensively in, the joint supervision and monitoring visits to ABE Centers with sub-partners. The target of 16 visits was significantly over-achieved with a total of 38 visits conducted, 138 percent over target, but the outputs of these visits have not been documented in order to learn lessons. The over-achievement was due to the interest of school inspectors, and also because the regional education officers had limited funds to arrange their own visits to the ABE Centers. The visits increased their cooperation, knowledge, and oversight of the program’s activities: ‘One of the main tasks of the government is the supervision of the ABE activities. For example, we monitor the quality of the teacher training and we also give them our professional consultations ... Since the curriculum is different from region to region, it is crucial to supervise how the lessons are going on and collect all the information related to this program. Then taking exams to observe how ABE program helped them, finally giving them certificates which indicate the student can continue learning and join higher education.’¹²⁸ CECs also conducted supervisory visits as part of the ABE monitoring system. During the evaluation, a CEC member in Gedo confirmed that ‘the CEC visits ABE Centers once or twice a week evaluating the learning process and also inspecting the presence of learners.’ The CEC member also added: ‘Our community works well in improving the school, moving forward, educating students, and finding quality teachers. We raise funds, inform parents, follow-up drop-outs, and meet student needs.’

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION POLICY SUPPORT

ABE funded a non-formal education technical advisor, embedded in the Ministry to advance the NFE agenda, but the indicator measures outputs (number of meetings) and not improvements or outcomes. ABE recruited a NFE technical advisor from January to August

¹²⁸ Government authority KII, Jubaland, by telephone, August 2020.

2018, and from May 2019 to April 2020. The advisor was embedded within the FGS MoECHE in the NFE department in Mogadishu to support the transference of knowledge and provide institutional capacity development.¹²⁹ The technical advisor contributed in discussions toward the development of a NFE policy, with the program not only meeting but exceeding consultations on the draft policy, with eight consultations conducted by March 2020. Policy development was the advisor’s main function, but the indicator does not take into account the processes toward policy development, such as the number of laws, policies, or procedures drafted, proposed, or adopted to promote non-formal education (and customized to promote, for example, gender equality in NFE).

ABE’s technical advisor supported the NFE department–initiated process of mapping and registration to create a profile of all non-formal centers, including the USAID-funded ABE Centers, across the federal member states of Somalia. The advisor also assisted with the fifth (and last) federal member states NFE meeting in Jowhar in Hirshabelle State, and co-facilitated the national NFE workshop in Mogadishu in February 2020 on the NFE policy framework on Accelerated Education and other alternative basic education options.¹³⁰ The output of the workshop was a comprehensive report that highlighted four key workshop achievements: (1) a roadmap with recommendations for the establishment of strong institutional frameworks for the delivery of holistic NFE programs in Somalia; (2) increased knowledge and awareness among national institutions and donors on the importance of NFE; (3) renewed donor interest in supporting out-of-school children and youth; and (4) the formation of a NFE technical working group, which would be the sixth education working group.¹³¹ At the time of this evaluation, discussions on the development of the NFE policy continue.

EVALUATION QUESTION 2: HOW WELL DID THE ABE PROGRAM THEORY OF CHANGE ADAPT TO INTERNAL PROGRAMMATIC SHIFTS AND MODIFICATIONS?

This section examines the initial theory of change and the technical and operational programmatic shifts and modifications to its initial design in 2015. It provides insights on the effects of these changes over the five years of program delivery in each region and on the target groups: pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, out-of-school children, children of IDPs, and urban children.

ABE THEORY OF CHANGE ASSUMPTIONS

Not all program design assumptions were accurate in the original theory of change, which resulted in some slight modifications during program implementation.

The theory of change held critical assumptions, including:

1. Marginalized pastoralist communities lacked access to basic education, which was not seen as adaptive to their pastoralist lifestyle;
2. Increased availability of educational facilities will increase demand;

¹²⁹ There were two different individuals in the role of NFE technical advisor.

¹³⁰ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 21.

¹³¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 20.

3. Conflict risks would impact ABE and therefore ABE communities needed to be resilient to external factors;
4. With strengthened communities, the government will invest in the ABE approach to flexible alternative basic education; and
5. Government capacity building and joint monitoring visits to manage the delivery of education in the targeted areas would be strengthened, but education ministries also needed support for governance reforms to improve the transparent use of funds.¹³²

Assumptions 1, 2 and 5 were accurate; and assumptions 3 and 4 were partially accurate as there were more external shocks than conflict that impacted implementation, and the government has not yet prioritized NFE although their discussions in a February 2020 workshop supported a move toward the development of a NFE policy. Additionally, ABE was initially designed to target learners 8-14-years-old based on the assumption that 6-8-year-old learners had access to formal education. This assumption did not hold true and the program included 6-8-year-olds in 2017.

INTERNAL PROGRAMMATIC SHIFTS AND MODIFICATIONS

ABE program shifts and modifications led to the inclusion of additional categories of beneficiaries.

ABE had five major programmatic shifts. These were:

1. Pilot program to full program;
2. Expansion of the program from solely Gedo region to include Bay and Bakool regions, as well as the inclusion and integration of IDPs and urban children in these locations;
3. Inclusion and enrollment of older children from 15-19 years old;
4. Amendments to the teacher training strategy and the shift from level-based teachers to the addition of subject-based teachers in each TLS/ABE Center; and
5. Exclusion of the testing of the cost-sharing approach.¹³³

PILOT TO A FULL ABE PROGRAM

The transition from a pilot program to a full program was undertaken with no extra costs due to the implementer's low overheads. ABE was initially designed as a pilot to test the condensed (accelerated) curriculum approach at the primary school level in the Gedo region, which was selected due to its accessibility at the time of the initial program design. ABE conducted a needs assessment in January 2016 and found that there were only a few marginalized pastoralist communities and they were scattered across the region. Therefore, the program concluded that it was not possible

¹³² Adapted from USAID. (2019). *ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work*. Dec. 6, p. 5-6.

¹³³ The ABE pilot program aimed to test cost-sharing in which communities assume responsibility for teacher incentives (to attract teachers to remote areas). From October 2019, this activity was transferred to another implementer.

to reach the targeted 21,000 children exclusively from pastoralist communities. USAID’s flexibility to reflect ABE’s needs resulted in the increased number of targeted communities in Gedo from 15 to 35¹³⁴ to include agro-pastoralist communities. The implementer requested no extra funding, due to their low overhead costs.¹³⁵

EXPANSION FROM THE GEDO REGION TO BAY & BAKOOL REGIONS

The targeted number of beneficiaries remained unchanged, but the expansion of ABE into the Bay and Bakool regions included more beneficiary groups. During the first year as a pilot program in Gedo, the program focused on girls and pastoralist communities. From Year 2, ABE maintained its operation in the Gedo region and expanded into the Bay and Bakool regions. Children who were already out of school in Gedo and then moved with their families to Bay and Bakool were internally displaced and further marginalized through this process. USAID agreed that UNICEF could hire two additional sub-partners to expand the program to the Bay and Bakool regions in South West State, as well as integrate IDPs and urban learners. This expansion resulted in a total of 96 communities supported: 52 in Gedo, 32 in Bay, and 12 in Bakool for pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, urban, and IDPs.¹³⁶

As the program expanded, the disaggregation of data did not, except for the inclusion of data on older children. The enrollment figures are not disaggregated in ABE reports into categories of children: e.g., by rural and urban, IDPs, or pastoralists and agro-pastoralists.¹³⁷ Hence, the reported data, to the end of the program, is only disaggregated by sex, age (6-14 years and 15-19 years), and children with disabilities. Table 22 (below) provides an overview of ABE enrollments by region, disability, and age. ABE learners with disabilities included 40 boys and 18 girls (31 percent) to total 58 children, which is 3 percent of all ABE enrollments. They were mainly from Gedo (66 percent) with 37 percent female, followed by the Bay region (31 percent) with 22 percent female, and Bakool region (3 percent) with no females enrolled.

Table 22: ABE enrollments by region, disability, and age, September 2020

ABE ENROLLMENTS												
REGION	DISABILITIES			AGE 6-14			AGE 15-19			ALL		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Gedo	24	14	38	3718	3176	6894	837	429	1266	4579	3619	8198
	63%	37%	66%	54%	46%	40%	66%	34%	46%	56%	44%	41%
Bay	14	4	18	3122	2636	5758	287	281	568	3423	2921	6344

¹³⁴ The 2016 Needs Assessment indicated 37 communities, but 2 were inaccessible due to conflict. UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016, p. 8.

¹³⁵ The implementer’s statement regarding their funding mechanism which enabled UNICEF to implement the entire five-year program with no extra funding was repeated at the virtual close-out ceremony on September 9, 2020.

¹³⁶ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, 2019, p. 10.

¹³⁷ Data disaggregated by beneficiary category is not reported in the semi-annual or annual program progress reports. The evaluation team requested disaggregated data, but it has not been provided to date.

	78%	22%	31%	54%	46%	33%	50%	50%	18%	54%	46%	31%
Bakool	2	0	2	2967	1753	4720	611	373	984	3580	2126	5706
	100%	0%	3%	63%	37%	27%	63%	37%	36%	62%	38%	28%
TOTAL	40	18	58	9807	7565	17372	1735	1083	2818	11582	8666	20248
Percent	69%	31%	0.2%	56%	44%	86%	61%	39%	14%	57%	43%	100%

Source: Adapted from Annex E to UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 2020.

INCLUSION OF OLDER CHILDREN AGED 14-19 YEARS

In ABE, 2,724 (14 percent) of all enrollments were older children, that would otherwise have not been enrolled. The age range initially targeted for the program was 8 to 14 years, because 6-8-year-olds were expected to have access to formal schools, but the program included the younger children due to demand. ABE enrolled 17,383 (86 percent) children in the 6-14 age range, with 7,563 (44 percent) of those being female. From the end of 2017, when the program expanded into the Bay and Bakool regions, ABE enrolled 2,724 older children (14 percent) in the 15-19 age range, with 1,029 (38 percent) females: 1,259 (46 percent) in Gedo, 975 (36 percent) in Bakool, and 490 (18 percent) in Bay (Table 22).

After the movement of families into the Bay and Bakool regions, the program observed that ABE teachers were enrolling children older than 14 into the classroom due to local demand for education for this group: ‘UNICEF observed that children younger than eight and older than fourteen were being enrolled in the temporary learning centers. Given the lack of schools in the area, UNICEF made the programmatic decision to not turn away students’ and enable access to education for youths aged 15-19 as well.’¹³⁸ Disaggregated data by all beneficiary groups is not available, but the evaluation team’s view is that, overall, the program focused on the enrollment of younger children in Bay where the majority of IDPs were located, and focused on older children in Gedo. The majority of older-aged enrollments were males (62 percent). Regionally, only the Bay region met its target of 50 percent older female enrollments with 243 females. There were 422 older females enrolled in Gedo (34 percent) and 364 in Bakool (37 percent).¹³⁹

INTEGRATION OF IDPs

The expansion into the Bay region led to the establishment of 23 TLS in IDP communities in Baidoa, which directly addressed the large challenge in providing access to education for this marginalized group. Across all three regions, there were an estimated 5,234 IDP enrollments,

¹³⁸ The ABE reports do not document the strategic change. It is noted in USAID. (2019). *Scope of Work ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation*, p. 1, and confirmed in KIs with UNICEF staff in August 2020 and in a telephone call with an education ministry official in August 2020. UNICEF’s definition of a child is ‘any person under the age of 18’ and school-aged children refers to children in Somalia from the age of six years. UNICEF Somalia. <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version> and https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Somalia/Primary_school_starting_age/, accessed September 10, 2020.

¹³⁹ Annex E to UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education Children Semi-Annual Performance Report, **September 30, 2020**.

which is 26 percent of all ABE enrollments (and 28 percent of all female enrollments).¹⁴⁰ Although ABE's support to IDPs only reached a limited number of communities, a Bay education official described the program as 'an educational program which focuses on IDPs; we can say the ABE program is a small portion of a resilience program.'¹⁴¹ [see Section 7, Case Study 1, Inclusion of IDPs and Case Study 2, Inclusivity and Access.]

AMENDMENT OF TEACHER RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

As ABE expanded, it re-structured the teacher training to support a subject-based model of teaching with more teachers, shifting away from level-based teaching. The program's expansion into Bay and Bakool resulted in significant overcrowding in the newly constructed TLS due to the large numbers of mobile and migrating families, including IDPs. The original program design mandated two teachers in each ABE classroom and envisioned multi-level class-based teaching in Gedo (i.e., one person teaches Levels 1 and 2, and the other teacher works with Levels 3 and 4). The local partners in Bay and Bakool proposed adopting a different approach to the teacher training strategy to include teaching by subject areas instead of levels. A female teacher from Bakool said, 'changing the strategy in a learner-centered, and content-based manner is a highly persuasive and commendable way of teaching that has changed a great deal the parents' awareness of education.'¹⁴² A Bay head teacher further supported this shift in strategy as proving ultimately beneficial for learners because they had 'the opportunity to interact with different teachers.' This change in strategy resulted in an average of three teachers per TLS in the Gedo region, six teachers per TLS in the Bay region, and six teachers per TLS in the Bakool region, exceeding the original mandate of two teachers per TLS in all regions. The initial strategy of two teachers per TLS in 75 communities would have led to a total of 150 teachers over five years. The program expansion led to the recruitment of 297 more teachers to total 447 teachers over the five-year period, distributed roughly in line with the proportion of enrollments in each region (Table 23).

Table 23: Number of ABE teachers by region and sex, September 2020

TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT								
REGION	TLS	% OF ENROLLMENTS	TEACHERS					
			M	F	T	%		
Gedo	52	41%	128	71%	52	29%	180	40%
Bay	32	31%	141	71%	57	29%	198	45%
Bakool	12	28%	57	83%	12	17%	69	15%
TOTAL	96	100%	326	73%	121	27%	447	100%

¹⁴⁰ The evaluation team requested IDP data, but this was not provided. The figures are extrapolated from enrollments for each ABE Center.

¹⁴¹ Local government KII in the Bay region, August 2020.

¹⁴² Bakool teacher, telephone KII, August 2020.

EVALUATION QUESTION 3: WHAT ASPECTS OF ABE'S DESIGN, DELIVERY, AND OPERATIONS HELPED OR HINDERED PROGRESS AND/OR ITS ABILITY TO ADAPT TO EXTERNAL CONDITIONS?

This section examines the design, delivery, and operations of ABE, evaluating what helped or hindered ABE's ability to adapt to external conditions in a timely manner. It provides insight into the external aspects that aided or impeded the program's progress toward its intended outcomes, how ABE was conflict sensitive in its design, delivery, or operations, and presents stakeholders' perceptions of program implementation.

EXTERNAL CONDITIONS: CONFLICT-SENSITIVE APPROACH

Temporary learning spaces were erected along migration routes, mitigating insecurity and maintaining the program's development goal of conflict-sensitive programming; but conflict was only one external condition negatively affecting ABE's targeted regions and ABE had no risk programming strategy.

Areas in the Gedo Region remain conflict-affected, restricting access to out-of-school children of migrating pastoralist families. Five years after ABE commenced implementation in the Gedo Region, children remain within the Al-Shabaab-controlled areas. In March 2020, an interagency assessment of 18 partners, including United Nations and local agencies, found that about 8,250 families (about 49,500 people) were new IDPs in Belet Hawa in addition to 207,000 displaced people living in Gedo region. Five schools closed due to tensions and displacement of 'some 130 teachers, affecting an estimated 6,500 students including those who cross the border daily to attend school in Kenya. Schools in the area of displacement cannot accommodate more children and, in addition, the displaced parents cannot afford double fees since they are not sure when they will go back home.¹⁴³ With school closures, learners are not being reached by the government or development partners. In January 2021, the IOM documented the continued presence of Al-Shabaab which perpetuates conflict in rural areas. IOM states that Somalia is highly susceptible to extreme weather conditions, and that 'drought exacerbates conflict by increasing competition for resources. Al-Shabaab feeds off these tensions and exploits vulnerabilities.'¹⁴⁴

ABE proactively conducted conflict resolution training for teachers, and provided conflict resolution awareness through radio programs for the community, as part of its professional development and social mobilization programs. The program aimed to build upon its existing cross-cutting work in Somalia with its establishment of non-USAID-funded Youth Education Pack (YEP) Centers in Gedo which provided life skills, literacy, numeracy, and vocational training. This

¹⁴³ Wardheer News. (2020). *Somalia: Flash Update No. 2 on Displacement in Gedo Region, Jubaland*. March 13. Source: reliefweb. Accessed on January 28, 2021. <https://wardheernews.com/somalia-flash-update-no-2-on-displacement-in-gedo-region-jubaland/>

¹⁴⁴ IOM. (2020). *Somalia Crisis Response Plan 2020*. January 31. Accessed on January 28, 2021. <https://www.crisisresponse.iom.int/response/somalia-crisis-response-plan-2020>

youth framework was a strategy to provide a conflict-sensitive curriculum within ABE.¹⁴⁵ In addition, ABE supported the FGS Safe Schools Declaration and its task force, and the USAID Education in Crisis and Conflict Network to protect schools from conflict, and trained its head teachers, teachers, CEC and CtC members on conflict-sensitive approaches. ABE's radio education programs, which commenced with its partner organization in 2019, also raised awareness of conflict management and resolution through dramatization and short stories. During interviews, teachers and CEC members referred the resolution of personal conflict, rather than the wider conflict-affected area—i.e., teacher-teacher conflict and teacher-student conflict: 'we also received four days of conflict resolution training; mainly what it covered was how to solve conflict among the teachers as well as the students.'¹⁴⁶

Community members said migrating families chose routes based upon the location of ABE temporary learning spaces. Community members mentioned that insecurity was one of the drivers for migrating, and since the implementation of ABE, a parent said, 'wherever [families] move now there is a TLS ... there are so many of them in the different routes. Yes, to answer that, I would say it is considered and now, in Luuq district, we have many options for such TLS, for which we are grateful.'¹⁴⁷

Local sub-partners aided conflict-sensitive programming through their extensive networks. ABE program staff mentioned insecurity challenges in the initial 'ten to eleven months'¹⁴⁸ of implementation which restricted their movement and affected their ability to select communities. The program intended to conduct research on mobile communities, but due to the insecurity in the region, this did not happen, as one donor said: 'They were going to study how effective it is to reach pastoralists in a mobile way, then the insecurity happened. They had to stick to the agro-pastoralists close to the towns ... I think they did a good job adjusting.'¹⁴⁹ The program indicated, at the end of 2016, that 'to address some of the security challenges, UNICEF is partnering with ... local organizations with extensive experience and strong local networks.'¹⁵⁰ ABE also conducted 'an in-depth analysis of the security context'¹⁵¹ which influenced its decision.

Conflict was experienced throughout the program's implementation, including attacks at ABE Centers in Belet Hawa in the Gedo region in September 2017 resulting in the destruction of facilities and equipment;¹⁵² Al-Shabaab militants in the Gedo region in November 2019 and the kidnapping of a Regional Education Officer; and Al-Shabaab attacks countrywide in 2019. These resulted in a reduction of the monitoring of ABE sites in the insecure areas.¹⁵³ However, sub-partners were crucial in sharing

¹⁴⁵ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, p. 20. Youth Education Pack was an 18-month program from September 2014 to March 2016 for 14- to 25-year-olds in the South and Central Zone (Mogadishu and Dolo) and North-East Zone (Bossaso and Garowe).

¹⁴⁶ Female teachers FGD, August 2020.

¹⁴⁷ Parent KII, Gedo region, August 2020.

¹⁴⁸ UNICEF KII, by telephone, August 2020.

¹⁴⁹ Donor KII, by telephone, August 2020.

¹⁵⁰ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, p. 7.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁵² UNICEF Somalia. (2017). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, p. 7.

¹⁵³ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, p. 5-6.

security information with local administrations. Although the ABE reports document incidents of conflict and insecurity, there is no documented conflict mitigation strategy.

While ABE works with the Education in Crisis and Conflict Network and other conflict mitigation networks, there is limited documentation of its strategies toward education in crisis, risks, shock absorption, vulnerabilities, stressors, or resilience. The community and stakeholders acknowledged that ABE had to respond to many external shocks which not only included conflict and security issues but also included drought, flooding, locust plagues, windstorms, local disputes, an influx of migrating people and IDPs, and the COVID-19 crisis. These factors affected, hindered, or delayed implementation to varying degrees.

POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES OF ABE's DESIGN and DELIVERY

ABE communities were overwhelmingly positive about the program.

The positive response to ABE included three major factors: (1) an overall sense of positivity about the future for those involved; (2) a sense of belonging for the ABE learners; and (3) the safe and secure environment created for learning. All teachers, CECs, CtCs, and religious leaders (100 percent) responded positively, 96 percent of parents were positive, 94 percent of ABE current and former learners were positive, and 91 percent of government respondents were positive (Annex G, Community Perceptions of the ABE Program).

Local authorities noted a positive change in the community attitude toward education.

Most education authorities surveyed (76 percent) noted a positive change in their communities toward education. Parents and community members also noted that they learned the value of education through ABE's social mobilization and radio education programs, in addition to CEC members interacting with them on a personal level.

The evaluation team asked open-ended questions during community, in-person KIIs and FGDs (i.e., not a checklist of issues and ABE interventions) and respondents answered without prompting. From this data, the team conducted a content analysis of their perceptions about ABE. Table 24 (below) captures these perceptions of the program's advantages and benefits. Their comments were based on three areas: ABE training, its curriculum, and general benefits of the program.

Table 24: Community perceptions of ABE's advantages by stakeholders

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS: ABE PROGRAM ADVANTAGES										
	LEARNERS N=45		PARENTS N=25		TEACHERS N=12		COMMUNITY N=37		TOTAL N=119	
ABE TRAINING										
Quality of teachers	23	51%	23	92%	0	0%	31	84%	77	65%
Teacher training – ABE curriculum	0	0%	4	16%	12	100%	9	24%	25	21%
Teaching training – methodology	0	0%	0	0%	5	42%	0	0%	5	4%
Media & community outreach	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	14%	5	4%
Teacher competencies/skills training	0	0%	1	4%	3	25%	0	0%	4	3%
Regular meetings with implementers	0	0%	0	0%	4	33%	0	0%	4	3%
ABE CURRICULUM										
Learner-centered & interactive	34	76%	21	84%	4	33%	11	30%	70	59%
Literacy, individual development	37	82%	11	44%	2	17%	20	54%	70	59%
TLM quality – good & interesting	14	31%	10	40%	6	50%	17	46%	47	39%
Social skills, values & manners	16	36%	12	48%	0	0%	11	30%	39	33%
Relevant subjects & practical skills	15	33%	8	32%	0	0%	15	41%	38	32%
Extra-curricular (sports & games)	20	44%	6	24%	0	0%	10	27%	36	30%
Quality curriculum	0	0%	10	40%	2	17%	20	54%	32	27%
Motivational competitions & rewards	10	22%	3	12%	1	8%	3	8%	17	14%
Flexibility (more than formal schools)	0	0%	3	12%	1	8%	6	16%	10	8%
Curriculum (simple, concise, basic)	0	0%	0	0%	3	25%	2	5%	5	4%
GENERAL BENEFITS										
Positive feelings in ABE Centers	40	89%	25	100%	2	17%	37	100%	104	87%
Positive future (school, jobs, respect)	41	91%	25	100%	0	0%	23	62%	92	77%
Change in attitude toward education	10	22%	12	48%	1	8%	28	76%	51	43%

Inclusivity in access & enrollment	1	2%	14	56%	3	25%	32	86%	50	42%
Benefits family, community & country	24	53%	9	36%	0	0%	17	46%	50	42%
Caring environment & belonging	23	51%	11	44%	0	0%	9	24%	43	36%
Safe & secure environment	2	8%	19	76%	0	0%	16	43%	37	31%
Free education	3	7%	16	64%	3	25%	14	38%	36	30%
ABE is for vulnerable communities	0	0%	4	16%	2	17%	12	32%	18	15%
ABE advocates gender equality	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	14	38%	15	13%
ABE advocates children's rights	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	1	27%	2	2%

Source: KIIs and FGDs, July to August 2020. The figures correspond to the total number interviewed (Table 9) but exclude 15 remote teachers and 11 remote government officials. Learners = current and former ABE learners. Shaded areas are the top responses.

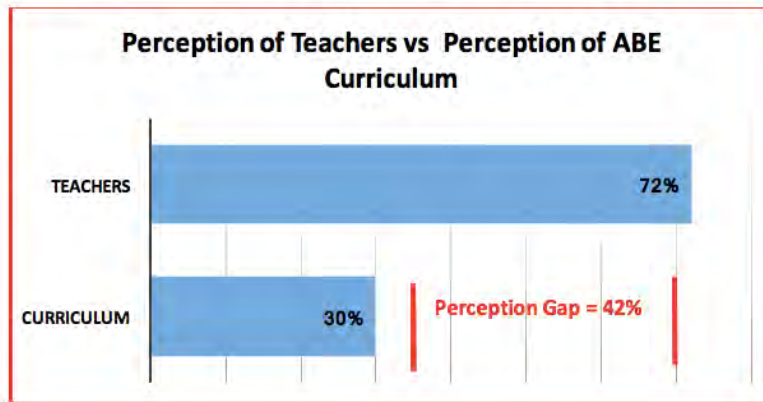
ABE Centers were associated with positive feelings, with 100 percent of parents and local authorities having entirely positive feelings, as well as 89 percent of learners (Table 24). The evaluation team found that there was a general sense of optimism toward the future: 100 percent of parents, 91 percent of learners, and 62 percent of local authorities were positive about the future. Overall, all groups stated the following benefits that helped ABE learners: a caring environment with a sense of belonging (36 percent); a safe and secure environment (31 percent); education is free (31 percent); and it advocates gender equity and children's rights (15 percent).

TEACHERS, TEACHER TRAINING, AND THE ABE METHODOLOGY

Communities, parents, and learners held ABE's teachers in high regard, which was complemented by favorable teacher opinions of the ABE training overall. Almost all parents (92 percent) commented on the quality of ABE teachers, which was confirmed by 84 percent of local authorities and 51 percent of learners. All teachers commented positively on the ABE training, with 42 percent specifically mentioning ABE's methodology and 33 percent indicating that regular meetings with ABE's sub-partners to discuss classroom issues were particularly helpful and useful (Table 24).

Overall, the perception of the high quality of teachers (92 percent of parents, 84 percent of community, and 51 percent of learners) averages 72 percent, and, distinct from the ABE methodology, the perception of the high quality of the ABE curriculum (54 percent of community, 40 percent of parents, and 17 percent of teachers) averages only 30 percent, showing that the perception of teachers is highly regarded despite weaknesses in the curriculum (primarily because it is not aligned to the formal government curriculum). A graph of the perception gap is depicted in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Perception of teachers vs perception of ABE curriculum



Literacy-focused, learner-centered, individualized, interactive approaches were highly valued. Specific components of the ABE curriculum that teachers found to be most effective were: the quality of teaching and learning materials; learner-centered and interactive approaches; the concise curriculum; literacy and individual development; and the overall quality of the curriculum. Local authorities also highlighted these components, in addition to offering practical subjects to learners. Parents favored the teaching of social skills, values, and manners (48 percent). Learners were most positive about literacy skills and individual development (82 percent), learner-centered and interactive approaches (72 percent), and extra-curricular games and sports (44 percent). Learners wanted to take readers home, however, this was rarely possible due to the limited number of readers, and the teacher having to share them among the classroom learners.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGNS

Government authorities viewed social mobilization campaigns positively. Government authorities at the federal and local level maintained that, through ABE's social mobilization (public awareness) campaigns, the program had a wider positive effect on communities in terms of community development, poverty reduction, regional peace and tolerance, and access to educational opportunities. A regional authority stated that: 'the provision of awareness campaigns on the importance of education to the rural people has changed their mindset and, as a result, parents are now dedicated to ensuring that their children go to school.' Another authority claimed that: 'ABE made quite a difference in these regions because many young children would have been recruited by the extremist Islamic group Al-Shabaab. Others would have been illiterate and unable to get a decent job. ABE was able to give many children the opportunity to be numerate and literate.'

CHALLENGES TO ABE'S DESIGN and DELIVERY

While there were significantly more positive comments than negative comments regarding ABE, the negative comments focused on the number of classrooms and facilities, the number and diversity of TLM, and missed opportunities to promote inclusivity in education.

ABE FACILITIES

To prevent overcrowding of classrooms, 68 percent of parents and 57 percent of community members commented on their preference for more than two classrooms for each TLS. The program conducted Levels 1 and 2 during the morning shift, and Levels 3 and 4 in the afternoon, and mitigated some overcrowding issues by establishing additional TLS. Parents (84 percent) would have also liked the inclusion of ABE play areas, gardens, fences for security, and beautification of facilities.

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

The community said that the distribution of teaching and learning materials was one of the main impediments to ABE's progress. Teaching and learning materials are the main concern for 96 percent of interviewed parents, 60 percent of learners, 51 percent of community members, and 33 percent of teachers, due to the limited supply and lack of diversity of materials. Only 25 percent of supplementary reading materials (readers) were distributed by March 2020 and the remaining 75 percent were distributed by September.

Table 25: Most frequently expressed concerns about ABE by stakeholders

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS: MOST FREQUENT CONCERNS										
	LEARNERS N=45		PARENTS N=25		TEACHERS N=12		COMMUNITY N=37		TOTAL N=119	
ABE FACILITIES										
Classrooms (number & capacity)	9	20%	17	68%	3	25%	21	57%	50	42%
TLS facilities (play, garden & fence)	6	13%	21	84%	1	8%	18	49%	46	39%
Equipment (desks, chairs, slates etc.)	8	18%	11	44%	1	8%	9	24%	29	24%
Food (school feeding program)	5	11%	12	48%	0	0%	12	32%	29	24%
Facilities (condition & repair)	2	4%	8	32%	1	8%	10	27%	21	18%
Hygiene (cleanliness & sanitation)	5	11%	7	28%	0	0%	3	8%	15	13%
Safety & security	0	0%	2	8%	1	8%	10	27%	13	11%
Water	6	13%	6	24%	0	0%	1	3%	13	11%
Technology (online & computers)	0	0%	4	16%	0	0%	3	8%	7	6%
QUALITY & READING										
TLM (number & diversity)	27	60%	24	96%	4	33%	19	51%	74	62%
Quality (training & capacity building)	6	13%	21	84%	1	8%	24	65%	52	44%
Teachers (number)	6	13%	13	52%	1	8%	20	54%	40	34%
Teacher salary (amount)	2	4%	17	68%	7	58%	11	30%	37	31%

Student competitions & rewards	4	9%	2	8%	0	0%	2	5%	8	7%
Extra-curricular (sports & games)	5	11%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%	7	6%
Guidance for teachers (coaching)	3	7%	2	8%	0	0%	2	5%	7	6%
Teacher salary (timeliness)	0	0%	4	16%	3	25%	0	0%	7	6%
SYSTEM STRENGTHENING										
Awareness of ABE (ownership)	0	0%	13	52%	0	0%	28	76%	41	34%
Levels (secondary & pre-school)	0	0%	3	12%	1	8%	12	32%	16	13%
Continuation into formal education	0	0%	2	8%	1	8%	11	30%	14	12%
School closures (due to COVID-19)	1	2%	0	0%	1	8%	6	16%	8	7%
Extend number of TLS & locations	0	0%	3	12%	0	0%	3	8%	6	5%
Alignment of NFE/ABE curriculum	1	2%	1	4%	2	17%	1	3%	5	4%
Subjects (include religion)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	14%	5	4%

Source: KII and FGDs, July to August 2020. The figures correspond to the total number interviewed (Table 9) but exclude 15 remote teachers and 11 remote government officials. Learners = current and former ABE learners. Shaded areas are the top responses.

INCLUSIVITY AND LESSONS LEARNED

Inclusivity of learners brought together children of diverse ages, situations, and backgrounds, but the program missed the opportunity to use this as a learning experience.

For example, a teacher in the Bay region stated that, ‘the program aimed to meet diverse children’s needs in a way that is responsive, accepting, respectful, and supportive.’ Another teacher in the Bay region said, ‘we cannot ignore the impact of them [urban children] on the children of IDPs. The urban students are familiar with Maxa Tiri (a Somali dialect) used in the ABE curriculum whereas the IDP children do not understand it. In this case, the urban students acted as translators in the absence of the teachers and, therefore, this helped much the internally displaced children. All children benefited from this ABE program in terms of accessibility.’ This is a good example of peer learning that also, in an unintended way, promotes tolerance and understanding. Examples such as this were not documented in the ABE reports or used as wider learning experiences between sub-partners and government.

PROGRAM OPERATIONS: PARTNERS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND MEL SYSTEMS

The community highly praised the work of ABE’s sub-partners; however, the government and parents thought that the community was not ready to take ownership of the ABE Centers, and stakeholders thought communication-sharing opportunities were missed.

Stakeholders maintained that sub-partners operating in separate locations avoided duplication, role confusion, and enhanced greater community cooperation and ownership. Stakeholders felt that the strength of the program was in the sub-partners’ commitment and dedication

to communities and beneficiaries, particularly in reaching remote areas. There was an overall positive response regarding the quality and consistency of public outreach to deliver messages on the importance of education, which facilitated increased enrollment and retention of learners.

Government and parents thought that communities were not ready to take ownership of the ABE Centers. From interviews and FGDs, a majority of parents and local government members questioned the readiness of communities to take ownership of the program and Centers: 76 percent of government respondents and 52 percent of parents (Table 25). Comments were related to the costs of operating a temporary learning space, particularly the cost of recruiting community teachers.

The government and stakeholders commented on the limited flow of communication and knowledge sharing. Stakeholders felt that there was limited knowledge sharing between regions and limited bottom-up communication from the field to the program office and on to the donor. A donor representative commented that, ‘from a monitoring and evaluation perspective, there is a weakness in how information and data are moved through the system; it’s very hard to get some information.’¹⁵⁴ Local authorities also noted the need for better communication, NGO-government coordination, participation, and engagement at the regional level. However, this view was not consistent among regions, with Gedo and Bay receiving more favorable comments than Bakool about the flow of communication to government officials. Communications improved by the latter part of the program: ‘though this program was going on for a period of five years, there was no close work collaboration between sub-partners and the ministry of education except the last two years of the program.’¹⁵⁵

EVALUATION QUESTION 4: WHAT INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL CONDITIONS APPEAR TO BE MOST INFLUENTIAL TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ABE INTERVENTIONS?

This section examines the most influential conditions for sustainability of ABE. The program design did not include a sustainability plan and an articulation of what it expected from the targeted communities and the government by the end of the program. However, the ABE report maintains that ‘sustainability of the ABE program was inbuilt in the design’¹⁵⁶ through the establishment of CECs, their training and micro-grants, as well as the professional development of education administrators and support to regional education offices. This section provides insight into the view of federal and local government representatives and donors, other strategies toward the adoption of specific interventions as a result of the program, and priority areas that require sustained support to address educational challenges. It also identifies what communities need to be able to sustain alternative basic education temporary learning spaces and programs.

The sustainability of ABE interventions was limited to some ABE Centers, social mobilization campaigns, joint monitoring visits, and NFE technical assistance embedded in the education ministry.

¹⁵⁴ Donor KII, by telephone, August 2020.

¹⁵⁵ Government KII, by telephone, August 2020.

¹⁵⁶ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 26.

ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION

Of the 96 supported ABE Centers, 36 (38 percent) will continue beyond the end of the program in 2021. This includes 24 communities, and their respective CECs, that have taken over management of their TLS and have committed to mobilize resources to fund recurrent costs to maintain their functionality to the same standard as ABE. These communities had active CECs. KfW has taken over management of 12 TLS under their program, Building Resilient School Communities in Somalia Through Basic Education. The program states that 30 ABE Centers are not enrolling new learners and are currently continuing with limited functionality with the current cohort of ABE learners (19 TLS will have Level and 2 learners only and the Level 3 and 4 learners will enroll in nearby formal primary schools in the equivalent grade).¹⁵⁷ ABE did not document the names of the TLS, their location, nor the number of learners affected by the change.

ABE's second cohort of 4,932 learners (3,575 from Gedo and 1,357 from Bakool), who were in Level 3 in 2019, are expected to graduate in May/June 2021.¹⁵⁸ The program did not state how many of these learners would be continuing under other programs.

ABE states that 11 TLS in IDP camps are likely to close due to lack of funds and land disputes. The landowners are aware of the closure of the program and intend to reclaim the land where the TLS was located, despite the location being a community-based decision.¹⁵⁹ The program did not state the location of these TLS or the number of learners affected.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

Social mobilization campaigns were used to educate communities, especially parents, on the importance of education. Local authorities and CEC members indicated that social mobilization campaigns resulted in attitudinal changes and ultimately increased the likelihood of parents sending children to school. However, local authorities thought that the campaigns needed to occur more often and on a regular basis, because external shocks could easily lead to a relapse, causing families to migrate to seek income and children to leave school to help support their families economically. Therefore, continued community campaigning remains important to the sustainability of an awareness of the importance of education.

Community Education Committees were proactive in social mobilization campaigns, learner enrollment, and interacting with local authorities, head teachers, teachers, CtCs, and parents. ABE aimed to strengthen the sustainability of community interest and capacity predominantly through the establishment and training of CECs, the issuance of micro-grants to CECs, and cost-sharing incentives for teachers. The program also provided CECs with micro-grants to sustain the TLS. The grants for all three regions were spent on feeding programs to improve enrollment and retention of learners.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ UNICEF's written response to the evaluation team's questions, October 1, 2020.

¹⁵⁹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 26.

The initial pilot program design sought to test cost-sharing approaches so that communities could assume responsibility for teacher incentives. However, ultimately cost sharing was not implemented. ABE informed USAID that cost-sharing activities would be attempted in another UNICEF-managed, KfW-funded program¹⁶⁰ which commenced in October 2019 focusing on 12 schools in Gedo. ABE continued paying teacher incentives as the communities, parents, and local authorities were not able to fund teacher incentives.

SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Local government said that their capacity to inspect schools and teachers was strengthened through joint monitoring visits and technical advice. Local authorities expressed interest and participated extensively in the joint supervision and monitoring visits to ABE Centers with sub-partners and CEC members, exceeding the target of 16 with a total of 38 visits. This meant that the government visited remote locations that the regional education officers and school inspectors might otherwise have not visited, or not have visited as frequently as they did under the support of ABE. While this was in part to capitalize on shared activities because Regional Education Offices could not afford transport costs to remote schools, the visits also strengthened the overall understanding and interest in the program which aimed to increase local ownership of the ABE Centers and knowledge about flexible approaches to non-formal basic education.

There was limited documentation on the outputs of the non-formal education technical advisor(s), embedded in the MoECHE, to assist the development of the NFE policy. The ABE NFE technical advisor assisted the government by strengthening capacity and ensuring the ongoing prioritization of NFE. This position may not be widely visible and known because there was limited evidence to support the advisor's work through evaluation interviews or MVR reports (although the MVR team's monitoring role is field-based). However, the technical advisor and the program state that the advisor provided inputs into a report (post February workshop, 2020) which recommends the formation of a NFE Technical Working Group within the ministry to complement the existing five education technical working groups.

¹⁶⁰ German Development Bank (KfW).

5. CONCLUSIONS

ABE had a variety of positive outcomes for the learners, teachers, and communities. However, there were weaknesses in the design, particularly from a MEL perspective, which affected the overall ability of this evaluation to measure the program's progress against its outcomes.

PROGRAM GOAL AND ULTIMATE OUTCOMES

MEL system deficiencies made it difficult for the program to efficiently and effectively identify vulnerabilities, highlight successes, and provide lessons learned for the wider non-formal education sector. The documentation of ABE's progress toward its goal was limited by its MEL system. There was confusion between output, outcome, and proxy output indicators, and the final 2020 ABE report in October did not report on the EGRA results because the report was not finalized. The results only appear in its MEL performance tracking table (Annex E), as a performance indicator against the program goal.¹⁶¹ Throughout the five years, reported disaggregated data was only available for girls and boys, people with disabilities, and age. There was limited documentation in terms of its gender strategies and their connections to the program's outputs and outcomes. Categories such as older learners, regions, and the location of ABE Centers were missing from the program's MEL system and reporting. Furthermore, the concept of action research, as stated in the Cooperative Agreement, that was dropped from the program, meant that ABE missed the opportunity to contribute to critical education issues, such as education for IDPs and mobile communities.

The original target population of out-of-school migrating pastoralists in Gedo Region have not been reached. The major theory of change assumption was that ABE could reach 8-14-year-olds children of pastoralists in migrating families in Gedo to provide them with access to alternative basic education. The target group were in an accessible area when ABE commenced implementation. However, Al-Shabaab activities heightened the conflict in the area, forcing ABE to leave. In doing this, an unintended negative result was that its original target of out-of-school migrating pastoralists in Gedo have not yet been reached because they remain in the Al-Shabab-controlled conflict-affected area.

The theory of change's critical assumptions was generally accurate, except for the age range of learners, conflict risks, and the capacity of strengthened communities. The program assumed that ABE communities needed to be resilient to external factors, which was only partially true. To respond to this assumption, the program focused specifically on conflict-sensitive programming, but there were many external shocks and risks that affected the implementation of the program, such as severe environmental shocks (drought, windstorms, and flooding), local disputes (land disputes and influx of migrants), and health shocks (COVID-19 pandemic). The assumption to strengthen communities partially held true, but the series of continual shocks made it too challenging for communities to take over financial responsibility for ABE Centers.

The early grade reading assessment was conceptually sound, but poorly implemented, and therefore learners' reading and comprehension outcomes were not available until the end of the program. Data quality issues with how EGRA was implemented rendered it unusable as a

¹⁶¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report. April 01–September 29, Annex E.

measurement tool. The program did not develop an alternative outcome measure (such as teachers' tests) to determine progress. Instead, the program used proxy output indicators such as the distribution of textbooks and readers to measure success against. It is the findings of this evaluation that the provision of supplementary reading materials (output) was not an adequate proxy to measure the ability to read (outcome).

GENDER

Gender equity is a national government challenge, and although ABE did not meet its gender targets, it gained parity with or exceeded the government's formal primary girl learner and female teacher targets. ABE enrolled 43 percent out-of-school girls, 27 percent female teachers, 43 percent female CEC members, and 40 percent CtC Club members. Although the gender target for the enrollment of girls was not achieved, the program nevertheless reflected the national challenge to enroll girls. The FGS estimated girls' enrollment in formal primary schools to be 44 percent in 2017.¹⁶² ABE proactively recruited 121 female teachers (27 percent of its gender target) in contrast to the government's average of 11 percent of rural female teachers in central south and central Somalia.¹⁶³ ABE was successful in attracting female teachers, partly with teacher incentives and also due to gender-sensitive facilities, but it did not document retention rates or drop-out rates—i.e., the number of teachers who stayed in the program, and those who left.

Gender-sensitive facilities, feminine hygiene kits, and female teachers resulted in girls enrolling in the ABE Centers, but it is unclear whether they helped to retain girls in education. Because the program did not monitor retention and drop-out rates of its learners, it is not clear whether these factors retained girls in schools and prevented drop-outs. The program disaggregated gender data, but lacked adequate indicators and documentation to link outputs to outcomes for girl learners. Similarly, the distribution of feminine hygiene kits was double the planned amount, but it is unclear whether it was by demand, and whether it resulted in girls attending regularly and being retained in the program.

Female teachers are positive change agents. Girls wanted to become teachers after viewing their teachers as role models.

ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION

Quick-to-erect temporary learning spaces on community-owned centrally selected land enabled vulnerable children to access learning in locations where the government had not reached. For many remote communities, the TLS was their first school ever.

The inclusion of IDPs was an unintended success due to the expansion into the Bay region. The expansion resulted in ABE Centers in 23 IDP camps consisting of an estimated 26 percent of all ABE enrollments, leading this to be a clear strength of the program in providing access to communities

¹⁶² FGS. MoECHE. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*, p. iii. The USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 11 indicates 36% but no source or date was provided. Updated gender statistics are not available in the National Development Plan 2020-2024.

¹⁶³ FGS. MoECHE. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*, p. 30.

that the government does not usually reach. ABE was viewed positively as an IDP program, highlighting the need to further address the educational challenges of IDP communities.

Establishing the TLS on migration routes enabled migrating families to choose routes that enabled the continuation of their children’s education. The distribution of 12,000 story books through the mobile libraries (donkey carts) to 21 migrating communities enabled their children to access supplementary reading materials that they did not have access to prior to the program.

QUALITY AND READING

The distribution of standardized pre-packaged educational kits and textbooks was more likely to be delivered on time than supplementary reading materials that may not be readily available in the local market. Only 25 percent of the target distribution of readers was achieved by March 2020 (Year 5) as readers were not available in the local market.

Due to the lack of existing story books in the local market, ABE printed their own supplementary reading materials composed by ABE learners. The supplementary reading materials were distributed to 21 mobile communities which enhanced the children’s literacy skills. This completed the remaining 75 percent of readers targeted for distribution, but they were delivered in September 2020. However, the process of story writing benefited only 150 students, from which 23 stories were selected to include in the story book. Learners wanted literacy skills, more story books, and more diverse story books. Learners want to take story books home to continue learning outside of the classroom.

Textbooks for Level 1 and 2 were distributed, but there is no evidence that textbooks for Level 3 and 4 were distributed. This is due to the printing of textbooks in 2020 and delivery in September, leading to ABE not providing appropriate information in its last report. However, there is evidence that Level 1 and 2 textbooks were used, but often with one book to several learners.

ABE did not define ‘quality education’ for both teaching and learning and therefore did not measure quality teaching or learning outcomes. The recruited community teachers had minimum teaching requirements and were trained, but government, community members, sub-partners, teachers, and stakeholders thought more training was needed to improve teaching quality. However, learners, parents, and community members valued the ABE teachers (their personal traits), even though they lacked extensive experience, because they provided a safe and conducive place for learning that gave them positive thoughts about the future.

ABE learners had access to several subject-based teachers who provided a diversity of teaching styles. The strategic move from two level-based teachers per TLS to 3 to 6 subject-based teachers per TLS in Bay and Bakool provided potential benefits for learners, but these were not documented in terms of improved learning or teacher/learner perceptions.

The provision of teaching and learning materials and ABE’s teaching methods through interactive, individualized, and child-centered approaches are highly regarded as ways to improve learning. These elements are perceived by learners and parents as factors that contribute toward improved learning. Both teachers and learners want more TLM, particularly recreation kits.

SYSTEM STRENGTHENING AND SUSTAINABILITY

An effective and active Community Education Committee was a critical factor for the sustainability of ABE Centers. Effective CECs have the capacity to engage with communities, provide parental information, encourage enrollment and retention of children in the program, and assist in monitoring the Centers. It was the communities with the most active CECs that made the decision to take over their ABE Centers.

The community said it could sustain social mobilization campaigns. Neither the government nor Community Education Committees can financially sustain non-formal education initiatives on their own despite their interest and active engagement. However, they can sustain social mobilization campaigns to continue to raise public awareness of the importance of education, which can potentially increase enrollments and retention rates.

ABE expanded extensively into the IDP communities, where government does not reach, but the TLS are highly vulnerable and susceptible to closing when the program finishes.

Joint supervision and monitoring visits were highly regarded by government, but ABE has not documented outcomes for lessons learned.

Sustained financial support for teacher incentives is crucial to the sustainability of teachers in the ABE Centers, especially in remote locations.

The NFE policy development has progressed, but it is still in progress. The indicator that measures the number of consultations on policy development between the technical advisor and the government is not adequate in measuring the progress, outputs, and outcomes of embedded technical assistance to the government.

In summary, Figure 4 provides a SWOT analysis of the program and demonstrates that, overall, there were more strengths than weaknesses across the program with significant positive outcomes.

Figure 4: ABE SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of TLS/ABE Centers • Quick to erect and dismantle TLS • Gender-sensitive facilities and hygiene products • Gender equality policy across all levels (teachers, learners, committee members etc.) • Social mobilization campaigns – education importance • Community Education Committees • Flexibility of interventions • Inclusive and diverse enrollment of beneficiary groups • Inclusion of children of internally displaced families • Teachers • Learner enjoyment and satisfaction with literacy lessons • Learner preference for learner-centered, interactive teaching • Extra-curricular activities • Pre-packaged educational kits • Joint monitoring visits to monitor ABE Centers • Local partners • Low program overheads • Non-formal education policy support • Government-embedded NFE technical advisor 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring, evaluation and learning system/approach • Performance tracking • Progress reporting • Teaching quality • Lack of a conflict-sensitive programming strategy • Lack of a risk assessment
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedded non-formal education technical advisor 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate outcome indicators to measure progress of outcomes toward the program’s goal • Lack of effective outcome indicators and means to measure quality learning • Late and limited distribution of TLM • Lack of local readers (story books)

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

The ABE evaluation has identified recommendations which can be used to guide future alternative basic education programming within Somalia for USAID.

RECOMMENDATION 1: RISK PROGRAMMING

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia implement risk programming in education programs (which encompasses, but goes beyond, conflict-sensitive programming)¹⁶⁴ due to the many and continuous shocks in the Somalia context. Upon implementation, and updated regularly, this includes a risk assessment checklist and plan to gain an understanding of the probability and consequence of a range of potential risks by region/location, such as natural (flooding, drought, insect plague); economic (food and energy costs, lack of provisions such as food and water); health (disease and accident); infrastructure (road closure, transport restrictions, fuel shortage); and conflict (personal, demonstrations, military action, tribal, terrorism). It is recommended that risk programming includes an understanding of the operational context, inter-group relationships, lines of communication, command and responsibility, action plans to minimize negative effects and maximize rapid responses and solutions, and contingency planning.

RECOMMENDATION 2: MEL SYSTEM TO MEASURE OUTCOMES

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia clearly define the *main* goal of a program—e.g., a reading-focused program *or* a holistic program that aims to ensure the graduation rate of its learners—and consequently design the program and its performance MEL system accordingly. Not all of the following suggested measurements require indicators, but they should all be monitored, disaggregated, and reported as part of the program’s progress toward its goal, with a focus on measuring change. To measure learner performance (i.e., improved learning), measurements should include enrollments, drop-out rates, retention rates, graduation rates, and reading (EGRA) and/or learning improvements. This could also include the monitoring and tracking of the progression of learners from level to level (grade to grade) to capture vulnerabilities in a timely way. In addition to an EGRA indicator measuring reading fluency and comprehension, alternative outcome indicators should be selected to measure improved learning outcomes, such as:

- Structured learner observations and checklists;
- Recording the results of teachers’ regular learner tests;
- Reading observations (how many books, how often, fluency, etc.); and
- Parental checklists of how often learners read at home.

To measure teaching performance (i.e., improved teaching), measurements could include the use of teaching and learning materials, and the use of teaching methodologies such as radio education programs

¹⁶⁴ USAID. (2013). Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs. November.

and child-centered learning methods. Outcome indicators should be selected to measure improved teaching outcomes, such as:

- Structured teacher/classroom observations and checklists; and
- Assessments of teachers' knowledge.

To measure community, parent, and teacher behavior change, it is recommended that the program use a before-and-after Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) survey or similar instrument. Similarly, there could be checklists for infrastructure and equipment safety, use, and hygiene.

It is recommended that the implementer provide MEL training and conduct joint monitoring visits—observations and supervision—with community leaders and government officials in a formal, structured way. It is recommended that the implementer document and disseminate lessons learned to contribute to the broader evidence base on NFE in Somalia, particularly in relation to children of IDPs due to the limited information about this population of learners.

RECOMMENDATION 3: QUALITY TEACHING METHODOLOGY

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia define and delineate between 'quality education' (overall effectiveness of a non-formal education program) and 'teaching quality' (more effective teaching). Teaching quality encompasses elements such as: the teacher, training (duration, frequency, etc.), teaching methodology, curriculum, and use of materials. It is recommended to continue funding literacy-focused, learner-centered, individual learning, and interactive teacher training, including training to support literacy, numeracy, sports, and games. To advance teaching quality, there could be regular government-led, program-guided, standardized and structured teacher observation checklists, with a feedback mechanism, to guide improved teaching instruction. Annual lessons learned could be used for further professional development and knowledge sharing.

RECOMMENDATION 4: QUALITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia continue to fund the establishment of safe, secure, and hygienic learning environments for all learners. This includes the construction of gender-sensitive learning spaces to facilitate increased female enrollment and retention in schooling. It includes up-scaling fun learning experiences, such as recreation and games, and booklet-writing or other literacy competitions and cooperative activities.

RECOMMENDATION 5: TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia fund interventions that lead to the output of teacher-student, parent, or community-generated story books, given the limited number of Somali readers in the local market. These could involve a media or education partner organization, and the distribution of the story books within ABE. It is recommended that activities are conducted from the onset of the program to ensure timely distribution.

RECOMMENDATION 6: GENDER EQUITY

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia continue to set gender equity targets across all levels of programming, such as the recruitment of female teachers and committee members, to ensure the visibility of female role models and change agents. In addition to gender disaggregation of results, narrative reporting on gender issues should be a specific reporting requirement. It is recommended that programs regularly monitor the learning outcomes of both girls and boys to determine progress toward improvements as well as any gender inequities, to be addressed in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATION 7: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING NFE

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia (through its *Bar ama Baro*, or “Teach or Learn” program) consider strengthening the engagement of the Non-Formal Education Directorate with other departments within the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE) in line with the Sustainable Development Goals in terms of policy development and a package of comprehensive non-policy interventions. This will facilitate ongoing support for the NFE policy, curriculum alignment, teaching and training materials, gender equity, and literacy and numeracy development, as well as the establishment of the NFE Technical Working Group, by also engaging the FGS for the certification/graduation of learners as part of the NFE policy framework. It is recommended that the NFE Directorate works at the federal and local levels to ensure a flow of communication and information. The main approach could cover: policy and results-based planning; decentralization management; institutional capacity development; critical reflection/debate workshops which are widely inclusive of a range of stakeholders; TLM development capacity building; and knowledge generation, research, and dissemination. Emphasis could be placed on strengthening action research capacity. In addition, to strengthen the formation of the NFE Technical Working Group, the Directorate, it is recommended to consider connecting with the Working Group on Non-Formal Education of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa.¹⁶⁵ Additionally, a technical advisor(s) could be embedded within the NFE Directorate and/or Regional Education Offices to strengthen NFE reforms, working in collaboration with curriculum, quality assurance, and other departments to advance sectoral efforts. Furthermore, it is recommended to have an effective system of monitoring, measuring, and reporting the progress of NFE strengthening activities against clearly defined goals, intended outputs and outcomes, indicators, and targets.

RECOMMENDATION 8: SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING

It is recommended that USAID/Somalia advocate for sustainability planning (exit planning) from the commencement of programs that documents strategies for community and school development (particularly in rural and remote locations). It is recommended that sustainability planning use a community-led, inclusive, and participatory approach that strengthens the capacity of Community Education Committees, or similar bodies, to plan for handover of ABE Centers and some or all elements of the program in a gradual phased-in approach by the end of the program. This could build upon, and

¹⁶⁵ Association for the Development of Education in Africa, formed in Dakar, Senegal in 1996 with the participation of the ministries of education in Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mauritania, Namibia, Senegal, Zanzibar, and the following development agencies: the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Association for the Promotion of Non-Formal Education in Burkina Faso, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, and the Club de Sahel.

<http://www.adeanet.org/en/working-groups/non-formal-education>

integrate members from, existing structures such as CECs, Child-to-Child groups, education authority planning units, and school inspectors, with donor-supported monitoring, reporting, and follow-up activities.

The formulation of written community-led, program-guided, joint sustainability plans at the local level could also include a risk assessment identifying potential risks to education (economic, environmental, conflict, etc.) and plans to mitigate them. Planning for sustainability needs to be practical and manageable for communities and consider such broad issues as: financing and fundraising, data collection, learner attendance, teacher attendance, cleanliness of classrooms and surrounding environments, inter-school teacher and learner knowledge-sharing, inter-school sporting teams and competitions, school gardens, community-led social mobilization campaigns on the importance of education, and community announcements.

7. CASE STUDIES

Drawing upon the desk review of program and related documentation as well as data collected in the field and remotely through KIs and FGDs, this section provides a series of case studies. Each study analyses in more detail the findings that identify ABE program’s ‘models of success’ and key implementation lessons learned, trends, or emerging issues. The case studies examine the factors that drive that success, or impeded it, in such a way that demonstrates potential use or learnings for future USAID programming. Evaluators referred to USAID’s guide on Evaluation Case Studies.¹⁶⁶

CASE STUDY I: INCLUSION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as “persons or groups who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.”¹⁶⁷ This case study presents information on ABE’s aim to provide IDPs with access to alternative basic education in the targeted regions of Bakool, Bay, and Gedo.

“The communities that benefited most from the ABE program were the IDPs because they are a part of the pastoralist communities and they migrate.” - Government official, Bay region, Somalia, key informant interview

CASE STUDY: INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS – ACCESS TO ABE

Purpose addressed	This case study addresses IDPs under Purpose 1, access to quality alternative basic education, and under Purpose 2, quality and reading, through teacher training and the provision of teaching and learning materials.
Challenge / rationale for the initiative	<p>Somalia has had a protracted IDP and refugee crisis for an estimated 25 years due to ongoing conflict and natural disasters. As a result of the movement of IDPs, and their long periods of shelter in IDP camps, children of IDPs are often vulnerable to missing basic education, or having their education severely interrupted. IDPs in Somalia live in camps and settlements among communities.</p> <p>The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Population Estimation Survey from 2015 documented that 24.2 percent of children of IDPs, aged six years and older, were enrolled in formal government schools compared with 36.6percent of the national average in Somalia. When broken down by schooling type, this is 16.8 percent in primary and 12 percent in secondary school against the national average of 32percent and 15.8percent respectively.¹⁶⁸ The FGS noted that ‘few “lessons</p>

¹⁶⁶ USAID. (2013). *Guidance on Evaluative Case Studies*: https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/usaid_case_study_tech_note_2013.pdf

¹⁶⁷ UNOCHA. (2004). *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. <https://www.unhcr.org>

¹⁶⁸ FGS. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education, p. 34.

learned” on IDP education in Somalia were located for this analysis or readily available [for the documentation of their 2018-2020 Education Sector Strategic Plan], in large measure because they have received little attention outside the context of Education in Emergency responses. This simply highlights that IDPs do not feature strongly in development programming (or Education in Emergency programming beyond “immediate responses”) because of their disadvantaged status in areas of settlement and their ongoing social, political and economic exclusion.¹⁶⁹

Large number of IDPs:

During the February 2017 drought in Somalia, the Humanitarian Information Unit of the U.S. Government estimated that more than 6 million people were facing food and water shortages caused by drought and a desert locust plague eating crops.¹⁷⁰ This led to large movements of communities, including in ABE’s beneficiary area, i.e., from the Gedo region to urban areas in the Bay region and the Bakool region.

By 2018, UNHCR estimated that 2.1 million men, women, and children were displaced in Somalia.¹⁷¹ The 2018 Somalia Gender Analysis report for USAID noted that, during 2017, ‘the number of IDPs more than doubled—from 1 million to over 2 million—many moving to informal settlements in and around Mogadishu and contributing to one of the highest rates of urbanization in the world.’¹⁷² In April 2018, UNHCR stated that there were 1,890 IDP sites in 48 districts in 17 regions across Somalia.¹⁷³

After Mogadishu, Baidoa in the Bay region had the second largest number of IDPs in Somalia, estimated by the EU in January 2019 to be 329,191, which outnumbers the resident population.¹⁷⁴ Yet, in February 2019, UNHCR estimated the IDP populations as: 48,000 in Bakool; 272,000 in Bay; and 207,000 in Gedo.¹⁷⁵

In the ABE location in the Bay region, Baidoa reported over 1,000 new IDPs in October 2019 due to physical or food insecurity, as well as the *Deyr* rains that

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁷⁰ Al Jazeera. (2017). *Drought in Somalia: Time is Running Out*. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2017/02/drought-somalia-time-running-170213111737077.html>, accessed September 17, 2020.

¹⁷¹ UNHCR. (2018). Somalia. January. <https://www.unhcr.org/somalia.html>, accessed September 5, 2020.

¹⁷² UNHCR (2018). *Somalia Humanitarian Needs Overview 2018* cited in IBTCI (2018). IBTCI. (2017). *Gender Analysis*. Under SPSS, pp. 1-2.

¹⁷³ UNHCR. (2018). *Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster Somalia DSA (Detailed Site Assessment) – March 2018*. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/63132>, accessed September 5, 2020.

¹⁷⁴ Delegation of the European Union to Somalia. (2019). *7,000 Displaced Families in Baidoa Have a New Home*. July 13, 2019. European External Action Service. <https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia>, accessed September 17, 2020.

¹⁷⁵ UNHCR. (2019). Somalia. February <https://www.unhcr.org/somalia.html>, accessed September 5, 2020.

began mid-September in the north-eastern regions with higher-than-average rainfalls.¹⁷⁶

Political tensions in the Gedo region in March 2020 and heavy fighting between the Somalia National Army and Jubaland forces led to increased fear among residents as well as the closure of businesses and of five schools. Following a rapid inter-agency needs assessment, UNOCHA estimated that 75 percent of Belet Hawa (5,275 households, including IDP households) have been displaced, fleeing to Luuq and Dolo.¹⁷⁷

ABE program activities and modifications – shifts/changes in strategy

ABE’s dilemma centered on how to reach the vast number of out-of-school children, especially IDP and migrating children who were dropping out of school. Therefore, ABE made the following modifications to its program: (1) extended its reach to urban areas in the Bay and Bakool regions; and (2) amended its teacher instruction strategy.

After a needs assessment in January 2016, the program, which originally aimed to work only in Gedo as a pilot program, had already expanded in Gedo from 15 pastoralist communities to 35 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities, and then to 75 communities (15 communities each year for five years). Taking the pilot to a full program, it expanded to 96 communities when the 2017 drought forced the movement of people.

Expansion to Bay and Bakool regions/Integration of IDP and urban children: ABE hired two additional sub-partners to expand into the Bay and Bakool regions in South West State, and to integrate IDP and urban learners. This no-cost expansion resulted in an increase in the number of communities in the program in the Gedo region to 52, with an additional 32 in the Bay region and 12 in the Bakool region. This brought the total to 96 pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, urban, and IDP communities.¹⁷⁸

Amendment of teacher training strategy: Due to initial overcrowding in the new schools in the Bay and Bakool regions with the two teachers per class methodology used in the Gedo region, ABE changed its teacher training and implementation strategy to include teaching by subject areas, which resulted in three to six teachers per TLS.

ABE activities in the IDP camps covered the same wide-ranging approaches as other TLS, such as a safe learning space, a condensed educational program to accelerate learning from eight primary school grades into four levels, as well as textbooks and readers.

¹⁷⁶ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 31, p. 6.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁷⁸ UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. September 30, 2019, p. 10.

Outcomes/
results and
beneficiary or
stakeholder
opinions

The main outcome of the program for IDPs included improved access to education that they would not normally be able to access due to long periods of absence from formal schooling. A key informant from an external education agency confirmed, “the ABE Centers are commonly located either in IDP camps or near primary schools.”

Establishment of temporary learning spaces for IDPs: The following figures are extrapolated from ABE Center data, and may underestimate the actual enrollments because ABE did not disaggregate IDP data.

In the 96 communities, ABE established at least 28 TLS for IDPs.¹⁷⁹ ABE established TLS inside three IDP camps in Gedo, enrolling 274 boys (54 percent) and 236 girls (46 percent) to total 510 IDPs, representing 6percent of all of Gedo’s ABE enrollments.¹⁸⁰ ABE established TLS in two IDP camps in Bakool, enrolling 548 boys (60 percent) and 349 girls (40 percent) to total 907 IDPs, representing 16percent of all of Bakool’s ABE enrollments. ABE established TLS in 23 IDP camps in Baidoa, enrolling 2,008 boys (53 percent) and 1,809 girls (47 percent), to total 3,817 IDPs, representing 61 percent of all of Bay’s ABE enrollments.¹⁸¹ Across all three regions, there were an estimated 5,234 IDP enrollments (2,394 or 46 percent girls), which is 26 percent of all ABE enrollments.

A community leader from the Bay region stated he was an IDP who enrolled all of his five children in ABE, indicating that families tend not to migrate to different areas each time, and through word-of-mouth, but now choose a migration route with a temporary school: “I believe people consider the availability of school when migrating to other areas.” A religious leader from the Bay region added, “some families have even relocated to IDP camps near big towns to enroll their children in those schools.” A Bakool IDP parent said, “it is easy to reach this ABE program and IDPs who were unfortunately uneducated benefitted from this program.”

A Bay education official confirmed that “the majority of the learners are IDPs and even old IDPs who joined these schools such that they study in the morning hours and work in the afternoon to make some money to cater for their families, others work in the morning and attend class in the afternoon.” Another agency official added, “this program is an educational program which focuses on IDPs; we can say the ABE program is a small portion of a resilience program.”

Conclusions /
lessons learned

Lessons learned:

1. Stakeholders viewed the inclusion of IDPs into the program in positive terms.
-

¹⁷⁹ Excel Sheet of TLS sites, ABE Enrollment by Center, provided by UNICEF.

¹⁸⁰ UNICEF. (2020). ABE Enrollment by Center, provided with *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, 2020.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

2. The enrollment of an estimated 5,234 children of IDPs, which is a quarter of all ABE enrollments, is a major achievement under Purpose 1, access to quality alternative basic education.
3. The enrollment of children of IDPs represents an estimated 26 percent of all ABE enrollments, predominantly in the Bay region (estimated 61 percent of Bay region enrollments), showing the demand for education among IDP families.
4. The ability of ABE to rapidly respond to external factors and modify the program addressed a critical educational and community need.
5. Temporary learning spaces provided the flexibility and adaptability needed to provide education within the learners' immediate location, thereby ultimately increasing access.
6. The equal opportunity to access education and the provision of the same interventions for IDPs as for all other marginalized groups in ABE enabled a safe, non-discriminatory environment for IDP learners and families.
7. Temporary learning spaces along migratory routes and in IDP camps enable families to plan movements and provide easier access to education.

Limitations

IDP educational needs continue to be substantial: Despite ABE's establishment of 23 TLS in Baidoa for IDPs, an education official from the Bay region said that the need is still great: "The society still does not benefit from this program as required because in Baidoa there are 384 IDP camps but only 64 IDP camps have schools." A federal ministry representative said Baidoa has "over 90 IDP schools but this is not enough." By December 2019, an international NGO reported that only 17 percent of rural children and children of IDPs had enrolled in primary schools—mostly in NGO-run temporary learning centers.¹⁸²

Limited supervision of schools in IDP camps: ABE conducted monitoring visits to its schools, including in six joint monitoring visits to each region in 2019 (i.e., 18 monitoring visits in total) with the regional education office and inspectorate system. Regional education office officials requested more joint monitoring visits, particularly to the remote locations, because the office had limited funds and had reduced its visits to schools. The office found the monitoring visits to be useful in bringing regional education and district education officers closer together, and collaboratively advising communities on regular opening times for schools, improved teachers' educational delivery, and the importance and value of education.¹⁸³

Lack of IDP disaggregated data: Many educational reports include urban statistics, but are limited in regional data, and are virtually without IDP

¹⁸² Ejakait, A.W. (2019). *Concern Worldwide and Education in Somalia*. <https://www.concernusa.org/story/education-in-somalia/>, accessed September 5, 2020.

¹⁸³ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, p. 26.

disaggregated data at the school level and regional level. For example, the 2017 Somali Perceptions Survey did not include pastoralists and IDPs¹⁸⁴ in their data collection, nor did the 2018 Somalia Gender Analysis because ‘the massive upheavals have adversely affected the availability of data disaggregated by gender and age per geographical location.’¹⁸⁵ UNICEF estimated in 2018 that up to two thirds of IDP households in Mogadishu are headed by women due to a combination of factors, including ‘high levels of divorce, polygamy, male death rates, and the practice of “parking” families in one area while the male head of household works’¹⁸⁶ i.e., urban data was available, but regional data was lacking. The FGS Somalia Education Cluster education partner meeting of August 2020 presented data disaggregated by displaced populations regionally (comparing figures with 2014 population data) but did not disaggregate further—e.g., stating that of 362,896 IDPs, 153,000 were displaced by floods with zero in Gedo, Bay, and Bakool regions (OCHA, August 3, 2020).¹⁸⁷

ABE collects enrollment data on ABE Centers, disaggregated by region, district, sex, age, and disability status, but it does not report disaggregated data by beneficiary category (IDP, pastoralist, and agro-pastoralist) to USAID, limiting its contribution to the much-needed knowledge base of IDP educational information within the education sector in Somalia.

CASE STUDY 2: INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION

Under the section on “Inclusivity and Access” in its reports to USAID, the program states that it ‘has ensured the diversity and inclusiveness of children enrolled in ABE Centers from pastoralist communities, including children with disabilities. The selected households are from pastoralist communities and households impacted by the various crises.’¹⁸⁸ This case study presents information on ABE’s aim to ensure inclusivity of children to alternative basic education, and how the expansion into Bay and Bakool transformed its limited view of inclusivity into a more encompassing definition.

“The school is located in an IDP Center and it’s for both refugees and host community children. The school surrounds different communities like Maay and Mahatiri, meaning the school has all different clans, minority or not. They are all in the school where they feel integrated through education. The children love each other in the school, and they protect one another. The teachers, and also the CEC members, play a key role in conflict management.” - Parent, Gedo region, Somalia, key informant interview

¹⁸⁴ IBTCI. (2017). Somali Perceptions Survey, Part I – The Emerging Federal States, Mogadishu, and Puntland. Under SPSS, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ UNHCR (2018). *Somalia Humanitarian Needs Overview 2018* cited in IBTCI (2018). IBTCI. (2017). *Gender Analysis*. Under SPSS, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁶ UNICEF Somalia cited in IBTCI (2018). IBTCI. (2017). *Gender Analysis*. Under SPSS, p. 4.

¹⁸⁷ FGS Somalia Education Cluster. (2020). Education Partner Meeting, August 11.

¹⁸⁸ UNICEF. (2020). ABE Enrollment by Center, provided with *Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report*, March 31, 2020, p. 28.

CASE STUDY: INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESS TO ABE

Purpose addressed	This case study addresses inclusivity and access under Purpose I, access to quality alternative basic education, through enrollment and retention in ABE and the establishment of temporary learning spaces (ABE Centers).
Challenge / rationale for the initiative	<p>In its Cooperative Agreement, ABE implementer UNICEF made no statement regarding inclusivity when referring to access to alternative basic education because, in 2015, the program’s goal was to ‘increase access to equitable, quality education for pastoralists and other out-of-school children living in south and central Somalia through the provision of alternative basic education.’¹⁸⁹ The program was aimed at access to non-formal education for pastoralist and other out-of-school children in 15 communities in 4 different districts only, with Gedo as a pilot.</p> <p>Limited definition of inclusivity: Despite “inclusivity” being omitted from its original design, from the beginning of reporting in 2016 ABE has included a section on “Inclusivity and Access” in each report to USAID. This was a positive addition aimed, in part, to address Cooperative Agreement conditions under the USAID Disability Policy and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Assistance.¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, the brief section in each report focused predominantly on the inclusion of three categories: (1) girls, (2) children with disabilities, and (3) people from diverse backgrounds, with a statement that ‘ABE is deeply rooted in UNICEF’s approach to child-friendly, inclusive, and equitable education.’¹⁹¹</p> <p>By 2019, ABE’s progress report stated that ABE ensures ‘children from pastoralist communities enrolled in ABE Centers come from diverse backgrounds and pay close attention to inclusiveness for children with disabilities. This equally applies to teachers of the ABE Centers, where priority is given to the recruitment of female teachers, and where communities are tasked to identify female teachers from the community as the first preference.’¹⁹² In its semi-annual report in March 2020, it again emphasized diversity, as disabilities, and a general statement on ‘inclusiveness of children.’</p>
ABE program activities and modifications – shifts/changes in strategy	Through an internal needs assessment in January 2016 and a range of external factors (i.e., conflict, drought, and flooding), ABE modified its original strategy to address immediate emergency situations by expanding its program from a pilot pastoralist non-formal education program in the Gedo region to a more inclusive, fully-fledged program that included: (1) two additional regions—Bay and Bakool; (2) urban learners; (3) older learners (i.e., older than 14 years); (4) IDPs; and (5)

¹⁸⁹ USAID. (2015). *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 15.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁹¹ UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016, p. 21.

¹⁹² UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Alternative Basic Education in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, 2019, p. 22.

other out-of-school and marginalized learners; under (6) a revised teacher training program to cater for an inclusive range of learners.

When it was strategically determined internally that the program could not operate in the Gedo region alone to fulfill its mandate to reach 21,000 pastoralist children, it transitioned to the current format. Ultimately, it was “forced” to become more inclusive through the expansion of its scope brought about by its challenging external environment (i.e., from a pilot program to full programming). ABE was able to respond immediately due to its flexible teaching and learning methodologies and the establishment of TLS.

ABE activities that included the diverse range of beneficiaries (above) covered the same wide-ranging approaches for all learners including: a safe learning space, a condensed educational program to accelerate learning from eight primary school grades into four levels, and the provision of textbooks and learning materials.

However, while the program expanded its geographic reach, methodologies, teacher training, and enrollments to a broader range of vulnerable children, it did not fully modify its MEL systems which particularly failed to disaggregate beneficiary data (in its monitoring plans and reporting to USAID). While implementation was responsive to external shocks and environmental challenges, the program’s MEL system remained relatively static, and consequently insufficient to capture program learnings and measure impact.

Outcomes/
results and
beneficiary or
stakeholder
opinions

ABE teachers and education administrators were trained to understand the philosophy behind the program, but this was based on the initial definition of inclusivity (girls, children with disabilities, and people of diverse backgrounds) which did not fully encompass the diverse needs of those within the program.

For example, a teacher in the Bay region stated that, “the program aimed to meet diverse children’s needs in a way that is responsive, accepting, respectful, and supportive.” Another Bay teacher added, “inclusive education is about ensuring access to quality education for all students, regardless of background and gender.” A teacher in Bakool stated, “inclusive education means all children regardless of gender”. A FGS NFE authority stated, “the teachers are not well trained for the ABE program in terms of inclusivity and condensed curriculum. Inclusive education should be available to all communities without discriminating against a boy or girl.”

Given that teachers are key change agents who impart information to learners, parents, and the community, their definition of inclusivity needs to be fully embracing of all categories of learners, regardless of background, clan, circumstance (IDPs etc.), rural, urban, gender, age, language, education level, religion, region, migratory, resident, pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, psycho-social, physical, financial, etc.

The following comment by a head teacher in the Bay region demonstrates the importance of inclusivity in its fully embraced philosophy. When teachers in a FGD stated that “the number of urban students was very few compared to the number of internally displaced and pastoralist children,” one teacher responded, “we

cannot ignore their impact on the IDP children. The urban students are familiar with Maxa Tiri (a Somali dialect) used in the ABE curriculum whereas the IDP children do not understand it. In this case, the urban students acted as translators in the absence of the teachers and, therefore, this helped much the internally displaced children. All children benefited from this ABE program in terms of accessibility.” This is a good example of peer learning that brings children together from diverse groups for mutual benefits, demonstrating tolerance and understanding.

Conclusions /
lessons learned

ABE has a number of promising interventions to improve equity and access in the NFE sector that lend themselves to further study and documentation, such as in the age-specific domain (including early childhood development), education resilience approaches, school feeding programs, peer learning, and ‘second chance’ programs for out-of-school children.

Lessons learned:

1. Inclusivity needs to be clearly and explicitly defined and adopted in all forms of communication—performance tracking sheets (disaggregated data), reporting, community messages, radio education programs, professional development, etc.
2. Inclusivity encompasses accessibility and the right to education for all groups of children.
3. Inclusivity brings people together that would not typically come into contact and interact with each other (e.g., IDP communities with resident communities).
4. Inclusivity lends itself to peer learning with learners of different ages, backgrounds, and perspectives.
5. Inclusivity reinforces tolerance, conflict mitigation, and peace.
6. Inclusivity normalizes diversity.

The responses of beneficiaries show, in part, some aspects of Universal Design, even though the program neither strategized nor documented a Universal Design approach to inclusivity, nor recognized it as a strategy to effectively address issues beyond access. However, it was recognized consciously by a donor KII respondent and subconsciously by many parents of ABE learners.

Universal Design enables diverse populations to benefit, universally, from an intervention that was specifically designed for one category of the population. For example, audio books, originally designed for sight-impaired readers (i.e., people with a disability), have become popular universally, e.g., for people without disabilities while on their commute to work or while exercising. Another example is the global positioning system (GPS)—a satellite navigation system designed by the military in war time to locate submarines—which has become universally applied to handheld devices to find a local store, a lost pet, aid in law enforcement, and keep track of aged persons with dementia.

Universal Design, a concept initiated in the mid-1990s, in its full application would subsume non-formal education into mainstream formal education if policies are specifically established and implemented to universally address inclusion. However, this is rarely an approach for education ministries globally. Nevertheless, Universal Design can be adopted at a programmatic level because it is a performance-based approach that addresses usability issues inclusive for everyone at all levels to reduce discrimination, which applies to physical products, learning activities, policies and philosophies, and systems.¹⁹³

Limitations

Limited celebration of inclusivity as a learning opportunity: Access to education programs, and in general most development programs, limit their definition of inclusivity to a few specified categories, and therefore interventions and activities are limited to those categories of learners and citizens. ABE expanded its ‘inclusivity’ reach when it expanded its geographic and programmatic reach to provide access to education for urban children, children of IDPs, and older children (outside its original scope) but did not seem to recognize the importance of using this as a learning experience (to promote peace, tolerance, and acceptance) or to keep track of disaggregated performance as a learning exercise for the wider NFE community. This missed opportunity meant the program reports to USAID failed to adequately report the actual extent of its inclusivity and, as a result, its access to a broader range of children.

Limited disaggregation of data (disaggregation did not reflect the true extent of the program’s expansion): ABE collects enrollment data on ABE Centers such as region, district, sex, age, and disability level of the learner, and reports its progress annually and semi-annually against these categories.

While it does report on male/female, 6-14 years/15-19 years, and learners with disabilities, it does not disaggregate data on IDPs, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, or rural and urban enrollments to USAID. Unfortunately, this limits its contribution to the wider education sector’s knowledge on inclusivity and access in the non-formal education sector. It may have collected some of this data in its database, but it did not report on it; when the evaluation team requested disaggregated data, it proved challenging to receive, or analyze the data with reasonable reliability.

CASE STUDY 3: FEMALE TEACHERS

ABE had a 50 percent gender recruitment target—i.e., 50 percent female teachers for its ABE Centers. This case study not only examines issues of recruitment, but also wider issues of qualifications, training, teaching quality, and challenges among female teachers. The comments are not comprehensive, given the nature of the evaluation. They are based upon two face-to-face focus group discussions with 12 female

¹⁹³ Adapted from Goals of Universal Design and UD for Learning, University at Buffalo, <http://idea.ap.buffalo.edu/about/universal-design/> and <http://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei/enhance/teaching/universal-design.html>, accessed September 18, 2020.

teachers in Gedo and Bay, and telephone interviews with 15 ABE teachers (9 female and 6 male) in July/August 2020.

“In terms of opportunities, I have particularly been satisfied with the quality of the training provided. I feel that we have become better teachers in the ABE program. I am not aware if there are any female head teacher in the ABE program, but I am dedicated to continue growing in the profession so that I am ready for such an opportunity when it knocks at my door.” - Female teacher, Bay region, Somalia, focus group discussion

CASE STUDY: FEMALE ABE TEACHERS

Purpose addressed	This case study addresses the issue of female teachers under Purpose 2, quality and reading, in addition to learners’ access to female teachers.
Challenge / rationale for the initiative	<p>The number of female teachers across south and central Somalia is a national problem in government schools at both primary and secondary levels. The FGS has published figures for formal government schools, but not for their non-formal educational institutions.</p> <p>MoECHE’s Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020 published in November 2017 indicated that the proportion of female primary teachers in south and central Somalia was only 13.8 percent, with 3.6 percent among secondary teachers. In rural primary schools, there were 10.9 percent female teachers, compared with 7.8 percent in urban areas, based on 2015 Education Statistics Yearbook figures.¹⁹⁴ More recent published figures were difficult to locate.</p> <p>South and central Somalia also had the lowest proportion of qualified formal primary school teachers in the country at 20.1 percent (2014 UNICEF Rapid Baseline), with 17.7 percent of female teachers qualified, compared with the national average of 40.6 percent. In the Gedo region, 7.5 percent of female, formal, primary school teachers were qualified (equaling 8 female teachers), with 6.9 percent in the Bay region (equaling 2 female teachers) and 56.4 percent in Bakool region (equaling 22 female teachers).¹⁹⁵</p> <p>In addition, in south and central Somalia, 86 percent of all formal primary school teachers are in urban areas. This is inequitable with the population distribution that shows the total combined percentage of urban and IDPs at 48.3 percent of the population, compared with 51.7 percent of rural and pastoralists.¹⁹⁶</p> <p>To address inequalities in the education sector, the FGS reinforced its aim to focus on the importance of education for marginalized groups and girls, and to attract female teachers: Somalia’s National Development Plan 2020-2024 aims to ‘focus</p>

¹⁹⁴ FGS. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education, pp. 30-31.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 60.

on education initiatives for the most vulnerable: IDPs, rural communities ... girls ... female teachers and household awareness of the importance of education.¹⁹⁷

ABE program activities and modifications – shifts/changes in strategy

ABE was proactive in its efforts to achieve a target of 50 percent of female teachers; however, this was not achieved with only 27 percent of recruited teachers being female. It proved most difficult to reach this target in the Bakool region, with 17 percent female teachers (compared with 29 percent in both the Gedo and Bay regions).¹⁹⁸ However, 27 percent of female teachers is significantly higher than the 11 percent of female teachers in rural formal government primary schools in Central South Somalia in 2015.¹⁹⁹

Outcomes/ results and beneficiary or stakeholder opinions

In the two evaluation FGDs with only female teachers, four (33 percent) of the 12 female teachers in the Gedo and Bay regions stated that they had previous training but limited teaching experience before joining the program. They were selected for the program based upon tests administered by the sub-partners, and all received training on the ABE approach, methodology, and curriculum.

When 15 additional teachers (9 female and 6 male) were asked, via KII telephone calls, why some teachers who were trained in the ABE curriculum were no longer interested in becoming a teacher, all of them said that the reason was the low salary.

Female teachers expressed the following challenges: low salary and high transport costs, work-life balance, maternity leave policy, and no staff offices to rest during break times. In addition, there were general challenges faced by all teachers including: the need for regular professional development sessions, more textbooks, more classrooms, more educational materials, more desks, less crowded classrooms, and a curriculum aligned with the government and standardized examinations. The topic most requested for more training was individual learner differences and the best steps for optimum individual performances.

Regarding the 18-day ABE teacher training, Bay teachers discussed the substantial benefits gained (whereas teachers in Gedo and Bakool did not express their views, except overall positive benefits): “It’s at this ABE Center where I have become better at teaching. Of course, here I am dealing with small children so one has to devise all sorts of teaching methods to keep them active and thirsty for learning. Otherwise, bored children cannot be handled. We have undergone comprehensive training for this.” One teacher said she now understood “the importance of preparing for classes, keeping an itinerary, and having a game plan to deliver sessions effectively. Therefore, I would say this program has prepared me to

¹⁹⁷ FGS. (2019). Somalia National Development Plan 2020-2024: The Path to a Just, Stable and Prosperous Somalia. Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development, p. 271.

¹⁹⁸ Annex E to UNICEF Somalia Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, [September 30, 2020](#).

¹⁹⁹ FGS. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education, p. 30.

become a professional teacher.” Another teacher added, “I have learnt everything I know about teaching at this Center.”

A Bay teacher said, “in terms of quality teaching ... I still think teachers in formal schools are more experienced than us here in the ABE program, but they have not had the kind of training we have received at ABE.” Another Bay teacher said, “at ABE we are encouraged to use interactive learner-centered methods, including game-based question and answer sessions, songs and stories.” Working with students in small groups was a common methodology among female teachers. They all said that they had gained confidence in their teaching skills after the training.

Several other benefits were also articulated by teachers, including the opportunity to work together collaboratively, more than they do with their male colleagues (the extent of male-to-male collaboration was not discussed): “Opportunities are also many. Since we are few female teachers, we can come together and advocate for the rights of the child in terms of education. We were taught this in our training as well. We have been creating awareness to both girl students and to their parents. I think more can be done,” a teacher from Gedo said. A Bay teacher also added, “in terms of opportunities, I feel that I am at the perfect school to grow as a teacher given that we get regular training to build our capacity.”

A Bay teacher said that mothers were likely to send their daughters to school if there was a female teacher. Local authorities confirmed the importance of female teachers in attracting girls to school, and as a role model for learners. In three FGDs with learners, 17 percent of girls and 9 percent of boys said they wanted to become a teacher. A female learner from Bakool said, “I want to be a good teacher ... the teachers are respected in the community, and I want to be a respected person in the community.”

Conclusions /
lessons learned

Lessons learned:

1. Salary remains a barrier for female and male teachers in remote schools.
 2. Female teachers are a positive change agent—changing community attitudes about the importance of education, encouraging mothers to send their girls to schools, and serving as role models.
 3. Female teachers work collaboratively with each other.
-

CASE STUDY 4: COVID-19 IN THE ABE PROGRAM

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared a coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on March 11, 2020, resulting in countries taking extreme health measures to restrict the disease. The Federal Government of Somalia also followed WHO’s guidance. This case study summarizes the COVID-19 survey that the evaluation team conducted in July and August during the ABE evaluation (Annex F).

“We have talked to teachers, the money will come, the government is there for them, the donors are there for them, and we feel strong for them, and we told them ... prepare to come back to school ... for a safe re-opening.” - FGS MoECHE representative, key informant interview

CASE STUDY: COVID-19 IN THE ABE PROGRAM

Purpose addressed	This case study addresses COVID-19, as an external condition or shock, and its impact and implications for ABE.
Challenge / rationale for the initiative	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic affected almost every country in the world at the same time, from early incidences in December 2019, to the WHO’s declaration of the pandemic on March 14, 2020. It is currently an ongoing pandemic.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education’s Education (MoECHE) responded immediately to the Federal Government of Somalia’s health and safety restrictions, and closed all schools from mid-March 2020. The MoECHE issued a three-pronged plan: (1) current planning for distance learning content (delivered by telephone and internet), (2) community awareness campaigns to promote continued learning at home, and (3) future planning for re-opening of schools.</p> <p>Five months of school closures, travel restrictions, social distancing, and health announcements affected everyone—local authorities, teachers, learners, communities, development partners, and donors. The issue for ABE was how to address the continuation of learning in remote areas for pastoralist children for five months during a severe health and economic crisis in the country.</p>
ABE program activities and modifications – shifts/changes in strategy	<p>ABE followed FGS guidance, closing its ABE Centers and attempting distance learning using the government’s radio programs while waiting for the government’s online programs. Local education authorities issued personal protective equipment and began a public awareness campaign in the regions in conjunction with health authorities. Sub-partners were in constant contact with CEC members and head teachers, but teachers were without a teaching job for five months. Noting that the government restrictions affected all sectors, and local government taxes were not collected because non-essential businesses were closed, the lack of funding was another shock in addition to the health crisis. The main government messages, and subsequent ABE messages, were: health first, reassurance, we are all in this together, and we are preparing for the future.</p>
Outcomes/ results and beneficiary or stakeholder opinions	<p>ABE program beneficiaries were aware of the pandemic, but most did not know of any cases in their region, or were not sure whether people had a regular cold or the COVID-19 virus. In any case, there was no panic nor anxiety at the time of the evaluation team questioning the ABE communities, although there were concerns that the gains made during the program would be eroded.</p> <p>ABE teachers were challenged with distance learning due to the poor internet connectivity in the remote regions. They “tried” but found it “impossible.” Hence, the program was not technologically ready to continue learning through online means. ABE teachers gave students work to revisit—i.e., not new work, but revision of previous lessons. Reading was difficult because there were not enough readers for learners to have for at-home use. Instead, the ABE teachers undertook small group teaching outside maintaining social distancing measures. Other development partners knowledgeable about the program confirmed that even</p>

though distance learning was challenging, the program would be more responsive than formal schools in recovering from any negative impacts of school closures—i.e., ‘the flexible nature of ABE will help in the rebound.’

Two thirds of ABE teachers volunteered to assist the government with public awareness campaigns and to monitor the health of ABE learners and families. Almost half of teachers said that the suspension of salaries led to financial difficulties, with 20 percent affected professionally because they missed the experience of teaching. A few were affected emotionally (trauma when tested positive for COVID-19), socially (missed interacting with learners and with other teachers), or physically (gained weight).

Limitations

Limited documentation by ABE of their actions during school closures:

In the 2020 semi-annual reports, the program discussed the delays to implementation during the pandemic due to transport and travel restrictions and school closures. Activities undertaken when the schools re-opened in August included teacher training sessions (professional development) on media messaging about COVID-19. The final report in September mentioned that the program also ‘supported students with alternative learning pathways through radio, television, and online e-learning’ and worked with the government to develop a COVID-19 Education Response Plan to ensure the safety of children and to ensure continuation of learning.²⁰⁰ However, it did not discuss the effects on the learners and their progress toward their learning outcomes.

Conclusions /
lessons learned

Lessons learned:

1. Programs need to be risk-ready for all shocks—i.e., manage uncertainty and expect the unexpected.
2. Teachers are ready and willing to assume other community leadership roles, such as public awareness campaigning, monitoring families, and being proactive with problem solving and community support.
3. Teaching and learning materials, particularly readers, can be a stop-gap measure to keep learners learning; but because the distribution of TLM to schools was limited before the pandemic (i.e., only 25 percent of story books and 73 percent of textbooks), there was not enough TLM to give ABE learners for home use.
4. Flexible teaching and learning methods were perceived by communities to be more responsive to shocks, but distance learning was not viable because of limited technology and internet availability.

²⁰⁰ UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education Semi-Annual Performance Report, September 30, p. 8-9.

ANNEX A, EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

USAID/SOMALIA ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE ENDLINE EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

Date: 6 December 2019

PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

The USAID/Somalia Office seeks to procure the services of an evaluation firm to conduct an endline evaluation of the Alternative Basic Education activity (ABE) on education access, quality and system strengthening for pastoralist and other out-of-school children. The ABE activity, implemented by UNICEF, is scheduled to come to an end in September 2020.

This final evaluation has three objectives: (1) analyze the process and fidelity of activity implementation; (2) assess changes that have occurred within beneficiary communities, and ABE's contribution toward those changes, as it relates to education access and quality of reading/learning and (3) understand prospect for the sustainability of activity interventions, especially as it relates to education access and quality of reading/learning.

This evaluation will assist the Mission in reaching decisions related to: (1) effectiveness of the current approach to alternative basic education programming in Somalia; and (2) the nature and scope of possible future interventions in the sector of education, based on lessons learned from the current activity. With this endline evaluation, the Mission intends to capture emerging results to inform decisions about future education programming in Somalia.

The primary audience for the ABE evaluation is USAID/Somalia, specifically the program office team, social services team, UNICEF and implementing partners for upcoming education activities. Per ADS 201.3.5.18, the ABE evaluation report and its annexes will be shared with relevant government officials, partners, donors, and other development actors. This will enable further promotion of learning around alternative basic education in Somalia and contribute to evidence and documentation around alternative basic education for pastoralist communities, particularly in crisis and conflict-affected environments.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY

Activity Name	Alternative Basic Education (ABE)
USAID Office (managing the evaluation)	Program Office

Implementer	United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)/Somalia Partners: Himilo Relief and Development (HIRDA); Baidoa Regional Education Committee (BREC); and HIDIG Relief and Development Organization (HIDIG)
Agreement Number	AID-623-IO-15-00001
Total Estimated Ceiling	\$9,999,999
Duration of Activity	September 30, 2015 - September 29, 2020
Geographic Scope	South West: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay (Baidoa, Qabsaxdere & Dinsoor districts) • Bakool (El Berde, Ato & Rab dhure districts) Jubaland: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gedo (Dolo, Luuq, Balethawa, Bardere, Garbaharey, and Burdubo districts)
Development Objectives	Increased Somali Government Capacity to Delivery Services
USAID Office	USAID/Somalia
Required Evaluation?	Yes
External or Internal Evaluation?	External

ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Somalia has been engaged in civil war over the past two decades. This protracted conflict has created regions within the country that present some contrasts in terms of development indicators. While the south and central regions have remained continuously entangled in the war and have suffered both social and developmental setbacks, the northeast (Puntland) and northwest (Somaliland) have experienced fragile peace and some stability.

More than two decades of conflict have nearly destroyed Somalia’s education system, which is characterized by poor quality, insufficient numbers of qualified teachers, and inadequate resources. The education deficit in Somalia is one of the most acute in the world. After the collapse of the Somali Government in 1991, the country’s education system ground to a halt. For over two decades, particularly in the south and central parts of the country, schools, university lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, and other education facilities were closed. The targeting of the educated cadre among the warring factions sometimes complemented the destruction of the education infrastructure. Consequently, Somalia hosts one of the world’s most significant out-of-school populations. Forty per

cent of the total 12.3 million²⁰¹ Somali population, roughly 4.9 million²⁰², are school-aged.²⁰³ Of the 4.9 million children who should be in school, enrollment in school is staggeringly low as 3 million children are out-of-school.²⁰⁴ Across Somalia, three out of ten children have access to school.

The number of teachers in Somalia is insufficient to respond to the demand, and the vast majority remains untrained and unpaid. Support to teacher incentives by development partners in the past few years has resulted in the recruitment and training of nearly 1,000 additional teachers throughout Somalia. However, the burden of funding teachers' salaries in most cases remains with parents, the majority of whom are required to pay school fees in some form or other, and school management bodies, which have the responsibility of raising funds for basic running costs. Dilapidated or inexistent facilities and few learning materials exacerbate the lack of teachers. It is also important to note that gender discrimination has resulted in a massively skewed teaching pool. National Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2017 data indicators that over 90% of primary and secondary teachers are male. The absence of female role models negatively impacts girl's access, learning and retention.

Somalia's agro and nomadic pastoralist communities – which account for over 60 per cent of Somalia's population – face further impediments to education. Somali pastoralists tend to be nomadic, although the frequency and extent of their movements vary greatly across communities. Pastoralist communities move with their children and livestock in search of water and pasture, which makes providing education in normal, static schools impractical and often impossible. Climatic factors and insecurity further exacerbate the situation. Pastoralist communities in Somalia have been marginalized in terms of access to education, mainly due to insecurity, the lack of education service provision and a formal schooling system that is incompatible with the nomadic pastoralist or agro-pastoralist lifestyle. Until recently, there has been a lack of willingness, on the part of authorities, to develop schools in pastoralist areas. Although pastoralists account for the majority of the population, and have unique needs in terms of education, there is no Federal Government strategy or policy governing non-formal education or guiding education for pastoralists.

HISTORY OF ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMING IN SOMALIA

Alternative basic education (ABE) interventions in Somalia were initially implemented as 'second-chance' models of education for children aged 8-14 years who, because of displacement, nomadic lifestyle or poverty were unable to join formal primary schools. They relied on a specific curriculum for basic education, delivered in an accelerated format. ABE interventions also recognized that non-formal education, especially in the pastoralist context, should refer to a range of other interventions, including the delivery of the formal curriculum (for example for children 6-9 years old) through flexible

²⁰¹ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Somalia. (2014). *Population Estimation Survey (PSS)*. Mogadishu hosts an estimated population of between 1.6 million people, accounting for 13% of the total population of Somalia. South and central FMS hosts 56% of the total population, followed by Puntland at 18% and Somaliland at 25%.

²⁰² United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2017). *Education Cluster Meeting presentation*. October 4, 2017.

²⁰³ Five to ten-year olds comprise a fifth of Somalia's population, while the youth bracket of 15-34 comprise 36% of the population. Federal Government of Somalia Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2018*.

²⁰⁴ Federal Government of Somalia Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education. (2015). *Joint Review Education Sector (JRES)*; UNICEF. (2017). *Education Cluster Meeting presentation*. October 4, 2017.

approaches. Therefore, ABE interventions comprised a combination of approaches tailored to the way of life of the communities concerned; for example, a flexible calendar and timetables, temporary learning spaces along migration paths, mobile schools using camels to transport education kits, mobile libraries and/or complementary interactive audio instruction. ABE interventions in Somalia, mostly in Somaliland and Puntland, included Flexible Approaches to Basic Education - FABE (2009-2011); Developing Appropriate Relevant Education and Training – DARRET (2008-2011); and Basic Education for Pastoralists (BEP) Program. ABE interventions have been more limited in south and central Somalia.

USAID ABE ACTIVITY

USAID’s ABE activity, implemented by UNICEF, supports alternative basic education for pastoralist and other out-of-school children through a combination of approaches tailored to the way of life of targeted communities: a flexible calendar and timetables, temporary learning spaces along migration paths, provision of teaching and learning materials, and mobile libraries. A specific curriculum for basic education is being delivered in an accelerated format – condensing grades one to eight into five years. ABE is also strengthening a cadre of teachers through specialized training, which can adapt to the unique learning needs of learners in nomadic communities and the displaced who are living in IDP camps. Through collective social mobilization activities, ABE is working with community groups to support education programs and increase engagement among parents, elders, and religious leaders. ABE is also supporting the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in developing a policy and strategy for Non-Formal Education based on the evidence gathered through this activity.

ABE’s theory of change posits that:

“If education services are delivered using flexible modalities for pastoralist children, adolescents and other out-of-school children, education will be seen as a gain within the pastoralist economy, and demand for, and contribution to, education services will increase through expanded access to quality education that result in improved learning outcomes, safety and security for children, and adolescents as well as increased government legitimacy.”

The overall goal of the ABE activity is to increase access to equitable, quality education for pastoralist and other out-of-school children through the provision of quality, relevant and flexible alternative basic education.

- Quality is defined as an environment that promotes both child well-being and learning. In the past decade, the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) approach has become the main model through which UNICEF and its partners globally promote quality education in a range of contexts, including fragile states. CFS environments build upon the assets that children bring from their homes and communities, respecting their unique backgrounds and circumstances. As such, the CFS model also builds partnerships between schools and the community.
- Relevant education is defined as the use of a curriculum and teaching approaches that are embedded in the cultural context of the learners and that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of communities.
- Flexible education is defined as an approach that respects the particular needs of pastoralist education. An accelerated curriculum, a flexible calendar that takes into account seasons and

migration patterns, flexible timetables and scheduling to allow for priority household activities, the conversion of classrooms to mobile schools during migration are examples of flexible education that have been shown to be successful in expanding educational services to pastoralist communities.

The target location for the activity is south and central Somalia, specifically South West and Jubaland Federal Member States. The purpose of ABE is threefold:

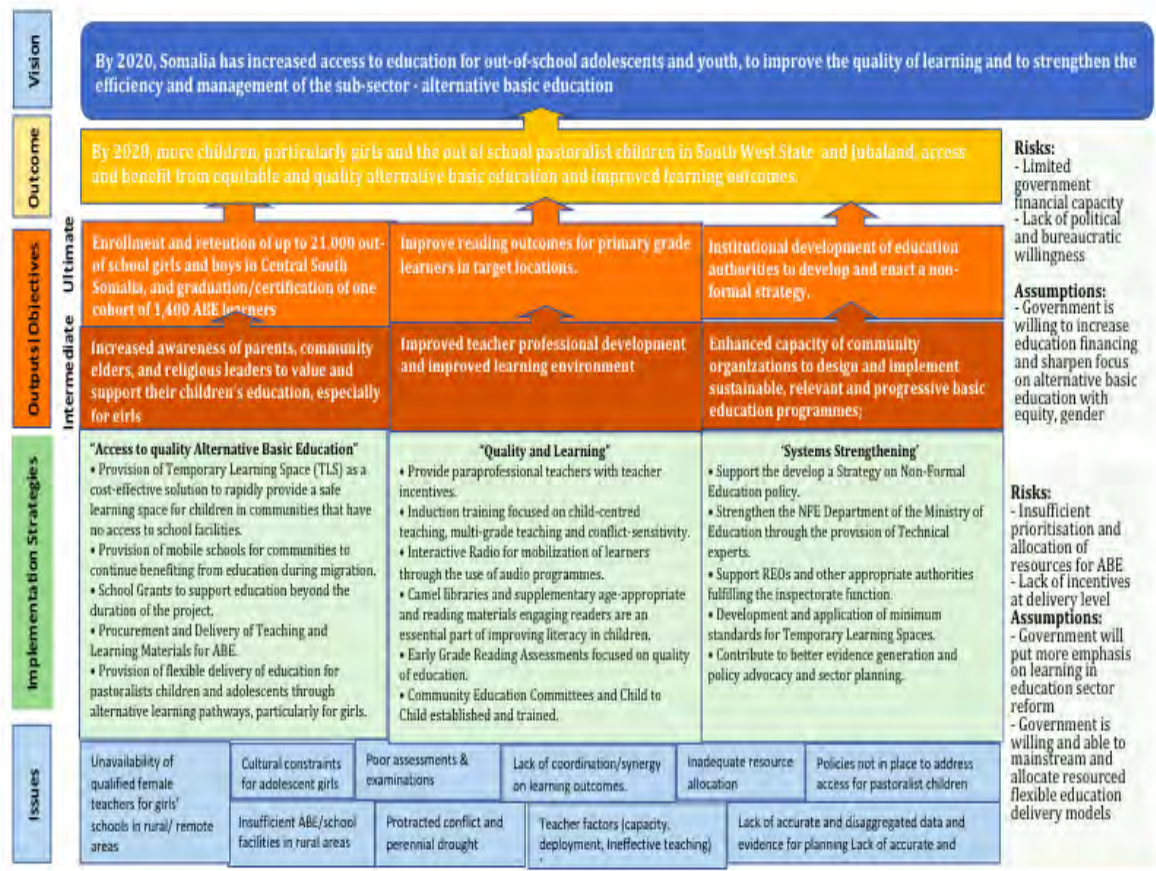
- **Purpose 1 - Access.** Target of 21,000 pastoralist and other out-of-school children (ages 6-14), with a particular focus on girls, have access to quality alternative basic education. This purpose supports Somalia’s Education Sector Strategic Plan priorities and is expected to contribute to raising student enrollment. Note that the ABE/NFE is not yet integrated into the education management information system (EMIS) data. This purpose also focuses on providing safe learning spaces for children in communities that have no access to school facilities through the construction and/or rehabilitation of temporary learning spaces.
- **Purpose 2 - Quality and Reading.** ABE Centers provide quality education to pastoralist and other out-of-school children. Increasing the quality of education for pastoralist and other-out-of-school children through improved education service delivery is critical to sustain gains made with enrollment and expanding access. This is particularly true among pastoralists whose rates of attrition are high. In addition to proxy quality “output” indicators (e.g., teacher training, provision of quality teaching and learning materials), the intent of this purpose is to show gains in reading sub-skills through an improved early grade reading assessment. This purpose also focuses on enhancing the capacity of community organizations and increasing awareness of parents, community elders, and religious leaders to value and support their children’s education, especially for girls. This is critical for community ownership and sustainability.
- **Purpose 3 - System Strengthening.** State and regional authorities adopt policies and practices that promote quality ABE as a viable alternative to formal school for pastoralist and other out-of-school children to complete a cycle of basic education. To address barriers in access to quality ABE, it is crucial to have a well-managed education sector with accountable, effective and efficient education institutions that have the capacity to deliver services. The support of an enabling policy and institutional environment is necessary for ABE and other types of Non-Formal Education to be sustainable.

ABE’s theory of change and resulting intervention rests on the following critical assumptions:

1. Pastoralist communities in Somalia have been marginalized in terms of access to education, mainly due to the lack of education service provision and the formal schooling system which is not adapted to the nomadic pastoralist or agro-pastoralist lifestyle.
2. The supply of quality, relevant and flexible educational opportunities for pastoralist children will increase demand for, and contribution to, education services amongst pastoralist and other marginalized communities.
3. The Government will invest in ABE and that major development partners, EU, USAID, and GPE will continue to support system reform, expansion of education supply, and improving quality. Civil

society organizations are expected to continue to contribute to community mobilization, education for ABE communities.

4. Anticipated risks related to domestic financing, economic and political factors and risks of increased conflict in south and central Somalia would impact ABE.
5. Capacity of education ministries to manage the delivery of education services would be strengthened but not sufficiently such that education ministries would carry forward governance reforms to improve the transparent utilization of funds.



ACTIVITY MODIFICATIONS

ABE was initially designed as a pilot activity to test the accelerated education approach in Gedo region selected due to its accessibility at the time of the initial proposal. UNICEF conducted a needs assessment in January 2016 and noted that pastoralist communities were most marginalized from education services, tended to be smaller in numbers and were scattered across the region. Based on these findings, UNICEF concluded that it was not possible to reach the targeted 21,000 children exclusively within the initially proposed 15 communities. A decision was made to increase the number of communities in Gedo from 15 to 35, focusing on pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities.

The 2017 drought led to the movement of beneficiary communities from Gedo to urban areas in Bay and Bakool as a consequence of the drought. This resulted in high numbers of drop outs and out-of-school children in Bay and Bakool. In response to this movement, UNICEF and its partners underwent a reprogramming exercise and decided to expand the ABE activity to South West, specifically Bay and Bakool and integrate internally displaced persons (IDP) and urban learners, as opposed to solely focusing on pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. When the activity expanded to Bay and Bakool, there was significant overcrowding in the temporary learning centers. Though the original design mandated two teachers by class and envisioned multi-level teaching in the Gedo region (Teacher #1 teaches Levels 1 and 2; Teacher #2 teachers Levels 3 and 4), with the expansion to Bay/Bakool, there was a strategic shift in the teacher training strategy and teachers taught by subject areas, which led to approximately seven to eight teachers per center.

The initial design for the pilot activity sought to test approaches of cost-sharing so that the communities assumed responsibility for teacher incentives. However, the activity was unable to test cost-sharing in any region; this is now being tested by UNICEF through another program, funded by KfW which works in some overlapping areas of ABE. This program commenced in October 2019 and will be focused on 12 schools in the Gedo area.

Additionally, the activity was initially designed to target learners aged eight to fourteen, assuming that learners aged six to eight had access to formal educational opportunities. This assumption did not hold true and, during implementation, UNICEF observed that children younger than eight and older than fourteen were being enrolled in the temporary learning centers. Given the lack of schools in the area, UNICEF made the programmatic decision to not turn away school-aged children.

ACTIVITY APPROACH AND IMPLEMENTATION

The ABE activity is implemented by UNICEF and currently operates in 96 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities, as defined by the location of the center. This includes five districts in Gedo region (Dolo, Luuq, Beled Hawo, Baardheere and Garbaharey), two districts in Bakool region (Ceel Barde and Rab Dhuure) and three districts in Bay region (Baidoa, the capital city of the Bay region, Qansax Dheere and Dinsoor). ABE identified the activities summarized below to address the needs, challenges and constraints regarding the provision of equitable, quality education for pastoralist and other out-of-school children.

PURPOSE I - ACCESS:

- Construction/Rehabilitation of temporary learning centers

- Provision of gender-sensitive facilities and sanitary towels for girls
- Provision of ABE classrooms with adequate teaching and learning materials (note that UNICEF does not mandate 1:1 student-textbook ratio, but 1:2).

PURPOSE 2 - QUALITY AND READING

- Teachers are trained and supported in delivery and management of ABE curriculum
- Teachers are trained to use interactive radio instruction (IRI) to complement teaching in ABE Centers
- Professional development of education administrators and officials
- ABE Centers are actively managed by engaged community education committees (CEC) and child to child (CtC) groups
- Early Grade and Reading Assessment
- Public awareness and community mobilization campaigns to enhance community oversight, ownership and sustainability.

PURPOSE 3 - SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

- Local authorities are engaged in school supervision and quality assurance of ABE Centers
- Placement of technical advisor to support development of Non-Formal education policy and standards.

Key stakeholders for the activity include: pastoralist and other out-of-school children, teachers, parents, community authority figures (e.g., village elders, religious leaders, Quranic school teachers), CEC and CtC members, Government education authorities (Regional Education Officers and District Education Officers), MoECHE, NFE technical advisor, UNICEF partners, UNICEF and USAID. USAID is also interested in capturing the voices of pastoralist and other out-of-school children and parents who did not have access to or chose not to participate in the intervention.

MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

UNICEF is the prime implementing partner for this activity. They hold overall responsibility for program management, monitoring and oversight. UNICEF staff work from offices in Mogadishu, Galkayo, Baidoa, Hargeisa, and Garowe. UNICEF has three partners who were integrated into the activity at the following points in time:

- HIRDA – End of 2015
- HIDIG and BREC– End of 2017 after reprogramming led to shift to Bay and Bakool in response to 2017 drought.

EXISTING DATA

As part of the activity's monitoring system, UNICEF partners conduct primary data collection in each of the 96 ABE Centers during their regular monitoring and supervision visits. USAID and the ABE activity will provide the evaluation team with a package of briefing materials, including:

- SOW for the ABE activity
- IP response to ABE activity SOW
- Needs Assessment
- Activity work plans, semi-annual and annual reports, activity monitoring, evaluation and learning plan, management reviews developed as part of routine monitoring, relevant sections of the Project Appraisal Document and miscellaneous thematic reports from other sources
- Monitoring and Verification reports conducted by USAID's third-party monitoring contractor
- Data Quality Assessments (DQASs), conducted by USAID's third-party monitoring contractor
- USAID/Somalia survey and assessment reports
- Internal EGRA Brief (this brief details the process and findings of the assessment, and the data quality challenges which have contributed to the decision to not use this EGRA assessment. UNICEF is currently reviewing the data and will make a decision on whether or not to conduct another EGRA)
- Any sector analysis/reports related to efforts of USAID, host country governments or other donors (e.g., ARC Country Report on south and central Somalia)
- Any reports related to UNICEF's 2013-2016 Go-to-School Initiative
- Disaggregated data of all 96 centers provided by implementing partner. Data collected includes: enrollment using school and class registers, teaching and learning materials distribution, and educators/school administration/community education committee training.

The evaluation team should also take into account that the activity did not conduct a baseline or midterm assessment.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The key evaluation questions to be answered through this evaluation are listed below. USAID is open to adjusting questions, in collaboration with the evaluation team, and encourages the evaluation team to suggest changes or refinements to the questions. The evaluation team will work closely with USAID to finalize the questions below, further defining them and developing sub-questions and/or specific/narrower areas of inquiry under each topic. To answer the questions below, the evaluation team will collect and analyze data from both primary and secondary sources.

1. How did ABE contribute to the intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes as prescribed in the initial SOW and subsequent modifications?
 - a. How did programmatic shifts affect ABE’s contribution to intended outcomes?
 - b. What is the perception of pastoralist and other out-of-school children, teachers, parents and community elders on how ABE was delivered and what was delivered?
2. How was the theory of change affected due to the following programmatic shifts: shift from pilot activity, expansion to Bay and Bakool, and integration of IDPs and urban learners?
 - a. Was the theory of change valid?
3. How did ABE’s design, delivery, and operations perform in Somalia’s challenging programming environment?
 - a. How did they affect results?
 - b. How could they have been improved?
 - c. To what extent was ABE conflict-sensitive in technical design, delivery or operations?
4. What contextual factors (internal or external to the project) appear to be most influential to sustained functionality and use of the temporary learning structures, teachers and teaching and learning materials after USAID funding ends?

Gender considerations must be taken into account in answering each of the above key evaluation questions. The evaluation team must ensure that evaluation methods address gender sensitivities. Additionally, all questions must be disaggregated, as is appropriate, by the following: regions (Bay, Bakool or Gedo), gender, age, type of learner (pastoralist or other out-of-school child), years of intervention and school level.

EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Design: The Evaluation team is expected to propose a set of approaches, for USAID’s approval, to address the evaluation questions outlined above. The Evaluation Design must incorporate findings from the evaluation team’s desk review of existing data. The overarching evaluation framework should be clearly summarized in an evaluation matrix that includes the following information: evaluation questions, types of answers needed (e.g., descriptive, comparative (normative) cause-and-effect), sampling/selection criteria, data sources and collection methods, and data analysis methods. The evaluation team can use the provided USAID format shown below:

Evaluation questions	Type of answer needed	Data collection method(s)	Data source(s)	Sampling or selection criteria	Data analysis method(s)
----------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------	----------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------

The evaluation team will submit the draft design along with the work plan and timeline. In collaboration with USAID, the evaluation team will finalize the overall evaluation design before fieldwork begins. The

final evaluation design will require substantial understanding of the educational and operational context as well as the implementation approaches and programming models used by UNICEF.

Evaluation Design Meeting: The Evaluation team will facilitate an evaluation design meeting of up to three days, in Mogadishu, involving the implementing partner and partners and the USAID Mission. This meeting will allow the evaluation team, USAID and the IP to clarify team member's roles and responsibilities; validate and finalize selected evaluation questions; review and finalize the evaluation timeline; finalize data collection methods, describe and share examples of instruments and data analysis methods; and review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the evaluation. The evaluation will use a mixed methods approach, including rigorous document review and primary and secondary, qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods.

Selection of Respondents/Sampling Strategy: The Evaluation team should carry out relevant data collection with a sample of USAID project beneficiaries (male and females), partners, and host government counterparts at appropriate levels. The Evaluation team should also include community members (parents and learners) who did not have access or chose not to participate in the intervention to ensure those perspectives are captured. The Evaluation team should propose a robust strategy for selecting respondents that ensures adequate geographical representation; ethno-linguistic and clan representation; gender balance; and the capture of a diversity of perspectives, among other key considerations. Depending on the design, the sample should include some amount of oversampling. Final criteria for sample selection should be developed by the Evaluation team in consultation with USAID. The evaluation team should propose relevant technical and managerial approaches to selecting and effectively accessing the respondents. Somalia is a fragile country with various and complex security threats and challenges that affect accessibility of project sites and remote areas. The evaluation design should integrate how these challenges to data collection will be addressed to ensure collection of quality information that meets USAID standards.

Data sources and collection methods: Prior to any field work, the Evaluation team is expected to carry out a targeted review and analysis of recent pertinent published literature on educational program evaluations in dynamic Education in Crisis and Conflict (EICC) and stable contexts, accelerated education or basic alternative education, including those commissioned by USAID's Office of Education in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and the Environment, with a particular focus on Somalia. Prior to field work, the evaluation team is expected to carry out a review of relevant project documents and performance data provided by USAID and listed above to: 1) gain a better and more in-depth understanding of the implementation of the ABE activity and, 2) understand the relevant policies or quality standards that govern alternative basic education and 3) assess the quality and relevance of the data to help answer the evaluation questions. The Mission expects the evaluation team to present strong qualitative (e.g., outcome mapping, contribution analysis, beneficiary assessment) and quantitative analysis, within data limitations, that clearly address key issues found in the evaluation questions.

The Mission is looking for new, creative, unbiased and methodologically rigorous suggestions regarding this evaluation, especially as it relates to assessing contribution of ABE to the intermediate and ultimate outcomes and understanding contributing factors to sustainability of the temporary learning centers, teachers and teaching and learning materials. It is anticipated that the evaluation team will provide a more detailed and clear explanation of the proposed methodology for carrying out the work. The

methodology will be comprised of a mix of tools appropriate to responding to the evaluation's questions.

Primary Data: Primary data may include, but is not limited to ABE enrollment, retention and promotion data; teacher training and placement data; and community and local government authority perception data. Primary data can be collected in a variety of ways, including key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and surveys/questionnaires. Data collection methods should be fit for the Somalia context, which can involve cyclical violence, mobile populations, rigid socio-cultural norms, and volatile clan dynamics. To mitigate volatility in perceptions in violent contexts, the evaluation team should prioritize the most relevant and robust sampling approaches that guarantee heterogeneity (e.g., Maximum Variety Sampling). Primary data should only be collected if the data is relevant to the evaluation questions, clearly stated and defined in the evaluation design matrix and does not already exist via the IP's monitoring data, school administrative data, census data, etc. The Evaluation team should outline a clear plan and specify which primary data exactly would be collected, why and how. Data collection methods should also clarify methods to overcome non-response gaps as well as identify partnerships in data collection with Somali based research or data collection firms that can access activity implementation sites. The development and finalization of instruments will happen after the evaluation design is finalized and approved. Instruments will be shared with USAID, for review and approval, prior to their use.

For adapted or new instruments, the Evaluation team should propose a plan for the development, reliability and validity assessment, and piloting of the instruments. For pre-existing instruments, the Evaluation team should ensure data collection instruments have been contextualized and are relevant to the Somalia context. It should be noted that:

- Prior to beginning field work (including field testing), the evaluation team is required to share data collection instruments (new and adapted) with USAID for review and feedback before they are used in the field.
- Issues of data confidentiality must be addressed as part of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process.
- Data collection methods must take into account contextual factors to maximize data reliability and minimize unintended consequences.

Secondary Data: The evaluation team should leverage secondary data whenever possible and relevant. Secondary data sources include: the IP's performance monitoring data, activity documents, MoECHE national statistics, etc. For all secondary data that is leveraged, there should be a clear link between the data and evaluation questions. Secondary data sources should be accessible and in readable formats.

Data Analysis. The Evaluation team should analyze both primary and secondary data. All secondary data should be assessed for quality and relevance in answering the research questions. Prior to the start of data collection, the Evaluation team will develop and present, for USAID review and approval, a data analysis plan that directly addresses each evaluation question with specific methods for analyzing the data; details out what procedure will be used to analyze qualitative data from key information and other stakeholder interviews; and how the evaluation will weight and integrate qualitative data from these sources with quantitative data from activity indicators and monitoring records to reach conclusions

about the effectiveness and prospect for sustainability of the ABE initiative. The information collected will be analyzed by the Evaluation Team to identify correlations, establish major trends and issues, and check whether results support causal contribution. Data will be disaggregated by gender, age, region (Bay, Bakool and Gedo), type of learner (pastoralist or other out-of-school child), years of intervention, and level of the learner. The evaluation team should use a comprehensive and systematic process for integrating primary and secondary data, qualitative and quantitative data to allow for triangulation and complementarity in developing findings and conclusions.

Methodological limitations. As part of USAID’s evaluation policy and the USAID Office of Education’s tool for assessing the quality of education evaluations, the Evaluation team is required to discuss and document any issues potentially affecting the quality of the evaluation (including the data validity, integrity, timeliness, precision, and reliability). Offers should clearly address all the limitations of their proposed approach(es) and appropriate mitigation plans for addressing those limitations. The Evaluation team and USAID should discuss all limitations and measures to address or overcome limitations in the implementation phase and these should be detailed in the reports. The evaluation reports should be clear and transparent about any notable limitations and if and how they may affect the evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

REPORTING

The evaluation reports should follow the criteria specified in the USAID Evaluation Policy and report templates. This should include a succinct executive summary that is easily digestible to a wide variety of audiences. Whenever relevant and possible, the reports should employ data visualization techniques in order to make the data and results from the evaluation more accessible, understandable and usable for key project stakeholders.

KEY DELIVERABLES SCHEDULE

The period of performance for the evaluation is expected to be of approximately 10 months, starting November 2019 and ending September 2020. Expected deliverables are as follows:

ACTIVITY/ DELIVERABLE	PROPOSED DATES	NOTES
SOW approved	Nov 19, 2019	
Timeline discussions with Mission	Nov 21-26	Call with USAID; submission of proposed timeline
Evaluation concept note, timeline, staffing, and budget	Dec 20	
USAID approval	Jan 2, 2020	
CO consent package (for subcontract with Integrity) sent to COR	Jan 3	

CO consent received	Jan 10	
Draft Evaluation Design Report	Jan 24	The draft evaluation design report (EDR) will include preliminary desk review, evaluation design matrix, evaluation questions, data collection description, data analysis plan, sample for KII and FGDs, list of potential interviewees, sites to be visited, draft selection criteria and/or sampling plan, limitations to the evaluation design and dissemination plan.
Evaluation Design Meeting (travel to Mogadishu)	Feb 02-07	The evaluation team will hold an Evaluation Design Meeting in Mogadishu with participation from USAID and the IP.
Final Evaluation Design Report (EDR)	Feb 28	Within 3 weeks of the Evaluation Design Meeting, the evaluation team (ET) must submit a final EDR to the COR. The design will become an annex to the evaluation report. This version should include a fleshed-out desk review, finalized KII list, and finalized data collection tools. The evaluation design will be shared with the IP for comment before being finalized.
Data Collection Tool Piloting/Testing	Mar 02-06	
In-briefing in Nairobi	Approx. first 2 weeks Mar	The evaluation team will meet with USAID Somalia, in Nairobi, to brief the Mission on the evaluation.
Interim Meetings	TBD	The ET is expected to provide periodic briefings and feedback on the status of the evaluation, including potential challenges, emerging opportunities and relevant findings. The format and frequency will be agreed upon during the in-briefing.
Data collection	Mar-Apr	The ET will target areas that will be most likely affected by the rains first and then move onto less affected areas.
Exit briefing in Nairobi	Approx. last week April	The ET is expected to hold a final exit briefing, in Nairobi, to discuss the status of data collection and any emerging questions.
Data analysis / preliminary findings	May	
Preliminary workshop for recommendation development	Approx. week May 25	Within 4 weeks of the exit briefing, the ET is expected to hold a workshop by virtual conferencing software to discuss the summary of findings and conclusions with USAID and to collaboratively draft any requested recommendations. This workshop will be scheduled as agreed during the exit briefing.
Draft Evaluation Report	Approx. June 26	The draft evaluation report will address each of the questions identified in the SOW and other issues the ET considers to have a bearing on the evaluation objectives. The submission date for the draft evaluation report will be determined in the final EDR.
USAID Somalia review		Once the initial draft evaluation report is submitted, USAID Somalia will have up to 15 working days in which to review and

comment on the initial draft, after which point the COR will submit the consolidated comments to the ET. The ET will submit a revised final draft report within 5 working days, and again USAID Somalia will review and send comments on this final draft report within 5 working days of its submission.

Final Evaluation Report	Approx. Aug 3	The ET will submit a final report that incorporates the team responses to USAID Somalia comments. The report will be disseminated within USAID. A second version of this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information will be submitted (also electronically, in English) for dissemination among implementing partners and stakeholders.
Final presentation (Nairobi and Mogadishu)	TBD	The ET is expected to hold up to two final presentations, one internal and one external, in person. The internal presentation, in Nairobi, will discuss the summary findings and conclusions (and recommendations, if applicable) with USAID. The external presentation, in Mogadishu, will focus on sharing evidence generated by this evaluation with Somali government and stakeholders for knowledge/evidence consumption and learning.
Datasets to DDL	Aug 15	Per USAID’s Open Data Policy, the contract must also submit to the COR and the Development Data Library (DDL), at www.usaid.gov/data , in a machine-readable, non-proprietary format, a copy of any dataset created or obtained in performance of this award, if applicable. The dataset would be organized and documented for use by those not fully familiar with the intervention or evaluation. Submission of datasets to DDL should be within three months of the conclusion.
Final Evaluation report to DEC	No later than Sep 30	After making it 508 compliant per USAID policy (ADS 201.3.5.18), the contractor must submit the evaluation final report and its summary(ies) to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) within 3 months of the conclusion.

EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The Evaluation team should propose a staffing plan that fully supports the requirements of this SOW. Given that the SOW includes a variety of evaluation questions with likely competing demands, the Evaluation team should make clear in their response how the proposed team structure will adequately and efficiently be able to manage and implement the evaluations. The recruitment of local evaluators is highly encouraged.

At the minimum, the staffing plan should: (1) list the proposed team members and clearly articulate each team member’s responsibilities within the team and their relevant qualifications to meet these responsibilities. As part of this response, the evaluation team will need to complete the table below and provide CVs for all team members proposed. (2) Describe how the team members will work together, and their anticipated Level of Effort (LOE) for the duration of the evaluation activities.

EVALUATION TEAM EXPERIENCE

Team Member Name	Title	Team Member Responsibilities	Team Member Relevant Experience
------------------	-------	------------------------------	---------------------------------

The Offeror is subject to FAR 9.5 Organizational and Consultant Conflicts of Interest. The Offeror must review the regulation and determine if there is a conflict of interest for individuals or the organization. If a conflict of interest exists, the Offeror must submit a Conflict of Interest Mitigation Plan for the Contracting Officer to review and analyze.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)²⁰⁵

The research/evaluation must conform to legal and other requirements governing research with human subjects in the country where it is conducted. USAID accepts legitimate foreign procedural systems in lieu of the U.S.-based IRB review only when they are determined to provide protection “at least equivalent” to the Common Rule. It is recommended that the US-based IRB review the host country procedural system with regard to human subject protection to make a determination whether it is at least equivalent to the Common Rule. IRB approval must be in place prior to data collection launch.

²⁰⁵ <https://usaieducationdata.org/sart/data/IRB%20Policy%20Brief%202017.pdf>.

Annex B, EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

USAID/SOMALIA ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE ENDLINE EVALUATION EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This annex details the evaluation approach and methodology and sets the parameters and criteria for the ABE performance endline evaluation.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

USAID/Somalia seeks answers to four Evaluation Questions (EQ). USAID formulated initial questions, and the evaluation team modified and finalized the EQs in discussion with USAID/Somalia staff, the implementer and its sub-partners, FGS representatives, and stakeholders in a three-day evaluation design workshop in Mogadishu, Somalia, from February 2-4, 2020. EQ1 focuses on ABE planning and theory; EQ2 focuses on implementation and delivery, and programmatic changes over time (internal conditions); EQ3 focuses on environmental challenges (external conditions); and EQ4 focuses on sustainability.

USAID confirmed that ABE's early grade reading assessments (EGRA) would not be included in the evaluation due to data quality challenges, and current results would not be available.

EVALUATION QUESTION 1: How did the ABE program contribute to its intended intermediate and ultimate outcomes as prescribed in the initial SOW²⁰⁶ and subsequent modifications?

Sub-question 1.1 Demonstrate the performance / achievement (or otherwise) of interventions against intended outcomes and targets.

Sub-question 1.2 How did the ABE program's individual interventions lead to its goal 'to provide a viable alternative to formal school for pastoralist school children to complete a cycle of basic education': accelerated-format curriculum, flexible timetables, temporary learning spaces along migration paths, the provision of teaching and learning materials, and mobile libraries?

Sub-question 1.3 How have cross-cutting issues (gender, youth, partnerships) been considered during implementation, leading to ABE's intended outcomes?

²⁰⁶ The initial Scope of Work refers to the PIO Cooperative Agreement between USAID and UNICEF signed on September 29, 2015. The interventions are outlined in Section 4.3 (9 ABE Interventions and 4 Institutional Strengthening Interventions). Refer to the glossary for a definition of terminology.

EVALUATION QUESTION 2: How did the ABE program theory of change adapt (or fail to adapt) to internal programmatic shifts and modifications (e.g., expanding communities in Gedo, from pilot to program, amendment of the teacher instruction strategy, and extending the age range of ABE learners)?

Sub-question 2.1 What were the programmatic shifts (technical and operational) and modifications?

Sub-question 2.2 How did these programmatic shifts and modifications affect the ABE program's target groups, i.e., pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, out-of-school children (OOSC), internally displaced persons (IDPs), and urban children?

Sub-question 2.3 How did these programmatic shifts and modifications affect delivery of the ABE program in each region?

EVALUATION QUESTION 3: What aspects of ABE program's design, delivery, and operations helped or hindered progress and/or the ability of the ABE program to adapt in timely ways to challenging external conditions?

Sub-question 3.1 How was ABE conflict-sensitive in technical design, delivery, or operations?

Sub-question 3.2 What are the perceptions of key stakeholders (pastoralists and other out-of-school children, teachers, parents and community elders) on what and how ABE was delivered?

EVALUATION QUESTION 4: What internal or external conditions appear to be most influential to the sustained functionality of the ABE interventions, such as the education hubs, teacher quality, community education committees, child to child groups, teaching and learning materials, and institutional strengthening after USAID funding ends?

Sub-question 4.1 How have ABE interventions been adopted at government-level (national and sub-national)? Which ones have been completely or partially institutionalized at the government level?

Sub-question 4.2 What are the priority areas that require sustained support to address education challenges for pastoralists and other out-of-school students?

Sub-question 4.3 What do communities need to sustain ABE schools and programs?

EVALUATION ETHICS

In accordance with the Scope of Work (SOW) in Annex 1, USAID's quality standards Automated Directive System (ADS) 201 apply to this evaluation, taking guidance on preparing evaluation reports from USAID's *A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 201*. All members of the evaluation team (ET) upheld ethical standards in accordance with USAID's guidelines. Confidentiality and privacy rights are guaranteed under NORC's and Integrity Global's policies and procedures, in conjunction with gender-sensitivity and cultural-sensitivity.

EVALUATION TEAM

EVALUATION TEAM (ET)

Ms. Martina Nicolls International Principal Investigator, ABE Evaluation
(working remotely due to the Coronavirus pandemic)

Role: develop the evaluation design, coordinate the evaluation team, lead data collection, lead data analysis, lead briefings and presentations, write draft and final evaluation report.

Experience: Over 35 years of international education and evaluation experience, including with USAID, US Department of State, and DFID in Somalia (2014, 2016, 2018, and 2019) – in education, governance, and conflict mitigation; experience with the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA).

Ms. Jelena Savic International Evaluator, ABE Evaluation
(working remotely due to the Coronavirus pandemic)

Role: provide technical support, draft evaluation design, work plan and training, contribute to evaluation design workshop, liaise with the local evaluation coordinator, liaise with Tusmo local staff, provide information to the PI, conduct remote interviews (KII), conduct initial cleaning and coding of data collection, contribute to draft and final reports and presentations (i.e., the link between the local data collection team and the international PI).

Experience: Over 20 years of experience in program development and about 10 years in evaluations, including in Somalia; experience in data analysis.

Ms. Saadia Ali Local Evaluation Coordinator, ABE Evaluation
(working in-country)

Role: local-based coordination of Somali-based enumerators and interviewers, coordinate and manage mobilization of data collection teams, conduct remote interviews (KII), oversee local data collection firm, contribute to data analysis, presentation and reports as appropriate.

Experience: Somali-born; about 5 years of experience in development, research, and evaluations in education and social services, including field coordination for monitoring, verification and reporting.

Tusmo Local Somali Partner Organization
(working in-country)

Role: data collection – field-based community data, participate in evaluation design workshop

QUALITY ASSURANCE TEAM

Ms. Varuni Dayaratna NORC, Vice President of International Programs. Role: Contract oversight & QA

Ms. Alicia Menendez NORC, Evaluation Technical Monitor. Role: Technical oversight

Ms. Kelly Skeith Integrity Global, Project Director. Role: Contract oversight and quality control; communications link between NORC and USAID

Mr. Sam Callum Integrity Global, Project Manager. Role: Backstopping, contract support, administration, and budget tracking

EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation is evidence-based using a participatory, qualitative approach. The objective of the ABE endline evaluation is to test the activity logic model, assess the extent to which ABE has achieved its objectives, and draw lessons learned and actionable recommendations for application in future programming. The evaluation is conducted in three phases: (1) Inception – desk review, evaluation design report and workplan, (2) Data Collection, and (3) Analysis and Report-writing.

PHASE I: INCEPTION PHASE – DESK REVIEW AND EVALUATION DESIGN REPORT (EDR)

Phase I of the evaluation included a desk review of key project documents provided by USAID/Somalia, such as: the ABE Cooperative Agreement and modifications; ABE work plans; the ABE monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) plan; performance tracking sheets (results against indicators and targets); annual and semi-annual ABE reports to USAID; relevant reports and regional research, and internal documents. These informed the approach and helped to refine the evaluation questions (EQs), the sampling plan, the field schedule, the related data collection tools, and the data analysis plan.

From the information gained during the desk review, the evaluation team drafted an evaluation design report, which was shared at an Evaluation Design Workshop with an extensive range of stakeholders, including government representatives, in Mogadishu, Somalia, from February 2-4, 2020. The workshop participants also reviewed roles and responsibilities, the draft EDR that contained the methodology and evaluation question matrix, definitions of key terminology, evaluation phases, and a stakeholder analysis. The workshop also included a discussion of USAID's proposed evaluation questions, which were subsequently refined according to a consensus of comments. From the refined EQs, the drafting of preliminary evaluation tools commenced (i.e., interview and focus group discussion question guides).

The evaluation team incorporated the feedback from the workshop, and USAID approved the EDR on March 16, 2020.

Integrity Global Inc, contracted a local firm, Tusmo, to conduct community key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions (FGD) in the field. The ET conducted training, in-country and remotely, for Tusmo interviewers and supervisors in Hargeisa, Somalia, from March 25-27, 2020.

CORONAVIRUS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE ABE EVALUATION

After the EDR was approved, which set out the methodology for the ABE evaluation, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced a global health emergency on March 8, 2020. The Coronavirus pandemic had a catastrophic effect on many countries, with hundreds of thousands of deaths globally due to the COVID-19 disease, such that there were progressively country-by-country responses to the emergency. At the time of writing the report, the WHO emergency decree has not been lifted, with expected country-specific responses to continue into early 2021.

The emergency responses led to the lockdown of countries and/or regions, quarantining to prevent the spread of the virus, travel restrictions, government-issued health regulations (such as social distancing, wearing protective face coverings, and regular hand-washing with soap or sanitizing gel). Consequently, USAID led discussions with the evaluation team and the ABE implementing partner UNICEF and its sub-partners to determine whether to proceed or delay the evaluation, the safety regulations involved in proceeding, how to proceed, how to gain trust and cooperation in the field, and how to keep all

participants and interviewers safe while operating within international and country-level health and safety laws, regulations, and guidelines.

USAID made the decision to proceed with the evaluation, suspending travel for the international Principal Investigator and the International Evaluator, in accordance with government travel restrictions, and to operate remotely. While the decision to conduct field work was being negotiated, USAID indicated that remote interviews could commence, by telephone and teleconferencing, to non-community stakeholders and to teachers. The following evaluation approach was therefore undertaken, with weekly update conference calls among the evaluation team and USAID to proactively incorporate decision-making regarding changes and actions.

PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION PHASE

Phase 2 of the evaluation involved the collection of qualitative data. Initially, before the Coronavirus pandemic, it was estimated that the data collection would occur from May 7 to April 30. Due to the lockdown and related restrictions, and amendments to the evaluation methodology, the data collection occurred from May 7 to August 18, 2020. The evaluation team, in conjunction with USAID/Somalia, the implementer, its sub-partners, and government representatives, modified the initial EDR to conduct three qualitative data sets:

- **Data Set 1: REMOTE QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION – KII**
telephone/teleconference interviews with the representatives of the donor, implementer, sub-partners, government, UN and other agencies, and teachers; and
- **Data Set 2: COMMUNITY QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION – Face-to-face KII**
interviews and FGDs in three regions (Bakool, Bay, and Gedo) with community representatives, including Community Education Committees (CEC), Child-to-Child (CtC) groups, religious leaders, community members, parents, current ABE learners, and former ABE learners.
- **Data Set 3: COVID-19 MINI-SURVEY (REMOTE & COMMUNITY-LEVEL)** – On USAID’s suggestion, the evaluation team added COVID-19 questions to the ABE evaluation in two parts: (1) remote (telephone) KIIs of 6 questions to a small number of government officials and teachers (not the same teachers as Data Set 1, but randomly chosen from a list of ABE teachers provided by USAID), and (2) community-level data collection in which the evaluation team added one COVID-19 question to community-level KIIs and FGDs (Data Set 2). The results of the COVID-19 mini-survey is presented in two ways: (1) a case study for the evaluation report, and (2) a stand-alone report of findings in Annex F. The methodology is detailed in Annex F.

DATA SET 1: REMOTE KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

The evaluation team conducted Data Set 1 teleconference interviews from May 7 to July 28, 2020. Two evaluation team members used a USAID endorsed list of respondents, to purposively select interviewees according to organization, position, and involvement in the ABE program. USAID provided a list of 153 ABE teachers for random selection (66 teachers in 52 Temporary Learning Spaces in Gedo;

25 teachers in 12 TLS in Bakool; and 62 teachers in 26 TLS in Bay).²⁰⁷ USAID issued an email invitation on May 7 to targeted stakeholders to participate in the evaluation. The two interviewers were the locally-based ABE Evaluation Coordinator (Somali and English speaker) and the international Evaluator (English speaker). All interviews were conducted in English via cell phones, Zoom, Skype, or WhatsApp.

KII SAMPLING AND SELECTION

The evaluation team selected an initial sample size of 70 potential participants, and achieved 60 remote interviews: 45 participants from the USAID list of donors, agencies, partner, sub-partners and government; and 15 teachers. The evaluation team randomly selected and interviewed 15 teachers from the list of 153 teachers. They selected 8 from Gedo, 3 from Bakool, and 4 from Bay according to their position: head teacher, teacher, and Quranic teacher. Hence, the sampling was based upon organizational position rather than gender, except in the category of teachers where the evaluation team sought a representative sample of female teachers.

DATA SET 2: COMMUNITY KII AND FGD

Data Set 2 was conducted from July 21 to August 18, after rigorous planning of implementation procedures to comply with the Somali government, USAID, and World Health Organization safety regulations and ethical interviewing requirements. This included adherence to travel restrictions, no physical contact with participants, the supply of face coverings and gloves for interviewers and participants, the use of sanitizing gel, social distancing to the required one metre, use of outdoor spaces where viable, and the reduction of participants in FGDs to five individuals in situations where social distancing was not possible.

The evaluation team's local partner organization, Tusmo, selected local interviewers with regional language skills, prior experience, and local knowledge, who were trained and supervised by the evaluation team. Hence only interviewers from Gedo conducted the Gedo interviews to comply with the Coronavirus travel restrictions, and likewise for Bakool and Bay regions. The interviewers worked closely with ABE sub-partners to ensure compliance of health and safety regulations, consent of all participants, and support of local government officials.

The evaluation team worked with ABE sub-partners to gain trust, plan the data collection, and access communities in the three regions, using the temporary learning spaces (TLS) as the location for interviews. There were ten (10) teams of interviewers: 5 teams in Gedo (three in Dolo, Luuq, and Belet Hawa; one in Bardheere; and one in Garbaharey); 2 teams in Bakool region (one in El Barde and one in Rab Dhuure); and 3 teams in Bay region (one in Baidoa, one in Dinsoor, and one in Qansah Dheere). The teams included male and female interviewers. They conducted KIIs and FGDs in the local language, and the transcripts were translated into English.

²⁰⁷ USAID-UNICEF. List of ABE Teachers-Selected, April 24, 2020. Total number of teachers = 447.

KII AND FGD SAMPLING AND SELECTION

The local evaluation team conducted 31 KIIs (10 individuals in Gedo region; 10 in Bakool; and 10 in Bay) with CEC member, CtC group member, religious leaders, community members, parents, and current ABE learners.

The local evaluation team conducted five (5) FGDs in each region (Gedo, Bakool, and Bay), to total 15 FGDs, with five respondents in each FGD. The evaluation team reduced the number of FGD participants from the planned 8-10 participants to five participants to comply with Coronavirus restrictions about the number of people permitted to gather in one place, and reduced the number of FGDs from 18 (6 per region) to 15 (5 per region). The FGD categories included: (1) Community (CEC; CtC; religious leaders; community leaders and members; elders; and parents), (2) Current ABE learners (pastoralists; agro-pastoralists; out-of-school urban and rural learners; internally displaced persons – IDPs; and older learners), (3) Former ABE learners (transferred to another location or formal school, drop-outs, etc.), (4) Female teachers, and (5) Parents of ABE learners.

In locations, and for FGD categories, where same sex groups could not be arranged, FGDs were conducted with mixed groups based upon consent of individuals and community. The random selection of participants occurred in conjunction with the implementer and sub-partners in accordance with consent procedures. The itinerary for the field qualitative data collection is shown in the table below.

DATA COLLECTION				
REGION	DISTRICT	KII	FGD	TLS
GEDO	Garbaharey	CtC & CEC	Parents of ABE learners	Taafaaq
	Belet Hawa	Religious leader & elder	Current ABE learners	Camp Ajuuran
	Bardheere	CtC, CEC & community leader	Female teachers	Camp Jirix
	Dolo	Parent & religious leader	Community	Sinai
	Luuq	Current learner & parent	Former ABE learners	Jaziira
BAKOOL	El Barde	CtC & CEC	Parents of ABE learners	Ugas Khalif
	El Barde	Parent & religious leader	Community	Qurac jomo IDP
	El Barde	Current learner & parent	Former ABE learners	Fikta
	Rab Dhuure	Religious leader & elder	Current ABE learners	Yed
	Rab Dhuure	Current learner & parent	Current ABE learners	Ato
BAY	Baidoa	Current learner & parent	Former ABE learners	Hiyaadho Yareey
	Baidoa	Religious leader & elder	Current ABE learners	Aliyow Marayle
	Baidoa	Current learner & parent	Former ABE learners	Moqor ii Manyow

	Dinsoor	CtC & CEC	Parents of ABE learners	Sandaale
	Qansah Dheere	Parent & religious leader	Community	Fathurahman PS
TOTAL	15 SITES	31 INDIVIDUALS	15 FGD	

Source: Tusmo, Somalia, and verified by the evaluation team, July 21, 2020.

TOTAL DATA COLLECTION

REMOTE AND COMMUNITY DATA COLLECTION									
REGION	KII			FGD			TOTAL		
	M	F	TOTAL	M	F	TOTAL	M	F	TOTAL
Bakool	13	3	16	15	15	30	28	18	46
Bay	10	6	16	11	19	30	21	25	46
Gedo	15	6	21	12	16	28	27	22	49
Other locations	31	7	38	0	0	28	31	7	38
TOTAL	69	22	91	38	50	88	107	72	179
Percent	76%	24%	100%	43%	57%	100%	60%	40%	100%

Note: 'Other locations' includes Mogadishu, Nairobi, etc.

The remote and community data collection included 91 KIIs (24 percent female) and 15 FGDs with 88 participants (57 percent female) to total 179 respondents (40 percent female). The respondents were equally represented in the regions (26 percent each), with fewer respondents in other locations (21 percent).

KII AND FGD EVALUATION TOOLS

The community data collection involved qualitative methods using two approaches and instruments:

1. **Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs)** with key stakeholders and beneficiaries. See Annex 3 for interview guide and list of interviewees.
2. **Structured focus group discussions (FGDs)** with key stakeholders and beneficiaries. Fifteen FGDs were conducted. See Annex 3 for the FGD guide.

PHASE 3: ANALYSIS AND REPORT WRITING

Phase 3 included a data analysis plan, which USAID approved on August 18. All three data sets (KII interview transcripts and FGD transcripts) were uploaded onto a secure database by August 28. Preliminary analysis of Data Set 1 commenced while waiting for completion of Data Set 2 data

collection. There were two rounds of analysis: (1) preliminary data analysis for qualitative data from all data sets, and (2) data analysis for qualitative and quantitative data, and triangulated to cross-check and verify evidence. The International Evaluator conducted the preliminary data analysis (using NVivo) and the Principal Investigator conducted the data analysis (using Stata and Excel). The combination provided a layer of quality assurance and cross-fertilization of technical expertise and support.

The preliminary data analysis involved uploading all KII and FGD cleaned transcripts to NVivo to code them against initial key words (nodes) for Data Set 1 (remote interviews), and additional nodes for Data Set 2 (community KIIs and FGDs). Coding is the process of gathering related material into a container called a node. This process helped to identify relevant data points for subsequent analysis. The International Evaluator conducted analysis queries and the data was organized into categories, i.e., by stakeholders. The Evaluator summarized the main findings by evaluation questions for all data sets.

The Principal Investigator used the preliminary data analysis to further analyze data and information, including the ABE performance tracking sheets to test the ABE program’s theory of change and to identify potential factors influencing positive and/or negative change. The Principal Investigator assessed the content and contribution narrative against the evaluation questions: – i.e., to provide evidence-based conclusions regarding ABE’s results through an understanding of why the observed results have or have not occurred, and ABE’s role leading to these results, as well as other internal and external factors. Secondary quantitative data analysis – i.e., the ABE performance tracking data of results against targets and indicators – was assessed for each achievement result by analyzing descriptive statistics (such as enrollment, attendance, and graduation statistics) where appropriate, in order to triangulate with the qualitative analysis of KIIs and FGDs. Other analyses included comparative analysis (disaggregated by sex, region, and stakeholder), trend analysis (patterns of convergence or divergence from ABE’s objectives), and gap analysis (where the ABE program was falling short of its intended aims and targets). Triangulation of findings was used to verify and validate the multiple data sources to ensure that minority views are mentioned without distorting the analysis. From the analysis, the Principal Investigator identified key ‘models of success’ or key lessons to document case studies. It was expected that 4-5 case studies would be developed.

SUMMARY OF ABE ACTIVITIES (2016-2020)

ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES	
PURPOSE I: ACCESS TO QUALITY ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION	
OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment & retention of up to 21,000 out-of-school girls & boys (aged 6-14) & graduation / certification of one cohort of 1,400 ABE learners. 	Construction/rehabilitation of temporary learning spaces (TLS) / (ABE Centers/hubs) <hr/> Provision of gender-sensitive facilities and sanitary towels for girls learners.

SUMMARY OF ACCESS ACTIVITIES:

Establishment of temporary learning spaces

PURPOSE 2: QUALITY AND READING

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
	Provision of ABE classrooms with adequate teaching and learning materials (UNICEF mandates 1:2 student-textbook ratio)
	Teachers are trained & supported in delivery & management of ABE curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reading outcomes for primary learners in target locations. 	Planned: teachers to be trained to use interactive radio instruction (IRI) to complement teaching in ABE Centers Actual: Teachers trained on media education awareness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved teacher professional development & improved learning environment. 	Professional development of education administrators and officials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of parents, community elders, & religious leaders to value and support their children's education, especially for girls. 	ABE Centers/spaces are actively managed by engaged community education committees (CEC) and child to child (CtC) groups
	Donkey carts are distributed to 21 highly-mobile migrating communities among ABE Centers/spaces
	96 centers/spaces supported with mini grants (32 Bay, 12 Bakool, 52 Gedo)
	Public awareness & community mobilization campaigns to enhance community oversight, ownership & sustainability

SUMMARY OF QUALITY & READING ACTIVITIES:

Teacher Training and Incentives * Teaching and Learning Materials * School Micro-Grants * Interactive Radio Instruction

Camel Libraries and Supplementary Reading Materials * Early Grade Reading and Math Assessments

Training of Community Education Committees (CEC) and Child to Child (CtC) Groups * Social Mobilization Campaigns

PURPOSE 3: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional development of education authorities to develop & enact a non-formal strategy. 	Local authorities are engaged in school supervision & quality assurance of ABE Centers/spaces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced capacity of community organizations to design & implement sustainable, relevant, and progressive basic education programs. 	Placement of technical advisor to support development of Non-Formal Education policy and standards
	Support for Non-Formal Education policy framework and standards development

SUMMARY OF SYSTEM STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES:

- Support to Policy Framework and Standards on Non-Formal Education (NFE)
- Provision of Technical Assistance on NFE to the Ministry of Education
- Support to Regional Education Offices and Inspectorate & Research and Documentation

Source: Adapted from USAID. (2019). *ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work*. December 6, p. 2.

ABE EVALUATION QUESTION MATRIX

The ABE Evaluation Question Matrix outlines the four key evaluation questions in a design matrix that summarizes the data sources, methods, and analysis linked to each question.

KEY QUESTION 1: HOW DID THE ABE PROGRAM CONTRIBUTE TO ITS INTENDED INTERMEDIATE AND ULTIMATE OUTCOMES AS PRESCRIBED IN THE INITIAL SOW AND SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS?			
SUB-QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION		ANALYSIS APPROACH
	SOURCE	METHOD/ SAMPLING	
I.1 Demonstrate the performance / achievement (or otherwise) of interventions against intended outcomes and targets.	ABE AMELP data; Work Plans; Reports; Desk Review; IP staff KIs	All documents - Desk Review; IP KIs	Quantitative data analysis; Content & Contribution analyses
I.2 How did the ABE program’s individual interventions lead to its goal ‘to provide a viable alternative to formal school for pastoralist school children to complete a cycle of basic education’: accelerated-format curriculum, flexible timetables, temporary learning spaces along migration paths, the provision of teaching and learning materials, and mobile libraries?	Desk Review - ABE AMELP data, Work Plans, Reports, Teacher training curriculum, Flexible timetables;	All ABE activities (except in-depth EGRA, IRI, & cost-sharing); Desk Review; KIs – all beneficiary & stakeholder groups;	Qualitative data analysis – NVivo; Content, Contribution, Comparative, Gap & Trend analyses;
I.3 How have cross-cutting issues (gender, youth, partnerships) been considered during implementation, leading to ABE’s intended outcomes?	KIs; FGDs	FGD teachers, FGD community members	Case Study

KEY QUESTION 2: HOW DID THE ABE PROGRAM THEORY OF CHANGE ADAPT (OR FAIL TO ADAPT) TO INTERNAL PROGRAMMATIC SHIFTS AND MODIFICATIONS (E.G., EXPANDING COMMUNITIES IN GEDO, FROM PILOT TO PROGRAM, AMENDMENT OF THE TEACHER INSTRUCTION STRATEGY, AND EXTENDING THE AGE RANGE OF ABE LEARNERS)?

SUB-QUESTIONS

DATA COLLECTION

	SOURCE	METHOD/ SAMPLING	ANALYSIS APPROACH
2.1 What were the programmatic shifts (technical and operational), what was the rationale for the shifts, and how were they implemented?	Documents (ABE AMELP data, Work Plans, Reports, Desk Review;	All 3 regions; Desk Review;	Identification of “model” enablers;
2.2 How did these programmatic shifts and modifications affect the ABE program’s target groups, i.e., pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, out-of-school children, IDPs, and urban children?	KIIs; FGDs	KIIs – all beneficiary & stakeholder groups; FGDs current ABE learners; FGDs former ABE learners	Content, Contribution, Comparative, Gap & Trend analyses; Case Study
2.3 How did these programmatic shifts and modifications affect delivery of the ABE program in each of the three regions?			

KEY QUESTION 3: WHAT ASPECTS OF ABE PROGRAM’S DESIGN, DELIVERY, AND OPERATIONS HELPED OR HINDERED PROGRESS AND/OR THE ABILITY OF THE ABE PROGRAM TO ADAPT IN TIMELY WAYS TO CHALLENGING EXTERNAL CONDITIONS?

SUB-QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION		ANALYSIS APPROACH
	SOURCE	METHOD/ SAMPLING	
3.1 How was ABE conflict-sensitive in technical design, delivery, or operations?	Documents (ABE AMELP data, Work Plans, Reports, Desk Review;	All 3 regions; Desk Review;	Content, Contribution, Comparative, Gap & Trend analyses;
3.2 What are the perceptions of key stakeholders (pastoralist and other out of school children, teachers, parents and community elders) on what and how ABE was delivered?	KIIs; FGDs	KIIs – all beneficiary & stakeholder groups; FGDs parents	Case Study

KEY QUESTION 4: WHAT INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL CONDITIONS APPEAR TO BE MOST INFLUENTIAL TO THE SUSTAINED FUNCTIONALITY OF THE ABE INTERVENTIONS, SUCH AS THE EDUCATION HUBS, TEACHER QUALITY, COMMUNITY EDUCATION COMMITTEES, CHILD TO CHILD GROUPS, TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS, AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AFTER USAID FUNDING ENDS?

SUB-QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION		ANALYSIS APPROACH
	SOURCE	METHOD/ SAMPLING	
4.1 How have ABE interventions been adopted at government-level (national & sub-national)? Which ones have been completely or partially institutionalized at the government level?	Documents (ABE AMELP data, Work Plans, Reports, Desk Review;	All 3 regions Desk Review	Content analysis; Contribution analysis; Gap analysis; Comparative

4.2 What are the priority areas that require sustained support to address education challenges for pastoralists and other out-of-school children?	KIIs; FGDs	KIIs – all beneficiary & stakeholder groups	analysis; Trend analysis; Correlation / relationship analysis;
4.3 What do communities need to sustain ABE schools and programs?		FGDs local government authorities	Case Study

DATA LIMITATIONS

The limitations to the data collection are provided below.

RISK/CHALLENGE	RISK MITIGATION
Timing of the evaluation	The Coronavirus pandemic protracted the data collection by four months (estimated initially to conclude on April 30 and actually concluding on August 28), which affected the timing of all deliverables. Working in collaboration with USAID and the implementers, the Evaluation Team (ET) was able to remain flexible and adaptable.
Not targeting the appropriate stakeholder for key informant interviews	The ET worked with the donor & IP to identify stakeholder groups & individual stakeholders; e.g., through the provision of a list of teachers. For government stakeholders, USAID provided suggestions, and issued letters of invitation.
Remote training of ToTs/local field teams	Both regional coordinators and local field teams were trained virtually using different communications platforms that affected the quality of training at times. There was follow up and a standby team to support field teams in case of queries.
Selection of interview venue	Most respondents were from remote communities and finding a conducive, quiet, open space for the interviews, to comply with COVID-19 social distancing, was challenging. The ET worked with the IP's sub-partners and head teachers to use the schools' open spaces which were familiar environments for community members.
Illiteracy of the respondents and different regional dialects	Most of the IDP/pastoralist respondents are illiterate and it took longer to administer the interview questions. The ET prepared for such risk in advance and was able to formulate all questions in a contextualized manner for easy understanding and the questions were translated in both Somali and Maay dialects. The ET deployed local enumerators who could speak and understand the regional dialect.
Presence of a parent during KIIs with ABE learners	Parents had an urge to add their responses and, at times, correct their child's information. The ET asked parents to observe from a distance.
Access to remote ABE Centers	The ET planned the mobilization and logistics with sub-partners and head teachers to include travel time in the data collection plan.
Access to key respondents from communities	Some communities were on the move and selected respondents had moved to other locations and were not able to participate in the evaluation. The ET rescheduled interviews to suit respondents that were coming back to the

locations. For those that were not returning, the ET selected replacement respondents.

Use of COVID Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)	The ET provided clarification on why they were using PPEs and shared information on COVID-19. Although participants were obviously uncomfortable speaking through the face masks, the communities understood the importance of this. However, children struggled more than adults with this requirement.
Disposing of PPEs	Participants were often not disposing of PPEs appropriately, causing potential lack of health and safety, and environmental harm, to communities. The ET cut the PPEs after use, and provided bins to dispose of participants' masks and gloves. It is understood risks still may occur regarding masks that participants took home. The ET stressed the importance of washing their hands, masks, and items touched with soap or high-grade disinfectant.
Loss of data fidelity due to terminology and translation, and the various data sets, affecting reporting quality	To mitigate interviewer questioning, transcription, and translation loss of quality, and to ensure that beneficiary responses were meaningful, the ET trained the field teams on the ABE interventions and terminology to ensure the use of common and standardized definitions (e.g., as provided in the glossary). The local interviewers conducted community-level data collection in the regional language, but notes were taken in English, so the ET's national evaluation coordinator, a native Somali speaker, cross-checked interview and FGD transcripts. Nevertheless, three transcripts were classified as invalid due to poor quality. The ET's International Evaluator created data acquisition and reporting forms for interviewers, FGD facilitators, field team coordinators, and were used as standard operating procedures for all remaining KIIs and FGDs.

Annex C, DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (KII) GUIDES

USAID/SOMALIA

1. What was the basis for the design of the activity? What previous lessons learned did the design build upon? What was the basis for addressing transient populations? What models were envisioned?
2. How effectively has the ABE activity been managed? (Strengths, weaknesses?) How effectively have the sub-partners worked together? (Strengths, weaknesses?) Was there a clear delineation of roles and functions for the sub-partners?
3. To what extent has ABE used studies/internal evaluations to evaluate, innovate, or modify its activities to adapt to the changing environment?
4. How much were ABE's programmatic changes directed by USAID, and how much were they initiated by the implementing partner due to internal or external circumstances? Did they forecast some of the changes and plan ahead?
5. Did the third-party monitoring influence any programmatic changes to ABE?
6. How have other donors responded to the ABE program?

EGRA

7. What was the genesis of EGRA in the ABE program design – what was the original intention? How did this change, and why, and by whom? Where was the disconnect between the design of the program activities and the intention of assessing reading when the ABE program is not a reading program (i.e., it does not focus on reading activities)?
8. Describe the EGRA process and timeline?
9. How big was the sample?
10. How many children passed from one level to the other?
11. Was EGRA the most appropriate measure to assess the quality of ABE education? Should the ABE program have used teaching quality as a proxy to measure reading performance? Or the corollary, were the right interventions undertaken to ensure improved reading performance?
12. What is your overall perspective of the EGRA assessment? What worked? What didn't work?
13. Should the assessment have been conducted? Why?
14. What was the discussion around the results?
15. What's the status now? Is it in or is it out? What would you do differently?

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER AND SUB-PARTNERS

1. What was the basis for the design of ABE?
2. How did you take into consideration the different regions, rural and urban issues, and gender differences during the implementation of the program?
3. What was the initial strategy for transient populations? What would you do differently in hindsight during the planning phase?
4. What is your view of the coverage of interventions—appropriate—or gaps?
5. For the time, effort, and money, where were the biggest gains/results? Most effective and efficient?
6. Did you select the most appropriate and most effective sub-partners? What would you change?
7. What was the duration of the teacher training? How effective is short term training, and what were the expectations for capacity building (professional development) over the five years?
8. Are there any possibilities to build upon the competencies of ABE teachers to keep them working in their respective areas? Do you have any ideas on how to retain female teachers in remote areas (since their presence is linked to the number of girls enrolling in ABE)?
9. How did the ABE approach influence teachers & education authorities to abide by child rights?
10. Some people trained in ABE methodology didn't become teachers. What was the barrier?
11. To what extent has ABE met expectations—of parents, community, local authority, & students?
12. What is the expectation of parents of children completing ABE Level 4? What next?
13. How successful was ABE in finding students that have never been in school especially age 6-10? Overall, what issues did you face with enrollments into an ABE Center? Regarding remote communities, how far is the government able to reach remote students—outside ABE sites—to be able to offer them non-formal/alternative education? Is the government ready—when will the government be ready—for a hand-over to absorb ABE into the formal education system?
14. How effective were the media programs (just started)?
15. When families move, is education part of their consideration for which migration route they take (i.e., the migration routes that have TLS)?
16. To what extent is ABE the right, or most effective approach for pastoralists and other out-of-school children? (i.e., To what extent is ABE relevant, responsive, and timely in addressing the education challenges in this region?)
17. How has the ABE approach influenced non-formal education policies in Somalia to develop a protective and more enabling environment for children and youth?

18. How did working with different levels of partnership contribute to better results or constrain/complicate ABE activities and approaches?
19. What were the major factors that contributed or hampered achievements of ABE's purposes?
20. What are 'good' schools doing right compared to other schools? If there are differences, why is one location doing 'better' than another?
21. What was the value-added of the expansion to additional communities?
22. To what extent did the inclusion of IDP and urban students, and the inclusion of students outside the original age range, affect the quality of teaching and learning?
23. How did the ABE approach consider both the short-term emergency needs of children and youth, as well as longer-term programming and development needs in the 3 regions?
24. How did you plan for the program's exit and sustainability?
25. Of everything we've discussed today, what would you say is the most important issue that helped students in the ABE program?
26. How can ABE programs be improved for the future?
27. How does the ABE program contribute to system strengthening and sustainability?

EGRA

28. What was the genesis of EGRA in the ABE program design – what was the original intention? How did this change, and why, and by whom? Where was the disconnect between the design of the program activities and the intention of assessing reading when the ABE program is not a reading program (i.e., it does not focus on reading activities)?
29. Describe the EGRA process and timeline?
30. How big was the sample?
31. How many children passed from one level to the other?
32. Was EGRA the most appropriate measure to assess the quality of ABE education? Should the ABE program have used teaching quality as a proxy to measure reading performance? Or the corollary, were the right interventions undertaken to ensure improved reading performance?
33. What is your overall perspective of the EGRA assessment? What worked? What didn't work?
34. Should the assessment have been conducted? Why?
35. What was the discussion around the results?
36. What's the status now? Is it in or is it out?

37. What would you do differently?

DONORS

1. Are you familiar with the USAID ABE program?
2. How closely do you work with UNICEF and/or its sub-partners-BREC, HIRDA, HIDIG?
3. What do you think the education sector in Somalia needs to do to make programs resilient to external challenges and crises in education, such as droughts, conflict, displaced persons – what support is needed?
4. How can alternative education programs (non-formal education) in Somalia be improved for the future to fit within the government policies for gender and inclusivity to suit the needs of the pastoralist, agro-pastoralist and other out-of-school children?
5. Mobile families are a common feature of Somalia – how can they be supported by schools, teachers, and communities in remote areas?

GOVERNMENT

1. Are you familiar with the USAID ABE program?
2. How closely do you work with UNICEF or its sub-partners-BREC, HIRDA, HIDIG, or MEDIA Ink?
3. In your opinion, which ABE intervention was the best one to meet beneficiary needs?
4. How important was it for ABE to have a range of flexible activities and methods to improve learning?
5. To what extent is ABE relevant, responsive, and timely in addressing this region's education challenges?
6. How did ABE change over the five years (such as its decision to move into other locations and include older children)? Were these changes appropriate, in your opinion?
7. How would you describe the shock absorption capacity of the program – to adapt to external changes to meet the needs of the community?
8. How effectively did the teacher trainings improve the quality of classroom teachers?
9. How successful was ABE in identifying out-of-school students – i.e., children that have never been in school, especially 6-10 year olds? Were the selection criteria adequate? Was there any category of learner that was not reached (i.e., 'missed') & how can future programs ensure that they are reached and included?
10. What are 'good' schools doing right compared to other schools? If there are differences, why is one location doing 'better' than another?

11. How far is the government able to reach remote students, or is the UNICEF ABE program unique in reaching remote students?
12. What difference does the ABE program make in Gedo/Bay/Bakool?
13. How aligned is the ABE approach to the government's education strategy?
14. What gaps are there in the ABE program? To what extent can local authorities fill the gaps? To what extent do other actors fill the gaps?
15. Are there any plans for local authorities to assess ABE students to ensure that they can move into the formal school program? Do you have alternative ways of assessing the students?
16. What are the measures of success? Are improved reading competencies the right measure of success for a program like ABE – or are there proxy measures that could be used?
17. What are the priority education areas that may be adopted in the future at national/sub-national level?
18. What conditions need to be present in order for the government to integrate ABE into the formal government system?
19. Are communities ready to adopt it or continue specific components? Are donors talking about adopting ABE approaches or continuing their support—financial or otherwise—of the ABE program? If not, what are the prospects for sustainability? Will ABE Centers stay open?
20. Of everything we've discussed today, what would you say is the most important issue that helped students in the ABE program?
21. How can ABE programs be improved for the future?

UN AND OTHER AGENCIES

1. Are you familiar with the USAID ABE program?
2. How closely do you work with UNICEF and/or its sub-partners-BREC, HIRDA, HIDIG?
3. What are the synergies between the ABE program and your programming – i.e., sharing resources, or over-lapping locations for positive movement from ABE schools to formal schooling? Alternatively, describe the duplication of effort.
4. Is the ABE program meeting the needs of pastoralist, agro-pastoralist & other out-of-school children?
5. To what extent is ABE relevant, responsive, and timely in addressing the education challenges in this region (Gedo/Bay/Bakool)?

6. How successful was ABE in identifying out-of-school students – was this helpful to your programming?
7. What difference does the ABE program make in this region (Gedo/Bay/Bakool)?

HEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHERS; COMMUNITY LEADERS & GROUPS. ELDERS AND PARENTS

1. How useful was the ABE teacher training? There were six days for the training – did you need more time to cover any topics?
2. What teaching methods do you use regularly in the classroom? Why? If these are not the same as the ones learned during training, why aren't you using that methodology? How has the training improved the quality of teaching & learning? What are the most effective teaching methods?
3. What are the gaps in the quality of your teaching—i.e., what else do you need to know?
4. What are challenges to delivering quality education and how can these be overcome?
5. Why some teachers who were trained in the ABE program did not become a teacher or were no longer interested in being a teacher anymore? What other opportunities did they have?
6. What are the advantages to you in the ABE program – what do you like best?
7. What educational opportunities and alternative modes of learning do children access?
8. How is the child supported to become an independent reader and writer? How are the students doing in their studies? How do you measure the students' learning?
9. What is your opinion about the ABE approach to flexible modalities? To what extent is it the right or most effective approach for pastoralists and other out-of-school children? (i.e., To what extent is ABE relevant, responsive, and timely in addressing the education challenges in this region?)
10. What classroom materials are used? Are these materials relevant in your context?
11. What is your understanding of inclusive education? How has inclusive education been included in teacher training?
12. The ABE program integrated IDPs and urban students into their program –if you were aware, what was the result of that? To what extent
13. Did that affect the issues of access or the quality of teaching and learning?
14. To accommodate the high volume of enrollments, the ABE program changed its teaching strategy from class-based to subject-based teachers. Were you aware of this change? If yes, how was that received and what effect did it have?

15. To what extent is ABE relevant, responsive, & timely in addressing education challenges in the region?
16. How did ABE change over the five years (such as its decision to move into other locations and include older children)? Were these changes appropriate, in your opinion?
17. How would you describe the shock absorption capacity of the program – to adapt to external changes to meet the needs of the community?
18. Of everything we've discussed today, what would you say is the most important issue that helped students in the ABE program?
19. How can ABE programs be improved for the future?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

INFORMED CONSENT [FOR STUDENTS WE NEED BOTH PARENTAL AND STUDENT CONSENT]

Welcome and thank you for taking your time to meet with us today. My name is [Name] from [Organization]. Currently, we are asking questions about UNICEF's Alternative Basic Education program—the ABE program. It was designed to help pastoralist children return to schooling, and to provide support to ABE teachers and education authorities. We would like to learn from its successes and challenges—from your perspective.

Participation in this interview is voluntary and you can choose not to participate. You may also leave at any time. We are not using names or taking details of your personal information. We would greatly appreciate your participation and honest opinions about the program. Your responses will be confidential and anonymous.

{We would like your permission to tape the discussion. If you do not want us to tape it, we will not.}

It is expected to last no more than one hour. Can we proceed? {Sign-in sheet to be used as appropriate}

FGD Rules: You do not have to speak in any order. When you have something to say, please do so. Please allow one person to speak at a time, so wait until the person has finished before you speak. I will guide the dynamics of the group so that everyone has an opportunity to speak if they want to. There are no right or wrong answers, and you do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group. You may leave the discussion at any time. Can we proceed? OK, let's begin. Introductions if needed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Date: Location: FGD Facilitator Name: Note Taker Name:
- Number and Sex of Participants: Male ___ Female ___
- Position/Role/Responsibility of the person(s) interviewed:

FEMALE TEACHERS - SPECIALIZED TEACHER TRAINING

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR EQs 3-4:

- Pathway to become a teacher
- Previous experience and training (qualifications)
- Type and frequency of ABE training – and adaptations
- ABE ‘flexible modalities’ adopted in the classroom
- Teaching and learning materials–availability/use
- Challenges and opportunities in the classroom
- Perception of ABE curriculum and teaching
- Measurement of success
- Conditions for sustainability

EVALUATION PURPOSE: Quality teaching

1. How did you become an ABE teacher? And why?
2. Did you have any previous experience or qualifications in teaching? Do you think the abe program prepared you adequately to become a teacher or change your teaching methodology?
3. What training did you receive? What was the duration and topics? And was there any further professional development or ways to improve your teaching skills?
4. What is different about ABE teaching compared with formal school teaching? To what extent is it quality teaching?
5. What ABE modalities (methods of teaching) do you use?
6. What types of teaching and learning materials do you use? What did you think about their effectiveness to improve the quality of teaching and learning?
7. What are the greatest challenges for you as a teacher? And the opportunities?
8. What is your overall perception of the ABE program?
9. How is success measured? Is that the most appropriate measurement of success?
10. What is needed now to keep the ABE centers open and functioning in the future?

PARENTS - PERCEPTION OF THE ABE PROGRAM

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR EQ 3:

- ABE ‘flexible modalities’ adopted in the classroom
- Teaching and learning materials–availability/use
- Teaching and learning quality
- Challenging community (external) environment
- Fulfilling expectations
- Perception of ABE program

- Improvements

EVALUATION PURPOSE: Quality teaching amid challenging environment—did ABE met their expectations?

1. How many of your children are in an ABE center school?
2. Do your children like school? Do they go every day?
3. What methods of teaching/learning are most effective for your children? Why?
4. What kind of learning materials are in the ABE centers? What do you think of them?
5. What is the quality of teaching in the classroom? What needs to be improved/changed?
6. How do teachers provide the best learning environment for your children? What is your view of this?
7. How does the school address safety in the school? Is this effective?
8. Does the ABE school meet your expectations for your children’s learning?
9. What is your overall perception of the ABE center approach to teaching and learning?
10. What recommendations do you have to improve ABE for teaching and learning?

COMMUNITY - PERCEPTION OF THE ABE PROGRAM

PARTICIPANTS: 8 COMMUNITY MEMBERS (selected from religious/community leaders, elders, etc.)

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR EQ 1:

- Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS)
- Teaching and learning materials—availability/use
- Teaching and learning quality – effects of mobility
- Relevance and effectiveness for mobile communities
- Gender differences – boys that left with their fathers (access to schooling)
- Mobile and flexible modalities for education – factors affecting migration routes
- Perception of ABE program
- Improvements

EVALUATION PURPOSE: Quality teaching for mobile communities

1. Do you know what a temporary learning space is? What are some examples of a temporary learning space?
2. What kind of teaching and learning materials are available in the TLS? What do you think about them? What do teachers and students think about them? Do they make a difference in improving the quality of learning?
3. What do you think of the teaching methodology? Is it quality teaching?
4. How is this type of teaching relevant for mobile communities?
5. How do boys and girls react to this type of teaching? Are boys and girls equally motivated to learn?
6. What happens to the learning needs of boys who leave with their fathers?
7. When the community moves, what influences their choice of migration route? Is education a factor in which migration route is taken? For example, are mobile libraries along migration routes a factor that makes people take that route? What is your opinion about mobile libraries and TLS?

8. Overall, what is your perception of the ABE method of schooling for your children?
9. What are your expectations now for your children's education? Will the ABE centers continue to open & function in the future? What is your evidence for thinking that?
10. What recommendations do you have for improving the ABE program?

CURRENT ABE STUDENTS - PERCEPTION OF THE ABE PROGRAM

PARTICIPANTS: CURRENT ABE STUDENTS (pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, out-of-school children—urban, rural, IDP, older students)

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR EQ 2:

- ABE 'flexible modalities' adopted in the classroom
- Teaching and learning materials—availability/use
- Teaching and learning quality – 'memorable learning moments'
- Perception of ABE program
- Improvements

EVALUATION PURPOSE: Quality teaching and learning—and expectations met

1. Tell me what you think about going to school?
2. Why do you come to school? What do you want to learn? Why?
3. Before you started coming to school, what did you do when you did not go to school?
4. How does school make you feel?
5. What do you like about school?
6. What don't you like about school?
7. What sort of books and reading materials do you have at school? What do you think about the books and materials?
8. How do your teachers help you to learn?
9. What else would you like your teacher to do to help you learn?
10. What do people in your home think about you going to school? Did they go to school when they were young?
11. Describe your very best day at school? What happened on that day?
12. What things would make school better?

FORMER ABE LEARNERS - PERCEPTION OF THE ABE PROGRAM

PARTICIPANTS: FORMER ABE LEARNERS (learners who transferred to another location or formal school, drop-outs, etc. in categories such as pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, out-of-school children—urban, rural, IDP, older students)

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR EQ 2:

- ABE 'flexible modalities' adopted in the classroom
- Teaching and learning materials—availability/use

-
- Teaching and learning quality – ‘memorable learning moments’
 - Perception of ABE program
 - Improvements
 - Current situation

EVALUATION PURPOSE: Quality teaching and learning—and expectations met

1. When did you go to the ABE center school?
 2. Before you went to the ABE center, what did you do when you did not go to school?
 3. How did school make you feel?
 4. What did you like about school? What did you not like about school?
 5. What sort of books and reading materials did you have at school? What do you think about the books and materials?
 6. How did your teacher help you to learn?
 7. What else could the teacher or school have done to help you learn more when you were at school?
 8. What things would make school better?
 9. Tell me what you are doing now? Are you going to another school or doing something else?
 10. If you never went to school, how would your life be different now?
 11. What would you say to children who do not go to school?
-

CLOSING THE FGD

Thank you for participating. This has been a very rewarding discussion and your opinions will be a valuable help to us as we learn more about how the ABE program worked in your area. We hope you have found the discussion interesting too. Thank you.

Annex D, DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Blue Marble. (2020). Evaluation Implications of the Coronavirus Global Health Pandemic Emergency. M.Q. Patton. March 23, 2020. <https://bluemarbleeval.org/latest/evaluation-implications-coronavirus-global-health-pandemic-emergency>, accessed on April 20, 2020.

Federal Government of Somalia. (2020). *Somalia School Re-Opening Guidelines, 15th July*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education.

Federal Government of Somalia. (2019). *Somalia National Development Plan 2020-2024: The Path to a Just, Stable and Prosperous Somalia*. Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development.

Federal Government of Somalia. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education.

Federal Government of Somalia. (2015). *Joint Review Education Sector (JRES)*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education. Education Cluster Meeting presentation. October 4, 2017.

Forcier Consulting. (2017). *Somalia Education Baseline Study*. Somalia Education Cluster. UNICEF.

IBTCI. (2017). Somali Perceptions Survey, Part I – The Emerging Federal States, Mogadishu, and Puntland. Under the USAID Somalia Program Support Services (SPSS).

Media INK. (2020). *ABERP Field Assessment Report*. Alternative Basic Education Radio Program. January 2020. As part of the Alternative Basic Education program.

Mercy Corps. (2018). “If Youth are Given the Chance” – Effects of Education and Civic Engagement on Somali Youth Support of Political Violence. April 2018. University of San Diego KROC School.

RTI. (2016). *Survey of Children’s Reading Materials in African Languages in Eleven Countries – Final Report*. Research Triangle Institute, International. May 2016. United States Agency for International Development. [Under EdData II: Data for Education Research and Programming (DERP) in Africa]

Samuel Hall. (2016). Evaluation of the Youth Education Pack (YEP) Programme in Somalia.

SPSS. (2019). Year 5 Round 2 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited January 1 to March 31, 2019. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2019). Year 5 Round 1 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited October 1 to December 31, 2019. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 4 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited July 1 to September 30, 2018. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 3 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited April 1 to June 30, 2018. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 2 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited January 1 to March 31, 2018. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2018). Year 4 Round 1 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited October 1 to December 31, 2017. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2017). Round 3 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited March 25 to August 15, 2017. Somalia Program Support Services.

SPSS. (2017). Round 2 Monitoring and Verification Reports to USAID for ABE-UNICEF sites visited during November 26, 2016 to March 24, 2017. Somalia Program Support Services.

UNFPA Somalia. (2014). *Population Estimation Survey (PSS)*. United Nations Population Fund.

UNICEF. (2013). Strategic Guidance Note on Institutionalizing Ethical Practice for UNICEF Research. October 30, 2013. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2013). UNICEF Education Kit Handbook: Recreation Kit Guidance. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: FY2020 Semi-Annual Performance Report. April 01 – September 29, 2020. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2020). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Semi-Annual Performance Report. March 31, 2020. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. September 30, 2019. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2019). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Semi-Annual Performance Report. May 15, 2019. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2018). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralists: Year 4 Workplan October 2018-September 2019. October 4, 2018. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2019). *Humanitarian Situation Report*. No. 3. March 31, 2019.

UNICEF Somalia. (2018). Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Annual Performance Report. September 30, 2018. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2018). *Humanitarian Situation Report*. No. 9. September 1-30, 2018.

UNICEF Somalia. (no date). *Education Strategy Note 2018-2020*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2018). *Somalia Annual Report 2018*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2020). *Education Cluster Meeting presentation*. August 11, 2020. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2017). *Education Cluster Meeting presentation*. October 4, 2017. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2017). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. September 30, 2017. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2017). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Semi-Annual Performance Report*. March 31, 2017. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2016). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralist and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia: Annual Performance Report*. November 15, 2016. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF Somalia. (2015). *Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralists: Proposal Submitted to USAID East Africa*. June 2015. United Nations Children's Fund.

UN OCHA. (2004). *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

USAID. (2018). *USAID Education Policy*. November. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID. (2018). *Synthesis of Findings and Lessons Learned from USAID-funded Evaluations, Education Sector, 2013-2016*. Management Systems International. January 22, 2018. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID. (2014). *Guide to Education in Natural Disasters: How USAID Supports Education in Crises*. JBS International. January. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID. (2013). *Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs*. November. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/East Africa. (2015). *Request for Application #SOL-623-15-000004 – To support the Go to School (GTS) Initiative adopted by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)*. June 5, 2015. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (2020). *Alternative Basic Education (ABE) Programme Somalia Early Grade Reading Assessment, EGRA Study Report*, September 2020. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (2019). *ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation Scope of Work*. December 6, 2019. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (2018). *Gender Analysis*. International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. under the Somalia Program Support Services. May 22 2018. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (2017). *Somali Perception Survey, Part 1: The Emerging Federal States, Mogadishu, and Puntland*. International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. under the Somalia Program Support Services. February 14, 2017. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (2015). PIO Cooperative Agreement Number AID-623-IO-15-00001 – Alternative Basic Education Curriculum for Grades 1-8 Targeting Pastoralists and Other Out-of-School Children in Somalia. September 29, 2015. And Modifications # 1-7. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (no date). *Transition Initiatives for Stabilization Plus (TIS+) Program Evaluation*. Transition Initiative in Somalia Plus. United States Agency for International Development.

USAID/Somalia. (no date). *Transition Initiatives for Stabilization Plus (TIS+) Synthesized Findings: Findings from a 3-Year Assessment of the USAID-funded Stabilization Program in Somalia*. PowerPoint Presentation. Transition Initiative for Somalia Plus. United States Agency for International Development.

World Bank. (2019). *Somalia Economic Update, August 2019: Building Education to Boost Human Capital*. World Bank. Washington D.C. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/32347> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

World Health Organization. (2020). *The Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Strategic Response Plan for the WHO African Region, February-December 2020 (update 4 May 2020)*.

Wuilbercq, E. (2020). Ethiopia's mobile camel libraries keep children from forced labour. *Thomson Reuters Foundation*. Retrieved from <https://news.trust.org/item/20200605121805-d2dst/> on 26 June 2020.

Annex E, COVID-19 SURVEY RESULTS

USAID/SOMALIA: ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION ENDLINE EVALUATION SOMALIA COVID-19 SURVEY:

September 2020

BACKGROUND

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared a Coronavirus (named COVID-19) pandemic on March 11, 2020. The consequences of the ongoing pandemic have been widespread, and, in some countries, catastrophic. The emergency responses across the globe have included the lockdown of cities and their business and social activities for up to four months, quarantining to prevent the spread of the virus, travel restrictions, and country-specific government-issued health regulations (such as social distancing, wearing protective face covering, and hand-washing with soap or sanitizer gel). Development aid was ceased, delayed, or continued in a limited manner. Many countries have faced a sharp decline in their economies. A major concern is uncertainty: uncertainty about the extent countries and their citizens would be affected, uncertainty about the duration of the lockdown and movement restrictions, and uncertainty regarding recurring ‘spikes’ of mass or localized infections. The pandemic has affected nations and its citizens financially, socially, and psychologically.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN SOMALIA

The first COVID-19 case in Somalia was announced on March 16, 2020, and immediately the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) issued directives to mitigate the spread of the virus. The FGS suspended all international and domestic flights, closed schools, and banned public gatherings.

During a round table discussion, convened by Africa’s Voices Foundation, a UK non-profit organization, in conjunction with the Center for Humanitarian Change, to explore the theme ‘Social Stigma and COVID-19 in Somalia’ in May 2020, USAID/Somalia noted the session’s key issues under three themes: overview, impact, and overcoming the stigma.²⁰⁸ The round table discussion noted that two months after the first COVID-19 case, at May 14, 2020, there were 1,219 confirmed cases in Somalia with no deaths. By August 12, five months after the first case, the U.S. Embassy in Somalia documented 3,310 confirmed cases and 97 related deaths, with health screening procedures in place at ports of entry; a FGS-imposed night-time curfew from 8pm to 5am announced on April 15; but with no restrictions on intercity or interstate travel or commercial international flights. Incoming foreigners were required to

²⁰⁸ *Social Stigma and COVID-19 in Somalia*, email to Nairobi El Somalia, dated May 19, forwarded by the USAID/Somalia Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, Advisor, Program Office, for information to the evaluation team on the same date.

quarantine or self-isolate for 14 days after arrival in Somalia, unless evidence of a negative COVID-19 test.²⁰⁹

In comparison with African countries of similar population sizes,²¹⁰ the U.S. Embassy in Chad²¹¹ documented 1,012 cases of COVID-19 and 77 deaths, to August 31, 2020, and the U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe reported 6,559 cases of COVID-19 and 203 related deaths at September 2, 2020. The WHO reported, on August 31, 2020, that all 47 countries across Africa were affected by the Coronavirus pandemic, with 1,045,990 confirmed cumulative cases and 21,783 deaths.²¹² By global comparisons, Europe, South America, and the United States of America, were more significantly affected. As of September 1, 2020, Europe (including Britain) reported 2,230,898 cases and 181,782 deaths, South America reported 6,387,367 cases and 204,582 deaths, and the United States of America reported 5,936,572 confirmed cases and 182,162 deaths.²¹³

During the round table discussion, it was widely believed that the number of COVID-19 cases was higher than reported in Somalia, and in other African countries, due to asymptomatic cases and people who suspected that they had the virus but were not disclosing the information, fearing social stigma and discrimination. Furthermore, Somali citizens desired a traditional funeral, according to their faith, instead of the distressing no-funeral and strictly quarantined burial or body disposal in accordance with COVID-19 health regulations. The stigma associated with COVID-19 in Somalia is similar to the stigma associated with other diseases, such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Other beliefs affecting the government's ability to track the virus included: that Muslims cannot contract COVID-19; if a person wears a face covering they are thought to be a carrier of the virus; and that the virus does not enter mosques.

The result, discussed during the round table, was that Somalia lacked sufficient healthcare capacity and resources to contain the spread of COVID-19, and it lacked the capacity to trace contacts of infected persons. This indicates that people may not seek the necessary healthcare, and health practitioners and hospital staff may hide the true number of suspected COVID-19 cases due to the fear of losing clients accessing the clinic or hospital for other health-related reasons. The discussion on overcoming the COVID-19 stigma in Somalia suggested the engagement of religious leaders to inform society; that health officials clarify the risks of spreading the virus to debunk medical misinformation; a focus on mitigation measures; the Ministry of Health to continue to communicate clear messages regarding risks

²⁰⁹ U.S. Embassy in Somalia. (2020). *COVID-19 Information*. <https://so.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/>, accessed on September 2, 2020.

²¹⁰ United Nations. (2020). *2019 World Population Prospects, July 1, 2019*. List of countries by population. The population of Somalia at July 1, 2019, was estimated at 15,442,905 with the population of Chad estimated at 15,946,876 and the population of Zimbabwe estimated at 14,645,468. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_%28United_Nations%29, accessed on September 2, 2020.

²¹¹ U.S. Embassy in Chad. (2020). <https://td.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/> and the U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe. <https://zw.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information-2/>, accessed on September 2, 2020.

²¹² WHO. (2020). <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus-covid-19> and The Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Strategic Response Plan for the WHO African Region, February-December 2020 (update 4 May 2020). <https://www.afro.who.int/publications/covid-19-strategic-response-plan-who-african-region>, accessed on September 2, 2020.

²¹³ European Center for Disease Prevention and Control. (2020) Covid-19 situation update for the EU/EEA and the UK, as of 1 September 2020. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/cases-2019-ncov-eueea> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_South_America and <https://covid19.who.int/region/amro/country/us>, accessed on September 2, 2020.

in dense population zones; improved contact tracing efforts; change agents should play a crucial role in mitigating stigmatization; community radios should disseminate government information; and that the narratives of people who have recovered from the virus should be widely communicated.

COVID-19 SURVEY BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE) in Somalia followed global health advice and closed the schools in mid-March 2020, for four months, immediately after WHO's announcement of the pandemic. Consequently, on March 14, USAID and the FGS indicated that, as in all Coronavirus-affected countries, the pandemic would affect both formal and informal education, due to school closures, or teachers introducing remote (online) learning for the duration of the pandemic emergency, particularly as the situation was unprecedented with an unknown duration and uncertain implications. The schools in Somalia re-opened on August 15, 2020, while the FGS continued to monitor the implications of the pandemic.

At the same time, NORC at the University of Chicago and Integrity Global were launching the endline performance evaluation of USAID/Somalia's five-year (2015-2020) Alternative Basic Education (ABE) program.²¹⁴ The evaluation team (ET) was scheduled to begin primary data collection in Somalia in March 2020, and was working with USAID/Somalia to adapt the evaluation methodology and approach to meet Somali government, WHO, and USAID ethical and health requirements.²¹⁵ The main change in approach was to conduct interviews remotely (by telephone), and to only conduct face-to-face interviews with community beneficiaries after extensive planning, and with strict safety regulations in conjunction with the UNICEF and its sub-partners.

To maximize a general understanding of the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic on the education sector in Somalia and support current and future education programming, USAID asked the ET to include additional COVID-19-related questions (hereto referred to as "COVID-19 Survey") to the ABE evaluation.

The ET drafted six COVID-19 questions to be administered remotely (by telephone) to government representatives in the education sector and ABE teachers (after seeking their interest in participating), as well as respondents from USAID and other donors, the ABE program implementer UNICEF and its sub-partners, UN agencies, and other agencies, if available. One COVID-19 question was added to the in-person community-level KIIs and focus group discussions (FGD) with the ABE program Community Education Committee (CEC) and Child-to-Child group (CtC) members, community leaders, religious leaders, elders, parents, current ABE learners, and former ABE learners. The telephone interviews took place from May 7-July 28 and the in-person data collection took place from July 21 to August 18.

²¹⁴ The ABE program is implemented by the Public International Organization (PIO) UNICEF and its three local sub-partners: Himilo Relief and Development (HIRDA); Baidoa Regional Education Committee (BREC); and HIDIG Relief and Development Organization (HIDIG).

²¹⁵ USAID. COVID-19 Guidance for Implementing Partners. <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/resources-for-partners/COVID-19-guidance-implementing-partners>, accessed updates on July 11, 2020.

COVID-19 SURVEY AIMS

The goal was to take advantage of the ongoing data collection effort for the ABE activity to gather information from ABE stakeholders and beneficiaries, while the pandemic was affecting the nation. The questions were intended to provide data on the effects of COVID-19 on the education sector in Somalia, especially for education officials and teachers. The additional question added to the in-person data collection was intended to gain insights into the current situation in the field in remote areas of Somalia, and the opinions and reactions of direct ABE beneficiaries within their communities on COVID-19 and education; i.e., what they knew, whether the disease was impacting their location, and the implications of the government and WHO health restrictions and guidelines for mitigating the spread of the disease.

COVID-19 SURVEY QUESTIONS

The final approved COVID-19 questions included the following:

Table 1: COVID-19 Questions to Government and Teachers

GOVERNMENT & AGENCIES (REMOTE) QUESTIONS	TEACHERS (REMOTE) QUESTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Could you please describe the government’s response to COVID-19 in the education sector? 2. What is the expectation for teachers, learners, parents during COVID-19 school closures (i.e., is learning continuing?) 3. What specific and unique challenges for distance learning do you foresee for pastoralist and agro-pastoralist and/or IDP populations? <i>(in introduction note that this is the population targeted by ABE so clear why highlighting this during the questionnaire)</i> 4. What challenges do you foresee for the re-opening of formal and non-formal schools? 5. What support will be needed for formal and non-formal learning centers to return to full operations when schools re-open in August 2020 or even later? 6. How will this pandemic affect education system programming in the next school year with regard to schedule, terms, holidays, and transition arrangements? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What type of guidance was given to teachers during COVID-19 school closures to support student’s continued learning at home? 2. How have teachers (and students) responded to this pandemic – was it taken seriously or not? How are they adjusting to the current situation during closure – are students still learning at some level? If yes, how? 3. How has the Coronavirus pandemic affected you personally? Do you intend to return to school when they re-open? 4. What specific and unique challenges for distance learning have you seen for ABE’s target population (pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, IDP)? 5. How do you think your teaching will change and adapt to this new education crisis – are you planning to anything different to help learners recover the time they lost? 6. Have you taken on new roles or responsibilities as part of the COVID-19 response? (e.g., teachers as front-line health workers, or assisted with schools as quarantines)?
<p>COMMUNITY QUESTION (FACE-TO-FACE DURING ABE PROGRAM EVALUATION KIIs & FGDs)</p>	
<p>Do you know whether there have been any COVID-19 cases in this community? (Cases are different from deaths; some people may be asymptomatic; some may have symptoms & self-quarantine for the required time.</p>	

Source: Integrity Global ABE Evaluation Team, May 17, 2020. Note: Community = CEC members; CtC members; religious leaders; community leaders & members; elders; parents; current ABE learners (pastoralists; agro-pastoralists; out-of-school urban & rural students; older student; IDPs; and former ABE learners (drop-outs, learners in formal schools, etc.).

COVID-19 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The ET administered the COVID-19 mini-survey to a total of 146 people, which included 27 key informants by telephone or online: representative of the government in the education sector, USAID, donors, U.N. and other agencies, and ABE teachers (Table 2). During the ABE program evaluation telephone interviews, the ET asked interviewees if they wanted to participate in a COVID-19 survey of six questions, and their preferred format: a separate 30-minute telephone call or through a secure online survey platform KoBoToolbox. From a list of 11 potential government personnel, six were willing to participate.

Table 2: COVID-19 Survey Participants, by Category

CATEGORY	COVID-19 QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANTS
PHONE	Government, head teachers, & teachers (6 questions) – by telephone	21
ONLINE	Donors, agencies, implementing organizations (6 questions) – KoBoToolbox	6
COMMUNITY ABE program evaluation community KII & FGD	KII - Students, parents, elders, CEC members, CtC members, religious leaders and other community leaders (one question)	31
	FGD - Students, parents, elders, CEC members, CtC members, religious leaders and other community leaders (one question)	88
TOTAL		146

Note: Current ABE learners included pastoralists; agro-pastoralists; out-of-school urban and rural learners; internally displaced persons – IDPs; and older learners). Former ABE learners included learners in formal school, drop-out, etc. as per the current ABE learner categories.

Additionally, six other stakeholders (USAID, UNICEF, and ABE program implementing staff) responded through KoBoToolbox. To avoid interview fatigue, the ET did not select the same teachers involved in the ABE program evaluation. Instead, the ET randomly selected 15 different teachers from the USAID-provided list of 153 ABE teachers, and asked them the six COVID-19 survey questions by telephone.

For community in-person interviews (with social distancing and COVID-19 health, safety, and ethics protocols), the ET formulated one COVID-19 question to ask at the end of the ABE evaluation KIIs and FGDs. There were 31 community KII participants: 10 from Bakool, 10 from Bay, and 11 from Gedo. There were 88 participants from 15 ABE evaluation FGDs in Bay, Bakool, and Gedo. Collectively, there were 119 community participants who were asked one COVID-19 question (Table 2).

COVID-19 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

When the ET conducted telephone interviews for the ABE program evaluation in May 2020, the ET also asked interviewees whether they were willing to answer additional questions about COVID-19 and education in Somalia. The ET had been advised by USAID that the response rate for additional questions

would be low for government officials and agency staff, but many of the other interviewees indicated that they were too busy to schedule another interview as well. To increase the response rate, the ET developed a secure online KoBoToolbox anonymous survey with the six COVID-19 questions, which enabled six people to participate in the COVID-19 survey that would not have otherwise chosen to participate. The response rate for teachers was 100 percent because the ET selected only teachers who were willing to participate until the quota of 15 was reached. At the community-level, all 31 KII participants (100 percent) answered the one COVID-19 question, whereas 77 out of the 88 FGD participants (88 percent) answered (due to the group situation).

COVID-19 SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The COVID-19 survey was conducted in two parts: (1) 6 questions for 12 stakeholders and 15 teachers (< 40 percent female) through phone interviews, and (2) one question for 119 community members (47 percent female) through in-person KIIs and FGDs (Tables 3a and 3b).

Table 3a: COVID-19 Participants – 6 Questions, by Category

SIX COVID-19 QUESTIONS (PHONE AND ONLINE)				
CATEGORY	PHONE KII		ONLINE (KoBo)	TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	ANONYMOUS	
Government	6	0	0	6
Head Teachers and Teachers	10	5	0	15
Other Agencies & Donors (not USAID)	0	0	3	3
Implementer (UNICEF) & Sub-Partners	0	0	3	3
TOTAL	16 (59%)	5 (19%)	6 (22%)	27

Table 3b: COVID-19 Participants – 1 Question, by Region

ONE COVID-19 QUESTION (IN-PERSON)							
REGION	KII		FGD		TOTAL		
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Bakool	8	2	15	15	23	17	40
Bay	7	3	11	19	18	22	40
Gedo	10	1	12	16	22	17	39
	25 (81%)	6 (19%)	38 (43%)	50 (57%)	63 (53%)	56 (47%)	119
TOTAL	31 (26%)		88 (74%)		119		

COVID-19 SURVEY FINDINGS

COVID-19 SURVEY FINDINGS: GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

The following results represent telephone interviews and online survey responses from 12 government, donor, agency, and implementing staff involved in the USAID ABE program and the Somali education sector. The interviews were conducted in July 2020, four months after the first case of COVID-19 in Somalia and the WHO declaration of a global virus pandemic.

QUESTION 1: Please describe the government's response to COVID-19 in the education sector.

The immediate closure of all schools in mid-March, and the recent government announcement of the resumption of schooling from August 15, 2020, has directly affected the education sector in Somalia.

Government Response: A surveyed education official explained the government's three-pronged plan during school closures: (1) current planning for distance learning content, (2) community awareness campaigns to promote continued learning at home, and (3) future planning for re-opening of schools.

At the local level, government officials began the FGS response by sensitizing local authorities, teachers, and communities on the COVID-19 pandemic and then beginning maintenance and minor repairs to school infrastructure.

Distance Learning: A federal education ministry official said that the ministry 'will start airing lessons on the radio' and planned to add online methods of teaching and learning, but 'only a handful of people can access the internet and electronics.' He added that 'the Ministry printed 1,100,000 textbooks and distributed them to schools' for home teaching, and small groups of rural students could gather in an open-air setting for lessons, with masks and virus preventative measures. 'These are the initiatives we will be looking at to ensure that students return to schools in a safe manner.'

Awareness Campaigns: A government awareness campaign did commence with the goal of re-assuring the education sector that the pandemic would, at some stage, end: 'we have talked to teachers, the money will come, the government is there for them, the donors are there for them, and we feel strong for them, and we told them good things will come, and you should prepare to come back to school for the fifteenth of August 2020 god willing ... for a safe re-opening.' Simultaneously, the Ministry of Education, with the Health Ministry, conducted community awareness campaigns.

Local governments have lost funding typically gained from taxes, which has limited funding for awareness campaigns and the distribution of health equipment. However, a surveyed government official from Bay region confirmed the instigation of training and media campaigns.

Personal protective equipment: The government provided face masks, because 'we don't know how it's going to be when children come back together.' For example, the regional education department in Gedo provided 'reachable areas' such as Dolo, Kismayo, and Belet Hawa, with washing facilities, thermometers to check temperatures, masks, and gloves.

Non-government respondents indicated that the government's response was 'timely and it introduced all COVID-19 prevention measures including social distancing, closure of schools, and self-quarantine.'

Economic Effects: An education official said that the government ceased school subsidies to pay non-teaching staff, which meant that not only are teachers and learners not at school, but some security guards and cleaners have lost their jobs. In Gedo region, a government official said that more than 1,030 teachers will not be paid for the four months of school closures.

QUESTION 2: What is the expectation for teachers, learners, parents during COVID-19 school closures (i.e., learning continuing)?

Donors and agency staff in Somalia were universal in their response to expectations: continuation of teacher incentives and continuation of student learning. They supported the three directives of the education ministry: community awareness on COVID-19, support for distance learning, and preparation for safe re-opening of schools. Donors currently supporting formal schools would continue supporting the government's distance learning radio and television programs, as well as remedial classes. They confirmed that the ministry had already hired professional subject-level teachers to record lessons for the remaining Grade 8 primary and Form 4 secondary formal education syllabus, and aired them on television and radio, and also via a mobile app. Textbooks have been issued in order for students to continue schooling at home. Government officials had the expectation that Grade 8 formal school children who were given textbooks could assist their younger siblings at home. Non-formal ABE Centers would remain closed, but the MoECHE and donors were expected to continue teacher incentives.

USAID's ABE Centers (the temporary learning spaces) closed and followed government instructions. The closures occurred about two months before the normal academic year vacation, and the government requested that, as for government formal schools and non-formal classes, head teachers should consider the learners' performances as per the last exams they did.' For ABE teachers, distance learning was an expectation only for prolonged school closures and in the interim, they would try to provide the government radio programs, as well as telephone calls. Parents and communities in rural areas had the expectation that when COVID-19 cases declined, schools would re-open as normal.

QUESTION 3: What specific and unique challenges for distance learning do you foresee for pastoralist and agro-pastoralist and/or IDP populations?

Access:

- **Textbooks/Supplies:** Surveyed government officials indicated that even for formal schools the distribution of textbooks for home learning was a challenge: 'we have purchased a high number ... but these were insufficient, like one book for two children in a family.'
- **Lessons/Radio Programs:** When the federal government aired radio programs for Grade 8 and Form 4, the education curriculum across States was expected to be uniform, but the regional education officials said that for rural areas they were not able to receive the radio and television programs: 'Puntland had the radio stations, but we [Jubaland] didn't ... education was going on but we were different from the other States ... we deployed 55 teachers in different districts to go to homes and do home teaching ... like a pilot program.'" ABE program implementers agreed that the inability of the radio programs to reach rural areas would be a challenge. They added that they believed the quality of the content may be lacking and could pose additional challenges if available.

- **Electricity:** For pastoralist and agro-pastoralist learners, government officials said ‘there are great challenges’ due to the lack of electricity, particularly for television programs. If possible, schools could consider having one DVD screen powered by solar energy for a group of children. They expected that radio would ‘play a great role.’ However, program implementers added that if COVID-19 infections increase, parents may be concerned about their children participating in any “mass gathering.”
- **Instruction and Educational Support/Assistance:** Almost all participants thought that distance education was reasonable for university students, but as learners became younger and more marginalized, participants espoused a greater need for teacher-child interaction and support, as well as support for rural teachers and parents, predominantly through small group teaching and learning. The ABE program implementers thought that distance learning was a good alternative during prolonged school closures, but admitted that adequate parental support would be a challenge.

Resources/Economy: Almost all of the surveyed participants said that the financial situation, not only for teachers, but also families, particularly those already marginalized, would be a huge challenge to distance learning. If families searched wider for work, the movement of families would disrupt their children’s education. Families were already leaving, and for those that remained, their children were looking for ways to generate income, ‘like child labor in the community, like doing housemaid work for girls ... boys were doing shoeshine in the markets.’ As one government official said, ‘there will be dropouts, children not going to school for four to five months; bringing them back will be a big challenge.’

QUESTION 4: What challenges do you foresee for the re-opening of formal and non-formal schools?

Survey respondents thought that the challenges for the re-opening of formal and non-formal schools would be the amount of educational content that needs to be covered to restore the months of lost learning during school closures, as well as the loss of teachers, and lack of student attendance. They thought that due to some students continuing their learning at home, while others didn’t, it would be difficult for teachers to keep some students motivated while the others caught up. The USAID ABE implementing staff thought that all ABE Centers would re-open and expected more than 90 percent of teachers to return to work, indicating that the challenges are likely to be limited and the program is experienced in being flexible and adaptable.

QUESTION 5: What support will be needed for formal and non-formal learning centers to return to full operations when schools re-open in August 2020 or even later?

Government officials agreed that formal and non-formal learning centers will need a ‘massive’ awareness campaign to return schools to full operability when they re-open. They expected that a one-month campaign was needed to stress the importance of returning to safe schools, information on mitigating COVID-19, re-arranging classrooms to ensure social distancing, and improving washing and hygiene facilities. For the ABE Centers to return to full operations, the USAID ABE implementing staff suggested support for social mobilization and awareness campaigns to return learners to safe schools, and the provision of the required equipment that meets the FGS guidance.

QUESTION 6: How will this pandemic affect education system programming in the next school year with regard to schedule, terms, holidays, and transition arrangements?

Donors and government officials agreed that the pandemic has been ‘disruptive’ to children’s education, and they were concerned about the stigmatization of students exposed to the virus.

Government officials indicated the pandemic has forced the education sector to re-think teaching and learning methodologies to be more flexible and resilient to unexpected situations. One government official said formal schools needed to be less congested, and possibly the ‘need to have more semi-permanent classrooms’ and more hygiene in terms of water, latrines, and washing facilities. One official was concerned about the USAID ABE program finishing: ‘we don’t want to have a gap; if there is a gap in support, these 6,000 children [in his State] will not be found again to bring them back to school.’ Government respondents stressed that the COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected all sectors across Somalia, not only the education sector, ‘such as economic opportunities, in terms of farm products and animal markets ... business has been low which meant that the entire community has low income.’

The USAID ABE implementing staff indicated that the capacity of their targeted communities were less resilient than formal school communities during the school closures due to their remoteness, lack of reliable internet and connectivity, and the potential for learners to drop out of education. However, once schools re-opened, they expected that the ABE target communities would be more resilient than others due to their four-year experience in developing resilience to other external factors, such as conflict and natural disasters that included flooding and drought. They will be more able to be flexible in their teaching and learning methodologies than formal schools. Donor and other agency staff confirmed that ‘the flexible nature of ABE will help in the rebound.’

COVID-19 SURVEY FINDINGS: COMMUNITY RESPONSES

Community participants in individual key informant interviews (31 individuals) or in focus group discussions of five participants (totaling 88 individuals) were asked one COVID-19 question during the first three weeks of August 2020, at the end of evaluation questions on the USAID Alternative Basic Education program.

QUESTION: Do you know whether there have been any COVID-19 cases in this community?

The majority of community participants (42 percent) maintained that there were no cases of COVID-19 in their community, with 18 percent indicating that there were cases, although 40 percent of participants were not sure or did not answer the question. Regionally, 63 percent of Bakool participants and 35 percent of Bay participants said there were no cases of COVID-19 in their area. Gedo participants were equally split with 28 percent saying there were no cases and 28 percent saying there were cases in their area (Table 4).

The population of Bakool, Bay and Gedo regions are 367,226, 792,182, and 508,405 respectively. Of the three regions, the population in Gedo is more urbanized (22 percent), compared with Bakool (17 percent) and Bay (12 percent).²¹⁶ Therefore, rural areas reported fewer cases of COVID-19 which is consistent with the global data that COVID-19 impacts urban areas more than rural areas (due to population density and proximity). All students in KIs and FGDs indicated that they did not know

²¹⁶ UNFPA Population Estimation Survey, 2014, cited in FGS. (2017). *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education, pp. 7-8.

whether there were cases in their region; most acknowledging that they knew what the virus was due to community campaigns (Table 4).

Table 4: COVID-19 Known Cases, by Region

DO YOU KNOW IF THERE HAVE BEEN ANY COVID-19 CASES IN THIS COMMUNITY?									
REGION KNOWN CASES OF COVID-19 (FGD PARTICIPANTS)									
	YES		NO		DON'T KNOW		NO ANSWER		TOTAL
Bakool	1	3%	22	73%	4	13%	3	10%	30
Bay	5	17%	12	40%	9	30%	4	13%	30
Gedo	9	32%	7	25%	8	29%	4	14%	28
TOTAL	15	17%	41	47%	21	24%	11	12%	88
REGION KNOWN CASES OF COVID-19 (KII PARTICIPANTS)									
	YES		NO		DON'T KNOW		NO ANSWER		TOTAL
Bakool	2	20%	3	30%	5	50%	0	0%	10
Bay	3	30%	2	20%	5	50%	0	0%	10
Gedo	2	18%	4	36%	5	46%	0	0%	11
TOTAL	7	23%	9	29%	15	48%	0	0%	31
REGION KNOWN CASES OF COVID-19 (ALL PARTICIPANTS)									
	YES		NO		DON'T KNOW		NO ANSWER		TOTAL
Bakool	3	7%	25	63%	9	23%	3	7%	40
Bay	8	20%	14	35%	14	35%	4	10%	40
Gedo	11	28%	11	28%	13	33%	4	11%	39
TOTAL	22	18%	50	42%	36	30%	11	10%	119

Although the same question – do you know whether there have been any COVID-19 cases in this community? – was asked in KIIs and FGDs, the 31 KII participants predominantly gave short ‘yes’ / ‘no’ / ‘I don’t know’ answers, whereas the 88 FGD participants regarded it as a ‘guiding question’ and provided unprompted additional information. Their comments are provided below.

In Gedo region, community participants in the mini-survey confirmed that Dolo, Luuq, Bardheere, and the capital Garbaharey had cases of COVID-19, with some deaths (‘more than 10’ in Garbaharey), but they were unsure of the exact statistics. They had seen more activity in their local hospital than usual,

such as testing, and ‘a lot of medical workers coming here bringing in medicine and protective gears like these ones’ (indicating the protective items supplied by the evaluation team). However, three people in FGDs said that, although there were deaths in their region, they did not know whether the deaths were from COVID-19 or from influenza. They confirmed that COVID-19 awareness campaigns were highly visible and audible, and people were social distancing and were not holding large events: ‘not going to the mosque ‘has been the hardest thing.’ Seven participants in Gedo had ‘not heard of any cases’ of COVID-19, but no one expressed absolute certainty that there were no cases. Eight people did not know, although they had heard ‘rumors.’

In Bay region, community participants only mentioned cases in the capital Baidoa, and two people in the same FGD said, ‘more than a hundred I believe,’ but no one had heard of any deaths. One person thought that there were more cases than reported because people were not going to hospital for tests: ‘there are many people in my family that believe they have it, but no one is willing to go to hospital to get checked.’ Another person from Baidoa said she thought COVID-19 was ‘scary and dangerous.’

Of the 14 people who indicated that there were no cases of COVID-19 in their community, five were certain of it. A person in Baidoa added, ‘I do not even know why you are making us wear these masks, because there is no COVID here. We have told you there are no cases here.’ The remaining nine hadn’t heard of any cases. One person said that ‘to be certain’ that there were cases, they ‘needed the right testing kits’ and added that people in the community were ‘adhering to the instructions presented by the government, like not holding big family gatherings.’ Nine people, all from Baidoa, did not know whether there were cases in their area, with four of them adding that they do not know what COVID-19 is.

In Bakool region, only three people said that ‘maybe’ there were some cases of COVID-19. Twenty-five people (63 percent) said there were no cases in their region, with four being definite, while the remaining 21 did not think there were any cases. A person in El Barde had heard about COVID-19 ‘through the radio and phone calls through Hormuud.’ Hormuud Telecom, a Mogadishu company established in 2002, was transmitting community SMS texts to disseminate information about the disease. However, another person from El Barde said, ‘I do not think the virus is real. This is not something that our community has dealt with.’ Four participants did not know whether there were cases. A person from Rab Dhuure said that they didn’t have ‘the right information’ about a person’s sickness to know whether the illness was COVID-related, although one person from El Barde said that it was not improbable: ‘The virus has an opportunity to be in our community since we are usually prone to a lot of diseases.’

Across the regions, awareness of COVID-19 was high due to wide-spread public awareness campaigns, with only four people from Baidoa, the capital of Bay region, admitting that they had no knowledge of it. Their main two methods of avoiding the disease were social distancing and not holding mass gatherings. Only one person of the 119 participants said that the COVID-19 pandemic was scary. The evaluation team also confirmed that people interviewed in the communities were not expressing anxiety or fear.

COVID-19 SURVEY FINDINGS: TEACHER RESPONSES

The following results represent telephone interview responses from 15 randomly-selected head teachers and teachers from the USAID ABE program, five from each of Bay, Bakool, and Gedo regions. A third were female. The interviews were conducted in July 2020, before the re-opening of schools on August 18, 2020.

QUESTION 1: What type of guidance was given to teachers during COVID-19 school closures to support student’s continued learning at home?

Given that the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic is uncertain, four surveyed teachers from Gedo region said that the MoECHE and UNICEF’s sub-partners guided teachers to support their students throughout the school closures primarily in two ways: (1) regular telephone calls to students to check their learning situation and wellbeing, and (2) to encourage students to revisit their previous lessons. The remaining 11 (73 percent) teachers surveyed said that there was no specific educational guidance on teaching, except to close the school, and that the guidance was mainly health-related. Although the MoECHE recommended ‘distance learning’ (online or by Smartphone) for formal schools, and where possible for non-formal schools, community leaders expected regional education officers and ABE program’s regional sub-partners to provide local guidance.

A surveyed head teacher from Gedo region said that distance learning ‘has no benefit to the ABE program, and we ... stopped it and changed it to group learnings.’ Two other teachers from Bay region said that community elders and local authorities provided guidance: ‘We changed the mobile phone teachings to small group teachings to the learners while giving consideration to social distancing ... the guidance was given to us by BREC office [ABE sub-partner] and parents supported it, and we are still doing small group teaching, dividing the children into groups of five.’ However, in Dinsoor in Bay region, a teacher said there was no government support for the children ‘even for home teaching’ but parents ‘or a hired private teacher’ conducted home teaching ‘since students have books.’

QUESTION 2: How have teachers (and students) responded to this pandemic – was it taken seriously or not? How are they adjusting to the current situation during closure – are students still learning at some level? If yes, how?

Fourteen of the fifteen surveyed teachers (93 percent) were unequivocal that the Somali government, communities, teachers, and students were taking the COVID-19 pandemic seriously. They felt that government followed WHO’s advice, and people followed the government guidelines, which included lockdown, travel restrictions, school closures, and people staying home to limit contact with other people. In Gedo region, teachers distributed soap as well as COVID-19 awareness information in conjunction with the Ministry of Health officials. In Dinsoor in Bay region, a teacher said that the community was taking it seriously by washing hands with water and soap, using masks and gloves, and heeding the advice broadcast on radio and mobile phones. The only teacher, from Bakool region, who thought that COVID-19 was not being taken seriously said, ‘I think no, because the students and the teachers received the information one time’ and promptly took the opposite point of view by adding that ‘students and teachers responded because they have closed the school where a lot of the population has access to it.’

QUESTION 3: How has the Coronavirus pandemic affected you personally? Do you intend to return to school when they re-open?

All fifteen surveyed teachers said that, without hesitation, they would return to school when it re-opened. The teachers responded that they were affected physically, socially, emotionally, professionally, and financially by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 5: COVID-19 Survey Teachers, by How they were Affected Personally

NUMBER OF TEACHERS AFFECTED BY COVID-19			
CATEGORY	NO	%	RESPONSES
Financially	7	47%	All regions: salaries were suspended during school closures; difficulty paying bills
Professionally	3	20%	Bay & Bakool regions: missed teaching others or seeing children not in school
Emotionally	2	13%	Gedo region: tested positive for COVID-19 which was 'stressful' and 'very traumatic'
Socially	2	13%	Gedo region: missed 'socializing with other teachers and colleagues'
Physically	1	7%	Gedo region: gained weight which affected creativity and movement
TOTAL	15	100%	

Half of the teachers (47%), from all regions, said that they were affected financially because their salaries were suspended when the schools closed, and they were having difficulty paying their bills. Two teachers from Gedo region were affected emotionally: one tested positive and found it 'stressful' and another had a family member who tested positive, which was 'very traumatic' until their recovery. Two teachers said they were affected socially; two were affected professionally; and one was affected physically (Table 5).

QUESTION 4: What specific and unique challenges for distance learning have you seen for ABE's target population (pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, IDP)?

All fifteen surveyed ABE teachers said that distance learning had not occurred in the ABE program throughout the school closures. They said distance learning methods through television, internet, or smartphone did not occur. One teacher said, 'Almost all of the distance learning methods are not accessible for the pastoralist community.' In Bay, a teacher said, 'we did our level best to use mobile phones but ... the majority of the families do not have phones at home. In Bakool, a teacher said, 'we tried, but it was impossible.' The challenge for teachers was the poor mobile telephone network, with the network often inoperable for two to three days at a time. Even when the network was functioning, three teachers said that the learners did not understand the content due to their age, with younger learners needing practical, face-to-face time with teachers 'with photos, displays and demonstrations.'

Two Gedo teachers said that the community initiated the provision of lessons in livestock and camel rearing to the children instead of the ABE curriculum during lockdown, and in Dinsoor in Bay region, 'some families went back to their villages near to town.' Teachers were concerned that their efforts to enroll and retain learners in the ABE program would be severely eroded because parents might encourage their children to continue livestock rearing instead of returning to the ABE program.

QUESTION 5: How do you think your teaching will change and adapt to this new education crisis – are you planning to do anything different to help learners recover the time they lost?

Teachers are considering a range of options so that ABE learners can catch-up educational time lost during school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When schools re-open, the options include

additional hours per day, remedial lessons, learners attending two school shifts for a period of time, rescheduling the timetable, hiring additional teachers, and/or re-opening schools before the official government notification. The responses differed in each region.

In the Gedo region, all ABE teachers said that, to recover the learners’ lost educational time due to school closures, they would consider adding ‘a few’ extra hours each day to the timetable, with parental consent. Two teachers planned to support learners with lesson revisions.

In the Bakool region, three teachers are considering the option to enable learners to attend both school shifts (morning and afternoon) to recover their lost educational time. One teacher is planning remedial classes, and another teacher is planning, in the meantime, to distribute textbooks to children at home so that they can continue some reading.

In the Bay region, teachers were more cautious about providing potential strategies for recovering lost learning time. The teachers expected changes would be made, and three said that the decision ‘needed planning’ with the ABE sub-partners and parents. Parents were already requesting schools to re-open because ‘Corona is out and nothing will happen.’ One teacher made suggestions, such as changing the timetable, teaching a subject twice a day, increasing the duration of school hours per day, offering remedial classes, or even hiring additional teachers.

QUESTION 6: Have you taken on new roles or responsibilities as part of the COVID-19 response? (e.g., teachers as front-line health workers, or assisted with schools as quarantines)?

Two thirds of teachers (67%), from all regions, had taken on, or were assigned, new responsibilities, primarily related to community awareness. Five teachers, all from Gedo region, indicated that they were assigned to regularly visit a specified number of parents’ homes (not entering) to enquire about their health in order to assist and to prevent the spread of the virus. Four teachers said that their new role was to contribute to community awareness with assistance from the government. In addition, one teacher said that some schools were designated as quarantine centers, but they had not been used for that purpose to date. A head teacher gave one teacher some items to distribute to the community, such as soap, but they were unaware of who paid for the materials. One teacher in the Bay region was assigned to assist health workers in a community-level chlorination campaign (Table 6).

Table 6: COVID-19 Survey Teachers, by New Roles and Responsibilities

NUMBER OF TEACHERS ASSUMING NEW RESPONSIBILITIES			
	NO	%	RESPONSES
No	5	33%	‘No, I have no new roles’
Yes	10	67%	Community awareness plus additional roles
TOTAL	15	100%	
Monitoring health	5		Gedo region: ‘to reach a certain number of learners/parents to monitor COVID-19 effects on their health; ‘to be a frontline health worker if I found any cases’

Community awareness & distribution	4		All regions: 'prevention together with signs & symptoms of the disease'; 'awareness on gloves & masks for prevention ... & hand-washing & general hygiene'; 'the head teacher gave me items to distribute, such as soap'
Chlorination & awareness	1		Bakool region: 'we are doing chlorination with the help of health workers, supported by businesses and community elders'
TOTAL	10	67%	

CONCLUSION

Universally, participants said that the ABE program was not resilient during the school closures, primarily due to the lack of effective distance learning tools and approaches for young learners and the challenges of accessing the pastoralist population remotely, but that the ABE program would be more resilient than formal schools in the 'rebound' when schools re-opened because it had a range of flexible options to enable it to quickly adapt and to 'catch up' lost schooling time. Government officials in particular expressed the view that flexible learning and the use of temporary learning spaces were advantageous in catching students up on education lost during the four months of school closures. However, the ABE program's wider community (implementers, teachers, parents, and community members) were concerned about the sustainability of their last four years of work enrolling and retaining learners. Primary concerns are that learners may not return to school and will instead return to livestock raising or seek income elsewhere to recover lost family incomes. For the ABE Centers to return to full operations, the USAID ABE implementing staff suggested support for social mobilization and awareness campaigns to return learners to safe schools, and the provision of the required personal protective equipment that meets the FGS guidance.

Annex F, ADDITIONAL STATISTICAL TABLES

Table: Overall Community Perceptions of the ABE Program

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE ABE PROGRAM									
	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE		MIXED, NOW +VE		NO ANSWER		TOTAL
Teachers (Remote)	15	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	15
Female Teachers (FGD)	12	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	12
Parents (FGD & KII)	24	96%	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	25
Community Members (FGD & KII)	19	95%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	20
CEC & CtC Members (KII)	8	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	8
Community Leaders (KII)	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3
Religious Leaders (KII)	6	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	6
ABE Learners (FGD & KII)	25	93%	0	0%	2	7%	0	0%	27
Former ABE Learners (FGD)	17	94%	0	0%	1	6%	0	0%	18
Government (Remote)	10	91%	1	9%	0	0%	0	0%	11
TOTAL	139	96%	1	1%	3	2%	2	1%	145

Source: KII and FGDs, July to August 2020. The figures correspond to the total number of people interviewed (Table 9).

Annex G, DISCLOSURE CONFLICTS OF INTERES

Name	MS. MARTINA NICOLLS
Title	
Organization	
Evaluation Position?	Team Leader
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	24 JUNE 2020

Name	MS. JELENA SAVIC
Title	
Organization	
Evaluation Position?	Team Member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes No
<p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	<i>Jelena Savic</i>
Date	1/2020

Name	MS. SAADIA ALI
Title	
Organization	
Evaluation Position?	Team Member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	<i>Saadia Ali</i>
Date	1/2020

Annex H, GLOSSARY

ABE CENTER

An Alternative Basic Education (ABE) Center is a non-formal school, building, or space where the ABE program takes place. It is referred to as a ‘temporary learning space’ (TLS), often containing two classrooms. The term ‘ABE Center’ is synonymous with TLS.

ALTERNATIVE BASIC EDUCATION

Alternative Basic Education is an educational approach to teaching and learning under the Directorate of Non-Formal Education (NFE) of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE) – generally referred to as the Ministry of Education in this document. The NFE directorate explores various alternative educational interventions to return out-of-school children to formal schooling, or to address the needs of children who may not be able to enroll in formal schooling (such as internally displaced persons, older aged children etc.). The USAID-funded ABE program is only one alternative educational program that fits under the directorate of NFE. Hence, this evaluation makes every attempt to differentiate between general alternative educational programs under the government and this specific USAID-funded alternative basic education (ABE) program in terms of documentation and the responses of key informants (beneficiaries and stakeholders).

BENEFICIARIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

A beneficiary is a direct recipient of the ABE program support and services. A stakeholder may be a person, group, or organization that has an interest in the ABE program, and may affect or be affected by the program’s purposes, objectives, or activities. The evaluation team also conducted interviews with former ABE learners, learners who dropped out of ABE classes, transferred to a formal school, or left the location etc.

SUB-GROUPS

Learners / Students	Agro-pastoralist; pastoralist; internally displaced persons (IDP); urban; other out-of-school children (OOSC) aged 6-14; and older students aged 15-19
Teachers	Head Teachers; Teachers
Community	Community Education Committee (CEC) members; Child-to-Child group (CtC) members; religious leaders; community leaders and members; elders; parents
Government	Non-Formal Education (NFE) directorate; Ministers of Education; mayors; Regional Education Officers (REO); District Education Officers (DEO); education sector specialists in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Jubaland State, and South West State (SWS); Regional Security Forces (RSF)
Implementer & Sub-Partners	Implementer: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

Sub-partners: Baidoa Regional Education Committee (BREC); HIDIG Relief and Development Organization (HIDIG); Himilo Relief and Development Association (HIRDA); MEDIA INK; New Horizon

Other Agencies	Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA); Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE); CONCERN Worldwide; Somalia Program Support Services (SPSS); Sharjah Charity International (SCI); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); Adam Smith International (ASI); Norwegian Church Aid (NCA); Creative Associates International (CAI)
UN Agencies	United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR); International Organization for Migration (IOM); World Food Programme (WFP); UNICEF Education Cluster; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF); Le Center Râzî d'Enseignement et de Formation (CREF)
Donors	United States Agency for International Development (USAID); German Development Bank (KfW); World Bank (WB); European Union/European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (EU/ECHO); Department for International Development (DFID); Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

CYCLE OF LEARNING

A cycle of learning, or cycle of education, is defined by UNICEF as the successful progression in the ABE accelerated-format from enrollment in Level 1 to completion of Level 4. (Source: USAID. 2015. *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 12) It is also known in formal schools as the survival rate, defined by UNESCO as 'Percentage of a cohort of students enrolled in the first grade of a given level or cycle of education in a given school year who are expected to reach a given grade, regardless of repetition.' (Source: UNESCO. *Survival rate by grade*. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term>)

DROP-OUTS

Drop-Outs refers to learners who were registered in an ABE class and attended for a period of time, however, did not return to schooling or did not finish the level in which they were enrolled (i.e., they left school before finishing the grade or year level). The ABE evaluation selected a small number of drop-outs (former ABE students), using a list of names provided by USAID, to interview to determine their views of the ABE program.

EDUCATION HUB

An education hub, defined by UNICEF for the ABE program, is 'a combination of temporary learning spaces and mobile schools.' (Source: USAID. 2015. *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 17)

FLEXIBLE APPROACHES

'Flexible approaches,' 'flexible modalities' and 'flexible educational opportunities' are not specifically defined in UNICEF's ABE documentation. Flexible learning occurs in situations when the formal state curriculum is not currently a part of the basic educational system, and/or the method of alternative

curriculum delivery is not in a traditional classroom setting. In Somalia, the Directorate of Non-Formal Education under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education has approved the specialized ABE curriculum. Examples of flexible modalities provided in the ABE program include non-formal educational methods of teaching and learning such as a condensed (accelerated) curriculum and mobile libraries (donkey carts). This evaluation uses the following definition of flexible teaching and learning:

Flexible learning environments imply that the school adapts the use of resources such as staff, space, and time to best support different structures, instructional strategies, and curricular approaches that allow a child, or cohort of children, to have access to what they need to improve their learning when they need it.

(Sources: Adapted from article, Lauren Mehrbach & Chris Beingsner. 2018. 'Why Flexible Learning Environments?' *Getting Smart*. August 8, 2018; and Somalia Accelerated Education Working Group's 10 Principles,

https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/12314/pdf/336_aewg_accelerated_education_10_principles-screen.pdf)

LEARNER VS STUDENT

This evaluation uses the term 'learner' for non-formal educational programs such as the ABE program. The term 'student' is used for formal government primary and secondary schooling. However, there are exceptions for common terminology such as student-teacher ratios, student-textbook ratios, student enrollment, and out-of-school students (OOS), and where an original text or data source uses a specific term.

MIGRATION

Migration is defined by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as 'a process of moving, either across an international border, or within a state. It encompasses any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition, or causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people and economic migration.' It can also refer to 'labor migration' which is the movement of persons from their home state to another state for the purpose of employment (IOM, 2004, <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>). This evaluation uses the IOM definition of migration in reference to migration routes.

MOBILE LIBRARY

A mobile library is usually a camel or donkey cart with learning materials and equipment, and with a teacher that accompanies the cart or donkey.

MOBILE SCHOOL

A mobile school (a planned but not implemented activity in the ABE program) is a teacher that lives within a migrating community and accompanies the community during migration. (Source: USAID. 2015. *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 18)

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

ABE's non-formal education (NFE) approach refers to a range of interventions including the delivery of the formal government curriculum condensed and modified into a specialized ABE curriculum implemented through flexible approaches. Therefore, ABE program interventions are a combination of approaches which are tailored to meet the needs of the communities targeted. They can include flexible calendars and timetables, temporary learning spaces along migration paths, mobile libraries using donkey carts to transport education kits, and/or complementary radio educational programs. (Source: USAID. 2019. *Scope of Work ABE UNICEF Endline Evaluation*, p. 4)

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN

A social mobilization campaign is designed to spread information and can include community consultations, dialogue meetings, door-to-door campaigns, or short text messages. The term is interchangeable with public awareness campaigns, community awareness campaigns, or media campaigns. (Source: USAID. 2015. *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 20)

SPELLING OF SOMALI LOCATIONS

Various spellings of Somali locations – regions, cities, and towns – appear between the documents provided by different stakeholders, and within documents of a single stakeholder. The evaluation team uses the spellings listed in the table below (except when quoting original documents):

SOMALIA LOCATION SPELLING		
USAID/SOMALIA Map (Fig.1) & Scope of Work (p.2 & p.8)	UNICEF Semi-Annual Performance Report, March 2020, AMELP 2019 & Enrollment Data	Evaluation Report
GEDO	GEDO	GEDO
Dolo	Dolow / Doolow / Dollow	Dolo
Luuq	Luuq / Luq	Luuq
Belet Hawa / Beled Hawo / Balethawa	Baladhawo / Beledhawo / Belet-Hawa / Bellet Hawa / Beled-Hawa / Belethawa	Belet Hawa
Garbahaarey /Garbaharey	Garbaharey	Garbaharey
Bardheere / Baardheere / Bardere	Bardhere / Baardheere / Bardheere	Bardheere
BAY	BAY	BAY
Baidoa	Baidoa	Baidoa
Qansah Dheere / Qansax Dheere / Qabsaxdere	Qasaxdhere	Qansah Dheere

Dinsoor	Dinsor / Diinsor	Dinsoor
BAKOOL	BAKOOL	BAKOOL
El Barde / Ceel Barde	Elbarde / Ceelberde / Ceel Barde / Elberdhe	El Barde
Rab Dhuure / Rab dhure	Rabdhure / Rab Dhuure	Rab Dhuure
Burdubo	Burdhubo	Burdubo

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability refers to the potential of the ABE program, or some of its elements, to be maintained after the completion of the implementation period. This includes keeping ABE Centers open and functioning, or the ongoing maintenance of mobile libraries and other approaches.

SYSTEM

In this context, the definition of a system covers a broad range of national and sub-national mechanisms that work in an interconnecting way to deliver services: e.g., educational system, monitoring and evaluation system.

SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

System strengthening refers to activities that enable local education authorities to improve or strengthen their institutional capacity, to ensure that the systems or mechanisms that are in place are functioning. This includes building the capacity of officials to develop a strategy or policy to operationalize an improved non-formal education process, and to build the capacity of community organizations to implement NFE programs at the school level. School supervision, the hire of technical advisors to support local authorities to develop NFE standards, and quality assurance mechanisms are part of system strengthening.

TEMPORARY LEARNING SPACE

A temporary learning space (TLS) is a non-permanent, safe learning space for children in communities that have no access to school facilities. It is established in temporary settlements and/or along migration routes. In permanent settlements, the TLS often becomes part of a permanent school or transforms into a permanent school. By definition, a TLS is a ‘low-cost semi-permanent structure’ that can be dismantled quickly and easily then transported to another location if required. (Source: USAID. 2015. *ABE Cooperative Agreement*, p. 18)

U.S.AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20523