Project Evaluation Report

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Notes:

Some annexes listed in the contents page of this document have not been included because of challenges with capturing them as an A4 PDF document or because they are documents intended for programme purposes only. If you would like access to any of these annexes, please enquire about their availability by emailing uk_girls_education_challenge@pwc.com.

Girls' Education Challenge

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Final Baseline Evaluation Report for CHANGE: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project

Submitted to: People in Need (PIN)

Submitted by: JaRco Consulting

January, 2021
Addis Ababa

ABE	Alternative Basic Education
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
CBE	Community Based Education
DFID	Department for International Development (UKAID)
EA	Enumeration Area
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/ Circumcision
FSA	Friendship Association Network
GEC	Girls Education Challenge
GPDI	Gayo Pastoral Development Initiative
HH	Head of Household
IFAL	Integrated Functional Adult Literacy
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNGB	Leave No Girl Behind
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation & Learning
OOS	Out Of School
PAGES	Pastoralist Afar Girls Education Support
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant
PIN	People In Need
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
REB	Regional Educational Bureau
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
RWCA	Regional Women and Children Affairs
RWCA	Regional Women and Children Affair
SHGs	Self-Help Groups
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TOC	Theory of Change
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VfM	Value for Money
WEO/ WEB	Woreda Education Office/ Bureau
WG	Washington Group
WpM	Word per Minute
SD	Standard Deviation

Contents

List of tables

List of figures

Executive Summary

Through the GEC's Leave No Girl Behind (GEC-LNGB) fund, DFID has financed CHANGE: '*Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls project'*. This five-year project, taking place from 2019 to 2023, is implemented by People in Need (PIN) and its partners (Concern Worldwide, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and Gayo Pastoral Development Initiative (GPDI), Welthungerhilfe and Friendship Association Network (FSA).

CHANGE aspires to improve the life chances of 31,000 Out of School, highly marginalized girls in four different selected regional states in Ethiopia – Afar (Awsi), Oromia (Borena), SNNPR (Gedeo) and Amhara (South Wollo). Targeted beneficiaries of CHANGE are highly marginalized girls aged 10 to 19 who are out of school because of barriers faced in their respective contexts. The beneficiaries have never attended school or dropped out early with no literacy or numeracy skills. These girls need support to enter, re-enter or stay in the formal or alternative education system. Therefore, CHANGE aims to advance the learning, transition and communal support of the girls divided in three cohorts through providing ABE and IFAL classes as the two main intervention pathways. The aim is to work towards improving the girls' learning outcome, level of life skill, through strengthening the community's support, acceptance and commitment on girls' education.

For this baseline evaluation, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to provide benchmark values against which the results and impacts of CHANGE can be measured over time. Quantitative data were collected through household surveys and learning assessment tests (EGRA and EGMA) conducted among the cohort of girls aged 10 to 19 and household surveys administered to household heads[1] and primary caregivers[2]. The sample size for the survey was stratified by two key intervention groups based on their age (10-14 and 15-19) to facilitate measuring the effect of project activities tailored to each group. Overall, the quantitative survey was administered to 1,054 sampled households for this baseline. The proportion of households surveyed across the three regions are, 208 in Afar; 430 in Oromia, 372 in SNNPR, and 44 in Amhara. Alongside quantitative data collection, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were held with target groups to collect qualitative data for this baseline evaluation. Interviews and focus group discussions were held with girls, religious leaders and primary caregivers. In addition, key informant interviews were held with Kebele leaders, Woreda and Regional Education officials, Woreda and Regional Women and Children Affairs officials, school directors, and PTA members to gather information on institutional and social norms related to girls' marginalization in their respective localities.

The major barriers girls face to attend education is poor economic status of households, high level of domestic chores, school distance and lack of potable water in schools. More than half of the girls, mostly in Oromia and SNNPR, live in households where their basic needs are not met. 22.2% of the girls in this study were said to be out of formal school mainly because of parents' inability to cover schooling cost. Girls' high level of domestic chores was in fact implied as an even severe barrier to the girls' education. Girls particularly in Amhara, Oromia, and Afar, spend half to a whole day undertaking domestic works in their households – more than 90% fetching water and more than 60% helping with agricultural or livestock-related activities, undoubtedly taking away from the time they have to study or even go to

[1]The Head of household is the adult responsible for the household. The head is someone who lives with the household all or some of the time. The head of household may live elsewhere some or most of the time (e.g. for work, or if they have multiple wives or husbands). However, they must have a close connection with the members of the household.

[2]The primary caregiver is the adult person who mainly cares for GIRL on a day-to-day basis

school. School distance is another barrier identified in this study. The distance of schools from homes and related safety issues encountered by girls during the journeys are the other critical barriers that prevent parents from enrolling their girls in schools. In Amhara, girls seem to travel farther than the rest of the girls in the other regions that 17.6% samples in the region could walk one to three hours to reach a nearby primary school. However, secondary schools seem to be even more distant than primary schools in all regions that in extreme cases, walking to a nearby secondary school in Amhara, Afar and Oromia can take 3 to 5 hours or even a day with this being particularly acute in Oromia and Afar. Formal schools were also critiqued for lacking essential facilities such as drinking water, toilets and seats in classrooms. The severity of lack of water was stressed by numerous study participants in all the regions that in some extreme cases children in Oromia were reported to have been fainting and losing control because of dehydration on the way home from school. Schools were also reported to toilets, seats and overall inclusive environment, especially to accommodate children with disabilities.

The average literacy and numeracy scores of girls aged 10-14 did not go beyond 23% which indicates that their level of literacy and numeracy skill is very low. Girls aged 15-19 scored relatively better in the tests with an aggregate score of 30.5% - still below 40% but relatively higher than the previous age groups. With an exception to the girls from Amhara who all have had the chance to be enrolled in formal education once, the vast majority of girls in this age group from the other regions did not perform well on the tests. Girls from Afar achieved the least level of scores in both the skills with an aggregate of just 13.5%. Afar is the second region after Oromia with high proportion of girls who have never been to school. 36.1% of the girls in Afar have also mothered children, amongst those 15% outside marriage. Girls in early marriage and childbirth are the two vulnerable subgroups identified in this study for being the ones who spend half to a whole day carrying out domestic chores in their households.

Higher numbers of sampled girls in Oromia and Afar have never been to school since these regions are hub for pastoralist communities with (recurrent) drought-prone areas often moving from place to place in search of water. In these regions, higher numbers of girls are not currently enrolled in formal education mainly because of the amount of work they need to carryout in their households. In Amhara, all the girls have once been to school which could be the cause for their better literacy and numeracy level in this study. In SNNPR, 39.2% of the girls have never been to school while 60.8% have once had the chance – a relatively better proportion next to Amhara. 40.6% of the girls in this region are identified as those who carryout high domestic chores in their houses for half to a whole day which could have contributed to their drop outs. In addition, unsafe journey to school due to poor roads and school distance were found to be the major barriers in this region.

As part of the project's intervention, girls aged 10-14 are expected to attend ABE level 1-3 classes to transit to a formal school or TVET education. For girls aged 15-19 as well, IFAL classes level 1-3 are the intervention pathways to help them attend formal schools, TVET education or join SHGs and start working to generate income. The baseline result indicates that majority of the girls are interested to be enrolled in schools, earn an individual or personal income to fund their study costs, or learn special skills to start their own businesses. Therefore, the proposed pathways of the project could benefit these girls to either attend formal school, TVET education or start working and generate income which is inclusive of all the opportunities the girls aspire to come across.

One of the major outcomes of the project is improved perception and willingness of communities to foster positive social attitudes towards girls' education and their progression in life. As per the results from this baseline study, attitude of girls, men and women towards girls' education is very positive that more than 90% advocate girls' education. When it comes to the commitment of the community and system in

dealing with girls' education issues, however, totally opposite results were obtained. In all the regions, girls' education issues are scarcely raised and discussed amongst the community but the particular measure taken to address the issues is said to be even close to none which could negatively affect the sustainability of the project. Concerned authorities fail to find the most optimal solution or reach the best compromise that can resolve the issue facing girls' education in some parts of these regions.

Overall, this paper demonstrates and identifies the common barriers direct beneficiaries face to learning and transition in spite of their age differences. The indicators already put in place by the project are appropriate enough to achieve the Intermediate Outcomes in the process of implementation. CHANGE (the project) has already considered almost all the major barriers identified in this study. However, project implementing partners are still advised to pay utmost attention on the following indicators which are the major targets of next evaluation point:

- The community with concerned stakeholders' commitment and involvement is further needed to transfer cases to appropriate and quality support services – community forums and girls' education agenda should officially be raised in forums with stakeholders as often as possible for the better sustainability outcome of the project. Target communities' positive attitudes towards girls' education and their role in society seems to be already established that more than 90% of girls, men and women in this study already demonstrated a high level of interest in girls' education.
- Region-specific barriers for focus on interventions recommended:
    - Oromia and Afar are the two nomadic pastoral communities often moving from place to place in search of water for their household and livestock. The vast majorities of their girls have never been to school and have the least level of learning outcome. Particularly in Afar, there is a high level of early marriage and child birth. In both regions, higher proportions of girls have very limited family planning knowledge which could lead to more childbirth and further marginalization. Focusing on the fact that livelihoods in these regions are never stable, therefore, would lead to intensified interventions to achieve the desired intermediate outcomes of the project. These could mainly include increased enrollment or re-enrollment of girls in alternative learning centers, improved quality of teaching with inclusive learning environment, and girls' acquisition of improved relevant life skills.
    - Girls in Amhara and SNNPR, with few discrepancies, also share common barriers that could guide project activities. All girls in Amhara and the vast majority in SNNPR have been enrolled in formal schools and have demonstrated better literacy and numeracy levels, especially those in Amhara. School distance and inability to cover school costs were the two major barriers indicated in these regions. Girls in both contexts seem to be more affected by supply-side barriers. They mostly require economic empowerment, physically accessible schools and the commitment of concerned official stakeholders.

Background of the project

3.1 Project context, target beneficiary groups and theory of change

The main contextual factors that have influenced the project design

- **Prevalent poverty and dependency on seasonal small-scale agriculture**:

Among the target population puts enormous pressure on families to enter their children, particularly girls, in to the workforce at an early age to supplement their meager household incomes. Due to the fact most of the population rely on small-scale agriculture, the ability of children to attend school is severely hindered by their enforced participation in the agricultural sector[3]. During the coffee-harvesting season in Gedeo Zone, girls drop out of school for three months each year to participate in daily labor. In Afar, families are forced to migrate in search of water and better pasture. These situations lead to low attendance and high school dropouts for girls in particular. These girls often never return to school (ft3). The harsh climate, chronic food insecurity, scarcity of arable land, recurrent drought, scattered settlements of villages, and challenges associated with inaccessibility of key facilities in mountainous or pastoralist remote areas magnifies these concerns for families

- **Harmful social and gender norms and cultural attitudes:**

were found to be one of the predominant barriers to girls' education across the target areas. There is a high prevalence of early marriage and child bearing as opposed to other regions in Ethiopia. Lack of awareness of reproductive health and family planning along with polygamy has resulted in large family sizes in poor economic environment.

A brief description of the project areas

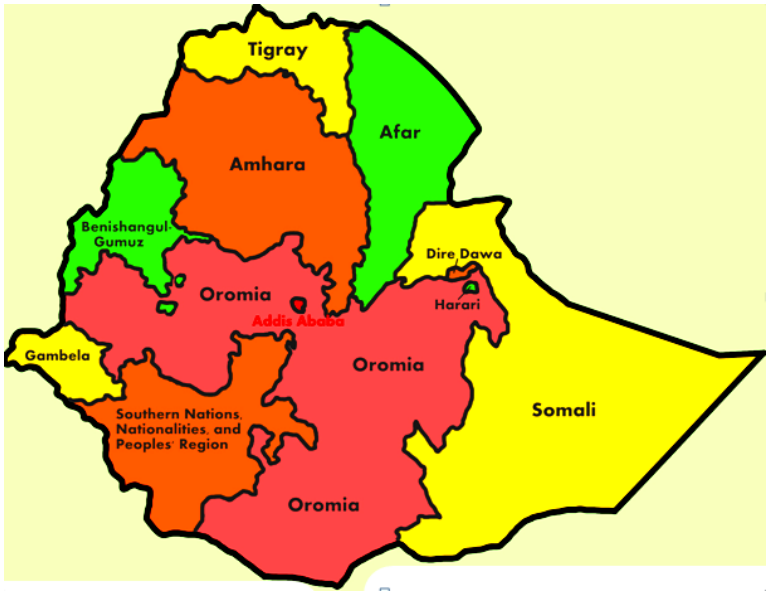


Figure 1: Map of Ethiopian regional states

Oromia (Borena)

Borena is the southern zone of the Oromia region bordered by Kenya, SNNPR, West Guji and Dawa zone Somalia region. The zone is a pastoralist area known to be very vulnerable to drought. Drinking water in this zone appears as the main concern. The more populated the area got the more drinking water has become scarce. According to the 2017 census projection, the population of the area is estimated at 1,681,473. About 91% of the population resides in rural villages while just 8% live in Woreda towns *(further explained in section 5).*

Amhara (South Wollo)

South Wollo is one of the 10 zones in Amhara region of Ethiopia. This zone is bordered by Oromia region, east Gojam, South Gondar and North Wollo. The area is characterized by a mixed farming system which involves crop production and animal husbandry. Based on the 2017 census projection, the zone's population is at 2, 983,555. Amongst these, 88.9% are projected to live in rural villages while 11.1% are in urban towns *(further explained in section 5).*

SNNPR (Gedeo)

Gedeo is located in the Southern Nations Nationalities Regional (SNNPR) part of Ethiopia. It is bordered by the Sidama zone in the north, and by the Oromia region in the south, east and west. Gedeo is very well known for its Indigenous Knowledge based self-sustaining land use system. The Gedeo have developed an agro-forestry system which is regarded as a sustainable land use system in the country. The components of the agro-forestry are mainly coffee, 'Enset', indigenous trees, root crops, shrubs, etc. Based on the 2017 census projection, the zone's population is at 1,142,114. Amongst these, 88.2% are projected to live in rural villages while 11.8% are in urban towns *(further explained in section 5).*

Afar (Awsi)

Awsi is one of the five zones of the Afar region in Ethiopia. Awash River is one of the known area characteristics of the zone. There are six interconnected chains of lakes in this zone, fed by Awash. An estimated 90 percent of the Afar population depends on pastoralism, herding cattle, sheep, goats and camels. As per the 2017 census projection, the zone's population is at 425,294. Amongst these, 78.4% are projected to live in rural villages while 21.6% are in urban towns *(further explained in section 5).*

A brief description of beneficiaries with which the project will work, noting key sub groups and levels of marginalization.

The direct beneficiaries targeted by the project are Out of school (OOS) girls aged 10 – 19. Most of the target girls are highly marginalized: they either never attended school or dropped out early with no literacy or numeracy skills that need to be supported to enter, re-enter or stay in the formal or flexible, alternative education system. All target girls are likely to be engaged in domestic chores, including taking care of younger siblings and sick parents. Other responsibilities include maize milling, fetching water, fire-wood collection, construction of houses, food preparation, assisting at farms, milking camels and cattle herding.

Within the identification phase, the project was focusing on detecting of all OOS girls with or without disability and their female siblings, dropped-out girls with and without disability and their female siblings. More specifically, the target groups were defined as follows:

- OOS girls 10-14 with or without disability

- OOS girls 15-19with or without disability

Out of those, the following sub-categories of OOS girls were identified as a project target:

- Out of school, 10-19y.– Girls who have not started / have not been enrolled in any formal education before being enrolled in ABE/IFAL programmes, and therefore have no formal education at all. This group is the primary target group of the project.
- Dropped out, 10-19y.– Girls who were enrolled at the start of some of the previous school years but did not conduct mid-term (first semester) or final exam. These girls may have some knowledge from the formal education, but due to different factors they were not able to keep attending classes and / or transit to another school level / higher class. They are being involved in the project activities from the beginning of the following academic year.

Specific sub groups are:

- **Girls with disabilities** are unable to travel to the schools because of inappropriate infrastructure. They also face social, emotional or physical discrimination or abuse/violence, family and community bias and stigma. CHANGE will apply Washington Group Child Functioning (CF) questions in the beneficiary identification stage and will be tracked in the course of evaluation during baseline, midline and end line survey.
- **Girls who have been affected by modern day slavery**– girls attending school are often engaged in labor to pay for their school fees. This impacts also their school performance and health. They are exposed to illegal movement inside and outside the country. Because of high involvement in child work in pastoralist communities, girls have low attendance and high dropout rates to school.
- **Girls experiencing early enforced marriage and childbirth**– practice common in Ethiopia, especially in remote areas. Once married, husbands are usually not willing to send their young wives to school or allow them to return after childbirth. For parents, to marry their daughter is a priority even if she is under aged**.**
- **Girls that have intermittent access to education–**Girls from pastoralist communities and (recurrent) drought-prone areas often move from place to place and may not come back to the previous village to complete their schooling. They either never start school or drop out when they move and never re-enrolled.
- **Girls with lack of physical access to education–** For girls living more than 4 km away from the nearest school it is difficult to regularly attend the school.
- **Girls living in extreme poverty–** Families unable to afford the indirect costs of schooling, result in most girls not going to school at all. Girls feel uncomfortable going to school during menstruation as families cannot afford to even buy sanitary pads.
- **Girls with high domestic chores–** Girls are often responsible for helping with household chores which result in their low attendance and high dropout rates.

Table 1: Summary of direct beneficiaries

Direct beneficiary numbers	Total figures
Total number of girls reached in cohort 1	6,406
Total number of girls expected to reach by end of project	31,000
Education level	Proportion of total direct beneficiaries (%)
Never been to school	63%
Been to school but dropped out.	37%
Age banding (The age bandings used should be appropriate to the ToC)	Proportion of total direct beneficiaries (%)
10 to 14	**56%**
14 to 19	**44%**

Proposed Intervention Pathways

Intervention pathway	girls following this pathway?	# of girls in this pathway for cohort 1 6,406							Length of intervention	# of cohorts	Numeracy and literacy levels girls starting at	Success for learning?	success for Transition
ABE/IFAL classes facilitated for out of school girls	Girls aged 10-19 (10-14 for ABE, 15-19 for IFAL)	Amh	Oro		SNNP		Afar		IFAL 2 years ABE 3 years	3	0 - 4	Numeracy and literacy skills that support them to transition to the next level. Improved third (cognitive) skill, decision-making, that will increase girls' confidence and self-esteem.	Girls enroll back to formal school, SHGs for both, and TVET for IFAL
		IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL					
		610	1292	851	1778	646	877	352					
	Total	610	2143		2424		1229						

Table 2: Indirect beneficiary groups

Group	Interventions received	Total number reached for cohort 1
ABE/IFAL facilitators	Trained in gender-sensitive and child-centered and inclusive education methodologies, child protection, safeguarding, gender trainings.	272
Community Members	Reached in different Covid -19 related awareness campaigns	222,185
Government office staff	Awareness campaigns on girl's education at times of Covid -19	80
Community action group members	Sensitization on follow up and support to girl safety, literacy skills	260
Primary care givers of girls	Awareness campaigns on Covid -19, protective kits to protect them from Covid -19	6,400 - 12,800 (as an estimation 1-2 caregivers per one girl)

3.2 Theory of Change (ToC)

The project ToC focuses on overcoming the identified barriers on different levels in order to allow the OOS girls aged 10-19 to gain relevant educational and life skills and to improve their life chances.

The main identified barriers on **the household/community level** (such as lack of girls' self/esteem and empowerment; early marriage; lack of employment opportunities; low awareness and negative traditional perceptions…) will be addressed (amongst others) by awareness sessions; messaging on child rights, protection issues and other harmful social and gender norms through different channels; and empowering boys as agents of change. Providing conditional cash transfers, supporting Girls Clubs, SHGs and mobile/short-term TVET will address the barriers connected with financial and employment constraints.

On **the school/institution level**, the identified barriers were connected mainly with the lack of flexible alternative and accelerated options; long distances and difficult terrain from pastoralist/ remote communities to schools; lack of gender-segregated sanitation facilities; lack of trained teachers; low education status; limited female teachers as role models, using corporal punishment; or poor school conditions and infrastructure for disabled girls. The activities include establishing and supporting alternative learning programmes in safe, quality and inclusive learning environments, improvement of quality of teaching in sensitive education, child rights and protection, building the capacity of school leadership, and supporting the transition pathways to different levels of formal education/SHG/employment.

On **the system level**, the identified barriers are lack of formal processes and data to track enrolment, attendance and drop outs, inability of system to support children with different circumstances; no systematic feedback mechanism; some existing schools and procedures are unused, lack of motivation and incentives for teachers etc. The intervention will focus mainly on rising the issue of girls' education at

community forums and engaging in government-NGO forums, creating and supporting CAGs, developing capacity of zonal and woreda TVET, conducting community stakeholders' meetings and so on.

Project activities therefore address the issues with the assumption that based on the planned intervention, the desired change in approaches and behavior may happen. The following ToC diagram shows the activities leading to the desired outcome.

Table 3: Project Theory of Change

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUT	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME	OUTCOME	IMPACT
1.1 Conduct community assessment and household and individual surveys 1.2 Establish and promote accelerated bridging education structures 1.3 Construct (or re-construct) school structures and girl-friendly spaces 1.4 Provision of special devices for girls with disabilities and referral system 1.5 Develop and Distribution of Books for enhancement of girls' leadership, SRH, HTP, Life Skills and knowledge for early grade readings from Afar folklore	**1**. Provision of flexible ABE and IFAL programmes for out-of-school marginalized girls (aged 10-19)	*1. Increased girls' enrolment, re-enrolment and attendance in alternative/ accelerated learning centres*	1. Improved learning outcomes and life skills for highly marginalized girls	Improved life chances of OOS highly marginalized girls in Afar, Borana, Gedeo and South Wollo
2.1 Conduct teachers' capacity assessment 2.2 Develop training manuals on child-centered and gender sensitive education 2.3 Train teachers in child-centered and gender-sensitive methodologies and inclusive education 2.4 Train facilitators in accelerated bridging structures /ABE 2.5Conduct school-to-school learning and sharing within woredas 2.6 Develop and implement Structural Improvement Plans	**2**. Teachers and facilitators trained in child-centered, gender sensitive, CP & adolescent development in improved learning environment	*2. Improved quality of teaching & inclusive learning environment to support equitable access to education for girls*		
3.1 Develop the capacity of zonal and woreda TVET 3.2 Support linkages for mobile and short term TVET centres 3.3 Create or support existing Girls Clubs in or outside of school	**3**. Introduction of alternative programmes for transition to formal education and (self) employment for girls	*3. Marginalised girls acquire relevant skills to overcome social, economic and contextual factors that leave them behind in*	2. Increased transition rates for highly marginalised girls at key points in their	

3.4 Create Self-Help Groups (SHGs) 3.5 Train SHG members in appropriate and innovative IGAs 3.6 Provide Conditional cash transfers to families/students 3.7 Provide access to SHG members with seed money 3.8 Hostel service in Afambo town (WHH)		*life*	pathway
4.1 Create and support of community action groups (CAGs) 4.2 CAGs conduct outreach and home visits through community steering groups 4.3 Conduct regular meetings between stakeholders through community forums 4.4 Develop communication and awareness raising material on girls' education and inclusive education 4.5 Conduct girls and family counselling, parent support groups and promote girls' friendly spaces 4.6 Promote girls as education champions and role models	**4**. Communities (incl. parents, men and boys) are sensitised to actively ensure promotion of learning opportunities for girls	*4. Improved perceptions and willingness of communities foster positive social attitudes towards girls' education & their progression in life*	3. Improved community and government support, acceptance and commitment to sustain girls' education
5.1 Conduct region, federal sensitization and networking workshops and roundtables 5.2 Support of government taskforce (steering committee) on girls´ education / zone and woreda 5.3 Conduct exposure visits of government officials to ABE and IFAL programmes 5.4 Conduct a national conference on girls´ education 5.5 Good practice and lessons learnt of the consortium/Transfer of knowledge and methodologies on government trainers through ToT trainings 5.6 CAGs conduct outreach and home visits through community steering groups	**5**. Government structures are involved and pursue policy improvements targeting girls´ education	*5. Strengthened partnerships with government and other key actors to influence national level policy, systems and practice*	

4. Baseline evaluation approach and methodology

4.1 Evaluation purpose(s) and evaluation questions

A comprehensive set of data was collected from different sources to provide benchmarks against which progress can be measured for the baseline evaluation. The findings in this report will be used to guide program staff, partners, and beneficiaries (both direct and indirect) in the process of achieving the program's stated objectives. In other words, the findings will provide valuable information which can be used to fine-tune the CHANGE Project approach, strategy and activities.

The evaluation helps to benchmark baseline values for the indicators presented in the project's MEL framework, and measures the results and impact of CHANGE over time during the midline and end line, as well as evaluating the overall baseline-to-end line level of change in treatment areas. Objectives of the evaluation were both summative – to measure the results and impact of the CHANGE Project for accountability and learning – and formative – to inform project staff and stakeholders on lessons learnt for on-going implementation, improvements, course-correction and scale-up/replication.

The evaluation required measurement of impact and in-depth analysis of the drivers of change – essentially answering *what* and unpacking *why*. This informed the selection of the overarching evaluation questions to generate the knowledge that the project seeks to understand: the effectiveness of the project in supporting the learning and development of highly marginalized girls, the impact on their learning and transition, what works in facilitating their positive transition, and the sustainability of GEC activities in delivering impact and leveraging additional investment. This baseline evaluation will set benchmark values to guide the project's implementation process. The following key evaluation questions have been identified to guide the baseline study:[4]

1. How effective was the project in OOS girls' (disabled, never been at school, dropped out, etc) enrolment, re-enrolment and attendance in alternative or accelerated learning centres?
2. How effective was the project in developing OOS adolescent girls' cognitive and non-cognitive life skills to overcome social, economic and contextual factors that leave them behind in life?
3. How effective was the project in terms of Value for Money (economy, effectiveness, efficiency) in reaching its goals?
4. What impact did the project have on the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities?
5. How and why was this impact achieved?
6. What is the role of the project's specific components, like SHGs in transition?
7. How, if at all, did the project succeed in creating enabling learning environments in schools, families, and communities, for the OOS girls to pursue their life plans?
8. How and why was this impact achieved?
9. Were there different impacts for different sub-groups?
10. How sustainable were the activities funded by the GEC and was the project successful in leveraging additional interest and investment?

[4] Refer to the CHANGE Baseline Inception report p-9 & 10

4.2 Overall evaluation design

As described in the methodology summary table (see annex 1), the baseline, midline and end line evaluations will be carried out using a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, as well as regular process monitoring output indicators. A mixture of a prospective cohort and cross-sectional study design will be used to conduct the baseline, midterm and end line evaluation of the CHANGE Project over the project lifecycle. Both quantitative data on project outcomes and qualitative data will be collected to inform the midterm and final project evaluation, as was done for this baseline study. The data obtained is synthesized with regular process monitoring of output (log-frame) indicators. Each quantitative, qualitative and process data will contribute to the VfM analysis, which is based on the data obtained corresponding to the major indicators for the 4Es – Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity as well as showcasing benchmarks for the projects' adoptive strategy.

The cohort identified for this evaluation includes only girls aged 10 to 19. A cohort was selected from the implementation areas in which the CHANGE Project is being introduced (the Intervention Cohort). Since this study mainly focuses on measuring changes before and after within the intervention area, no control or comparison group is considered. The intervention cohort selection for the baseline, midline and end line evaluation of the GEC project is based on the following specific participant inclusion criteria:

- Participants will be selected from all CHANGE Project implementation areas.
- The project will target selected communities covering selected woredas across four regions of Ethiopia.
- The sample frame is defined as all girls within the implementation areas aged 10 to 19 who have no education or are marginalized or out of school/have dropped out/ are ‘at risk’ of dropping out of school at the start of the project.

Data was also collected from the wider community, schools and local government offices. Assessment of improved government support was made by asking education officers and other stakeholders whether girls' education agenda has been officially raised in forums and stakeholders’ meetings or not using qualitative and quantitative tools. Future evaluation will also check whether the project will create strengthened partnerships with government and other key actors to influence national level policy, systems and practice. At each stage of the evaluation (baseline, midline and end line), data will be collected from:

- Girls (aged 10-19)
- Women and men (PCGs are all 19+)
- Teachers/ ABE/IFAL facilitators
- Clan/religious leaders
- Kebele officials & KATB (Board members responsible for education)
- Community groups ‘student returning committee/ PTAs/CMCs’
- Government officers (WEO/ REB/ Schools/ RWCA/ WWCA)

In addition to investigating how girls are marginalized in the context of their communities, data will be collected from the cohort on the extent to which the project has transformed girls’ knowledge, attitude

and practices – and whether the CHANGE Project has enabled them to develop confidence, high self-esteem and leadership qualities. Evidence of changes towards attaining gender equity and equality in schools and ABEs will be documented within the cohort study and any links with the wider gender equality agenda in the regional context will be demonstrated.

4.3 Evaluation ethics

JaRco has a comprehensive child safeguarding policy used for all studies engaging minors. For the baseline evaluation, therefore, all members of the evaluation team underwent safeguarding training. A staff member from implementation partners also provided a disability awareness orientation session to enumerators and supervisors during training in Addis Ababa prior to data collection. Strict protocols were in place for individual interviews, household surveys, learning assessments and FGDs that directly engaged young and vulnerable people in discussing difficult topics such as their own marginalization.

Significant ethical considerations were considered for individual interviews, especially in the data collection with highly marginalized girls. All members of JaRco's team strictly followed JaRco's Child Safeguarding Policy which was also in line with PIN's policy as well as GEC and DFIDs' safeguarding protocols.

Informed voluntary consent was obtained prior to the start of interviews. In the case of minors, consent was obtained from the parent or caregiver. Any refusals to participate were upheld and were treated as 'no-response' under the survey. As per the ethical protocol for data collection from disabled participants, if the disability of a child is severe and cannot engage with interviewer, data collection of any type with that child was discontinued. Overall, the following principles were major guidelines that were followed by the researchers during data collection:

- Ask for the permission of an adult caregiver before involving a child in any part of the research.
- Avoid all physical contact with children at all times.
- Make no incentive to either a child or parent for a child's participation in any part of the research.
- Ideally, spend no time alone with a child; where this is necessary, avoid spending a moment longer than the research task takes.
- Respect local cultures regarding child protection.
- Be prepared to break cultural practices and traditions when it is clear such practices are harmful to the physical, emotional or psychological wellbeing of the child. Abstain where there was ambiguity.
- Be prepared to report any breaches of the code immediately to JaRco's senior management.

In addition, to ensure that the respondents felt comfortable and reduced any unnecessary time or logistical burdens, the household survey and learning assessments took place at the respondents' homes. Given the subject matter and the fact that the primary beneficiaries were female minors, the household survey was conducted one-to-one by suitably qualified and experienced enumerators.

4.4 Quantitative evaluation methodology

4.4.1 Quantitative Evaluation Tools

For this baseline study, quantitative data was collected using household surveys conducted among the cohort of girls aged 10 to 19 and other key target groups. Additionally, the learning assessment (EGRA and EGMA) tests were major means of obtaining quantitative data. The nature of the tools and how they were administered is thoroughly elaborated below.

4.4.1.1. GEC Step Change Window: Household Survey

Household surveys were conducted by teams of enumerators and supervisors working under the oversight of the Evaluation Team. At each household, the teams interviewed, where present, target girls and their guardians. In order to maintain confidentiality, remove group bias of other family members and gather the best possible data, all individuals in the household were interviewed individually. As much as possible, female enumerators from the surrounding region were recruited and trained within each region.

Conducting household survey longitudinal data across the three evaluations (baseline, midline and end line) enables a comparison before and after implementation to assess the CHANGE Project's effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The data collected through the survey for the evaluation will measure change in key barriers, enablers, knowledge, attitudes and perceptions regarding girls' education, and marginalization attributable to the CHANGE Project activities. The survey for this baseline study collected the attitudes and perceptions from both girls and their families regarding future aspirations, perceptions of learning facilities, attitudes towards girls' education, and access to schools/ABEs with appropriate infrastructure. It collected socio-economic variables to assess the effectiveness of the CHANGE Project's interventions on learning and attendance outcomes relative to pre-existing factors.

According to GEC, the household survey has four key objectives:

- Identifying the specific population groups that projects are targeting and the extent to which they are educationally marginalised,
- Assessing the education outcomes of girls in project areas and establishing the extent to which GEC project activities have led to improvements in enrolment, attendance, retention and learning,
- Exploring the prevalence and importance of different barriers to girls' education and establishing the extent to which project interventions have affected them, and
- Assessing the extent to which girls have reportedly been exposed to education-related interventions to understand whether GEC projects reached their intended target groups and had an effect.

Table 4: Quantitative evaluation tools

Table 5: Quantitative evaluation tools

Tool name	**Relevant indicator(s)**	**Who developed the tool?**	**Was tool piloted?**	**How were piloting findings acted upon (if applicable)**	**Was tool shared with the FM?**	**Was FM feedback provided?**
GEC Step change Window Household survey	**IO 1-3**	**JaRco& Project**	**Yes**	**No major issues identified in piloting stage.**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Reading (EGRA) and Mathematics (EGMA) assessments	**OI1.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**Yes**	the duration of the timed questions was changed from the standard time 60 second to 120 seconds	**Yes**	**Yes**

4.4.2 Enumerators

All the supervisors and enumerators who participated in this survey had previous experience in conducting studies of this type in Afar, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR regions. As a result, those enumerators and supervisors who have worked with JaRco previously in these regions, and who demonstrated knowledge of relevant local languages in similar studies within the recent past, were recruited to conduct the baseline evaluation surveys.

As a second step after recruitment, JaRco conducted a training of five days for enumerators and supervisors. The training consisted of classroom-based learning and field-based revision. It covered every aspect of what the teams needed to be aware of in order to conduct the surveys effectively and efficiently. There were common and differentiated aspects of instructions for enumerators and supervisors based on their roles and responsibilities in surveys. Training sessions were used for pre-testing and fine-tuning the tools, and for testing eligible responders. For that, the data collection team was taken out to the field for two days to test the questionnaires and check their practicality.

Based on the review of preliminary results of the pilot test of the tools, the Team Lead and Gender Specialist made several adaptations to the survey tools to best suit the local context of the survey areas, in order to maximise the validity and reliability of the tools. Furthermore, thorough discussions were held with enumerators and supervisors about the translation of the questionnaires into the vernacular of the local languages to increase the usability and transferability of the tools across regions.

The result of the pre-test was also used to identify enumerators with the desired competency for final recruitment and deployment. The Data Manager and Statistician judged the filled-in PDA forms to check the accuracy of the information recorded by enumerators during pre-testing field work. Those with the highest degree of accuracy and efficiency were selected for recruitment, while those that performed moderately were retained as reserves (with only very few of these called upon to keep the field teams at

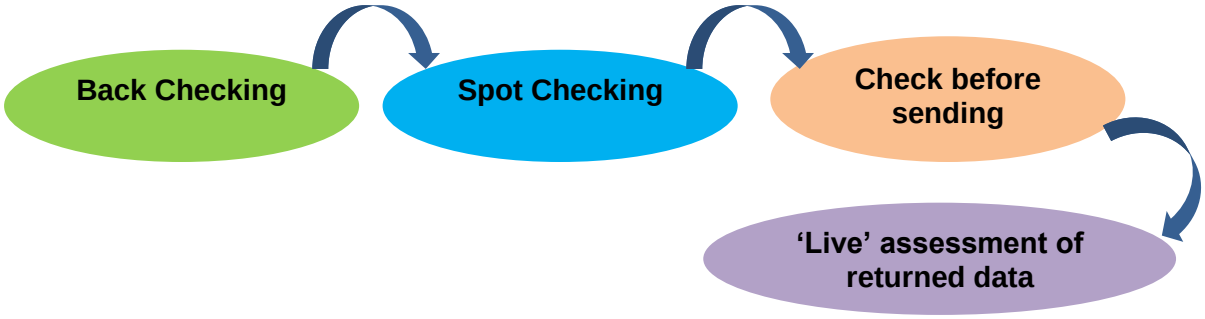
the required staffing level). Those that did not perform to the minimum requirements set by JaRco were dismissed.

4.4.3 Quantitative data collection

The collection of quantitative data for the baseline evaluation took place from the 13th of February to the 8th of March, 2020. Enumerators deployed in all regions administered all survey tools in households uniformly. Firstly, the Head of Household (HH) survey was completed to gain information on the general nature and economic status of the household. Then, the Primary Caregiver survey was administered to gather all the necessary data about the girl and the Primary caregiver of girl. Following this, the girls' survey, together with the EGRA / EGMA tests, was carried out. The EGRA /EGMA test is programmed using Tangerine software, which is specifically designed to administer EGRA/EGMA test. These steps were followed by enumerators across the four regions.

Regarding data quality assurance, Supervisor quality checks of the data collected by enumerators were performed daily throughout the data collection period. The supervisors put in place ongoing monitoring of attrition in the field, using re-contact and one-for-one replacement procedures (for those households who declined to participate in the survey to maintain overall minimum sample size.

The data collection assurance dimensions ensured that data was accurate, timely, complete and had integrity. This hierarchy of quality assurance was connected through a chain of communication and specific checks following JaRco's standard operating procedures, which comprised of the following:



Back Checking: The first means of checking took place as the fieldwork was ongoing. Once an Enumerator completed a household questionnaire and learning test, they handed their tablet to the Supervisor, who then gave them an empty device so the Enumerator could perform another interview while the Supervisor checked their work. The Supervisor performed a visual quality check on the information recoded to ensure that the questions were filled in properly, that there were no unintended gaps, and that the information was stored and time-stamped properly. Any errors spotted by the Supervisor were corrected before leaving the site.

Spot Checking: Supervisors performed spot-checks on enumerators' work during the first three days of their deployment. During the interview, supervisors sat in and monitored that the process of questioning was being conducted properly. Supervisors gave feedback to the enumerators at the end of each session, instructing if and where an error had been made, so that it could be corrected together and reducing the likelihood that of the mistake recurring. Any common errors were highlighted to the whole team.

Check before sending: Before sending the digital forms to the Data Manager in Addis Ababa at the end of each day or week, the Supervisor performed an overall check on the data files to ensure that the information was complete, formatted correctly and there were no unaddressed issues. The Supervisor

wrote a short summary report to describe where the data has been collected, how the checks have proceeded and any anomalies of which the Data Manager needed to be aware of.

'Live' Assessment of returned Data: JaRco's Data Manager checked the quality of the returned information using MS Excel, and sent messages to the Supervisors and the Survey Team about the quality of the data quickly and efficiently. This prompt feedback mechanism allowed field teams to return to households where any errors occurred and rectify them.

4.4.4. Quantitative Data Cleaning and Storage

Information was stored firstly on PDAs, then uploaded at the end of the day onto a supervisor's laptop, before being sent to the Data Manager in Addis Ababa via email on a weekly basis. JaRco utilized a local server for processing in order to maintain the security and confidentiality of the surveys. The weekly returned data was then cleaned using MS Excel as soon as received, and the complete data were cleaned again at the end of the data collection. SPSS dataset was created for data management and the information from tablets were directly uploaded onto this, reducing risk of error. Prior to this, data entry ranges and necessary rules for variables were set so that unlikely values could be rejected.

4.4.5 Quantitative Data Analysis

Once the data collection phase was complete and all data sets cleaned, the Evaluation Team conducted in-depth analysis of the data, based on a strategy agreed during the Inception Phase. The data analysis entailed a rigorous process in which quantitative and qualitative analysis strategies were connected to determine and understand key findings and conclusions. JaRco entered all quantitative data collected into tabulations. Using the tabulation plan and with reference to the core indicators, the quantitative data was interpreted and conclusions were drawn. Although the qualitative and quantitative data had separate purposes for the evaluation, they also interlink for triangulation purposes. The two were brought together in order to suggest causality and to identify links running through all data collected.

Quantitative data was studied and interpreted to make inferences at the population level. The results from the cohort household survey and EGRA/EGMA contained the most robust findings and conclusions, statistical tables and a description of the procedures used in conducting the survey. The learning results were analyzed using SPSS statistical software.

4.4.6. Learning Tests

To measure girls' learning outcomes, the evaluation team administered tests to eligible girls at the household level in the treatment areas for this baseline evaluation. The tests were adapted to the local languages (Oromiffa, Amharic, Gedeoffa and Qafar). The learning benchmark for CHANGE will be set following completion of this baseline survey and the analysis of these nationwide EGRA/ EGMA test results.

Improvement in girls' learning outcomes and life skills for highly marginalised girls is one of the key outcomes of the CHANGE Project. Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) are standard tools developed by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) was adopted. The tools were modified or altered by increasing the time to 160 seconds to all the timed subtasks and reducing the number of words/numbers in the test. This change has been made in consultation and guidance of FM (Fund Manager). These assessments test the level of literacy and

numeracy. EGRA and EGMA cover a range of sub-tests. The oral fluency section comprises a significant portion of EGRA. The test determines oral fluency by giving a value of words per minute (WPM). The WPM score measures and sets targets for the literacy component of learning under CHANGE project's intended outcomes. The EGMA, in turn, includes measures of both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency, such as number identification, addition and subtraction. The overall EGRA and EGMA scores are the aggregate means of the weighted sub-tests. Target for achievements in learning outcomes for each grade is established as a number of standard deviations of the test score of the grade above the baseline values (benchmark grades).

As a general rule, the learning tests reflect the achieved level of knowledge regarding literacy and numeracy. JaRco is aware that a major concern with testing is distinguishing whether a test is measuring the knowledge of the person taking it or only how good they are at being tested. For example, it is possible that the girls assessed in this study may have very low self-esteem, both academically and in terms of expressing themselves because of prevailing power relations (gender, age, marginalization, etc.). Further, the girls may not have educational role models. JaRco's past GEC evaluations and educational research suggests that students sometimes perform poorly in exams because the testing situation creates anxiety that hinders their capability. To avoid this, the time of the test was changed from 60 seconds to 120 seconds after the pre-testing for the girls to have enough space to demonstrate their numeracy and literacy skills. In addition, field teams worked relentlessly to create a comfortable and low-stakes environment for girls while completing the learning assessments, for girls to perform their best.

It should be noted that the midline and end line tests will not be identical to those administered at the baseline, as the cohort of girls participating will not change. As a result, the contents of the tests will be calibrated differently to maintain the level of difficulty and scoring.

4.4.7 Quantitative Sample selection

Samples for this baseline study were randomly selected from the final version beneficiary lists project partners provided prior to data collection. A random number between 1 and 10 was selected by using random number tables. Then, data collection started with the first household from the list whose number corresponded with the random number selected. Selection of samples continued in this way until the total number size was complete.

4.4.8. Quantitative Sample sizes

To determine the sample size for the baseline study, a variable on which to base the sample size calculations and ultimately measure the final goal of the program was selected. The requirements for each indicator were considered in determining the sample size needed for the surveys. This was addressed through determining which of the indicators was likely to have the highest necessary sample size and using this to ensure the sampling requirements of other indicators were satisfied. The most important variable to measure was the proportion of girls who achieved above a desired proficiency among the selected learning outcome indicators. Based on the LNGB sampling guide, it has been estimated that 58% of the sample will achieve the desired proficiency levels in selected learning indicators across the project area. In addition, it is assumed that the initial or the baseline value for the selected indictors is 50%.

CHANGE would like to see changes of 8% proficiency level from the baseline due to its intervention. As a result, this figure is used as a change that the project would like to achieve for the main project

indicator. Based on this premise, the sample size for the project area was calculated using the following formula:

Sampling formula and sampling parameters

$$n = D\left[(Z\alpha + Z\beta)2 * \frac{P1(1-P1) + P2(1-P2)}{(P2-P1)2}\right]$$

Where,

n = required minimum sample size per survey round i.e. for each Project area;

D=design effect (assumed in this case to be 1 based on LNGB sampling guide, it is required only when sample is taken from under 50% of the clusters, as such the cluster/kebele that would be covered in each area should not be less than 50%.);

Po = the estimated level of an indicator measured as a proportion at the time of the first survey (Po= 50%); as it is obtained from LNGB sampling guide.

Pa=a selected learning indicator - proportion of girls who achieved above a desired proficiency. In this particular case, based on the LNGB sampling guide, it has been estimated that 58% of the sample will achieve the desired proficiency levels in selected learning indicators. For the project area, the quantity (Pa-Po) is the size of the magnitude of change it is desired to be able to detect, in this case the magnitude of change is 8% or 0.08.

Zα = the z-score corresponding to the degree of confidence with which it is desired to be able to conclude that an observed change of size (Pa - Po) would not have occurred by chance (α - the level of statistical significance), and for 95 percent of degree of confidence the value of Zα will be 1.96; and

Zβ=thez-scorecorrespondingtothedegreeofconfidencewithwhichitisdesired to be certain of detecting a change of size (P2 - P1) if one actually occurred (β - statistical power), for the 80 percent of degree of confidence the value of Zβ will be0.84.

The formula above allowed the gathering of a statistically significant amount of data on the target areas. Considering a non-response rate of 30%, an initial sample size of 619 households was determined for the quantitative survey and 1276 girls to take the EGRA and EGMA learning assessments. As such, all sampled girls took EGRA and EGMA tests for the baseline survey, whether in or out of school. In order to keep homogeny at cluster (kebele) level and to get a sufficient sample size for reporting at the regional level, 25 households and 25 girls both in and out of school were covered in the treatment area. The sample size was further stratified by two main intervention groups based on their age (10-14 and 15-19) to facilitate measuring the effect of project activities that are tailored to each age group. In order to have statistically representative sample sizes in each group the same number of respondents was sampled, bringing the initial sample size to 1238. Considering the number of households targeted by the project in each region and the number of household interviewed in each kebele/cluster, adjustments were made to bring the total sample household to 1300. To minimise the sample size effect on the outcomes of the project impact, the same number of sample households and girls were covered in the baseline study.

4.4.9. Limitation of the study

Considering the number of households targeted by the project in each region and the number of household interviewed in each kebele/cluster, the anticipation was to sample a total of 1,300 households for this baseline study. With this in mind, the quantitative data was collected from this sample size from each region. The data collected was then cross-checked by implementing partners through field and active attendance verification. Thus, the result indicated 18.9% of the sampled girls were no longer part of the project. This led to the total elimination of these girls from the study yet guaranteeing the representativeness of the rest of the samples subsequently- Amhara being exceptional in this regard.

Considering the total non-response rate of 30%, samples were regionally dropped from the study within the acceptable limit. 17.3% (78 out of 450) girls from SNNPR, 16.8% (42 out of 250) from Afar, and only 4.4% (20 out of 450) from Oromia were excluded from the study since doing so did not have an effect on the representativeness of the sample size. Nevertheless, in Amhara, 70.6% (106 of the 150 sampled) were considered as drop-outs from the project intervention, which made the sample size small to make meaningful inferential. The major reason behind high level of drop-outs in this region was the exclusion of registered screened girls for the ABE intervention. Despite the initial plan to implement both ABE and IFAL in Amhara, the local Authorities did not approve the ABE project component after the screening had been already done. Thus, the project team assessed that those screened out of school girls were already registered in the formal schools. Therefore, only IFAL sampled girls took part in this study.

4.4.10. Representativeness of the sample

Since the target groups for this project are highly marginalized girls aged 10-14 and 15-19, equal numbers of girls in these age groups were sampled for the baseline study with minor discrepancies because of the inclusion of disabled girls. Nevertheless, in Amhara, all the girls sampled are 15-19 years old because of the project's exclusion of all 10-14 beneficiaries from its intervention due to low number of registers. The table below shows the detailed sample distribution.

Table 5: Quantitative sample sizes

Region	Sample Proportion of girls aged					
	10-14		**15-19**		**Total**	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Afar	102	20.0	106	19.5	208	19.7
Amhara	0	0.0	44	8.1	44	4.2
Oromia	215	41.7	215	40	430	40.8
SNNPR	231	38.4	141	32.4	372	35.3
Total	**548**	**52.0**	**506**	**48.0**	**1054**	**100**

Table 6: Sample breakdown by region

Tool name	Sample size agreed in MEL framework	Actual sample size	Remarks on why anticipated and actual sample sizes are different
GEC Step change Window Household survey	1300	1054	Drop-out and sampling issues – explained in further detail under the limitation of study sub-topic
Reading (EGRA) and Mathematics (EGMA) assessments	1300	1054	Drop-out and sampling issues – explained in further detail under the limitation of study sub-topic

Table 7: Sample breakdown by intervention pathways and region

Intervention pathway	Sample group in regions (%)								Total	
	Afar		Amhara		Oromia		SNNPR			
	No.	%	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ABE	102	49.0	0	0.0	215	50.0	231	62.1	**548**	52.0
IFAL	106	51.0	44	100.0	215	50.0	141	37.9	**506**	48.0
Total	**208**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**430**	**100**	**372**	**100**	**1054**	**100**

This data was secured from the girls' survey and a crosschecking with the project's registers. The results obtained from the primary caregivers' survey, particularly, regarding current education status[5], were considerably different from this one. Taking into consideration that caregivers might not recognize the exact technical term of their girls' education status since most of them have not received any education themselves, we have based this report on the data obtained from the project's current attendance list and the girl's survey. As displayed in the table above, out of the sampled 1,054 girls across the regions, 52% (548) are currently enrolled in ABE classes while 48% (506) are in IFAL. Except for Oromia where there is a proportionate distribution of sample sizes for the types of classes, there is a slight and somehow notable discrepancies in ABE and IFAL samples in the other regions – Amhara being exceptional for only sampling girls aged 15-19 due to the nature of the project's intervention in the region. In Afar, for instance, 51% of the girls are in IFAL classes while 49% of the others are in ABE – a difference of less than 2%. Conversely, in SNNPR, 62.1% sampled girls are from ABE when 37.9% are from IFAL – a difference of above 20%.

4.4.11 Challenges in baseline data collection

Many of the challenges faced during quantitative data collection common to all regions were related to relocation of households and girls. Some sampled girls (mostly those aged 15-19) have, for example,

[5]The question on Education status required the caretakers to recognize the technical terms of the non-formal education types like 'ABE' or 'IFAL'. Since the majority of these caretakers are illiterate, they did not provide a reliable data regarding the girls' level of education.

married and re-located permanently. There were also sampled girls who migrated to different cities looking for work. As a result, a number of sample replacements were made. Kebele displacements were also amongst the common challenges faced during data collection.

4.4.12 Cohort tracking and next evaluation point

Where possible, a certain proportion of the same girls within the treatment groups from this baseline will be tracked and re-contacted for interviews and learning assessments during the midline and end line evaluations. JaRco has designed the tracking of the intervention cohort in line with the five-year impact evaluation. Based on understanding of the CHANGE Project, the Terms of Reference and established guidelines by DFID and GEC-LNGB evaluation Manager, the cross-sectional study is necessary to include new girl entrants in the program intervention and assess their performance during midline and end line. Based on the number of the new entrants in the program during midline, a certain proportion of both the new entrants and the cohort will be taken for the midline and end line assessments.

From the experience obtained so far, there have been a considerable number of drop-outs of girls between data collection and the writing of this report. Therefore, it may be challenging or not possible to re-contact some girls from the baseline for midline and end line assessments because of, for example, natural disasters, migration to cities, or even closings of intervention areas due to low number of beneficiaries. Consequently, the number of new girls to be substituted might be relatively high, which necessitates flexibility in methodological approach. In such instances, a cross-sectional approach is useful during midline and end line assessments to gather a statistically significant level of data from intervention woredas. The cross-sectional approach allows for the study of various outcomes and multiple independent cross-sectional studies at different times. The woredas selected will remain the same as those identified at baseline throughout the implementation period.

Inclusion of new girls from new woredas is also possible should the need arise. When new girls enter into the intervention system between the baseline and midline, a representative sample of new entrants is selected during midline and they will be considered as a baseline for the end line assessment. In addition to allowing the inclusion of new girl entrants of the program into the assessment, the cross-sectional design is more viable for considering the midline as a baseline for the new entrant girls into the project for the end line assessment.

The household survey and learning assessments include tracking and measuring the changes in results experienced by girls who are exposed to the project's activities. When there is a possibility to use cohorts, the cohort tracking will enable the comparison of change over time and the contribution of change within the intervention areas over time by the CHANGE Project. Such longitudinal tracking of girls over the project lifecycle improves JaRco's ability to demonstrate statistically significant outcomes contribution to the CHANGE Project. Potential beneficiaries are identified, interviewed and given learning assessments in treatment areas during this baseline study.

4.5 Qualitative evaluation methodology

4.5.1. Qualitative data collection tools

In-depth Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions were carried out with all target groups to further explore key evaluation questions and interrogate the Theory of Change, answering the 'why' questions. The qualitative tools were designed to test the assumptions of the targeting and intervention of

the project, and explore the experiences of those exposed to the intervention. The information gathered can be used to determine whether the intervention logic is workable in the way expected or not. Concurrently with the quantitative data collection, in-depth interviews and Focus group discussions were held with target groups to collect qualitative data for the baseline evaluation.

4.5.1.1 In-depth interviews

The Evaluation Team for the baseline assessment used In-depth Interviews (IDIs) with local stakeholders and girls to capture information on institutional and social norms related to girls' marginalization and its effects on educational outcomes, as well as institutional and social barriers faced by girls. The interviews were held with girls, religious leaders, primary caregivers, Kebele leaders, Woreda and Regional Education officials, Woreda and Regional Women and Children Affairs officials, school directors, and PTA members.

These interviews were held at the workplace or in the typical locality of the interviewees. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed along with written notes taken by the interviewer.

4.5.1.2. Focus Group Discussions

Participatory Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held to examine and interrogate the Project's Theory of Change and assumptions underlying the interventions. The primary goal of the FGDs was to provide an opportunity to collect in-depth, qualitative data from representative target groups, and to validate, substantiate and verify quantitative and qualitative results of the baseline evaluation.

The FGDs were held with girls, community members and parents. The groups were split for the discussions to allow them discuss the issues with peers of the same gender and age range, allowing sensitive topics to be broached with greater ease. As much as possible, Facilitators tried to create a trusting and culturally sensitive environment for all participants during discussions. Particularly, the FGDs with girls under 18 years old and/or not yet married were handled with special care and precautions.

Table 8: Qualitative evaluation tools applied for the baseline

Tool name	Relevant[6] indicator(s)	Who developed the tool?	Was tool piloted?	How were piloting findings acted upon (if applicable)	Was FM feedback provided?
Key Informant Interviews (KII) with clan leaders	**I .O 4.1 / I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with religious	**I.O 4.1 /**	**JaRco&Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**

[6] The revised CHANGE's MEL framework clearly displays the outcome contents from page 37-44
I.O 1.1 Increased girls' enrolment, re-enrolment and attendance in alternative/ accelerated learning centres-enrolled OOS girls who attend ABE/IFAL program/ I.O 1.2 supported ABE/IFAL centres providing safe and girls-friendly learning environment...

leaders	**I.O 5.1**				
KII with Kebele leaders	**I.O 4.2 / I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with Woreda & regional Education Office	**I.O 4.2 / I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with Woreda and Regional Women and Children Affairs Office	**I.O 4.2/ I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with school directors	**I.O 4.2 / I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with PTA members	**I.O 4.2/ I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with girls	**I.O 4.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
KII with PCGs	**I.O 4.1 /I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
FGDs with girls	**I.O 4.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
FGDs with PCGs	**I.O 4.1/ I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**
FGDs with PTA members	**I.O4.2 /I.O 5.1**	**JaRco& Project**	**No**	**N/A**	**Yes**

4.5.2. Qualitative sample selection and sample sizes

The sample selection method for the qualitative data collection was similar with that of the quantitative one (see above). Table 13 below, however, shows a more detailed qualitative sample distribution with the relevant sources of information.

Table 9: Detailed qualitative sample distribution per region and subgroups

Information Source	Interviewee	Interview type/kebele				Interview type/woreda				Total Interview per region[7]			
		Afar/Amh		**SNNP/Oro**		**Afar/Amh**		**SNNP/Oro**		**Afar/Amh**		**SNNP/Oro**	
		KII	FGD	KII	FGD	KII	FGD	KII	FGD	KII	FGD	KII	FGD
Kebele level officials	Kebele official	1		1		1		3		2		3	
	Parent-Teacher-Student Association/ PTSA	1		1		1		3		2		3	
School level officials	Principal or lead teacher	1		1		1		3		2		3	
Community level	Religious and clan leaders	1		1		1		3		2		3	
Household level	Mothers of 10 – 14 & Mothers of 15 – 19	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	6	4	4	6	6
	Fathers of 10 – 14 & Fathers of 15 – 19	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	6	4	4	6	6
	Girls 10 - 14	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	3
	Girls 15 - 19	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	3
Woreda level officials	Woreda Education Officer/ WEO					1		3		2		3	
	Woreda Women & Children Affairs/ WWCA					1		3		2		3	
Regional level officials	Regional Education Bureau/ REB									1		1	
	Regional Women & Children Affairs/ RWCA									1		1	
	Total	**10**	**6**	**10**	**6**	**12**	**6**	**36**	**18**	**24**	**12**	**38**	**18**

[7] One Kebele per woreda and covering all the implementation woredas across all regions.

4.5.3 Qualitative field researchers

Four education experts with adequate high level of expertise worked as qualitative field researchers for this study. These experts had successfully accomplished similar tasks for studies in the regions (Afar, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR) with JaRco before. Hence, a new phase of recruitment and training was not compulsory for this group of qualified researchers. To acquaint researchers well with the nature of the project and the specific data collection tools to be used, the evaluation team leader provided extensive support.

4.5.4 Qualitative data collection

Qualitative and quantitative data collection took place concurrently. As mentioned above in the '*quantitative data quality assurance'* section, a work plan to strictly follow up the data collection procedures of data collectors was put in place by JaRco. For the most part, the evaluation team leader was on standby to systematically identify, assess and prioritize potential issues that occurred during the collection of data.

Experts conducted the KIIs and FGDs using the discussion guides provided by JaRco. After completing discussions, they prepared expanded field notes – not verbatim translation – and handed those to the evaluation team leader together with the recorded audio files. The notes were thoroughly analysed while the audio recordings were kept in a password-protected computer at the data management office.

4.5.5. Qualitative data handling and analysis

The qualitative data gathered from in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions were used to further explore Key Evaluation Questions for this baseline assessment. The tools were designed to test the assumptions of the targeting and intervention of the project through exploring the experiences of those exposed to the intervention. The qualitative data helped verify whether the intervention logic was actually workable in the way that it is expected or not. The primary purpose of collecting the qualitative data was for triangulation.

4.5.6 Challenges during baseline qualitative data collection

Qualitative researchers faced hardly any challenges during data collection but even those few ones were systematically mitigated as follows:

- Due to scorching hot weather in some regions, few interviewees and discussants were often inattentive. The researchers arranged most of the interview and discussion time in early mornings as a result.

- Some girls aged 10-14 were timid to talk about personal issues. Researchers managed to create friendly environment to help these girls fill at ease and open up.

5. Key characteristic of subgroups and barriers faced

This section of the report includes specific information about baseline respondents, their key characteristic subgroups and barriers faced that result in education marginalization. For this study, the subgroups of beneficiaries are girls aged 10 to 14 and 15 to19 that present the characteristics outlined in table 10 below. Note that the characteristics subgroups here are by no means wholly discrete but rather connected with one another. That means girls fall into more than one subgroup. Perhaps the most common ones are girls under early marriage and childbirth categories who are largely found in girls with high domestic chores subgroup. This section, therefore, further presents about the following subgroups and the pertaining barriers they face in their respective contexts:

- Girls with disabilities,
- Girls living in extreme poverty,
- Girls with lack of physical access to education,
- Girls with high domestic chores
- Girls experiencing early marriage and childbirth

Table 10: Key characteristics subgroups

Characteristic	Proportion of sample with characteristic%								
	Afar		Amhara	Oromia		SNNPR		Total	
	ABE	IFAL	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL
Girls with disability									
No.	5	4	6	3	8	16	15	24	33
%	4.9	3.8	13.6	1.4	3.7	6.9	10.6	4.4	6.5
[8]Girls living in extreme poverty									
No.	29	27	21	143	139	141	90	313	277
%	28.4	25.5	47.7	66.5	64.7	61.0	63.8	57.1	54.7
[9]Girls with lack of physical access to education									
No.	19	11	14	45	46	50	51	114	122
%	18.6	10.4	31.8	20.9	21.4	21.6	36.2	20.8	24.1
[10]Girls with high Domestic Chores									
No.	68	72	36	175	182	79	72	322	362
%	66.7	67.9	81.8	81.4	84.7	34.2	51.1	58.8	71.5
Girls experiencing early marriage									
No.	4	41	8	1	19	5	16	10	84
%	3.9	38.7	18.2	0.5	8.8	2.2	11.3	1.8	16.6
Girls experiencing early childbirth									
No.	29	46	3	0	10	8	13	37	72
%	28.4	43.4	6.8	0.0	4.7	3.5	9.2	6.8	14.2

[8]Girls living in a household that is unable to meet basic needs without charity
[9] Girls that would walk for more than 31 minutes to a nearby school
[10] Girls who spend half to a whole day carrying out domestic work

N=	102	106	44	215	215	231	141	548	506
%	49.0	51.0	100.0	50.0	50.0	62.1	37.9	52.0	48.0
Total N =	208		44	430		372		1054	

One of the major specific sub-groups incorporated in this project are girls with disabilities. Table 12 below demonstrates the percentages of sampled disabled girls included in the baseline survey from each region.

Table 11: Sample breakdown by region and disability (N = 57)

	Afar (N= 208)		**Amhara (N=44)**		**Oromia (N= 430)**		**SNNPR (N= 372)**		**Total (N=1054)**	
Proportion of girls with at least one difficulty	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
	9	4.3	6	13.6	11	2.6	31	8.3	57	5.4
Domain of Difficulty										
Seeing	0	0.0	1	2.3	1	0.2	9	2.4	11	1.0
Hearing	2	1.0	0	0.0	6	1.4	9	2.4	17	1.6
Walking	3	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.5	5	0.5
Self-care	1	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.5	3	0.8	6	0.6
Communication	1	0.5	0	0.0	4	0.9	2	0.5	7	0.7
Learning	0	0.0	1	2.3	6	1.4	6	1.6	15	1.4
Remembering	2	1.0	2	4.5	3	0.7	6	1.6	13	1.2
Concentrating	1	0.5	2	4.5	3	0.7	9	2.4	15	1.4
Accepting change	3	1.4	1	2.3	5	1.2	9	2.4	18	1.7
Controlling behavior	3	1.4	0	0.0	5	1.2	3	0.8	12	1.1
Making friends	2	1.0	2	4.5	4	0.9	6	1.6	12	1.1
Anxiety	2	1.0	1	2.3	5	1.2	6	1.6	14	1.3
Depression	1	0.5	1	2.3	4	0.9	3	0.8	9	0.9

This disability status data is the one gathered through the girls' survey. The data gathered from primary caregivers regarding the disability status of the girls demonstrated a slight difference from the data obtained from girls' survey. Consequently, a decision was put in place to only consider the number of disabled girls identified through the girls' survey for this baseline assessment.

Overall, 57 girls with multiple types of disability were sampled for this study. Since the Washington Group (WG) disability questions administered for this assessment included multiple choices on different types of disability, the sampled girls had chosen more than one domain of difficulty- implying that one girl could have learning, remembering or hearing difficulty at the same time. The above table, therefore, reveals the different types of disability these 57 sampled disabled girls have - each number representing the types of disability the girls face.

More than half of the sampled girls for this study live under poverty. In particular, 65.6% of the girls in Oromia and 62.1% in SNNPR live in a household where their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, healthcare and education are not met. 47.2% of the girls in Amhara as well live in a similar condition. Though relatively less, 26.9% of the sampled girls in Afar are also deprived of basic goods and services.

A notable number of sample girls in all the regions would walk for 31minutes to 3 hours to access a nearby school. Of the 1054 sampled girls, 22.3% are in this subgroup with the highest proportion from Amhara at 31.8%.

The other prominent subgroups of this project are girls with high domestic chores. In this study, 65% of the sampled girls are responsible to undertake their households' work chores for half to a whole day. This is the main reason why many girls particularly in Oromia and Afar are currently not enrolled in formal schools.

The girls' Marriage and Child birth status related questions were only asked to the Primary caregivers with an intention that the caregivers cannot miss out on these issues and that they could be more open to talk about these than the girls. Subsequently, all findings presented in this report relied on the data from these sources. As in put clearly in table 11above, amongst the overall 1,054 sampled girls for this study, 8.9% are married while 10.3% have experienced early childbirth. Afar takes the lion's share in both statuses with 21.1% married and 36 % mothers out of the 208 sampled girls in the region.

For further information, a question was posed to the primary caregivers to find out about their girls' previous formal education enrollment status. The question simply asked the caretakers if their girls have or have not been to a formal school no matter what level of grade they were when they dropped out.

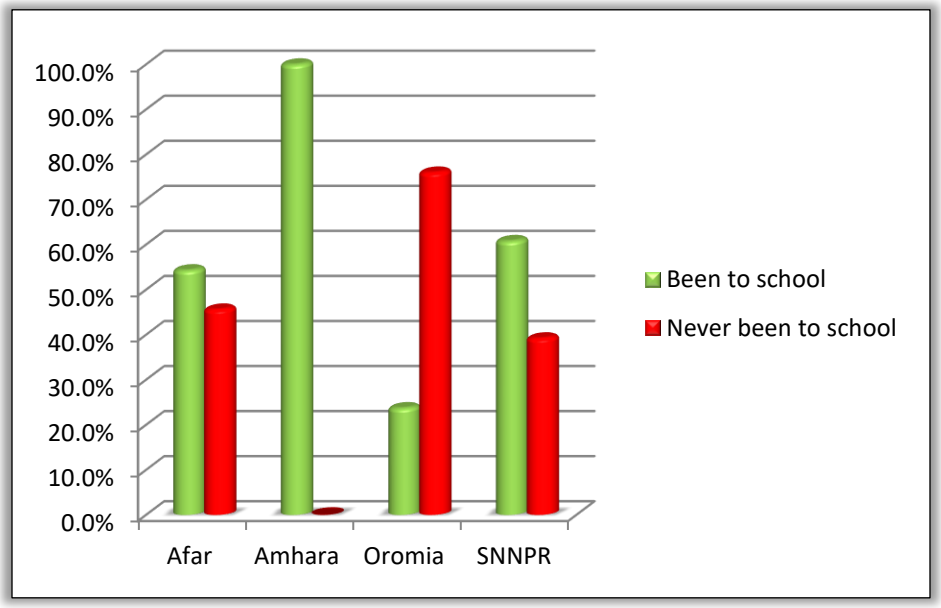


Figure 2: Girls previous formal education enrollment status

According to Primary caregivers, out of the sampled 1,054 girls, 46% of the girls have been enrolled in a formal school while 53.8% have never been to a formal school at all. Proportionately higher numbers of sampled girls in Oromia and Afar have never been to school since these regions are hub for pastoralist communities with (recurrent) drought-prone areas often moving from place to place in search of water,

which could affect their girls' school enrollment. Out of the overall sampled 430 girls in Oromia, 76% of them have never been enrolled in a formal education while only 23.7% were once enrolled showing that more than half of the girls in this region have never had the chance to attend formal education. In Afar, still, more than half of the respondents implied that their girls (54.3%) had once been to a formal school while 45.6% did not have the chance to do so. However, in SNNPR, the majority of girls (60.8%) have once been enrolled in formal education but dropped out while 39.2% have not attended any formal education at all. In Amhara, the circumstance is different that all the sampled girls have had the chance to be enrolled in a formal school.

5.1 Environment and context

To identify the intensity of barriers resulting in girls' education marginalization, understanding living environments and context is critical. Here, unique and common geographical and ecological features of the four regions are briefly presented. As mentioned in previous sections, project interventions take place in selected zones of the regions: only Awsi in Afar, Borena in Oromia, South Wollo in Amhara and Gedeo in SNNPR. In this report, the zones are represented by their regions as a whole only for simplicity reason. Note: all the information presented below is taken from the qualitative data collected.

5.1.1 Afar (Awsi)

A. Rural village life

Most of the respondents in the FGD and KIIs described living in villages or small towns, with limited infrastructure such as roads, bridges or community infrastructure (e.g. schools and health centers). The area's predominant geographical feature is the Awash River that has no bridge where people have to cross using strategically placed logs. When it floods, crossing using improvised bridges in this way becomes impossible and communities are forced to use other paths to go around it. As will be seen, flooding comes with its own set of challenges (mobility).

B. Livelihoods and drought

The most significant issue reported was the yearly flooding and overflow of the Awash River, which creates significant difficulties. Duration of flooding and related disruptions was varied between communities, with the general consensus that the flood is a problem from between two to three months. One individual stated:

> *"The flood occurs every year for minimum of two to three months. In some cases the flood continues for a year. At this time what we do is collect our materials and move to dry mountains until the water level goes down. Because of the flood the students' education is not affected much because they use another road to school."*

The livelihoods of respondents in Afar are dependent on agriculture and rearing of cattle. Climate-related issues impact their livelihoods significantly such as drought that threatens food security:

> *"The other problem is drought which results in worms that attack their maize… The worm can only be treated with rain water."*

Also related to a lack of rainwater is the fact that many pastoralists move frequently to graze their cattle. This lifestyle and form of livelihood can make it difficult to reach individuals with necessary infrastructure and support, as their mobility makes them harder to monitor and provide for.

C. **Prosopis juliflora – invasive Plant**

Although there is no mention of the invasion of Prosopis juliflora in the Afar region during FGD or KII, there have been studies conducted on the serious potential impacts of this plant species on people's food security and livelihoods in the region. People and livestock suffer from injuries from the sharp and poisonous Prosopis thorns. Local people report that dangerous wild animals' such as, hyena, jackal, lion and leopard, attacks on livestock have increased since the prosopis invasion[11] (Admasu, 2008)[12]. The mention of this hazardous plant in this study could play a role in identifying underlying barriers to girls' safety during journeys to schools (centers) and overall socio-economic of the people living in the area.

5.1.2 Oromia (Borena)

A. Remote, rural, isolated communities

Many of the communities spoken with, reside in remote areas with little-to-no infrastructure. One focus group of mothers in Elweye stated: *"Our specific area is called 'sonyhalta', where we have no road, no bridge and no water. It is difficult even for a car to get into our area."* This accounts for a great deal of the challenges faced by remote communities. Without adequate transportation links or possibility of moving between local areas, there are few opportunities to pursue lucrative means of making a living.

B. Livelihoods and drought

The inhabitants of Dillo in particular are pastoralists, depending on the sale of cattle for their livelihoods. The community is rural and residents see little opportunity to pursue other ways of life. While some people do report starting small businesses, much of this involves collecting firewood, taking it to the city and reselling it – an activity that yields low profits for strenuous activity.

Because there is limited water in the area, the population is heavily dependent on rain in order to graze their herds, as well as for drinking and household usage. In recent months, a severe drought has created particularly challenging situation where many farmers have reported leaving the area in search of more fertile land. Others simply wait for the rainy season to come.

That pastoralists often undertake seasonal migration, (due to the dry, remote and rural nature of the environment in which they live) reproduces the poverty and marginalization that these groups face. As summed up by one of the Oromia regional officials interviewed:

> *"Pastoralist communities usually move from place to place to search for water and grass for their cattle. This situation is not backwardness; rather, it is about survival. Safe and good situations are not fulfilled for pastoralist communities; they are ignored in the country. There are no facilities, infrastructure or clean water."*

This quotation underscores the challenges such individuals face: if they stay in one place, they might be more likely to eventually enjoy safe, equitable access to water, education and institutional support to help them reduce their poverty; on the other hand, they can hardly sit and wait for such support to come as the drought is too harsh.

[11]Shiferaw, H., Schaffner, U., Bewket, W., Alamirew, T., Zeleke, G., Teketay, D., and Eckert, S. 2019. Modelling the current fractional cover of an invasive alien plant and drivers of its invasion in a dryland ecosystem.
[12]Admasu, D. (2008). Invasive Plants and Food Security:. *Farm-Africa* .

C. Conflict and security

Some of the areas included in this research (Dillo Woreda) are close to the Kenyan border and have seen some bouts of violence and insecurity, resulting in the temporary closure of some schools and disruption to normal life. However, the community was keen to stress that there is no violence or insecurity in the area and failed to mention the conflict; it was only through KIIs with community and woreda officials that the existence of any conflict was learned.

The effect of border-related violence on local people can be seen as relatively minimal; most individuals were much keener to talk about other issues that impact on their lives. For example, when pressed as to whether war or violence had ever impacted their lives, a focus group of fathers stated: *"there is no war other than drought."* As such, although clearly there are instances of conflict, these are a secondary concern when compared to the seemingly more immediate dangers of hunger, poverty and drought.

In addition to outbreaks of violence close to Ethiopia's national borders, there has been considerable inter-ethnic/regional conflict that has resulted in disturbance. Oromia regional officials described how conflict along the border of Oromia and Somali regions had resulted in considerable disruption to education: many schools were forced to close and, when they reopened, many children did not return because the interference was too difficult to recover from. As one official commented, *"missing one or two years means a lot."* Furthermore, some schools were actually destroyed in battles and, given limited resources for reconstruction and refurbishment, are still in dilapidated conditions.

5.1.3. Amhara (South Wollo)

A. Highlanders and lowlanders

Communities in Amhara described two sorts of terrain: highland and lowland. The highland area was described as "not productive" and frequently affected by drought and cold weather conditions, making farming difficult. Some educational officials described it as an area characterized by poorer educational attainment. In spite of this, the lowlanders also said they had limited access to schooling, claiming that the highland areas have more schools. There was little information to suggest what the differences actually are.

B. Livelihoods and drought

The vast majority of respondents described their livelihoods as reliant on farming, supplemented by occasional daily labor work where available. As such, the community is heavily dependent on sufficient and predictable rainfall to plan productive agricultural activities. However, as reported by an interview with a mother in Dessie Zuria Woreda:

> *"In every season there is shortage of production, especially if there is no adequate rain during autumn, food shortage is a serious problem. My worry is my inability to support my life, nothing else."*

When asked about whether natural disasters occur in the area, participants universally stated that yes, there are – including flood and drought, causing substantial challenges for food security, livelihoods and attending school. The previous year (2011 E.C. / 2019 G.C.), for instance, there was a serious flood and

"most of the people" in one of the communities surveyed were affected, resulting in damage to crops as well as school closures for several days.

5.1.4. SNNPR (Gedeo)

A. Livelihoods and drought

Given the prevalence of coffee farming in most respondents' livelihoods, climate plays a big role in their live. Almost all respondents spoke of droughts and frosty weather in 2017, which "resulted in demolishment of coffee plants in the woreda but there were no problems related to floods, drought and storms." Planting of "inset" was also described as a livelihood.

B. Conflict and security

Respondents described ***'narrow nationalism'*** as having caused conflict in the recent past. This conflict (in 2017-18 G.C) resulted in loss of human life, serious destruction of property, displacement of people from their residence, physical and psychological attacks on women like rape, sexual harassment and abduction. Participants stated that this was the result of the widespread dissemination of false propaganda, but did not specify who this had come from or what 'sides' were taken by different groups or communities.

Given that almost all respondents referred to this, it is likely to have a continued impact on individuals' well-being and personal perceptions of security. However, "differences in wealth, income, social status, ethnic background, tribe, religious beliefs, political ideology, age or gender" were not the causes of the conflict. These differences are described as being respected and never having resulted in conflict or violence.

5.2. Barriers to school enrolment and attainment

5.2.1 Economic Factors

Across all four regions, the majority of the surveyed households (79.8% - 841 from 1054) are male headed, while 20.2% (213) are female-headed. In contrast to most males being household heads, however, the majority of sampled caregivers in households are females. Across regions, 91.2% (961 of 1054) caregivers are females while only 8.8% (93) are males, with no major differences between each region surveyed.

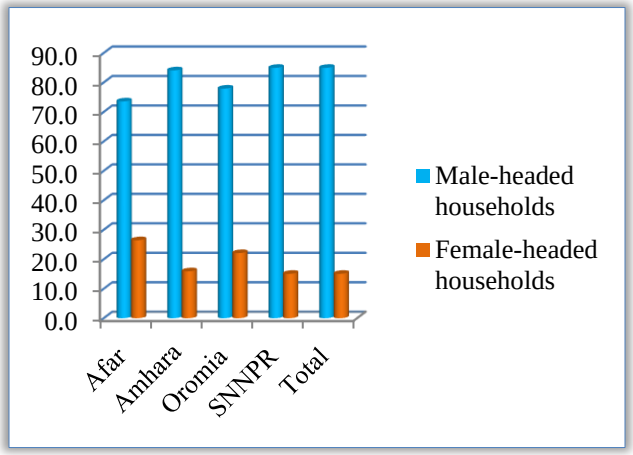


Figure 3: Gender of household heads

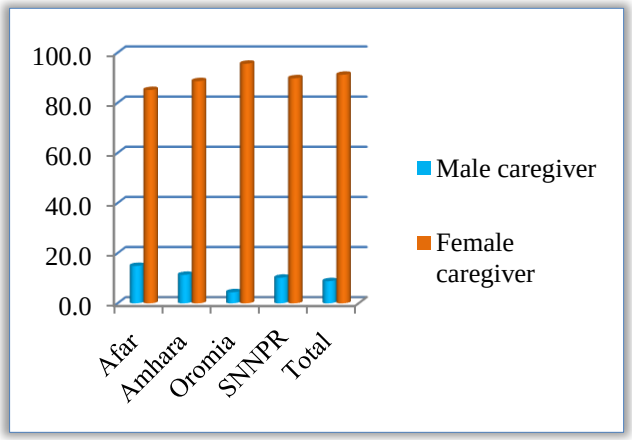


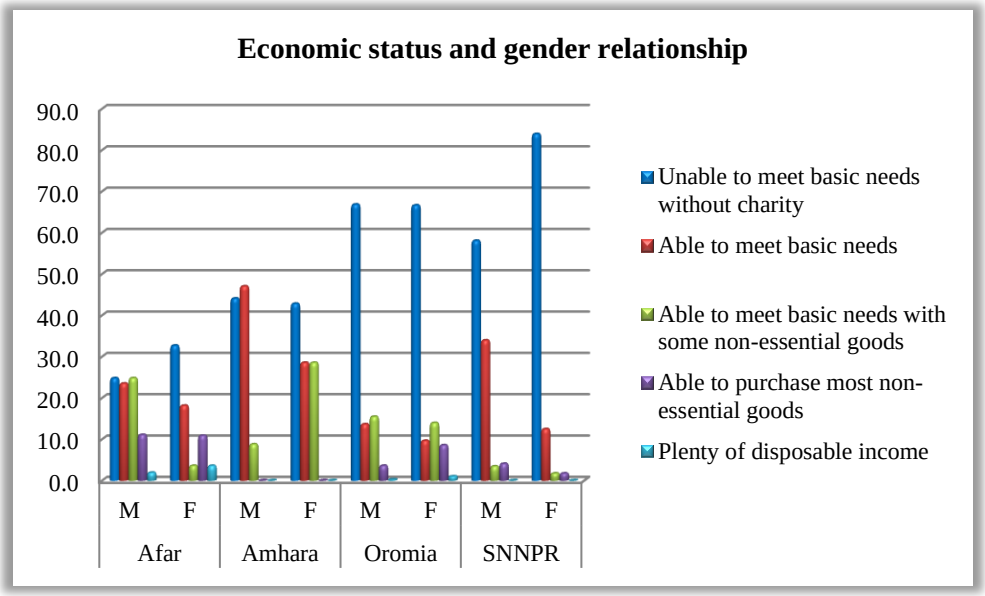
Figure 4: Gender of caregivers

The relationship between caregivers and household heads can be categorized in two ways: caregivers are either the wives or husbands of the household heads or are, themselves, heads of the household. For instance, 69.4% (731) of the caregivers sampled for this study are wives or husbands of the head of households across the four regions, while 26.4% (278) of caregivers are, themselves, heads of the household. The data collected from household surveys show that the majority of caregivers are mothers of the sampled girls: 90.9% in Afar; 84.1% in SNNPR; 91.6% in Oromia, and 84.1% in Amhara are the mothers of the girls.

According to the data from household survey, across regions, 73.9% of households are run by heads who are farmers (with the exception of Afar, where household heads were more likely to carry out building work, daily labor or household chores, with a considerable percentage out of work). Of the farmers surveyed, more use their produce to feed their household (46.1% of all household heads) than sell their products at the market (28.2% of household heads surveyed). As such, it is possible to infer that the majority of farmers lack the surplus possible to sell at market after feeding their own families. It is clear that, even though families are trying their hardest to earn sufficient income, they lack the necessary resources to keep their children in school in some cases. In Amhara, in particular, this problem was so acute that interviewed girls themselves said they dropped out in order to secure jobs and begin earning their own money.

Amongst the 1054 sampled households, 56% cannot meet their basic needs without charity or external help while 22% are able to meet only basic needs, but cannot purchase extra things that are not regarded as essential. The female and male headed households' ability to meet basic needs do not show a considerable difference.

Figure 5: Economic status and gender relationship



SNNPR and Oromia are home to the largest proportion of both male and female headed households who are unable to meet basic needs without charity. Except in SNNPR, both the male and female household heads in the other regions have similar economic status. The majority are either able or unable to meet basic needs with very few able to add some non-essentials. In SNNPR, the female headed households (83.9%) seem to be challenged with the inability of fulfilling basic needs more than the male-headed households – even though the men still face similar issues. In this region, less than 4% of households can meet basic needs with some non-essential goods. Those in Oromia gave a similar indication of their financial situation that 66.9% of the men and 66.7% of the female heads

cannot meet basic needs. Respondents from Amhara and Afar also answered as such. In Amhara 43% of the female and 44.1% of the men-headed households cannot meet their basic necessities. And in Afar, 32.7% female heads and 24.8% male household heads indicated a similar phenomenon. Most of the remaining respondents from all the regions selected that they can only meet basic needs, with no remaining money for non-essentials - suggesting people are particularly struggling to make ends meet in these regions.

Even though a considerable proportion of sampled households were reported to have no or very little ability to satisfy family members' basic needs, the majority of respondents said food requirements are met most of the time. In Amhara 79.5% (35), in Afar, 57.7% (120), in Oromia 60% (258), and in SNNPR 26.9% (100) of households have never gone to sleep feeling hungry over the past month. Meanwhile, 19.2% (202) of overall respondents reported having gone to sleep hungry for few days in the past month and 17.4% (183) indicated this was 'many' days – particularly in SNNPR, where hunger was described most, and Oromia. A further 40 respondents (3.8%) indicated having gone to sleep hungry on most days in the past month.

It is worthwhile noting that this survey was conducted in February. Given that different regions grow different crops, harvesting is likely to take place at different times, which affects household's levels of hunger considerably – particularly given that so many respondents described their employment as farming

for subsistence or marketing produce. As such, seasonality can affect hunger levels either directly or indirectly, if households lack produce to sell and hence lack the necessary income to purchase food.

On the other hand, across all regions, 21.3% (225) and 26.5% (279) sampled caregivers responded that they went without any cash income for all or many days over the past month. Sampled caregivers, particularly in SNNPR and Oromia, seem to struggle with generating cash income. In SNNPR for instance, only 8.3% (31 out of 372) of caregivers said they never lacked income, while only 1.9% (7) said they might lack income for only a day. In contrast, 44.9% (167) of caregivers in this same region indicated that they do not get cash income for many days and 25.8% (96) said they almost never earned cash for a long time. In Oromia, as well, 28.1% of caregivers (121 out of 430) described their households' economic status saying as having been mostly without cash income over the past month. Seasonality ought to be taken into account here: SNNPR is a big coffee-growing region, with the harvest mainly occurring towards the end of the year. However, this survey was undertaken in February which likely affected the results.

A particularly debilitating problem is a lack of clean water for household consumption, which has a negative effect on many sampled girls who spend considerable time fetching water for their families. Overall, 36.1% (380) of sampled households reported almost never having had sufficient access to clean water over the last month, while a further 13.9% (147) reported often not having enough. On the other hand, 5.2% (55) and 11.5% (121) said they went without sufficient water for just one or a few days in the past month. But still, 30.8% of sampled households (325) across the regions also indicated that they never experienced a lack of clean water at all during the past month, according to the sampled caregivers – particularly in Amhara, where 75% of respondents (33 of the 44) stated this had not been an issue for them. A particularly severe lack of water was reported in Oromia where 51.9% (223) and 14.9% (64) of sampled respondents said clean water had not been available ever or on most days during the past month. Generally, a fairly large number of respondents described a shortage of clean drinking water across Oromia, Afar and SNNPR, as 22% (82) and 18.8% (70) caregivers from SNNPR reported that they did not have enough water for most and many days in the past month, while similar claim was made by 34.1% (71) and 4.3% (9) of respondents in Afar.

Although many interviewees and focus group discussion participants described a lack of water, the issue was most consistently described in Oromia, where drought affects livelihoods and disrupts education to a considerable degree. During almost all conversations, the impact of drought was mentioned. One father described it as like a ‘war’, while others spoke of the hopelessness of having to sit around and wait for the rains to come to begin farming again. Those with cattle described moving in search of water, with the teachers going as well because they, too, have no water at home.

Indeed, this is supported by interviews, in which hunger was stated as a key challenge in the lives of many participants – particularly in Afar, which has the lowest percentage of farmers of all regions. During focus groups discussion and interviews, respondents characterized the nature of their livelihoods and farming at length. Those in Oromia, the region home to the highest percentage of farmer heads of household, described the pastoralist nature of their livelihoods, whereby they rear and sell cattle for a living – probably reflecting the high percentage of heads of household engaged in trade/sales farming as a means of income. However, they also noted that such a livelihood involves frequent seasonal migration in search of water for both their herds and themselves. Cattle-rearing was such a prominent feature in Oromia households that the majority of households described how their children were involved in such work – with one child usually remaining out of school in order to look after the animals.

As such, the professions referenced by both qualitative and quantitative research methods evoked a potentially unreliable, climate-dependent way of life yielding unpredictable, often very low incomes. During focus groups and interviews, primary caregivers (especially mothers) characterized the nature of their livelihoods and the prominence farming in their overall ability to care for their families. Unlike household heads, who were more likely to be engaged in selling produce than using it for subsistence (except in Oromia, where the two figures were comparable), primary caregivers tended much more to grow produce and use it for their families. Indeed, most of the professions that caregivers are involved in tend to be those close to the household, reflecting the overall nature of society that women are more likely to take on household tasks – which they cannot do as effectively if they work further from the home.

As per the formal employment status of sampled household heads, the majority are either self-employed or unemployed. In Oromia and SNNPR, 87% (374 of 430) and 83.3% (310 of 372), respectively, are self-employed, while only 13% of respondents are unemployed. Conversely, 51% (106 0f 208) household heads in Afar and half of the heads in Amhara (50%) are not employed at all, while 37.5% (78) and 47.7% (21) are self-employed, respectively. Formal employment was very or somewhat low across all regions, with Oromia having no employed head of households.

Table 12: Employment status of household heads

Employment	**Proportion of respondents (%)**				
	Afar	**Amhara**	**Oromia**	**SNNPR**	**Total**
Employed	11.5	2.3	0.0	3.2	3.5
Self Employed	37.5	47.7	87.0	83.3	74.3
Not employed	51.0	50.0	13.0	13.4	22.2
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Most of the interviewed respondents during KIIs described themselves as working in some capacity or other – whether daily labor, cattle-rearing, trade or agricultural activities. Indeed, no respondent stated they had nothing to do in terms of work, whether this consisted of domestic or household tasks, or other activities in the wider community – even supporting neighbors with their initiatives. However, whether the individuals surveyed universally considered such activity as 'work' in the sense of being employed is called into question by the quantitative data. Respondents were much more likely to state they were not employed in Afar and Amhara than in Oromia and SNNPR which does not necessarily mean that those in the former two regions have less work to do than in the latter regions. The fact that all interview participants spoke of work in an activity-sense (rather than, necessarily, a formal employment-sense), the overall data suggests that conception of what amounts to having a job may be different across regions.

5.2.1.1. Low level of family education

As an average across all regions, most surveyed heads of households are illiterate and have never attended school. Oromia takes the largest proportion of sampled heads of household that have never been to school, at 94.7% (407 of 430). Similarly, in Afar, 79.8% (166 of 208) heads of households had never had any schooling, with the respective figures in Amhara and SNNPR at 52.3% (23 of 44) and 41.4% (154 out of 372). However, it is worth considering SNNPR's figure distribution across the variables which entails that not many interviewed household heads in the region are likely to be illiterate. 21.8% (81) reported having attended grades 1-4 while 21% (78) had reached grades 5-8 like those 20.5% of the respondents in Amhara. As was seen with the head of households sampled for this study, the majority of primary

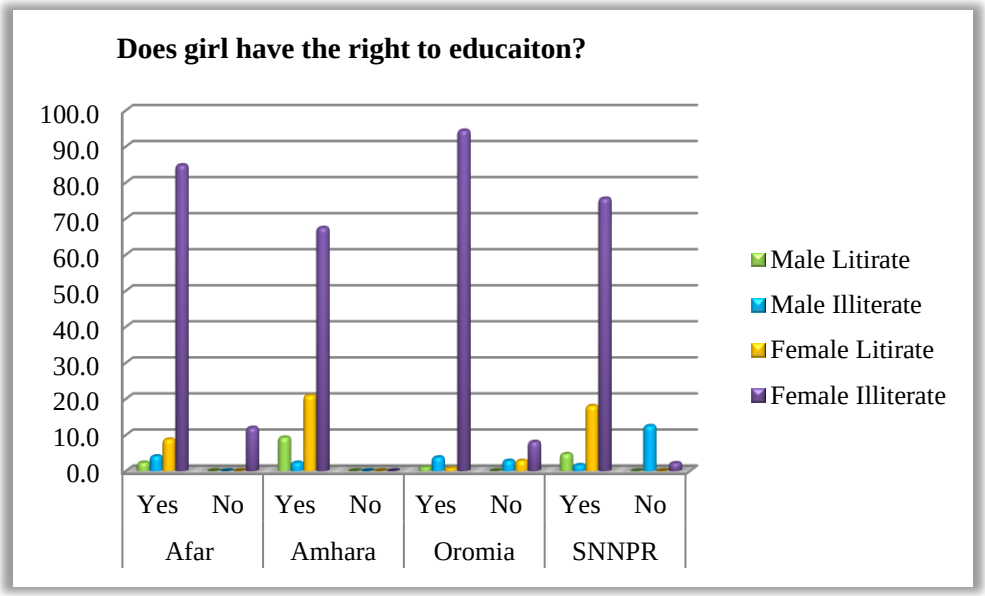
caregivers, 87.1% (918 from 1054), have never been to school. A small number of caregivers attended school, with 2.4% (25) of respondents attending pre-primary; 5.5% (58) attending grades 1-4 and 2.6% (27) who were in grades 5-8.

Some interviewees during KIIs commented on how a lack of education is a vicious cycle in that educated parents are more likely to want to educate their children than those that have not received any schooling. Participants of numerous focus groups from SNNPR, for instance, stated that girls from literate families were much more likely to be supported with the necessary environment that facilitates learning than those from illiterate families. Even though this claim is somehow logically understandable, the relationship between literacy level of caregivers and their perception on their girls' right to education in this study did not show any notable difference in the quantitative data.

To understand the prevailing perceptions towards education of their daughters, a question was posed to caregivers of children with and without disabilities regarding their child's right to go to school. The vast majority of caregivers of all children said they believe their children have the right to education even when not in school. Out of the overall sampled 57 primary caregivers of children with disability, 86% mentioned that their children have the right to go to school, while 8.8% said the opposite. Similarly, 92.2% caregivers of children without disabilities believe it is their children's right to attend education even when not at school. A further 63 caregivers of children without disabilities (6.3% of those in this category) and 5 caregivers of children with disabilities (the slightly higher comparative percentage of 7.8% for this category) said their children do not have the right to go to school.

According to the graph below, the majority of caregivers, in spite of their literacy level and gender, believe that their girls have the right to education even when not in school.

Figure 6: Caregivers' perception of girls' education



Overall, the perceptions of the caregivers across the regions on educating their children can be considered as very positive in spite of their level of education – particularly in Amhara, where no caregiver responded 'no' to the question. However, in Afar, 12%; in Oromia 8.1%, and in SNNPR 1.9% do not

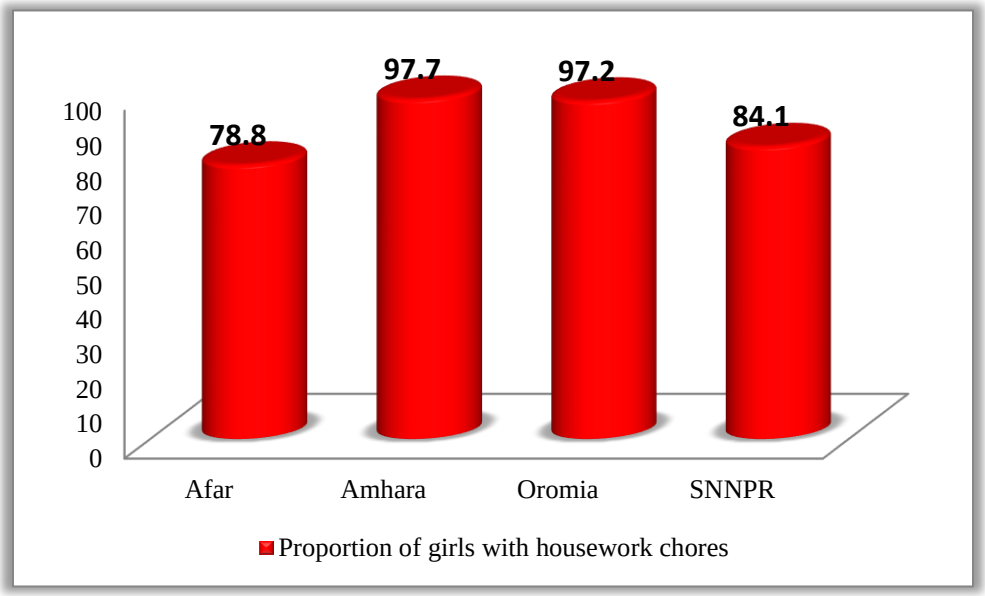
think their children have the right to go to school. Apparently, even though the proportion of these caregivers who were against their girls' right to education was very low, they all share a common feature of being illiterate and females. Even during FGDs with officials, there were accounts of individuals that reported not all members of the community feel positive about girls' education. The Head of PTA in Amhara, for instance, during discussion stated that probably more than 80-85% of the community believes in girls' education. But while this was described as a positive endeavor, it still leaves up to a fifth of the population of girls at risk of not being enrolled or dropping out of school because of their parents' negative attitudes.

However, although the feeling was that girls from literate families are more likely to be supported with the necessary environment that facilitates learning, caregivers during FGDs also stressed that this does not mean that girls with illiterate families have no chance to access education. Indeed, a focus group of mothers in SNNPR, only half of whom had had any form of education at all, agreed that education is important for girls to improve their lives and the lives of their families – demonstrating that their attitudes have changed considerably. Many families described how important it is for their children to stay in school because they, themselves, are illiterate and view their lack of education as a key reason for their current precarious economic and employment statuses. One mother from Amhara, for instance, described how she hoped her daughter would join university so as to generate income and enjoy her life, *"equal opportunity with male counterparts."* As with many of those spoken with, she mentioned a desire for her daughter not to repeat the same lack of educational trajectory she did. As such, it seems that those with less education are inclined to send children to school out of a hope that their girls will gain more opportunities than they did.

That so many respondents are unemployed or mostly undertake domestic chores as a primary form of work, goes some way in explaining girls' anxieties or uncertainty regarding their destination after schooling as well. Although some during discussions mentioned wanting to become physicians, pilots, engineers and teachers, during later stages of discussions, several also reflected on the fact that they did not quite know how their education would help them in later life. A lack of clear role models in their lives in the form of caregivers with sustainable, well-paid employment that requires a degree of education provides a critical barrier towards girls' motivation to remain in school: many simply cannot imagine the lives that education will help them lead after.

5.2.1.2 Girls' Housework Chores

Figure 7: Sampled girls housework chores



The quantitative data collected from the primary caregivers of sampled girls for this study shows that the majority of sampled girls (89%) spend time in their houses doing domestic housework activities. Proportionately high number of girls in Oromia and Amhara seem to be engaged in undertaking different housework chores in comparison to the other regions. According to the caretakers in Amhara and Oromia, their girls have housework responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, or washing clothes in the households at 97.7% and 97.2% respectively. In SNNPR and Afar as well, considerable number of girls are said to be involved in various types of works in the household.

This was echoed in focus groups and interviews on numerous occasions. Household tasks were universally described as being divided between girls and boys, according to the task and gender. One focus group of fathers in Oromia described how:

> *"Boys' tasks are looking after cattle and goats… Girls have more work such as collecting firewood, fetching water, preparing food and any other household works."*

Similarly in Afar, this statistics was supported by various discussants in the regions, but in particular by teachers who pointed out that:

> *"Generally the attendance, retention and attainment level of boys are better than girls. The main reasons of girls for low attendance, high dropout and low retention are marriage, giving birth and family work load."*

The basic and fundamental distinction between genders reflected by this quotation is manifested in other areas of life, translating to different opportunities and prospects for each gender. Indeed, a mother in Amhara referenced how girls will be required to stay at home and carry out domestic chores if their mother is away, ill, give birth to a child, or particularly busy. Although keen to stress on this occurs when girls are not in school, it is clear that they felt burdened by having to carry out such a large amount of household tasks.

As per the type of domestic tasks these girls undertake, looking after or carrying for a family member is the major one. Still, a considerable number of caregivers (77.6%) reported that their girls spend time looking after other family members.. In Oromia 88.4% of the sampled girls are responsible to look after their older or younger family member, while this figure is 74.5% in SNNPR. In Amhara and Afar as well, 72.7% and 62% of the caretakers implied that their girls are required to take care of a family member in the household.

This was echoed by other officials, including a PTA Official representative, who spoke of early marriage, workload as a household leader, domestic tasks, pregnancy and having to rear cattle. *"No attempt is done to improve girls' situation,"* they added – suggesting that the variety of reasons for girls' dropout ought to be better addressed. The main reason of for less experience of girls at school according to the informant is family problem:

> *"For instance, girls miss class or drop out of schools to take care of their parents when they are sick or get old, as in the case of my daughter who dropped out to take care of her sick father."*

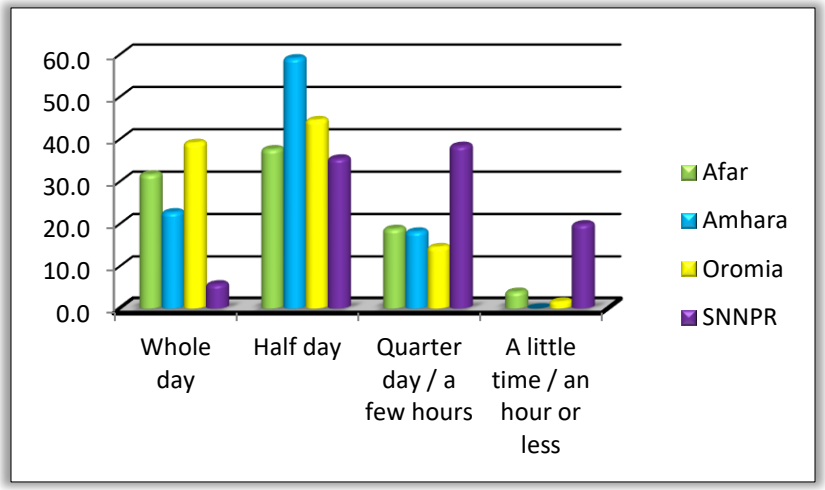
Of the different types of housework girls need to undertake, fetching water requires a reasonable amount of time and energy as in most cases, especially in rural areas with a lack of clean water, fetching water requires people to travel or walk to considerable distances. This may or may not be the case for sampled girls in this study, but there is still a very large proportion of girls, that is 97.1%, who must or need to fetch water for the household. all the sampled girls in Amhara are mandated to fetch water for the households, while in the rest of the regions more than 90% of the girls are required to fetch water for use in their households. This particular task is executed by larger number of sampled girls in comparison to the other types of housework girls need to undertake.

Many surveyed girls for this study also help with agricultural works. Overall, 63.1% girls across the regions engage in farming-related and livestock activities. Being the two known nomadic pastoralist communities in Ethiopia, Oromia (Borena) and Afar take the lion's share in occupying their sampled girls with livestock- related activities. 85.3% of the girls in Oromia and 85% in Afar are responsible to carryout livestock-related tasks. Since livelihoods in Amhara as well was described as being reliant on farming, 77.3% of sampled girls in this region are reported to be engaged in agricultural works of the household. However, the situation is different in SNNPR where coffee farming and 'Inset' planting are the major livelihoods of the community there. The majority of girls (76.6%) were described as not helping their families with any kind of agricultural work while only 23.4% were said to do so.

Sampled primary caregivers were also asked if their girls help with family business or any work they do outside their houses. 75% of the respondents implied that their girls are not engaged in any form of work outside their houses. This is relatively higher in Oromia that 90% of the girls in this region do not help with family business or anything related to that. This is also true for the 76.1% of girls in SNNPR while in Amhara and Afar relatively higher number of girls were said to experience the opposite. In Afar, 52.9% of the girls and in Amhara 45.5% assist their families with non-agricultural works away from their houses- implying that still the majority workload for girls comes from home than from outside.

Time spent by girls doing all the above-mentioned housework every day

Figure 8: Amount of time girls take to carryout house chores on a daily basis



Sampled girls across the regions spend a considerable amount of time per day supporting their families with the previously mentioned works. As can be seen in the chart, except for few girls in SNNPR (19.9%), undertaking housework tasks or helping family members inside the house cannot be completed in just an hour or less, but more. For the majority (64.9%) of the girls across the regions, spending half or a whole day for domestic work is inevitable. 59.1% of the girls in Amhara spend half a day while for the other 22.7% a whole day is required for the tasks. The same is true for girls in Oromia that 44.5% help in the house for half a day while 39.1% are needed to do the same for an entire day – a relatively higher percentage of girls spending a whole day for domestic work in this region. 37.6% of girls in Afar as well are mandated to help out in the house for half a day while 31.7% others need to do all the work for a whole day. In SNNPR, however, most of the girls spend from few hours to a half day to undertake their daily chores with just 5.7% of them spending a whole day.

All in all, the quantitative data collected for this study implies that, 53.8% of sampled girls in Oromia and 45.6% in Afar are mainly Out of School because of the amount of time they take to complete housework. As a result, these two regions are especially accountable for the marginalization of these specific subgroups. Girls living in these two nomadic communities are mandated to work for their households to an extent of preventing a number of them from going to school.

Married girls, including those who already mothered a child spend half to a whole day doing different housework in all the regions, particularly in Amhara and Oromia. In Amhara, all the sampled married girls undertake domestic chores for up to a whole day while also in Oromia 90% of the married girls are in a similar situation. Similarly, 85.7% of the married girls in SNNPR and the 68.1% in Afar are always mandated to work for half to a whole day in their houses implying that these specific subgroups are majorly affected by the barrier. In Afar, married and unmarried girls who mothered a child spend a relatively more amount of time working in the household than those girls who are just married with no children.

Girls living in poverty are the other subgroups identified in this study for facing a similar barrier. 65.6% of the girls in this study who live in households that are unable to meet basic needs spend from half to a whole day undertaking domestic housework. 82.1% of girls in Afar who live in such condition need to carryout different works in their houses for such an extended amount of time. The same is true in Amhara and Oromia that more than 75% of the girls in extreme poverty provide help to their families for a considerable amount of time.

During interviews and FGDs, girls described the work they have to complete at home for their families as taking a considerable amount of time, even though they did not go as far as specifying the number of hours. None mentioned having to work a full or half day – perhaps suggesting that they see this as relatively normal and un-noteworthy despite the fact that the survey results reveal an enormous amount of time spent on such tasks- undoubtedly taking away from the time they have to study or even go to school.

5.2.2. School-based Factors

5.2.2.1. Journey to school- distance

Table 13: Amount of time girls spend to travel to a nearby formal school

	Sample proportion of girls (%)						
	0-15 min	16-30 min	31 min to 1hr	1:01 to 3 hrs	3:01 to 5 hrs	Don't Know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Amhara	26.5	32.4	14.7	26.5	0.0	0.0	3.8
Oromia	38.4	33.7	17.2	4.0	0.0	6.7	48.2
SNNPR	27.0	39.7	26.3	6.0	0.3	0.7	33.6
Afar	55.8	20.9	12.4	8.5	2.3	0.0	14.4
Total	36.6	33.8	19.5	6.2	0.4	3.5	100.0

It could take the majority of sampled girls 0-30 minutes to reach their nearby school across the four regions. In Afar, specifically, 55.8% of girls would reach a learning establishment in under 15 minutes, with a further 20.9% arriving in 30 minutes or less. A similar situation can be seen for girls in Oromia and SNNPR that many of them access their schools within 30 minutes or less. This is somewhat acceptable in terms of the standard distance schools should have from the students' homes. However, the most important issue lies on those girls who have to travel to their schools for more than 30 minutes or even hours every day to attend their formal education.

The data collected as depicted above in the table, shows that, in extreme cases, there are girls who could spend a lot of hours ranging to even 5 hours to reach to the 'nearby' school– particularly in Afar. Relatively, the number of these girls might not seem to stand out in the data but still, it is important to consider the time even a single marginalized girl spends to get to her school. Out of the overall sampled 1054 girls across the regions, 19.5 % would travel for 31 minutes to an hour to reach a nearby school.

In Amhara, girls seem to travel farther than the rest of the girls in the other regions that 17.6% samples in the region could walk one to three hours to reach a school nearby. During interviews and focus groups, the distance of nearby schools from children's homes was raised as an issue in several regions. In Amhara, for example, many girls reported that their last journey took over an hour and was hazardous journey involving strong sunlight, arriving home late at night and facing the aggression of wild animals, such as hyenas and foxes. According to an interview with a girl in Legambo Woreda, aged just 10-14:

> *"[The journey from] school to my home is far, it takes some time to reach to school. We cross a jungle of eucalyptus tree and a small river. But as we come in groups we don't feel frustrated to go to school and back to home."*

This quotation exemplifies the strong motivation and determination of children to pursue education in spite of the obstacles faced. However, the fact that girls reported feeling safe because they travel in

groups was striking as children should not need to rely on 'safety in numbers' to pursue their education safely. Similar statement was captured from primary caregivers' responses to safety related questions which will be discussed in much detail below.

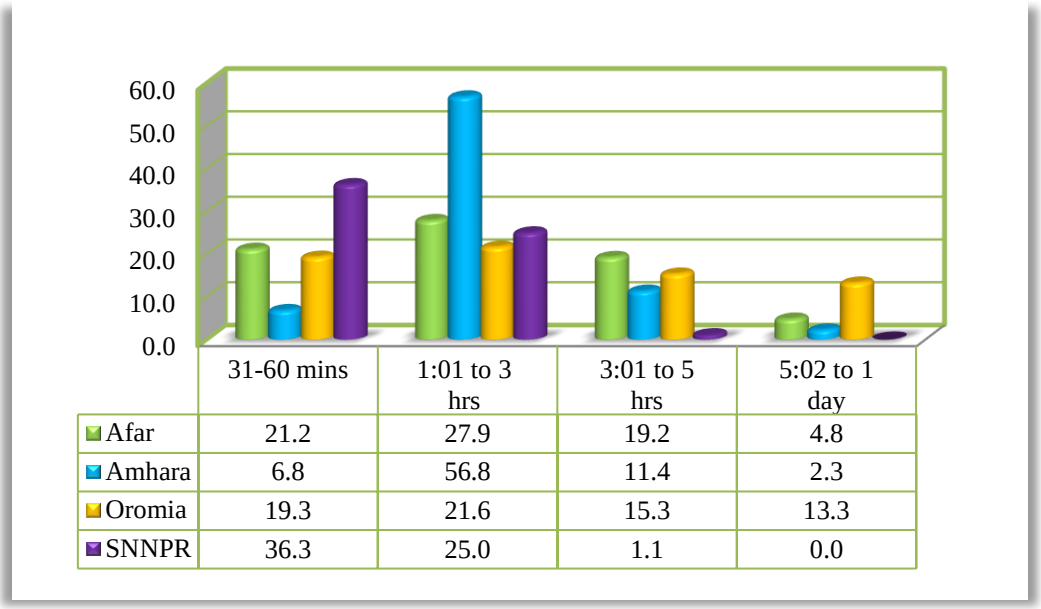
In Afar, similarly treacherous journeys were reported by parents who have strong concerns regarding enrolling their children in faraway schools because of the potential danger:

> *"We parents have concerns about our children because they travel through a forest in which wild animals live – hyenas, crocodiles and hippos – and they cross the Awash River using logs lying across the river with no bridge."*

The fact that parents were concerned about their physically able-bodied children attending school via this journey, makes it difficult to image parents of disabled children being willing or able to allow their children to make such journey. Indeed, those in Oromia mentioned how the distance of schools would form a critical barrier for children of disabled parents to attend school as well as disabled children themselves – noting that, *"children of people with disabilities are not learning because… they don't want to go far from their family."* In this region, 4 out of the 11 disabled girls would need to walk for 31 minutes to an hour to get to the nearby school.

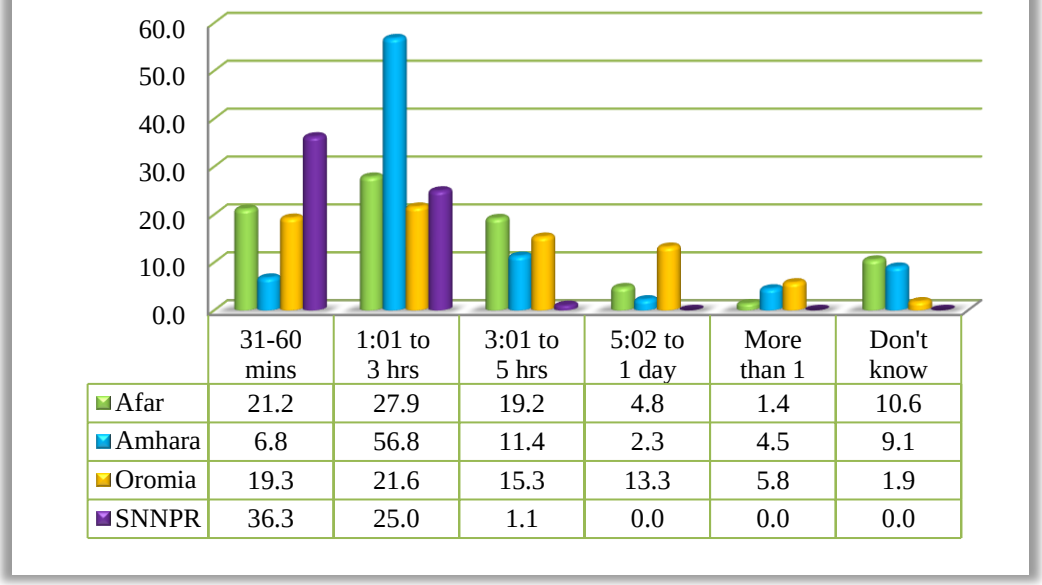
The distance of schools from homes is a critical barrier in terms of parents' willingness to enroll children – not to mention their safety on the journey. Sampled girls' caregivers were asked about the amount of time their girls could take to walk to the nearby primary and secondary schools. The question posed to girls only identified the amount of time they would spend walking to nearby schools, without differentiating between primary and secondary schools as in the case of the question caregivers were asked.

Figure 10: Time taken for girls to walk to the nearest primary school



	31-60 mins	1:01 to 3 hrs	3:01 to 5 hrs	5:02 to 1 day
Afar	21.2	27.9	19.2	4.8
Amhara	6.8	56.8	11.4	2.3
Oromia	19.3	21.6	15.3	13.3
SNNPR	36.3	25.0	1.1	0.0

Figure 9: Time taken for girls to walk to the nearest secondary school



	31-60 mins	1:01 to 3 hrs	3:01 to 5 hrs	5:02 to 1 day	More than 1	Don't know
Afar	21.2	27.9	19.2	4.8	1.4	10.6
Amhara	6.8	56.8	11.4	2.3	4.5	9.1
Oromia	19.3	21.6	15.3	13.3	5.8	1.9
SNNPR	36.3	25.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0

The two graphs above demonstrate that, according to caregivers, the time their girls could take to walk to the nearest primary school is lower than that of the journey to the nearby secondary school. The data displayed in these graphs do not include responses of less than 30 minutes. As previously explained, the intention here is to understand the major problems that girls face, so focusing on the number of girls needing to travel for more than 30 minutes is a priority.

Across all regions, 20.9% of caregivers suggested it could take their girls 31 minutes to an hour to walk to the nearby primary school, while 6.5% of them suggested that it can take their girls from 1 to 3 hours. This length of time can be considered as a major obstacle that girls must overcome to attend formal education. However, secondary schools seem to be even more distant than primary schools in all regions, although respondents from SNNPR suggested that schools were closer to their homes than in any of the other regions. In extreme cases, walking to the nearby secondary school in Amhara, Afar and Oromia can take 3 to 5 hours, according to 10.5% of caregivers, while a further 6.4% stated it would take between 5 hours to a day. Troublingly, 25 caregivers from Oromia, 3 from Afar, and 2 from Amhara stated it would

take their children over a day to walk to the nearest secondary school – with this being particularly acute in Oromia and Afar, where more than 5% of respondents stated the journey can take to over 24 hours.

Indeed, many participants during the FGDs and KIIs stated that making the transition to secondary school was often difficult because of the distance girls would have to travel. Long distances can entail that a child's only option to pursue secondary education is to secure accommodation in a dormitory or boarding house. In addition to the financial burden of paying for food and accommodation which can result in girls dropping out of formal education after primary school, some parents expressed their concerns regarding the length of the journey for children to reach school - exposing them to more potential conflict and violence on the way. That secondary schools were further away, often in a city, was a key reason for girls failing to transition suggested by interviews and discussions – particularly in Amhara. Material barriers – a lack of funding to cover food, housing and uniforms were cited as the main reason for failing to transition to secondary school in this region.

5.2.2.2. Violence and safety

According to the 1054 sampled caregivers across all regions, there has not been any notable difference between the safety of girls and boys walking to school. The majority of respondents, 68.8%, said that girls are very safe while traveling to schools. Similarly, with an average of only 5% more, 71.9% caregivers said boys are also very safe when going to their schools. In Amhara and Oromia, the environment for both girls and boys is perceived by caregivers as being very safe, while in Afar and SNNPR, a nonetheless considerable minority of respondents reported that the environments can be fairly unsafe for both boys and girls. In SNNPR, 20.7% and 19.4% of caregivers said that the environment may be fairly unsafe for girls and boys respectively. In Afar, as well, 7.7% and 5.8% respondents each claimed that the journey to school might not be safe for girls and boys respectively. Perceptibly, 7.7% reported it can be very unsafe for girls in this region.

The statistical data above was confirmed by attitudes expressed in interviews. While most parents reported that the journeys were safe enough that they were not overly worried, some parents described concerns – particularly in Afar and SNNPR, although they stated that nothing bad had ever happened so far, luckily.

In addition, questions were posed about the possible reasons that could make journeys to school unsafe for their children. Since the vast majority of the caretakers in Amhara and Oromia previously indicated the extreme safety of the journey to school, only 5 respondents from Oromia replied to these questions posed about possible reasons for unsafe journey while no respondent was registered from Amhara at all. That being the case, this part of the analysis is primarily on Afar and SNNPR. In these regions, poor roads and long distances of schools from homes were found to be the major commonly-shared causes of unsafe journeys, with 55.3% and 41.6% respectively. Of the respondents who chose poor roads being one of the major causes for unsafe journeys to school, 60.3% are from Afar and 51.6% and are from SNNPR. In Afar, particularly, interviewees noted how the journey takes them across a river with no bridge - part of the road to school being simply logs placed across gushing water. Long distance between schools and homes was the other commonly shared cause of unsafe journey with an overall proportion of 41.6%.

Considering the pertinence of the safety issues in Afar and SNNPR, it is worth noting the following problems that were chosen as the major causes for unsafe travel to schools there:

- **Wild animals**: 49.2% of respondents in Afar. Hyenas, hippopotamuses and wild dogs were described as a crucial barrier towards children's safety in Afar, although girls stated they travel in groups to feel safer on the way.
- **Harassment by other children and adults**: 36.5% of respondents in Afar with reference to harassment at the hands of both. Many interviewees believed that there were minor conflicts among peers but felt that this was not a great concern.
- **Other unspecified causes in the questionnaire**: 33.3% of respondents in SNNPR.

Even though no further issues were raised, interviewees from SNNPR did stress on the need for adequate follow-up with regards to conflict and harassment that girls experience on the way to school – potentially suggesting that some of the instances go unreported or are not dealt with properly. A religious leader of one Kebele described how physical violence, verbal harassment or sexual assault are now decreasing but that girls in some specific areas are still exposed to abduction and rape. The Women Youth and Children Affairs Official described the *"serious effect on girls' education"* and strongly recommended that the bureau takes *"necessary measures on those who are committing such crimes.*

With regards to safety-related problems at schools and on the way to schools, according to the data collected from the overall 895 respondents (girls), very few reported security-related issues as a barrier to their education in Amhara and Oromia, in comparison to the other regions. In SNNPR and Afar, however, as in the safety concern reported on the way to school previously, a nonetheless considerable minority of respondents reported that their school environment is not as well safe. In SNNPR, 20.9% of the girls implied that they face security issues at their schools. In Afar, also, 16.3% stated they do not feel safe in their schools.

During interviews, Kebele and Woreda Officials stated that girls are safe on the way to school. Somewhat encouragingly, they described the situation as having 'improved' over the years, such that girls are much less likely to experience abduction and rape. Girls universally agreed in interviews; although at odds with the 23.7% described above, who felt unsafe, all of those spoken with agreed that they felt safe from threat of conflict or violence on the way to school – particularly as they travel in groups.

However, certain instances arose and alarming stories stood out regarding the potential insecurity girls' face. Two mothers from one Woreda in Amhara spoke of how girls had been abducted and raped on their way to school, while one individual described how this had even happened to a young female teacher. Despite this, communities and respondents in interviews were very keen to stress that the community lives together peacefully and with no conflict, demonstrating either that respondents were eager to downplay instances of violence or that they might not consider such things as constitutive of violence'. Similarly, in the latter line of reasoning, a Woreda Educational Official from Oromia gave an internally contradictory statement that, in itself, reveals the perceptions of what constitutes violence against women and girls:

> *"There is no such activity [verbal or physical conflict] in our woreda. However, sometimes verbal taunting will occur. There is also sexual harassment…"*

That the individual opens the point of view by stating that harassment or violence does not occur but then goes on to describing two clear examples of violence, demonstrates incoherent attitudes and a lack of understanding on the challenges that women and girls face.

To take a different aspect of danger, the geographical features of many regions make journeys unsafe. In Afar, for example, the Awash River cuts across the paths of many girls to school. With no bridge, they are forced to use logs stacked across which is particularly dangerous when the river is high – not to mention the crocodiles and hippopotamuses that live in the area. While children stated that a bridge *"would be nice,"* parents were far more concerned about the danger of journeys, emphasizing that these were considerable barriers towards them enrolling children in school.

Indeed, the issue of safety and security was raised by parents particularly when describing the transition to secondary school and the longer distances that girls need to travel to access further education. While this was less concretely referenced in relation to abduction or physical threats, parents believed that the length of journey might leave children vulnerable and that city life was likely to pressure girls into unsafe situations.

5.2.2.3 School facility / building deprivation

Table 14: Poor school condition characteristics

Poor School condition barriers %								
Regions	**No books**	**No computers**	**No seats**	**No drinking water**	**No toilet**	**Unsafe at school**	**Unsafe school journey**	**Non-inclusive environment**
Afar	14.0	81.4	19.4	64.9	19.4	16.3	14.7	17.1
Amhara	17.6	97.1	5.9	85.7	72.7	2.9	2.9	11.8
Oromia	37.9	79.3	28.1	94.9	93.7	4.4	5.1	10.9
SNNPR	76.5	99.3	39.1	98.7	59.2	20.9	22.5	40.7
Total	**46.7**	**87.0**	**29.7**	**93.9**	**75.6**	**11.6**	**12.3**	**21.9**

Sampled girls described a number of school-related issues that pushed them to the verge of dropping out of education. The most widely recognized barriers are related to poor infrastructure quality of the establishments and lack of adequate resources to provide the basic educational needs girls have in order to stay in school and learn well. Surveyed girls for this baseline assessment were asked to point out as many resource and safety related problems they face in their previous schools as they could possibly recall. Though varying responses were captured, previous schools of sampled girls across the regions were particularly critiqued for not having books, computers, seats, drinking water, toilets, adequate safety and an overall inclusive environment.

The data collected for this baseline study shows that high proportions of respondents, that is, 93.9%[13] did not have potable water at their schools across the regions. This particular lack of potable water barrier was more accentuated in Oromia and SNNPR with 94.9% and 98.7% sampled girls respectively who said the unavailability of potable water in their schools or centers was more severe than the other resources they lacked in their schools' compound. Similarly, 85.7% in Amhara and 64.9% sampled girls in Afar described a lack of clean drinking water at their formal or non-formal education centers. Similar claim

[13] The number of respondents to water and toilet related questions are different from the other barriers here as these two questions unlike the others had follow up questions.

was also raised during discussion with sampled Primary Caregivers that they particularly emphasized on the issue of drinking water saying, *"children are forced to drink river water during break times*" because of the severity of lack of water at their girls' schools.

In Oromia, drought-related issues and threats to livelihoods were raised as an acute issue affecting girls and their families. During the dry season, communities often move to search for water – meaning children either must miss class to go with their families or suffer from severe thirst while at school. Indeed, Woreda and Kebele officials expressed that providing water was an effective way of keeping children in school, while a mother of a child aged 15-19 stated that children often *"lose control and faint because of dehydration when they return home."* Teachers are similarly affected by this issue, affecting their ability to provide quality education to the extent that emergency water tankers have been moved into the area during particularly severe droughts. While water was raised as an issue in other regions, it was described consistently as a fundamental barrier to attending education in Oromia, particularly.

Computer unavailability was more opted than the absence of clean water in this study. However, since the unavailability of potable water is undeniably more noteworthy than the lack of computers at schools, water and other 'must–haves' in standardized schools are more prioritized in this report. Hence, a lack of books and seats in learning classes are the two other prioritized problems sampled girls faced in their schools. In SNNPR, 76.5% of girls claimed that their schools had no books (perhaps not enough) for them, while 37.9% claimed the same in Oromia. Though relatively lower, in Afar and Amhara, as well, 14% and 17.6% respectively reported that there were no books available in their schools– many interviewed girls stating they shared one between three. Lack of books can play a paramount role in students'poor learning outcome, particularly on the younger ones since they make sense of learning more through touching and visualizing objects. In this study, no considerable difference was observed amongst the ages of girls who implied lack of books in their previous schools except for those in SNNPR. In this region, 63.2% of the girls who reported the barrier are aged 10-14 while the rest are older than them.

Seats are the other fundamental prerequisite schools need to fulfill to ensure that students are at least comfortable during class when attending their education. Nevertheless, 29.7% girls confirmed that their schools had no seats in their classrooms. Except in Amhara, where only 5.9% of girls said they had no seats in their schools, the issue of insufficient or simply no chairs seem to be more amplified in the other regions. In SNNPR, for instance, 39.1% revealed that they did not have anything to sit on during class times like the 28.1% girls in Oromia and the 19.4% in Afar. Although the statistics do not reveal such acute issues regarding shortage of chairs, still many girls during discussions described having to sit on a dusty floor while studying. This could cause them health and educational problems. Thus, it causes a major barrier to any girl but more acutely to a girl with physical disabilities from considering attending school even though just only 1.8% of the disabled girls reported this barrier for this study with no notable difference amongst the regions.

The above issues of a lack of books and seats were described as being amplified by high numbers of girls during interview and discussions. As noted by many participants, the number of children in schools is going up with more children accessing education than before. However, without improvements to such basic facilities, it is very possible that motivation will wane as children cannot achieve the education they seek and deserve in an environment where their minimum basic needs are barely met.

Absence of toilets is perhaps more debilitating for girls than boys, particularly for those at menstruation age. Amongst the overall respondents, 75.6% said they do not use toilets in their educational establishments. From these 192 girls, only 66 of them said they do not use toilets because they are not very accessible or they are not acceptable for use, while 127 of the girls said their reason for not using toilets is because toilets are not at all available in their schools or centers. Particularly in each region, 93.7% in Oromia, 72.7% in Amhara, 59.2 % in SNNPR, and 19.4 % in Afar said that they had no toilet in their schools. In interviews and focus groups, girls hardly discussed menstrual hygiene needs (perhaps due to embarrassment or unwillingness to disclose their personal hygiene issues) but several mentioned missing school for multiple days a month because of a lack of facilities at school. Furthermore, even given the link between poor sanitation and diarrheal illnesses, lack of toilets spreads pathogens and diseases that are likely to make children miss school due to sickness. Other girls mentioned going to toilets in nearby houses perhaps of friends or local villagers; however, leaving school in order to walk to a toilet disrupts class and stunts educational progress – an issue that disproportionately affects girls (given menstrual hygiene needs and complications surrounding FGM/C).

Overall, it can be understood that most of the educational establishments of the sampled girls do not have inclusive environments where they can access their education with no or very little discomfort – this expectedly being even more severe condition for girls with disabilities. As such, from the overall 302 respondents in SNNPR, 40.7% confirm that their schools are not inclusive enough to accommodate girls particularly with special needs while similar claims were as well echoed in the other regions - in Oromia with 10.9%, in Afar 17.1%, and in Amhara with 11.8%.

5.2.2.4 Quality of Teaching

Table 15: Teacher-related barriers

Teacher-student encounter	Proportion of respondents %				
	Amhara (N=34)	Oromia (N=430)	SNNPR (N=302)	Afar (N=129)	Total N=895
Feeling unwelcomed	2.9	11.4	6.0	3.1	8.0
boys treated better than girls	5.9	33.0	25.5	64.3	34.0
Teacher often absent	17.6	36.3	27.5	58.9	35.9
Lessons too slow	8.8	28.1	13.6	58.9	26.9
Lessons too fast	41.2	18.6	45.0	21.7	28.8
Just right	50.0	53.3	41.4	19.4	44.2
Lack of appropriate teaching methodology	Proportion of respondents %				
Teachers not explaining usefulness of lesson to girls' life	5.9	24.4	10.3	19.4	18.2
Lack of supportive ideas on how girls should learn	29.4	19.8	11.6	41.9	20.6
Teacher asks more questions to boys	0.0	1.4	0.7	22.5	4.1
Teacher asks more questions to girls	11.8	10.5	43.7	3.9	20.8
Teacher asks harder questions to boys	0.0	3.0	1.0	27.1	5.7
Teacher asks harder questions to girls	14.7	9.8	43.7	3.1	20.4
Teacher doesn't code-switch to simplify lesson	32.4	41.2	4.0	17.8	24.9
No encouragement for student participation	0.0	10.9	24.8	41.9	19.7

Lack of support on ways of independent learning	17.6	17.9	29.5	35.7	24.4

A total of 895 respondents pointed out the teacher-related problems they faced at schools. A range of different issues, such as teachers' pedagogy knowledge, teacher-student relationship, and teachers' conduct were covered in this section of the questionnaire where surveyed girls were given the chance to choose the most frequent challenges they faced from teachers.

Accordingly, teachers' absenteeism was among the many problems that girls faced across the regions. In Afar, 58.9%, in Oromia 36.3%, in SNNPR, 27.5%, and in Amhara, 17.6% said their teachers were often absent from classes. While in some regions, interviews revealed that this was due to teachers having to search for water (a problem experienced by other community members as well, particularly in Oromia), other students described teachers having to combine multiple classes and teach double the number of children at once.

As per a notable proportion of sampled respondents, boys were said to be treated better than girls (34% of the 895 respondents). Particularly in Afar, 64.3% of the respondents implied the trend. Although a considerable regional variation exists, girls in interviews and focus groups reported feeling equal to boys, and mostly reported that their teachers treat them similarly demonstrating that this issue might be too sensitive to discuss outside of a questionnaire or survey context.

The other two commonly-shared teacher-related problems across the regions were the use of language in classes and lack of support from the teacher on how girls should master autonomous learning. Whether teachers used the local language of girls in class, or perhaps used another language commonly understood by students, it is always advised to switch the code and be flexible with language use during lessons to facilitate learning. A considerable proportion of girls for this assessment, 24.9%, however, implied that their teachers did not use another language in class to simplify lessons when students did not understand.

This is important for more than just understanding education. Parents, in particular, reported appreciating the fact that teachers educate in the local language. This is considered as a positive recognition of the culture and the community living there. While respondents agreed that education does not conflict with their traditional values and culture, fathers did agree in a focus group that in SNNPR, they would be potentially unwilling to send their daughters to school if the activities of the school contradicted with their culture. As such, switching codes demonstrates a willingness of teachers to be flexible and considers local needs which affect wider attitudes towards education in addition to quality of teaching and lessons. When asked about what happens to children who do not speak the local language, participants across regions agreed that children could receive instruction in Amharic – which was described as a positive and inclusive step.

Reflections of lessons being too slow or too fast were as well identified in the data. In Afar, 58.9% of the respondents revealed that the delivery of lessons was too slow for them as it was for the 28.1% of girls in Oromia. However, in SNNPR and Amhara, notable respondents 45% and 41.2% respectively, implied that lessons are rather too fast for them.

The other problems that were most commonly chosen are different from region to region. The information regarding these problems, specific to regions, can be summarized as follows:

- Teachers failed to provide the appropriate support and guidance to help the girls continue studying or learning after school or while at home: opted by 35.7% respondents in Afar, 29.5% from SNNPR, 17.9% from Oromia, and 17.6 from Amhara
- Teachers did not encourage students to participate in classes: claimed by 41.9% (54) in Afar, 24.8% (75) in SNNPR, 10.9% (47) in Oromia but no respondent from Amhara.
- Teachers did not explain how the things girls learn would be useful in their lives: 24.4% (105) in Oromia, 19.4% (25) in Afar, 10.3% (31) in SNNPR, and only 5.9% in Amhara. Indeed, related to this issue, girls during discussions mentioned the fact that they believed education would help them live a better life but were unsure of what exact skills or information they had gained to support this.

The collected data also shows the different types of punishment that teachers used on students for getting things wrong in lessons. The punishment-related data gathered for this study does not include punishments teachers use for wrongdoings or misbehavior of students but it is only about measures teachers take to correct students' mistakes or errors in classes. Overall, out of the 891 respondent girls, 47.6% (424) of them stated their teachers used punishments on students when they did things wrongly in a lesson, while 13.2% (118) did not want to comment on this issue – perhaps because they did not feel safe in doing so or else they did not understand the question. The proportion of respondents who said their teachers punished students for getting things wrong in classes is noteworthy in all regions, but particularly in Afar, 70.5% sampled respondents stated the deed. In the meantime, 48.1% sampled respondents from Oromia, 38.6%, in SNNPR, and 32.4% confirmed that students got punished by their teachers in classes for making mistakes during lessons.

When asked about the type of punishment that teachers used on students, an average of, 31.9% of girls across regions confirmed that their teachers used physical punishments. This is a worrying indicator regarding children's potential learning outcomes. Corporeal punishment constitutes violence against children and is illegal under the federal constitution of Ethiopia. But over a quarter of children reported their teacher using physical punishment as a method of correcting mistakes during lessons is deeply concerning.

Verbal shouting was also mentioned as the other type of punishment teachers used on their students. In total, 30.4% of girls said their teachers verbally shouted at students when they make mistakes in lessons – again, with the majority of students reporting such punishment in Afar with 52.9% respondents.

To understand the issue more deeply, a question was posed to the sampled girls if they themselves were punished very recently for making mistakes while learning. Across regions, 30.1% of girls, each amounting to 53.4% in Afar, 26.4% in SNNPR, and 16.5% in Oromia said they were punished once or twice in recent times – with no girl from Amhara reporting such incident. Meanwhile, over 40% of children across regions stated they had witnessed other students been physically punished in the last week, with particularly high responses from SNNPR. According to 61.2% of the girls (41 out of 67 respondents) in SNNPR, 48.9% (43 of the 88) in Afar, and 41.7% (48) in Oromia, they witnessed a teacher using physical punishment on other students a week before.

During discussions from focus groups and interviews with the girls, they were unwilling to admit that teachers had ever used physical punishment against them – whether for making a mistake in class or any other reason. However, as the data above demonstrates, it is possible this was unreported for fear of repercussion. In Oromia and SNNPR, teaching was universally described as positive, that all educators do

their best with given limited resources – as reported by children, parents and officials. In Afar, a few issues were raised with regards to recruitment and 'unsuitability' of certain staff, but there was a considerable disagreement over teaching attitudes and quality in Amhara. During a focus group of girls aged 15-19 held the following discussion:

> *P2: They are not teaching properly. They do not control, they are aggressive and insult students, and as a result there are students who feel discouraged and miss classes.*
>
> *P3. I agree, but with the reservation this is not the behavior of all teachers.*
>
> *P1. I disagree entirely; the problem emanates from interests of students themselves because, there are students who have no interest to learn, which upsets teachers."*

As such, children clearly hold different attitudes towards what is or is not appropriate in terms of a teacher's behavior. P1 clearly feels that verbal aggression is an inappropriate technique; P2 agreed that it does happen in some cases, whereas P3 did not state that verbal aggression is a problem of teaching methods or staff attitudes, as it is necessary or warranted given the children's' behavior, in some cases.

5.2.3 Attitudes and Support in family and community

5.2.3.1 Attitudes

The vast proportion of sampled girls across the regions agreed with the fact that going to school is important for their future plans, and that children- boys and girls with or without disability all have the right to go to school. What were worth considering in this group of data was the opposite perceptions of those girls who think about schooling and the right to go to schools otherwise. In Oromia, 88.4% sampled girls have positive perception towards schooling while just 9.1% girls do not agree with one or more of the issues at all. In SNNPR too, 82.3% agree while 14.8% do not. Similarly, 88.6% sampled girls in Amhara support the ideas while only 9.1% do not. In Afar, as well, 66.3% said schooling is important and that children have the right to go to school while 23.6% said the opposite (statistical difference *P- value .000*).

Despite the fact that a notable number of sampled girls have positive perception towards schooling, almost half of them (512 out of 1054) across the region stated that they do not unfortunately have any control over their own education that they only accept what happens. Sampled respondent girls with disability and those without were separately analyzed for this specific agenda. Therefore, 50% girls without disability and 1 girl with disability in Amhara said they strongly agree with the fact that they are not the ones who decide about their education. In Oromia, similarly, 20.4% (88) without disability and 3 with disability asserted their lack of control. The same is true in Afar and SNNPR that 27.7% (103) non-disabled girls and 1 disabled girl in Afar and just 1 % (4) disabled with 20.9% (78) non-disabled girls in SNNPR agree a lot that they do not have a say in the decision made for their own education. The statistical significance test between girls with and without disability is *P- value* .000.

While nobody from Primary caregivers or other stakeholders during FGDs directly stated their negative feeling towards girls' education, they nonetheless described other individuals that had such feelings. Girls, for instance, from Oromia themselves described their families as part of the problem. In an interview with a girl aged 10-14, she stated:

"Teachers believe in the importance of girls' education, families don't believe in the importance of girls education. Families believe in boys' education."

This was echoed by another girl of a similar age in Afar:

"Families send boys to schools more than girls. There is not family support for girls because there is a negative attitude towards girls' education, saying girls' education has no life changing impact. As a result, there is high dropout and low participation of girls, compared to boys."

This quotation not only exemplifies and demonstrates that some families, certainly, have negative attitudes towards girls' education. It also suggests that this causes dropout and low participation in schools as girls are not firmly supported to continue their education whether because of developing low morale and motivation or because they are given so many other household tasks they are unable to complete.

Sampled primary caregivers' aspirations for girls' future education

With the exception of Oromia, caregivers tend to favor their children joining college or university as more than 50% of the caregivers in the other regions opted for this level of education. In Amhara, 4 of the 6 caregivers of children with disabilities and 89.5% caregivers of children without disabilities stated that their girls should make it to college or university. Encouragingly, only very few respondents from Amhara believed that no education or low levels were appropriate. Similar results were observed in SNNPR where 6.4% caregivers of disabled girls and 61.6% non-disabled caregivers suggested that university or college was the appropriate level of education. This figure was followed by 29.3% of caregivers of nondisabled girls who opted for Upper secondary education in this region. The statistical significance test between girls with and without disability is *P- value .069.*

In Afar, also, caregivers were likely to respond that their girls both with and without disabilities should go onto higher education with 67.8% (140 out of 208) stating this was the appropriate level their girls should reach. Unlike caregivers in Amhara and SNNPR, a relatively high percentage (13.6%) of non-disabled caregivers stated that no education was necessary or desirable in this region.

In Oromia, a very different picture was perceived. A total of 66 caregivers of girls with and without disabilities do not want any level of education for their girls with only 20.6% (89) favoring upper secondary school. The other 18.6% caregivers of girls with and without disability implied that higher education is sufficient – a much lower proportion than seen in other regions. Rather, Primary and lower secondary levels of education were more favored by 18.9% and 14.6% caregivers in this region. Yet, a comparatively higher number of respondents (12.3%) did not respond to the question. However, the figures demonstrate a reasonably similar result for girls with and without disabilities, suggesting that the problem is largely to do with how caregivers see the value of education overall than their value of education for girls with disabilities in particular. The statistical significance test between girls with and without disability is *P- value .069.*

On the whole, 88.8% of caregivers across all regions believe that girls are as likely as boys to use their education in their lives. The statistical significance test between girls with and without disability is *P-value .000.* Accordingly, most caregivers agreed with the advantage of sending their girls to school even when funds are limited. Across regions, 61.4% (647 out of 1054) of caregivers of girls with and without disabilities strongly agreed with the statement while just 30% agreed. Only 10 respondents (all from Afar)

strongly disagreed with the usefulness of sending their girls to school while a sizeable minority (2.2%) of caregivers of non-disabled girls in the other regions just agreed that it is not worthwhile to enroll their girls in schools. However, Amhara was the region in which caregivers were most likely to strongly agree or just agree with the statement. From the 44 caregivers of disabled and nondisabled girls, 80% strongly agreed while 11.3% just agreed. Similar results were captured in SNNPR with 4.8% of caregivers with disabled girls and 64.8% caregivers of non-disabled strongly agreeing that girls need to be sent to school even if they are not financially stable. The same was true for caregivers in Oromia that 7 of the caretakers of disabled girls and 53.5%of the non-disabled caregivers strongly agreed with the idea of sending their girls to school despite financial constraints. Also, 38.6% of caregivers of girls with and without disability supported the thought. The statistical significance test between girls with and without disability is *P-value .000.*

Results from interviews and focus groups conducted with PCGs did not often indicate the desired level of schooling that they wished their daughters to reach overall. Rather, parents were united that they wanted their children to 'complete their education' before getting married' – suggesting that a desired level of schooling would be at least until the end of primary or lower secondary. While it is possible for a girl to continue education after marriage, this is seen as a decision that the husband and wife would make together. In short, a married girl's new husband would decide on the level of her education.

Indeed, one father (who is also a Religious Leader of a Kebele in Afar), described how he wanted his daughter to go to secondary school, but feared for her safety. His solution was to have his daughter married at the end of grade 8 and make an agreement with her husband that she would be able to continue after marriage. Two things can be drawn from the man's opinion expressed in this quotation. First, it is possible that PCGs recognize both their own unwillingness for girls to reach secondary school because of safety issues. Secondly, marriage is seen as a solution to this issue and that the new husband must be 'okay' for his bride's continuation of education - demonstrating how PCGs might not be the only potential stakeholders in a girls' educational level.

In Afar, participants of numerous discussions repeated their agreement that education is worth more than money and, as such, it is worthwhile investing in children's education even when funding is limited. Indeed, this was the one region in which a certain phrase was repeated across interviews and focus groups, translating to:

> *"Money without knowledge is worthless." // "Education has more value than money and knowledge can never be finished like money.*" // *"Education will never run out like money"*

This is particularly curious given that respondents from Afar were statistically less likely to agree with the statement offered in the survey than those from other regions (although percentages were still relatively high, with nearly three-quarters of all surveyed in Afar 'strongly agreeing' or agreeing' on the usefulness of education.) As such, it is likely that many surveyed primary caregivers in Afar offered socially-desirable viewpoints, although their statements certainly support their agreement with the question in the survey.

Acceptable situations that can prevent a child from going to school

PCGs' points of view on what could make children not attend schools were assessed through a question posed to them to choose from a group of statements about possible reasons that could force a child not to attend schools. The vast majority of respondents, that is 60% - 90% of them, did not agree with most of

the statements saying that they could not be acceptable reasons for children not to attend schools. Only small numbers of PCGs believed in one or more of the statements, confirming that they could be an acceptable reason for a child not to go to school. The following are the statements the caregivers were asked to choose from:

- The child is a mother
- Education is too costly
- The child is unable to learn due to disability
- The child has physical or learning needs that the school cannot meet
- The child is too old
- The child is married/is getting married
- The child needs to help at home
- The child needs to work
- The child may physically harmed or teased other children at school
- The child may be physically harmed or teased at school or on the way to/from school

Across the regions, *'the child needs to help at home'* was the statement which was commonly chosen as an acceptable condition that could make a child not attend school. Of the 430 caregivers surveyed in Oromia, 46.5% indicated, if a child is required to work at home and help family members, it is acceptable that they may not be able to attend school. Similarly, in Afar, 28.8%; in Amhara, 20.5%, and in SNNPR, 10.5% of caregivers suggested the same possible reason that could prevent a child from attending school (statistical difference between disabled and non-disabled is *P-value* .000).

These statistics chime with data received in focus groups, in which caregivers from Oromia, in particular, acknowledged the necessity of at least one child staying at home to look after the cattle. Many saw one child remaining out of school as a non-negotiable fact of life, rather than a barrier to education with a possible solution. Indeed, parents see the sacrifice of one child's education as necessary in educating the others. As expressed in one focus group:

> *"All school age children are learning. One of them is very little. I have no plan to send one of my children because I want her to look after my cattle. This is a must, I have no other option. The other children will also learn if my cattle are safe… One is very little and one will stay with my cattle…"*

While this opinion was echoed in some other regions, most caregivers stressed that having to carry out household tasks was something that did not interfere with education, as children could undertake such work outside of schooling hours. However, in reality, this particular reason is the main cause for 37.4% sampled girls' out of school status in this study with higher percentage in Oromia and Afar in particular.

Education being too costly is the other possible reason caregivers agree would stop children from attending school. 11.8% of caregivers (53) in Oromia; 11.1% (50) in SNNPR, and 20.7% (31) in Amhara were more inclined to this reason next to the previous one. In Afar, only very few caregivers responded that costly education was an acceptable reason for their children not to attend schools (statistical difference between disabled and non-disabled is *P-value* .000).

Respondents from Afar were more inclined to select other factors. 31.7% said bullying by others would be a reasonable factor preventing a child from attending school, while 27.4% indicated their child bullying other children could be an acceptable reason as well. Some others (23.1%) also believed that if children have to work in agricultural or non-agricultural tasks outside the household, they might not be able to attend school. Meanwhile, if a child is married or about to get married, according to 20.2% of caregivers in this region, schooling can be impossible. A few others, 15.9% also implied that if a child is too old, schooling can be the unfeasible (statistical difference between disabled and non-disabled is *P-value* .000).

These results demonstrate that a reasonable number of caregivers' prevailing perception towards acceptable conditions that could prevent children from attending their education is not so good. Most of the suggested reasons signify their lack of awareness on existing barriers that could play a significant role in their girls' education marginalization. For instance, the fact that a child needs to work at home rather than get education is more of a lack of perception result than considering a possible condition of a child not able to attend education because of disability- which is more of a factual barrier due to lack of inclusive school environments in the areas.

For further detail, caregivers were asked to choose from different possible reasons as to why their girls are not currently enrolled in a formal school. They were given multiple choices- some were different barrier-related reasons while others were attitude towards schooling-related ones. Though the vast majority did not agree with most of the statements, a notable number of respondents identified few of the reasons as to why their girls are currently out of school. 37.4% of the caregivers in all the regions chose the 'Girls need to work, earn money or help out at home' option as the main reason why their girls are not currently in school. The vast majority of these caretakers were from Oromia that 60.6% of them in this region indicated this reason. Schooling cost was the second mostly opted reason by 22.2% of respondents. Girls' lack of interest to go to school was also stated as a main reason particularly by those caretakers of married and mother girls in Afar and Amhara. 20% of caretakers of married girls in Amhara and 15.3% in Afar implied their girls' lack of interest in education. In Afar, 29.8% of primary caregivers of girls who experienced childbirth also indicated this reason.

During FGDs and KIIs most caregivers interviewed suggested that a lack of funding was the main reason their child would not be able to attend school. Lack of funding is a gender-relevant issue according to the majority of participants. For example, particularly in Amhara, a lack of funding necessitates girls especially to drop out and earn money for themselves and their families because the work available is mostly domestic service roles – which are seen as jobs more suited to girls than boys. As such, although most PCGs did not explicitly mention that a lack of funding was more of a reason for girls than boys to drop out, they did state that girls are more likely than boys to leave and pursue work. Indeed, the issue may stem from the opinions of girls themselves who see a lack of funding as a reason for them to drop out. During a discussion with a group of girls who had quit school to take jobs in towns but were not re-enrolled, they agreed:

> *"We were generating income to support our families. But now we are here and dependent on our parents, if we experience the same problem as before, we leave our education and go to other places for employment."*

As such, a lack of income is certainly a reason for girls to drop out of their own volition in Amhara, expressed by girls who had dropped out as well as the parents of out-of-school girls. Because of their

desires to go and earn money when the family is short of income, many PCGs may well see it as a legitimate reason for quitting education as well.

5.2.3.2 Institutional/community support

Primary caregivers were asked several questions that aimed to capture the overall picture of how they perceive the engagement and commitment of nearby institutions to address the agenda of girls' education. At first, they were asked to identify the frequency of girls' education issues which are raised in community meetings. Overall, 43% of the respondents from all the regions implied that girls' education agendas are rarely or never been raised in any type of community meetings. Out of the 682 respondents, 32.8% stated that education issues are often raised in community meetings, while 22% said it is only sometimes. 47.9% from Afar; 36% from SNNPR; 44% in Amhara and22.7% from Oromia are amongst those who said community meetings in their environment often dwell on education agendas. In the meantime, 33.5% from Oromia; 16.4% in SNNPR, only 12.3% from Afar, and just 4 from Amhara said meetings of those type sometimes raise girls' education issues. However, a total of 25.2% caregivers revealed that education issues have never been raised in community meetings. Meanwhile additional 2.2% primary caregivers did not comment on this, perhaps, because they could not precisely recall such agendas in meetings or because they do not attend community meetings at all.

Similar variation was observed in focus group discussions and interviews, with participants not giving universal responses by any means. While some suggested that there have been meetings in which the issue is raised, in particular with reference to motivating parents to enroll their daughters, others stated that the issue is not consistently raised or given sufficient attention. Indeed, many believed that:

> *"Education for both boys and girls is raised, and parents are asked to send their children to school. As a result, no special support/action has been referred to girls' education."*

Even more worryingly, a religious leader stated that girls' education *"had never and will never"* be raised as a specific issue in meetings. Mostly, participants felt that a focus on education of poor, marginalized or vulnerable sub-communities has not been prioritized. Rather, meetings tend to focus on education more generally.

Secondly, a question about how often girls' education agenda has been fully addressed by local authorities was posed to the caregivers. Accordingly, the result implies that the frequency in which girls' education agendas are addressed in Amhara and Afar is relatively less in comparison to the other regions. 68% of the caregivers in Amhara like those 42.5% in Afar stated that such agendas have never been addressed by responsible authorities. This indicates that concerned authorities fail to find the most optimal solution or reach the best compromise that can resolve the issue facing girls' education in some parts of these regions. Similarly, 28.5% respondents in Oromia asserted that no meeting in their community addressed girls' schooling issues. But yet again, except for those in Amhara, the other 24.8% respondents in the other regions replied that meetings in their community address girls' education issues often.

A central common topic of conversation and disagreement during FGDs across regions was that of whether girls' education had been addressed in community meetings. In Afar and SNNPR, participants agreed that, although education as a whole is discussed, that of girls is not specifically raised. In SNNPR, one participant of a caregivers' focus group stated:

"They simply discuss about the provision of education in the school in general but girls' education has not been given special attention by the PTA. Similarly, girls' education has officially been raised as an agenda in the community meetings but the problem is not fully addressed by the local authorities."

This view was echoed in Afar, with one participant raising the points from the previous community meeting in which girls' education had been discussed:

"Suggested measures to be taken and points for discussion to be raised in meetings were constructing toilets, arranging summer tutorials for girls and creating affirmative action programs to inspire girls and low-income individuals to stay in education."

In Amhara, a Woreda Head of Education described "*Woreda and Kebele-level structures that give special attention for girls,"* including separate discussion about girls' education.

Overall, however, participants were mostly inclined to state that although education is raised as a separate issue in community meetings, girls' education is neither sufficiently nor consistently covered.

Type of support provided to the girl (financial or scholarship support)

According to primary caregivers, there are 263 (24.9%) girls, of whom 23(2.2%) with disability, across regions, who have received a scholarship or financial support for education in the recent past.
In SNNPR, in particular, quite a considerable number of sampled girls have had such support. Out of the overall 372 respondents, 49.5% of the non-disabled girls and 4.6% girls with disability have received free education or financial support for education.

On the other end, Oromia has far fewer sampled girls that have received financial assistance followed by Afar. In Oromia, no such support was at all reported for disabled girls, while only 2.4% of the non-disabled girls were claimed to have had opportunity for scholarship or financial support in the recent past. In Afar, 17.7% girls were said to have had received scholarships or financial support, according to primary caregivers. In Amhara, as well, 30% of girls disabled and non-disabled included, received assistance for their education. During KIIs, Oromia was the region in which interviewees most commonly reported the existence of financial support for disabled girls. According to one Woreda education official:

"Special needs students need special support. We have a separate budget from school grant so materials needed by them can be fulfilled.

Those from Oromia reported the existence of financial support, particularly for disabled girls, on a number of occasions. According to one caregiver, his child got the chance to go to school because of *"support such as finances and hostel provision from the government."*

In Amhara, meanwhile, a Kebele leader described a social arrangement called 'community collaboration', which mobilizes resources *"such as financial contributions from the community, so as to support people with disabilities by providing exercise book, uniforms, pen and the like. The Kebele leadership mobilizes the community to support the community collaboration committee."* That such an arrangement occurs at a leadership level, from a top-down approach, makes it likely that many local people will be aware of the community collaboration and its embodiment of support for equality of and opportunities for people with

disabilities – demonstrating a degree of institutional support in this region. However, only one mother described her daughter, who is deaf and does not speak, as having received support and been able to pursue education as a result.

However, what the aforementioned 'support' amounts to, whether learning aids, hearing support or extra teaching time, was not elaborated on by this mother. Similarly, a Woreda-level Education expert explained that there is provision of financial support for special needs students, but did not give any information on how much, what this amounts to, who provides it and how it helps the students that receive it. As such, the support offered in Amhara remains unclear.

In Afar, the only mention of financial support provided was from a focus group of primary school-age girls, who reported an NGO – The Friendship Support Association (FSA) –providing stationery, and Islamic Agency and Mekaneyesus, which provide financial support for low-income families.

It should be noted that, across regions, School Directors, Educational Officials and representatives from the Woreda- and Region-level Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Bureaus affirmed their support for girls' education. Although some referenced financial support, this was not elaborated on in further detail. Furthermore, no specific mention of 'scholarships' was made by any participant.

Consequently, primary caregivers were asked whether the financial support or the scholarship their girls have received has impacted their enrollment and attendance in school. In terms of both attendance and enrollment, out of the 270 who responded to this question, 49.6% said the assistance provided to their girls had a positive impact on their enrollment. Likewise, 76% said the scholarship or financial support contributed to the girls' attending school more regularly. In contrast to this, 23.7% of caregivers stated that the financial support or scholarship had brought no change in their girls' regular attendance or enrolment in schools.

5.2.3.3 Attitudes- marriage and child birth

From the overall sampled 1054 girls across the regions, 8.9% are married. Amongst these girls, 3.9% from Afar;0.5% from Oromia, and 2.2% from SNNPR are between the ages of 10-14. Overall, Afar takes the lion's share in having 21.6% of married girls in this study. As per marriage with disability, none of the girls with a disability from Afar and SNNPR are married while, in Amhara and Oromia, there is 1 disabled and married girl aged 15 –19 in each region.

Universally, participants during FGDs responded that they do not support early or forced marriage. Girls described wanting to marry *"after completing [their] education and when [they] bring change in lives."* However, when their caregivers were asked about the issue, they had other feelings: one father stated that, sometimes, there are girls that want to discontinue their education to get married. However, he argued against this and said that he would not permit his girls to marry early. That some girls actually want to marry early was echoed during a group of fathers' discussion:

> *"Sometimes girls gradually develop relational feelings and interests, and establish friendships with boys that move them away from their purpose. As a result of development of such kind of relationship, at the end, they request and enforce their parents to allow them to marry."*

That parents can refuse marriage of their girls is certainly true, but if a girl becomes pregnant, cultural and societal pressures would tend to encourage a marriage to take place nonetheless. Although there is nothing in principle about living with a partner or being married that precludes a girl from being able to

attend school, there is a cultural expectation that a wife's role is to manage the household – meaning that married woman are often unable to continue attending school, particularly if the distance is far from the house.

In Oromia, for example, one man in a focus group described how he supports his wife to continue pursuing her education, stating: *"though she is my wife, I will support her to learn."* While it is certainly positive that the woman is still in school although she is married, the inclusion of the word '*though*' makes it clear that this situation is unusual and perhaps the man does not see it as normal.

5.2.3.4. Family Planning knowledge, attitude and practices

According to caregivers, 109 of the girls sampled for this study are mothering children amongst whom 7 are with different types of disabilities. A 1.8% difference can be observed between the girls who are claimed to be married and mothers indicating that there are girls who bear children outside of marriage, particularly in Afar. In this region, 15% of the girls are mothers but not married. Amongst these girls who mothered a child/children outside of marriage, 12% are just below the age of 15 which could potentially be an indicator of forced marriage in this region. However, during interviews and discussions, a slight cultural shift from girls forced early marriage to letting girls decide on when to get married on their own (often above the age of 20) was indicated implying that there are girls who could have sexual partners before marriage and who could often conceive a child in the process. The Women, Youth and Children official for the Woreda spoke about pregnancy and education as follows:

> *"Pregnant girls come to school though they usually drop out. Particularly, those girls who get pregnant out of marriage are less likely to come to school because of rumor/gossip from friend and others."*

This shows that girls can and do get pregnant out of marriage and this could probably be a taboo that most remain out of school if faced with the problem. The fact that girls who experienced this issue could be as young as below 15 years of age makes the whole situation even more worrying in this region In addition, all participants during discussion clearly stated that, although it is a personal and couple-level choice as to whether to use contraception, it is 'haram' – against their religious principles to implement any sort of family planning.

By the same token, as per the data collected from the girls, 15.5% of girls across all regions live with their partners or husbands. This figure includes 7 sampled girls in Amhara, 14 in Oromia, 21 in SNNPR, and 42 in Afar - with Afar showing the highest proportion at 39.6%. This entails that most of the sampled girls (71.8%) do not cohabit with their partners or husbands. Out of the girls who confirmed that they reside with their partners, 20.4% of them use different methods to delay pregnancy while 33% others do not – with 46.7% girls unable to provide response. This much girls did not give answers perhaps because they did not know what to say or that they were shy to talk about the issue. Either way, the data shows that although the number of girls who do not reside with partners outnumbers those who do, still, there are sizable number of girls who currently cohabit with partners who do not use any type of contraception method to delay pregnancy. It is worth comparing the results of these questions with that of another data secured on girls' awareness of contraception. Nearly 60% of the girls in Afar have no awareness of contraception followed by 47.7% in Oromia and 37% in SNNPR.

With regards to whether or not contraceptives should be used, amongst the 31 (20.4%) sampled girls who use contraception across the regions, 54.8% of them are positive about it that they agree it should be used while 9 are neutral and just 1 does not agree with the idea of using it at all (but still use it anyway for unknown reasons.) To find out about the assumptions and attitudes towards contraception more widely, further questions were posed to all 15-19 aged girls regardless of their marital status. To begin with, they were asked whose concern contraception use should be – men's or women's. Accordingly, 18% of the girls stated that only women should worry about the use of contraception not men. From another point of view, however, 35.7% girls implied that the concern should not only be women's but men's as well. In the meantime, nearly a third of girls refrained from commenting on the issue, while 14.4% were not sure.

In addition, many girls (197 of 542) believe that men, as well as women, should use contraception, while some others (102) believe only women should use contraception. Still, the number of those who did not comment is considerable. 44.8% (243) surveyed girls did not say anything about the issue which perhaps indicates timidity or lack of knowledge.

5.2.4 Personal factors

To find out the prevailing level of self-perceived efficacy of overall sampled girls, a series of statements were read out by enumerators with girls asked to state whether or not they agree. The statements describe positive feelings that denote girls' self-confidence and belief in their educational ability and potential. A considerable number of girls agreed with the statements read out saying that they truly relate or agree with them, while also a proportionate number of girls said the statements do not describe them at all. Since the aim was to understand the severity of girls' lack of self-value, more attention is given to the number of girls who did not agree with the statements and those who did not know what to say when asked.

Below, the overall numbers of respondents across the regions who did not believe they can do what the statements say are listed and described:

- ***'I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough'****:* Overall, 25 girls out of 57 with disabilities (2.4%) and 37.2% girls without disabilities said 'no' to this question. Particularly, more girls from Afar seem to disagree with this statement that 59.1% of them did not believe the statement was true for them. Similarly, in SNNPR, 35.4%; in Oromia 33.4%, and in Amhara 38.6% of the girls confirmed that they are not able to solve difficult problems even if they try hard enough. There were also 13% (138) girls both with and without disability who did not know what to say about this; either they did not understand the statement or had never thought about it before.
- ***'If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want'*****:** As per those disabled, 16 from SNNPR, 4 from Oromia, and 1 from Afar do not think this statement defines them well. Likewise, 45% (94) non-disabled sampled girls from Afar, 24.7% (92) from SNNPR, 17.7% (76) from Oromia, and 20.4% (9) from Amhara believed the same way. Still, 14% of the girls, in total, refrained from saying anything.
- ***'It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals'***: 40.3% (84) non-disabled girls from Afar, 23.1% (86) from SNNPR, 21.9% (94) from Oromia, and 13.6% (6) from Amhara did not agree if this statement truly represents them. Likewise, 12 sampled girls with disability in SNNPR, 3 in Oromia and 1 from Afar reflected similar point of view. There are still 17% girls here, who did not suggest on the idea at all.

- ***'I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events':*** There still seem to be a noteworthy number of girls who do not agree with this statement as well. From the disabled girls, 14 of them from SNNPR, 5 from Oromia, 1 from Afar (the other 8 with no response at all), and another 1 from Amhara implied their lack of confidence to deal with unexpected events. As per the non-disabled girls, 47.2% (94) from Afar, 25.5% (87) in SNNPR, 27.4% (115) from Oromia, and 42.1% (16) from Amhara said 'no' to the statement. Yet again, there were 18.2% (192) girls who could not comment on the issue.
- ***'Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations***': 45.7% (91) non-disabled girls from Afar, 28.1% (96) from SNNPR, 21.4% (90) from Oromia, and 42.1% (16) from Amhara did not agree with this statement while 12 of the disabled girls from SNNPR, 4 from Oromia, 2 from Afar, and 1 from Amhara similarly indicated their disagreement. 18.4% (194) other girls still refrained from stating their view.
- ***'I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort':*** A notable proportion of girls also disagreed with this statement. Afar takes the lead in this with 43.7% (87) girls without disability saying 'no' to the statement, followed by Oromia and SNNPR with 22.6% (95) and 21.4% (73) respectively. 6 of the 38 non-disabled girls in addition from Amhara said 'no' to the statement. By the same token, 11 disabled girls from SNNPR, 3 from Oromia and 1 from Afar seem to also struggle with solving most problems they face on their own. And yet, 183 girls did not respond.
- ***'I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities':*** relatively, a proportionately higher number of non-disabled girls (43.7%) in Afar did not think they have the coping abilities to stay calm when facing difficulties. In Oromia, SNNPR, and Amhara as well 24.8% (104), 26.3% (90), and 25% (11) sampled girls without disability respectively implied their lack of resistance when facing difficulties. Likewise, out of the 31 disabled girls in SNNPR, 15 of them, 5 others from Oromia and 2 from Afar and Amhara each made similar assertions while 181 (17.1%) girls with and without disability from all the regions did not know what to say.
- ***'When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions':*** the same remains true for this statement. 49.7% (99) non-disabled girls from Afar, 23.2% (79) from SNNPR, 23.6% (99) in Oromia, and 15.9% (7) from Amhara admitted their inability to provide solutions when confronted with problems. As per those with disability, 12 from SNNPR, 4 from Oromia and 2 from Afar indicated similar standpoint to the statement while in the meantime, 196 (18.6%) girls did not respond to the question.
- ***'I can usually handle whatever comes my way':*** 45.2% (90) non-disabled girls from Afar, 24.2% (86) from SNNPR, 24.3% (102) from Oromia, and 34% (15) from Amhara said 'no' to this statement. Likewise, 9 of the disabled girls in SNNPR, 5 others in Oromia and 1 girl from Afar did not agree with the statement while 184 (14.4%) did not reply at all.
- ***'If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution':*** This statement was also denied to be true by 52.2% (104) non-disabled girls in Afar (a relatively higher proportion), 22% (75) from SNNPR, 27.2% (12) from Amhara, and 21.7% (91) from Oromia. 10 of the disabled girls in SNNPR, 5 in Oromia and 1 from Afar and Amhara each, also implied their inability to think of solutions when in trouble. As in the previous cases, 191 (18.1%) girls did not respond.

The above analysis describes a significant number of girls who demonstrate a lack of confidence to handle problems on their own. A large number of girls, also, did not know what to say about the issues raised, particularly in Afar. This shows that the girls either have limited understanding of what the statements mean or perhaps they lack the confidence to express their feelings. Either way, the data reveals a significant gap in confidence and perceptions of one's own potential that the girls need to

develop. While girls stated they were good students because they can understand well in class and achieve good results, they did not express overwhelming confidence in their own beliefs or suggest anything that amounts to inner conviction during interviews or focus groups either.

Sample girls' previous life skills/vocational training status

According to the sampled 57 caregivers of disabled girls across the regions, none of their girls have taken any type of vocational training to learn specific skills for a job, business or particular livelihood. In Amhara, however, it is not only the 6 caregivers of disabled girls who said their girls have never had life skill classes but also those 38 caregivers of the non-disabled girls confirmed a similar case. In the other regions, only very few caregivers of non-disabled girls reported about their girls having had the chance to take such courses or classes. In Afar, out of the sampled 199 caregivers of non-disabled girls, 12.6% reported their girls having undertaken such a course, while this figure was only 2.1% in SNNPR. Meanwhile, in Oromia just 1%of caregivers stated their non-disabled girls had undertaken courses of that type. The data here clearly demonstrates that most or all sampled disabled girls, that is 93.8% of the girls in general, have never had the chance to take vocational training that can support them to develop skills for specific jobs.

The above data is supported by that of focus groups with girls during which they described enjoying education and wanting to stay in school so they could learn skills and develop knowledge that would help them to have a better future. However, no girl was able to specify which particular skills they felt had helped or would help them in particular. Indeed, many girls from SNNPR, in particular, mentioned wanting to engage in income-generating activities and develop skills in the fields of trade, beauty salons, driving and mechanics in order to start small enterprises to fund their education. When asked what their future ambitions were, most girls gave professions such as teachers, pilots, doctors or managers/leaders; however, they still wanted to gain some smaller forms of income or employment before moving onto careers in order to remain in education. Nonetheless, not one girl mentioned vocational or skills-related training to support such ventures.

Perhaps, the lack of such training is the main cause for the vast majority of sampled girls' unemployment status in this study even though they highly aspire to be engaged in income generating works to stay in schools according to participants in FGDs. As per the data secured from the quantitative survey, the vast majority of sampled caregivers stated that their girls are not in employment of any type. That is, 93% of the disabled girls and 98.3% of the non-disabled girls do not have a paid job. In Oromia, for instance, none of the sampled girls were reported as having a formal job, while in Amhara only 1 disabled girl from the 6 sampled and 2 from the non-disabled are said to be employed. In Afar, none of the disabled girls are employed but 1 girl from the overall 199 surveyed girls without disabilities are in employment. Similarly in SNNPR, none of the girls with disability have a paid job while only 3 out of the 341 non-disabled girls are reported to be employed.

5.3 Key barriers to education by regions

Table 16: Key barriers to education by regions

Barriers	Amhara	Oromia	SNNPR	Afar
Poverty ↳ (those unable to meet basic needs without charity)	47.7%	**65.6%**	**62%**	26.9%
High Domestic Chores (*spending half to a whole day*)	↳ **81.8%**	↳ **83%**	↳ 40.6%	↳**67.3%**
Early marriage	18.2%	4.6%	5.6%	**21.6%**
Early Childbirth	6.8%	4.7%	5.6%	↳ **36.1%** ↳ **(15% outside marriage)**
School distance ↳ (walking to a nearby school for more than 31 minutes)	**31.8%**	21.1%	**27.1%**	14.4%
Unsafe journey to school	-	-	↳ **51.6 –poor roads** ↳ **40.9% - long distance**	↳ **60.3% - poor roads** ↳ **49.2% - wild animals** ↳ **39.2% - long distance**
School facility/ deprivation	**85.7% - no drinking water**	↳ **94.9% - non-drinking water** ↳ **93.7% - no toilet**	↳ **76.5% - no books** ↳ **98.7% - no drinking water**	**64.9% - no drinking water**
Teacher-related barrier	↳ **41.2% - lessons too fast** ↳ 32.4% doesn't code switch	↳ 36.3% - teacher often absent ↳ **41.2% - doesn't code switch**	↳ **45%- lessons too fast** ↳ **43.7% - girls asked more and harder questions**	↳ **64.3% - boys treated better than girls** ↳ **70.5% corporeal punishment** ↳ **58.9% teacher often absent** ↳ **58.9% Lessons too slow**
Girls education agendas failed to be addressed by authorities	**68%**	28.5%	-	**42.5%**
Lack of family planning knowledge (contraception)	18.2%	**47.7%**	**37.5%**	**60%**
Lack of girls' self-esteem	15.7%	15.3%	17%	**20.6%**

5.4 Appropriateness of project activities to the characteristic subgroups and barriers identified

The key characteristic subgroups and barriers identified in the baseline study are mostly well considered in CHANGE's TOC. However, the baseline study also implies that there are few more critical barriers that would affect beneficiary girls' transition to formal education as that is one of the key points in their pathway. Therefore, the following questions would require answers from the project to understand the appropriateness of the project activities to the subgroups and barriers identified in this study:

- Sampled girls particularly in Amhara, Oromia, and Afar spend half to a whole day undertaking domestic works in their households – more than 90% fetching water and more than 60% helping with agricultural or livestock-related activities in particular. Amongst these, married and mother girls seem to be more affected by the barrier. Once girls are married, they are under the control of their husbands. Will girls' husbands be involved in the intervention process? How?
- School distance is another barrier identified in this study. 17.6% of the girls in Amhara would roughly take 1 to 3 hours to walk to a nearby school while for 2.5% of girls in Afar, it would take them from 3 to 5 hours. How would this be addressed in the project since this would impact transition paths to formal education negatively? According to Primary caregivers, secondary school physical accessibility is even scarce. 15.3% of the sampled girls in Oromia; 19% in Afar, and 11.4% in Amhara would be required to walk for 3 to 5 hours while for the 13.3% girls in Oromia, it would take them 5 hours to 1 day to access a secondary school. This has raised security issues on the way to school in these regions which could force parents to stop sending their girls to school. Which of the main activities in the project's TOR are designed towards addressing these barriers of the girls?
- Schools in all the regions are mainly critiqued for lacking drinking water. This would negatively affect school environments' inclusiveness. How would this be addressed? In Oromia, 93.7% of the sampled girls implied that their previous schools did not have toilets as well. These deprivations would affect the attendance of girls at a higher rate. How would these barriers be addressed?

5.5.Project response: Appropriateness of project activities to the characteristic subgroups and barriers identified

At the end of each academic year, the beneficiary girls should reach the learning outcome related to their latest year of attendance. Their pathways differ based on the enrollment in particular structures – 3 levels of ABE for girls 10-14 years old, 2 levels of IFAL for girls 15-19 years old, and TVET for both age groups. There are standardized literacy and numeracy skill levels for each educational ABE / IFAL level. Thus, passing the final exam each academic year gives us a clear idea of what level of knowledge the girls have achieved.

Domestic works / helping at home: The perception of communities, parents, men and boys of the importance of education for girls is one of the important barriers that has been originally identified at the beginning of the project. The activities under the Output 4 and 5 have been addressing this barrier on the level of community as well as on the level of the government structures. For the communities (incl. parents, men and boys), the stress is put on the CAGs and their active promotion of the importance of education and future advantages for the girls within their communities. Girls and family counselling will be conducted when necessary, also parents support groups and girls' friendly spaces will be promoted. However, as the evaluator identified other barriers as more important for the school attendance

than the general attitude and perception, the project is going to reflect the suggestions for the next steps and will focus more on the barriers identified in the baseline. One of the activities that might be relevant is providing conditional cash transfer to families / students and financially supporting SGHs under the Output 3, which will address the potential financial loss connected with girls regularly attending schools.

School distance: The activities under the Output 3 focus mainly on the barriers related to the school level. The project considers formal education as one of the desired pathways from the ABE / IFAL structures. As a second pathway for both age groups, TVET is an option in case formal schools are not available. The project will support capacity building of zonal and woreda TVET as well as linkages for mobile and short-term TVET centers. Existing girls' clubs in or outside school will be supported or new ones will be created if necessary (as well as SHGs), to help empowering girls and creating girls' safe space for sharing experiences and support.

Lack of drinking water in schools: Activity 1.3 under the Output 1 addresses mainly the construction / re-construction of the school structure and girls' friendly spaces (WASH facilities, accessibility for girls with disabilities, classroom and school environment etc.). The Consortium will discuss if and how the provision of drinking water might be included (in case we are talking about the ABE / IFAL structures). For the formal schools, further discussion will be needed as the way of support them is under revision.

6. Learning Outcome findings

6.1 Introduction

This section of the report presents the achievements of sampled girls on the EGRA and EGMA tests they took for this baseline assessment. These instruments were composed of a variety of subtasks designed to assess foundational reading and numeracy skills of surveyed girls. Participants were given the choice of which language they would like to take the test in, with all exercises made available in the local languages of each region: Amharic, Oromiffa, Gedeoffa and Qafar. As the tests were administered for particularity two age groups, there were slight differences between the subtasks of the EGRA test - particularly with '*the letter identification'*, 'reading passage', and *'invented words'* part while both the age groups were posed with identical questions for all the subtasks of the EGMA test. In other words, all girls took similar EGMA test regardless of their age differences while there were few content differences on the EGRA test for 10-14 and 15-19 aged sampled girls.

Standard timed EGRA/EGMA tests are usually administered with 60 seconds given for each timed sub-task. For this particular study, 60 more seconds were added to give sufficient time considering that the majority of girls sampled for this study are out of school or at risk of dropping out. For all the timed excises in this report, therefore, two different analyses are made - one for how much the girls scored in the first 60 seconds (1 minute) and another for the whole 120 seconds (2 minutes). However, for those untimed subtasks only one round of analysis is made.

While administering the tests, enumerators utilized procedures to ensure the quality of test results. The following points were major requirements of the tests that enumerators had strictly followed:

- For all the timed exercises enumerators had to start their timer to run for 120 seconds. When the girls went half way through and reach at 60 seconds the enumerators marked their timer at 60 seconds (1 minute) to register how much the girls completed per 60 seconds. This was done without

the consciousness of the girls. Those girls who did not finish doing the tasks by 120 seconds (2 minutes) were told to stop and move on to the next exercise.

- Tasks were discontinued for those girls who made four or five consecutive errors in a row categorizing them in the ‘non-learner’ band for scoring 0%- which is 'the early stop rule'.
- For every subtask, enumerators were asked to make sure the girls understood what they were expected to do before starting. Enumerators read out examples and practically demonstrated the tasks before asking the girls to do them.
- Prepared booklets were given to the girls when enumerators read out instructions for every subtask.

The EGRA test included the following 7 exercises which are chronologically ordered in terms of level of difficulty- from easy to harder questions:

- Exercise 1: Letter Identification - (timed)
- Exercise 2: Familiar words - (timed)
- Exercise 3: Invented words reading- (timed)
- Exercise 4a: Oral reading - (timed)
- Exercise 4b: Reading comprehension - (untimed)
- Exercise 5: Listening Comprehension - (untimed)

The EGMA test continued after this with the following subtasks:

- Exercise 6: Number identification - (timed)
- Exercise 7: Quantity Discrimination - (untimed)
- Exercise 8: Missing numbers - (untimed)
- Exercise 9: Addition - (timed)
- Exercise 10: Subtraction - (timed)
- Exercise 11: Written exercise - (untimed)
- Exercise 12: Word problems - (untimed)

The analysis for EGRA and EGMA is made separately with sub-sections for each subtasks of the tests. For a diagnosis of the gaps in literacy and numeracy skills, the subtask scores are cut into bands of achievements as follows for the subtask analysis:

- Non-learner: 0% of items.
- Emergent learner: 1%-40% of items.
- Established learner: 41%-80% of items.
- Proficient learner: 81%-100% of items.

For the oral reading fluency score (words per minute (WPM) or 2 minutes for this study), the following four learning categories were used:

- Non-reader: 0-5 WPMs.
- Emergent reader: 6-44 WPMs.
- Established reader: 45-80 WPMs.
- Proficient reader: 80+ WPMs.

To arrive at the aggregate learning scores for this study, the following approaches were adopted:

1. For each individual subtask, the total numbers of correct answers were divided by the total number of questions for the subtask to arrive at the average %. The only exception to this rule was the words per minute subtask. To convert this to a %, any WPM scores at 100 or higher received 100%. For every WPM under 100, the standardised score was discounted out of 100 by 1 mark (i.e. 75 WPM = 75/100).
2. All subtasks were weighed equally. For example, if the literacy test was composed of four subtasks then each subtask counted for ¼ of the total.

3. The average score was taken across all subtasks (e.g. if subtask 1 =50%, subtask 2 = 40%, subtask 3 = 80% and subtask 4 = 20% then the calculation was (50+40+80+20)/4 = 47.5%.

Project response: Learning levels

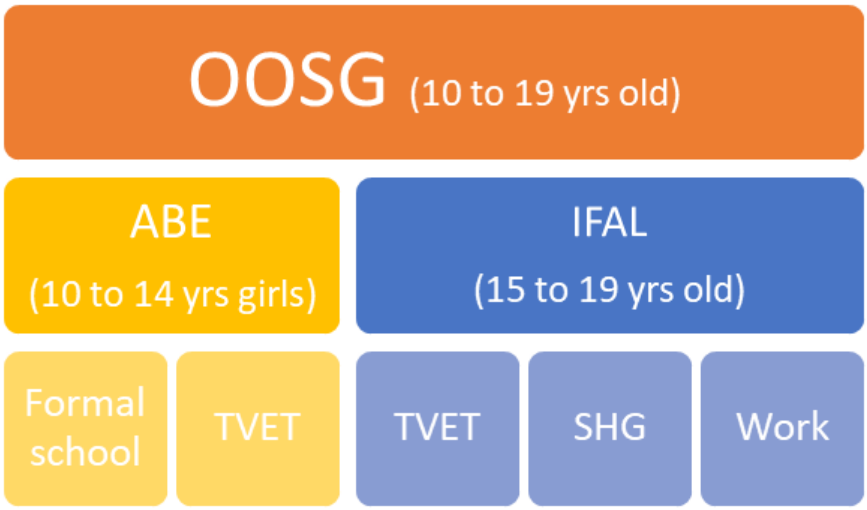
At the end of each academic year, the beneficiary girls should reach the learning outcome related to their latest year of attendance. Their pathways differ based on the enrollment in particular structures – 3 levels of ABE for girls 10-14 years old, 2 levels of IFAL for girls 15-19 years old, and TVET for both age groups. There are standardized literacy and numeracy skill levels for each educational ABE / IFAL level. Thus, passing the final exam each academic year gives us a clear idea of what level of knowledge the girls have achieved.

Additionally, with the context evolution related to Covid-19, the Consortium have recently conducted Rapid Assessment on home-based learning as well as ASER tests, which will provide more detailed information on the level of knowledge of the beneficiary girls as well as on the current teaching and learning situation.

In the context of this project, passing the final exam (ABE level 3, IFAL level 2, obtaining Certificate of Completion in case of TVET) was set up as the benchmark for the transition to the next stages – formal education / TVET / SHG / work. It will look as follows:

1) After passing the level 3 final exam, the ABE girls will join grade 5 in regular schools. Those who will be above 16 years old will be enrolled into TVET.

2) After passing the level 2 final exam, the IFAL girls will have three options to follow: TVET, SHG and / or self-employment.
The following diagram shows the current transition pathways:



6.2 Learning Outcomes

6.2.1 EGRA- ABE (girls age 10-14)

Exercise 1: Letter identification- sounds of letters (timed)

For this exercise the girls were asked to say the sounds of the letters given to them on the booklets.

Example:

f	**j**	**A**	**s**	**Z**	**e**	**U**	**j**	**m**	**o**	**/10**
Y	**g**	**k**	**B**	**T**	**P**	**d**	**V**	**k**	**n**	**/10**
				Total score (#/100) (Data entry person to complete)						**/100**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' alphabet knowledge.
- For this subtask the girls' provided the sounds of the letters differentiating each letter from the groups.

Table 17: EGRA-ABE Exercise 1 scores in 60 seconds

Categories		Region						Total	
		Oromiya		Afar		SNNPR			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ex. 1 (60')	Non-reader 0%	124	57.7	76	74.5	132	57.1	332	60.6
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	74	34.4	23	22.5	89	38.5	186	33.9
	Established reader 41%-80%	17	7.9	1	1.0	5	2.2	23	4.2
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	0	0.0	2	2.0	5	2.2	7	1.3

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

Of the 548 girls, the majority, 60.6% (332), scored 0% and were asked to stop after giving five consecutive wrong answers. Girls from Afar are mostly in this band score, with 74.5% (76 out of 102). In Oromia and SNNPR as well the girls scored 0%. This clearly shows that more than half of the girls could not identify simple letters/symbols. Meanwhile, 33.9% (186) of the girls identified 1%-40% of the letters/symbols per minute while 23 (4.2%) managed to identify 41-80% of the individual letters. Only 7 out of the 548 girls were able to proficiently tell the sounds of the letters/symbols given within a minute or less - with no girl from Oromia in this band.

Table 18: EGRA-ABE Exercise 1 scores in 120 seconds

Categories		Region						Total	
		Oromiya		Afar		SNNPR			
		No	%	No	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ex1 (120')	Non-reader 0%	123	57.2	76	74.5	132	57.1	331	60.4
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	46	21.9	16	15.7	70	30.3	133	24.3
	Established reader 41%-80%	18	8.4	3	2.9	18	7.8	39	7.1
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	27	12.6	7	6.9	11	4.8	45	8.2

- **Scores in 120 seconds (2 minutes)**

Still, the majority of the girls scored 0% with very few of them making progress into the '*established and proficient reader'* band scores. Within the 60 more seconds, the girls' actual literacy level was further exposed. Overall, 9.8% (54) of the girls managed to score 41-100% making use of the time given. In Oromia, for instance, a notable progress was observed. 13% (28) of the girls scored better than they did in the first 60 seconds. Their progress can even be clearly seen with their score on the *'proficient reader band'* that 12.6% (27) of them secured this highest achievement in the 120 seconds. In SNNPR, and Afar, as well, even though relatively very few, 8.2% (19) of the girls in SNNPR and only 6.8% (7) girls in Afar achieved a better score within the additional minute.

Exercise 2: Familiar Words (timed)

Here, girls were asked to read aloud frequently used words. They were not allowed to individually say the phonetic spellings but were asked to read them at once.

Example:

boy	**Hen**	**bee**	**fox**	**Fat**	**/5**
hat	**Bus**	**Ear**	**cow**	**Pig**	**/5**
				Total score (#/25)	**/25**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' level of word recognition.
- The girls were required to read randomly ordered words.

Table 19: EGRA-ABE Exercise 2 scores in 60 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 2(60')	Non-reader 0%	192	89.3	91	89.2	196	84.8	479	87.4
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	13	6.0	8	7.8	25	10.8	46	8.4
	Established reader 41%-80%	6	2.8	1	1.0	8	3.5	15	2.7
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	4	1.9	2	2.0	2	0.9	8	1.5

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

Similar to the previous exercise, this subtask was as well not easy for the majority of the girls across the regions. The vast majority of sampled girls from all regions (87.4%) scored 0% and were unable to identify the familiar words given. Therefore only 4.1% of the girls were in the '*Established and Proficient'* reader band score for reading 41-100% of the words with accuracy while just 8.4% others were recognized as *'Emergent readers'* for trying to read the words with somehow less accuracy.

Table 20: EGRA-ABE Exercise 2 scores in 120 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 2 (120')	Non-reader 0%	192	89.3	91	89.2	196	84.8	479	87.4
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	6	2.8	8	7.8	20	8.7	34	6.2
	Established reader 41%-80%	9	4.2	0	0.0	12	5.2	21	3.8
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	8	3.7	3	2.9	3	1.3	14	2.6

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per two minutes)**

Still, very limited number of girls managed to progress through the band scores. Most girls were unable to read the words even if they were provided with additional time. Particularly in Afar and SNNPR, only 1 girl in each region read the words proficiently while 4 girls in Oromia were able to achieve such score. In SNNPR and Oromia, less than 2% of the girls read 41%-80% of the non-sense words of the sub-task. These girls somehow accurately but slowly read the words in this exercise.

Exercise 3: Invented words (timed)

In this exercise, girls were asked to read made up words that give no meaning. As with the previous task, girls were asked not to individually spell the letters but read the words as a whole.

Example:

kem	**Lub**	**dan**	**ren**	**Bil**	**/5**
mag	**Zor**	**nuk**	**wep**	**Pic**	**/5**
				Total score (#/25)	**/25**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' decoding skill
- The girls made letter-sound (grapheme- phoneme correspondence through reading the nonsense words)

Table 21: EGRA-ABE Exercise 3 scores in 60 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 3. (60')	Non-reader 0%	193	89.8	91	89.2	199	86.1	483	88.1
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	3	1.4	7	6.9	17	7.4	27	4.9
	Established reader 41%-80%	13	6.0	2	2.0	12	5.2	27	4.9
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	6	2.8	2	2.0	3	1.3	11	2.0

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

More girls struggled with this exercise than the previous one. 88.1% (483 from 548) could not read the non-sense words at all. The vast majority of the girls in Oromia, that is, 89.8%; in Afar 89.2%, and in SNNPR 86.1% were all unable to recognize the sounds of the words given. As a result very few numbers of girls were able to read the words with varying accuracy level. Just 2% of the overall girls that is, only 11 of the 548 sampled girls proficiently read the words while 9.8% of the others were able to read 1-80% of the familiar words provided within the 60 seconds.

Table 22: EGRA-ABE Exercise 3 scores in 120 seconds

Category	Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
	No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**

Ex3(120')	Non-reader 0%	193	89.8	91	89.2	199	86.1	483	88.1
	Emergent reader1%-40%	3	1.4	7	6.9	10	4.3	20	3.6
	Established reader 41%-80%	5	2.3	1	1.0	19	8.2	25	4.6
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	14	6.5	3	2.9	3	1.3	20	3.6

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per two minutes)**

Because most of the girls discontinued the task for giving five consecutive wrong answers, the proportion of girls in the 'Non-reader' band score remained the same. It can easily be understood that this particular sub-task was difficult for most of the girls that very limited number of girls read more words accurately using the 120 seconds given. In Oromia, 8 girls and 1 girl from Afar managed to progress from only scoring 41-80% in the 60 seconds to scoring the 'proficient reader band'. In SNNPR, however, no girl scored the highest band even though 7 girls still thrived and achieved the 'Established reader' band score.

Exercise 4a: Oral Passage reading (timed)

For this subtask, girls were required to read short stories. Before they start reading, they were told they will be asked different questions about the story they were about to read. Then, they were asked to read aloud, quickly, and carefully.

Example:

Selam went to the river to fetch water. On her	**/10**
way to the river, she met her friend Beletu. They	**/10**
Total score (#/60)	**/60**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' oral reading fluency
- The girls were evaluated whether they could read a text with accuracy, with little effort and at a sufficient rate.

Table 23: EGRA-ABE Exercise 4a scores in 60 seconds

Category		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 4a (60')	Non-reader 0%	191	88.8	80	78.4	197	85.3	468	85.4
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	16	7.4	6	5.9	19	8.2	41	7.5
	Established reader 41%-80%	5	2.3	4	3.9	13	5.6	22	4.0
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	3	1.4	12	11.8	2	0.9	17	3.1

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

Across the regions, 85.4% of girls were unable to read the passage in the first minute. That is, 88.8% from Oromia; 85.3% from SNNPR, and 78.4% sampled girls from Afar could not read the given text at all. Apparently, this score might not come as a surprise since the vast majority of these girls were unable to read individual words or even recognize alphabets in the previous subtasks. More than 75% of girls in each of the regions did not, therefore, have the literacy level to read the passage or had made five consecutive errors when trying to read in the first 60 seconds and were forced to an early exit.

Table 24: EGRA-ABE Exercise 4a scores in 120 seconds

Category		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 4a (120')	Non-reader 0%	191	88.8	77	75.5	197	85.3	465	84.9
	Emergent reader 1%-40%	8	3.7	8	7.8	14	6.1	30	5.5
	Established reader 41%-80%	5	2.3	1	1.0	16	6.9	22	4.0
	Proficient reader 81%-100%	11	5.1	16	15.7	4	1.7	31	5.7
	Total	**215**	**100**	**102**	**100**	**231**	**100**	**548**	**100**

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per two minutes)**

From the 548 girls, only 9.6% of them read the passage with an 'Established and Proficient' level of performance. That means, the majority of them still performed very poorly in the sub task despite the abundant amount of time provided. Relatively, girls from Afar read the passage more proficiently than the other regions that 15.7% of them were able to achieve the highest score when only 1.7% and 5.1% of the girls in SNNPR and Afar accomplished the band score.

Table 25: Foundational Literacy gaps- EGRA – ABE- untimed

Categories		**Region**						**Total**	
		Oromia		**Afar**		**SNNPR**			
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 4b.	Non-learner 0%	176	81.9	82	80.4	202	87.4	460	83.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	20	9.3	13	12.7	20	8.7	53	9.7
	Established learner 41%-80%	14	6.5	6	5.9	7	3.0	27	4.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	5	2.3	1	1.0	2	0.9	8	1.5
Ex 5	Non-learner 0%	82	38.1	48	47.1	61	26.4	191	34.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	66	30.7	14	13.7	76	32.9	156	28.5
	Established learner 41%-80%	37	17.2	20	19.6	56	24.2	113	20.6
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	30	14.0	20	19.6	38	16.5	88	16.1

Exercise 4b: Reading comprehension (untimed)

This sub-task was the extension of the previous task. The story the girls read was given to them if they wanted to review it. Then, different questions were posed to the girls about the story.

Example:

	Correct	Incorrect	No response
Who went to the river? [Selam]			
Why did Selam go to the river? [to fetch water]			

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' reading comprehension level
- The girls were assessed if they could respond to the different types of questions posed to them, which included literal and inferential questions

Scores

Despite this subtask not being timed, for girls to answer questions with care and flexibility, the majority of them (83.9%) scored 0%. This is unsurprising, given that the majority of these girls could not identify letters/symbols very well. 87.4% (202 out of 231) girls in SNNPR did not answer any of the comprehension questions, with similar results in Oromia, 81.9% (176 out of 215) girls, and Afar, 80.4% (82 of the 102). In the meantime, the minorities, that is, less than 7% of the girls from all the regions managed to answer 41-80% of the comprehension questions.

Exercise 5: Listening Comprehension: (untimed)

For this task, enumerators read aloud a passage slowly (about 1 word per second) only once. The girls were asked to listen to the passage carefully and answer the questions that followed it.

Example:

Question	Correct	Incorrect	No response
When do Hiwot and Yezina go to school together?			
What do they do while studying?			

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' oral language skill - their listening comprehension of oral language
- The girls were assessed if they could respond to literal and inferential questions after listening

Scores

Better scores were achieved for this subtask in comparison to the previous reading tasks, which indicates that girls perform better in speaking than reading. It is worth noticing the score distribution of this subtask. Although 34.9% of girls (191 from 548) could not answer any of the listening comprehension questions posed to them, a further 16.1% (88) performed the task proficiently, answering 81-100% of the questions while 20.6% (113) girls answered 41-80% of the questions - demonstrating their better level of oral language proficiency against their reading one. This might not come as a surprise since almost all the girls took the test in their own mother tongue or in a language that they daily use and that all they were asked to do was to listen and respond.

6.2.3 EGRA- IFAL (girls age 15-19)

Exercise 1: Letter identification- sounds of letters (timed) - IFAL

For this exercise, girls were asked to tell the sounds of the letters given to them on the booklets.

Example:

f	**j**	**A**	**s**	**Z**	**e**	**U**	**j**	**m**	**o**	**/10**
Y	**g**	**k**	**B**	**T**	**P**	**d**	**V**	**k**	**n**	**/10**
				Total score (#/100) (Data entry person to complete)						**/100**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' alphabet knowledge.
- For this subtask the girls' provided the sounds of the letters differentiating each letter from the groups.

Table 26: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 1 score per 1 minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 1 (60')	Non-reader 0%	3	6.8	96	44.7	77	72.6	94	66.7	270	53.4
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	9	20.5	75	34.9	17	16.0	42	29.8	143	28.3
	Established learner 41%-80%	26	59.1	39	18.1	9	8.5	2	1.4	76	15.0
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	6	13.6	5	2.3	3	2.8	3	2.1	17	3.4

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

Half of the 506 girls, that is, 53.4% did not identify the letter/symbols provided in the first 60 minutes – a proportion of higher number in Afar with 72.6%. Contrarily, very few girls from Amhara failed to tell the

letters in this sub-task. There were also 28.3% (134) other girls who could tell only 1-40% of the letter sounds. Except in Afar, noticeable proportions of girls were found in this band score for the first 60 seconds. 15 percent of the girls performed better by telling 41-80% of the accurate sounds, while only 2.4% (11 of 462) girls achieved the highest score for recognizing more than 81% of the letters within a minute. Girls from Amhara outperformed the others in this sub-task that 70.7% of them managed to accurately identify more than 41% of the letters or sounds provided. It is also worth noting that far fewer number of girls accurately identified more than 41% of the alphabets in the other regions.

Table 27: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 1 score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 1 (120')	Non-learner 0%	3	6.8	96	44.7	77	72.6	94	66.7	270	53.4
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	3	6.8	38	17.7	13	12.3	28	19.9	82	16.2
	Established learner 41%-80%	10	22.7	28	13.0	6	5.7	12	8.5	56	11.1
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	28	63.6	53	24.7	10	9.4	7	5.0	98	19.4

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per two minutes)**

12.1% (61) of the girls performed better than they did in the first 60 seconds. From the overall 506 girls who continued doing this task, 34.4% (63) were noticeably able to score the highest band by providing 81-100% of the sounds of the letters – girls from Amhara spearheading the proportion with 63.6%. It can also be seen that a higher number of girls from the other regions particularly from Oromia, demonstrated their alphabet knowledge using the additional 60 seconds. Even though these girls spent more than a minute to do this task, they accurately recognized most of the symbols /letters implying that they could be slow but are accurate.

Exercise 2: Familiar Words (timed) - IFAL

Here, girls were asked to read out loud frequently used words. They were not allowed to individually tell the spellings of the words but to read them at once.

Example:

buy	**HIV**	**Bee**	**fox**	**Fat**	**/5**
map	**Bus**	**wet**	**cow**	**Pig**	**/5**
				Total score (#/25)	**/25**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' level of word recognition.
- The girls were required to read randomly ordered words.

Table 28: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 2 score per 1 minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 2 (60')	Non-learner 0%	4	9.1	175	81.4	86	81.1	122	86.5	387	76.5
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	0	0.0	16	7.4	10	9.4	10	7.1	36	7.1
	Established learner 41%-80%	6	13.6	12	5.6	4	3.8	8	5.7	30	5.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	34	77.3	12	5.6	6	5.7	1	0.7	53	10.5

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

The vast majority of girls were not able to accurately recognize the words provided. A large number of girls are categorized under the two extreme band scores of the test. The vast majority, more than 80% of the girls in the regions except Amhara, scored 0%. These girls were unable to read any of the given frequently used familiar words. On the other extreme, the achievements of 10.5% girls were categorized under the '*Proficient learner'* band score. Like in the previous exercise, girls from Amhara still outperformed the majority of girls in the other regions with 77.3% of them securing the highest score within just 60 seconds. Yet very few in number, there were also girls from the other regions who managed to read the letters with varying accuracy level. 7.1% of them for instance, accurately read 1-40% of the words when 5.9% performed better and correctly recognized 41-80% of the words given.

Table 29: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 2 score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 2 (120')	Non-learner 0%	4	9.1	175	81.4	86	81.1	122	86.5	387	76.5
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	0	0.0	5	2.3	8	7.5	7	5.0	20	4.0
	Established learner 41%-80%	5	11.4	7	3.3	2	1.9	11	7.8	25	4.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	35	79.5	28	13.0	10	9.4	1	0.7	74	14.6

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per 2 minute)**

Only 3.1% (16) girls provided more accurate answers than they did in the first 60 second while the majority still struggled to read the words. In fact, in all the regions except in Amhara, like in the first 60 seconds, more than 80% of the girls performed very poorly in this subtask and achieved 0% while limited number of girls proficiently performed the task – the majority being from Amhara.

Exercise 3: Invented words (timed)

In this exercise, the girls were asked to read made-up words with no meaning. Like the previous task the girls were asked not to individually spell the letters but read the words as a whole.

Example:

kem	**Lub**	**dan**	**ren**	**Bil**	**/5**
mag	**Zor**	**nuk**	**wep**	**Pic**	**/5**
				Total score (#/25)	**/25**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' decoding skill
- The girls made letter-sound (grapheme- phoneme correspondence through reading the nonsense words)

Table 30: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 3 score per 1 minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 3 (60')	Non-learner 0%	5	11.4	177	82.3	88	83.0	124	87.9	394	77.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	11	25.0	11	5.1	6	5.7	10	7.1	38	7.5
	Established learner 41%-80%	17	38.6	11	5.1	5	4.7	7	5.0	40	7.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	11	25.0	16	7.4	7	6.6	0	0.0	34	6.7

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

The number of girls who could not read increased even more for this subtask. 77.9% of the girls were completely unable to read the invented words. As a result, very few numbers of girls were able to make progress in the task and read more than 41% of the words. Exceptionally, girls from Amhara registered proportionate scores across the bands that only 11.4% of the girls scored 0% while in the other regions more than 80% of the girls failed to even read 1% of the non-sense words.

Table 31: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 3 score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 3 (120')	Non-learner 0%	5	11.4	177	82.3	88	83.0	124	87.9	394	77.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	5	11.4	3	1.4	5	4.7	9	6.4	22	4.3
	Established learner 41%-80%	19	43.2	12	5.6	4	3.8	8	5.7	43	8.5
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	15	34.1	23	10.7	9	8.5	0	0.0	47	9.3

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per two minutes)**

Reading the non-sense words apparently continued to be challenging for the majority of the girls that very few were able to read more words using after the first 60 seconds. Only 3.1% (16) of the girls most of them from SNNPR (8 girls) and Amhara (6 girls) performed better using the additional time. In Afar and Oromia, only 1 girl from each region progressed further and achieved better score even though the girl from SNNPR could not still achieve the highest mark.

Exercise 4a: Oral Passage reading (timed)

For this subtask, girls were required to read short stories. Before they start reading, they were told they will be asked different questions about the story they were about to read. Then, they were asked to read aloud, quickly, and carefully.

Example:

Selam went to the river to fetch water. On her	**/10**
way to the river, she met her friend Beletu. They	**/10**
Total score (#/60)	**/60**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' oral reading fluency
- The girls were evaluated if they could read a text with accuracy, with little effort and at a sufficient rate.

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Table 32: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 4a score per minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex4a (60')	Non-learner 0%	2	4.5	174	80.9	76	71.7	116	82.3	368	72.7
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	4	9.1	17	7.9	16	15.1	11	7.8	48	9.5
	Established learner 41%-80%	19	43.2	15	7.0	4	3.8	1	0.7	39	7.7
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	19	43.2	9	4.2	10	9.4	13	9.2	51	10.1

- **Scores in 60 seconds (per minute)**

The vast majority of the girls, that is 72.7% could not read the passage at all. There were only 2 girls in Amhara, however, who were unable to read the passage, while 86.3% of the girls in this region read 41% - 100% of the passage accurately per the first given minute. In the other regions, conversely, not more than 10% of the girls were able to achieve the proficient or established band score level. Less than 10% of the girls were, as a result, able to make progress in the task. Unlike previous results, relatively more girls (15.1%) in Afar read 1-40% of the text provided while in SNNPR and Oromia this band score is achieved by less than 8% of their girls.

Table 33: EGRA-IFAL Exercise 4a score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex4a	Non-learner 0%	2	4.5	173	80.5	73	68.9	116	82.3	364	71.9

(120')	Emergent learner 1%-40%	1	2.3	11	5.1	13	12.3	9	6.4	34	6.7
	Established learner 41%-80%	9	20.5	7	3.3	3	2.8	2	1.4	21	4.2
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	32	72.7	24	11.2	17	16.0	14	9.9	87	17.2

- **Scores in 120 seconds (per two minutes)**

Notably, an average of 3.5% girls from all the regions demonstrated the level of their reading fluency using the additional time. Unlike in the previous two tasks, larger numbers of girls were able to achieve better scores this time – girls from Amhara still being exceptional in this regard. The vast majority of the girls in this region have been making use of the additional 60 seconds that in most of the tasks, they were able to progress further into achieving the highest mark. For this particular sub-task, 72.7% of the girls read the passage with accuracy, little effort and with a sufficient rate.

Exercise 4b: Reading comprehension (untimed)

This sub-task was the extension of the previous task. The story the girls read was given to them if they wanted to read again. Then, different questions were posed to the girls about the story.

Example:

	Correct	**Incorrect**	**No response**
Who went to the river?			
Why did Selam go to the river?			

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' reading comprehension level
- The girls were assessed if they could respond to the different types of questions posed to them

Table 34: EGRA – IFAL Exercise 4b score- untimed

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex4b	Non-learner 0%	5	11.4	158	73.5	78	73.6	126	89.4	367	72.5
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	13	29.5	16	7.4	10	9.4	12	8.5	51	10.1
	Established learner 41%-80%	23	52.3	24	11.2	11	10.4	3	2.1	61	12.1
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	3	6.8	17	7.9	7	6.6	0	0.0	27	5.3

Scores

Because 71.9% of the girls were not able to read the passage in the previous exercise, it was expected that they would not be able to answer the comprehension questions. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that 72.5% of the girls could not answer any of the questions raised in this subtask. However, even though the vast majority scored 0%, some, particularly those in Amhara, answered the questions with different accuracy levels (1% - 80%). Around 10% of the girls in all the regions except Amhara, correctly answered less than 40% of the comprehension questions while a much greater number of girls in Amhara managed to achieve similar score. The lowest proportion (5.3%) gave 81-100% accurate answers to the comprehension questions with no girl from SNNPR.

Exercise 5: Listening Comprehension: (untimed)

For this task, enumerators read aloud a passage slowly (about 1 word per second) only once. The girls were asked to listen to the passage carefully and answer the questions that followed it.

Example:

Question	Correct	Incorrect	No response
When do Hiwot and Yezina go to school together?			
What do they do while studying?			

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' oral language skill - their listening comprehension of oral language
- The girls were assessed if they could respond to literal and inferential questions after listening

Table 35: EGRA – IFAL Exercise 5 score- untimed

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 5	Non-learner 0%	1	2.3	62	28.8	33	31.1	43	30.5	139	27.5
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	7	15.9	29	13.5	5	4.7	34	24.1	75	14.8
	Established learner 41%-80%	11	25.0	46	21.4	18	17.0	32	22.7	107	21.1
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	25	56.8	78	36.3	50	47.2	32	22.7	185	36.6

Scores

This listening comprehension sub-task seemed to be a lot easier for most of the girls that 36.6% were able achieve the highest score. A proportionate distribution of scores was registered for this task with relatively lower number of girls who scored 0%. In Oromia and SNNPR, reasonably balanced scores can be seen on the test results while in Afar the scores stood at two extremes. Most of the girls in this region achieved either the *'non-learner'* or the *'proficient learner*' band score. In Amhara, however, the majority scored 41-100% of the test.

6.2.4 EGRA analysis summary

The EGRA results of both girls aged 10-14 and 15-19 groups demonstrate a staggeringly low literacy level with most girls not being able to recognize even individual alphabets of their respective mother tongues or a language they regularly use. As a result, the girls' scores for the rest of the subtasks which required them to read and understand words and sentences remained extremely low with an exception to the listening comprehension sub-task where most girls in both age groups relatively performed better. For the most part, because 60 extra seconds were added to all timed subtasks, some girls were able to achieve better scores reading more words accurately but relatively slower.

Most girls in Amhara (only IFALs) demonstrated intermediate and advanced levels of literacy unlike most of the sampled girls in the other regions. The quantitative data secured somehow echoed a similar phenomenon about the majority of sampled girls in Amhara who have the habit of reading regularly unlike the vast majority of sampled girls in the other regions. Most of the girls in Afar, SNNPR and Oromia do not read at all for a number of reasons. From the overall sampled 1054 girls, only 20.8% (219) girls make time to read while the vast number of respondents that is 73.5% (775) do not read at all. In Amhara, there seem to be a large number of girls who read in comparison to those who do not. Out of the 44 girls who responded to this question, 77.3% (34) said they read while only 20.5% (9) do not. The reality is vice versa for girls in the other regions that the number of those who do not read outnumbers those who do. In SNNPR and Oromia, for instance, 84.4% (314 out of 372) and 79.5% of sampled girls (342 of 430) do not read. Less than 20% girls in these regions read. In the meantime, more than half of the sampled girls in Afar said that they have no reading habit while 26.4% (55) said that they do. Overall, only 20.8% of the sampled girls across the regions read.

Still, even these girls who said they read regularly encounter challenges that stop them from reading. A number of different problems were pointed out as the reasons that cause these girls not to read. While of course there were also girls who said have no reason at all for not reading, the absence of electricity was opted by 67.3% girls in Afar, 35.1% (29) in Oromia, and 11.8% in Amhara as the major reason that stops them from reading. In Oromia, SNNPR and Afar, having no resource to read such as text books, story books or newspapers was the other reason that prevents girls from reading. In Oromia, 46.8%; in SNNPR, 35.8%, and in Afar 16.4% of the girls mentioned this problem. Having no free time to do other duties inside and outside of house, and lacking a supportive environment are the other most amplified obstacles for the girls in reading.

6.2.5. EGMA- ABE (girls age 10-14)

Exercise 6: Number identification: (timed)

For this exercise, girls were given a set of individual numbers on a booklet, and were asked to point out and tell the numbers to the enumerators.

Example:

6	**1**	**2**	**4**	**8**	**/5**
12	**18**	**14**	**24**	**26**	**/5**
				Total score	**/20**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' numeral knowledge in terms of reading and speaking

Table 36: EGMA-ABE Exercise 6 scores in 60 seconds

Categories		Region						Total	
		Oromia		**Afar**		**SNNPR**			
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 6 (60')	Non-learner 0%	66	30.7	58	56.9	47	20.3	171	31.2
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	73	34.0	22	21.6	104	45.0	199	36.3
	Established learner 41%-80%	68	31.6	13	12.7	45	19.5	126	23.0
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	8	3.7	9	8.8	35	15.2	52	9.5

- **Scores at 60 seconds (1 minute)**

Identifying individual numbers was not too challenging for most girls as identifying letters was in the EGRA test. Across all regions, 36.3% and 23% girls were able to tell 1-40% and 41-80% of the numbers given within the first 1 minute respectively. 9.5% of the girls also identified the numbers proficiently, while, on the other end, 171 of the 548 others could not recognize the numbers at all. Girls in SNNPR relatively performed well in this subtask that 15.2% accurately identified 81-100% of the numbers per minute.

Table 37: EGMA-ABE Exercise 6 scores in 120 seconds

Categories		Region						Total	
		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ex 6 (120')	Non-learner 0%	66	30.7	57	55.9	46	19.9	169	30.8
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	71	33.0	21	20.6	104	45.0	196	35.8
	Established learner 41%-80%	67	31.2	15	14.7	43	18.6	125	22.8
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	11	5.1	9	8.8	38	16.5	58	10.6

- **Scores at 120 seconds (2 minutes)**

Very few girls obtained the proficient learner band score while some achieved the emergent and established bands. A total of 2.3% (13) girls made use of the additional 60 minutes to achieve more in the sub-task implying that the majority of them achieved a similar score, even so more space was provided to do the task. Therefore, only 10.6% girls identified 81-100% of the numbers within the given 2 minutes, while 35.8% were only able to name 1 to 40% of the numbers. Considerably, 22.8% of the girls accurately identified 41-80% of the numbers.

Exercise 9: Addition (timed)

Example:

Exercise
2 + 2 =
2 + 4 =
5 + 3 =

For this exercise, girls were given addition problems to solve and give the answer for each problem.

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' knowledge and confidence of basic addition facts.
- They mentally solved addition problems with sums less than 20

Table 38: EGMA-ABE Exercise 9 scores in 60 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 9. (60')	Non-learner 0%	123	57.2	75	73.5	119	51.5	317	57.8
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	57	26.5	21	20.6	52	22.5	130	23.7
	Established learner 41%-80%	34	15.8	6	5.9	55	23.8	95	17.3
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	1	0.5	0	0.0	5	2.2	6	1.1

- **Scores at 60 seconds (1 minute)**

More than half of the 548 girls (57.8%) did not solve a single addition problem in this subtask- mostly from Afar. Indeed, 73.5% of the girls in Afar, 57.2% in Oromia and 51.5% in SNNPR did not manage to get any correct answer. Meanwhile, 41% of the other girls proportionately achieved the 'emergent' and 'established' learner band scores for solving 1-80% of the addition problems. Only 6 girls - one from Oromia, 5 from SNNPR, but none from Afar proficiently solved the problems in first 60 seconds.

Table 39: EGMA-ABE Exercise 9 scores in 120 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 9 (120')	Non-learner 0%	123	57.2	75	73.5	119	51.5	317	57.8
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	32	14.9	13	12.7	31	13.4	76	13.9
	Established learner 41%-80%	42	19.5	10	9.8	50	21.6	102	18.6
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	18	8.4	4	3.9	31	13.4	53	9.7

- **Scores at 120 seconds (2 minutes)**

Only 9.8% of the girls improved their scores using the additional 60 seconds – all of them answering over 41% - 100% of the questions. 18.6% of them solved 41-80% of the problems while just 9.7% did very well in accurately providing 81-100% of the required responses – with Oromia and SNNPR taking the lead in these band scores. In Oromia, 11.6% (25) and in SNNPR 9% (21) girls achieved a relatively better score using the additional seconds. In Afar, only 8 girls were able to make progress along the band scores that only 4 of them proficiently solved the addition problems.

Exercise 10: Subtraction (timed)

As with the previous exercise, girls were provided with subtraction problems. They were asked to solve the problems and say the answer.

Example:

Exercise
4 - 2 =
6 - 1 =
4 - 4 =

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' knowledge on basic subtraction facts
- They mentally solved subtraction problems with differences less than 20

Table 40: EGMA-ABE Exercise 10 scores in 60 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 10 (60')	Non-learner 0%	136	63.3	82	80.4	132	57.1	350	63.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	49	22.8	19	18.6	57	24.7	125	22.8
	Established learner 41%-80%	27	12.6	1	1.0	42	18.2	70	12.8
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	3	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.5

- **Scores at 60 seconds (1 minute)**

Again, out of the 548 girls, the majority (63.9%) scored 0% in this subtask – Afar spearheading with 80.4%. For most of these girls, the task was discontinued for giving four successive wrong answers. However, 22.8% (125) were able to provide 1-40% correct responses to the questions while 12.8% (70) other girls, the majority from Oromia and SNNPR achieved 41-80% scores. As per, the highest achievement, no girl from SNNPR and Afar secured that band while only 3 were able to do so. Girls from Afar in particular struggled with this sub-task that just 1 girl provided 41-80% accurate answers while the others could not score more than 40% .

Table 41: EGMA-ABE Exercise 10 scores in 120 seconds

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex10 (120')	Non-learner 0%	136	63.3	82	80.4	132	57.1	350	63.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	30	14.0	17	16.7	41	17.7	88	16.1
	Established learner 41%-80%	35	16.3	1	1.0	43	18.6	79	14.4
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	14	6.5	2	2.0	15	6.5	31	5.7

- **Scores at 120 seconds (2 minutes)**

Even though the majority of girls still could not go beyond providing 40% of the correct answers, the additional minute played a noteworthy role in revealing some girls' actual numeracy level. A total of 6.7% (37 out of the 548) girls progressed in their level of performance using the additional 60 seconds. Within the first minute, just 3 girls (all from Oromia) were able to achieve the highest score while here, 31 more girls managed to accurately solve the subtraction problems making use of the additional minute – the highest proportion being from SNNPR.

Exercise 7: Quantity Discrimination (not timed)

Here, girls were given a pair of numbers to identify the bigger ones from the pairs.

Example:

Exercise	
8	**6**
12	**21**
34	**26**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' ability to compare numbers

Table 42: Foundational Numeracy gaps- Exercise 7 EGMA-ABE- untimed

Categories		Region						Total	
		Oromia		**Afar**		**SNNPR**			
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 7	Non-learner 0%	89	41.4	64	62.7	71	30.7	224	40.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	74	34.4	26	25.5	67	29.0	167	30.5
	Established learner 41%-80%	42	19.5	9	8.8	77	33.3	128	23.4
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	10	4.7	3	2.9	16	6.9	29	5.3

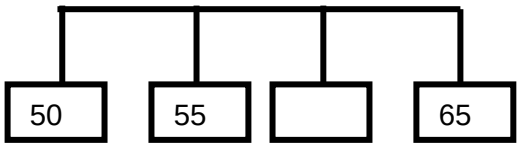
Scores

Like in the previous subtasks, the number of girls who scored nil in this subtask is greater than those who performed better. Though girls were given the freedom to answer the questions at their own desired pace, still 40.9% (224 from 548) could not provide any correct answer. 30.5% (167) achieved a slightly better score of 1-40%, while 23.4% of girls (128) gave 41-80% correct responses. As in the previous subtasks, very few girls made it to the proficient learner band score for accurately identifying 81-100% of the correct larger numbers. Only 5.3% (29) girls proficiently compared the numbers still girls from Oromia and SNNPR leading the way. In this task, 16 girls from SNNPR and 10 from Oromia were proficient enough to successfully achieve the highest score.

Exercise 8: Missing Number (untimed)

This exercise contained rows of numbers with one missing number in between. The girls were asked to tell what number goes in the empty space to complete the pattern of the numbers.

Example:



What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' ability to identify number patterns
- They identified the missing number in a pattern of four numbers

Table 43: Foundational Numeracy gaps- Exercise 8 EGMA-ABE- untimed

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 8	Non-learner 0%	84	39.1	69	67.6	93	40.3	246	44.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	108	50.2	28	27.5	106	45.9	242	44.2
	Established learner 41%-80%	18	8.4	4	3.9	30	13.0	52	9.5
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	5	2.3	1	1.0	2	0.9	8	1.5

Scores

This exercise demanded more critical thinking of the girls than the previous ones. Hence, the majority of girls scored less than 41%. Out of the 548 girls, 44.9% (246) were unable to tell the missing numbers at all while 44.2% (242) performed somehow better and completed 1-40% of the number patterns. Those who scored more than 41% were very few in number. The proficient band score was, therefore, not very easy for many to achieve, so only 8 girls from the overall 548 were able to get 81-100% of the correct answers.

Exercise 12: Word Problems

For this specific exercise, counters were provided to the girls to help with the tasks. The girls were told to use the counters if only they needed to.

Example:

	Answer	**Correct**	**Incorrect**
<u>Exercise 1</u> **7 ducks are swimming in a pond. [pause and check]** **2 more ducks join the swimming. [pause and check]** **How many ducks are swimming in the pond altogether?**			

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' skill on interpretation of a situation, planning, and problem solving.
- The girls solved problems presented orally using any strategy they wanted, including the use of paper or counters.

Table 44: Foundational Numeracy gaps- Exercise 12 EGMA-ABE- untimed

Categories		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 12	Non-learner 0%	58	27.0	56	54.9	56	24.2	170	31.0
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	49	22.8	18	17.6	72	31.2	139	25.4
	Established learner 41%-80%	61	28.4	13	12.7	71	30.7	145	26.5
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	47	21.9	15	14.7	32	13.9	94	17.2

Scores

For this final subtask, proportionate distributions of results per every band score were observed. There were a balanced number of non-learners, emergent, established and proficient learners except in Afar where 54.9% of the girls did not give any accurate answer to the task outnumbering those who relatively did well. Across regions, 17.2% (94 of 548) girls solved the problems using different strategies of their own choice proficiently while 26.5% (145) were able to get 41-80% of the solutions to the mathematical problems posed. Meanwhile, 25.4% of girls (139) only provided accurate answers to 1-40% of the questions, while the other 31% (170) did not provide any correct answer at all.

Exercise 11: Written Exercise (untimed)

This exercise was only completed by girls who had correctly solved 5 or more addition or 5 or more subtraction items in the previous two subtasks. For those who did not achieve this, the next exercise (Exercise 12- analyzed above) was carried out. For this exercise, white papers were given to the girls to write their answers on with a pencil. Basic mathematical exercises were included for the girls to calculate. The questions included addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, with sums of a range of difficulty given.

Example:

Exercise
18 + 7=
25 – 8 =
30 ÷ 6=
6 x 5 =

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girl's ability to apply procedural addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division knowledge

Table 45: Foundational numeracy skills (%) EGMA – ABE exercise 11

Categories		Region							
		Afar		Oromia		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Exercise 11: Written exercise	Non-learner 0%	19	67.9	48	49.0	61	49.6	128	51.4
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	4	14.3	43	43.9	55	44.7	102	41.0
	Established learner 41%-80%	3	10.7	6	6.1	7	5.7	16	6.4
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	2	7.1	1	1.0	0	0.0	3	1.2
	Total	28	11.2	98	39.4	123	49.4	249	100

Scores

Out of the 548 girls, only 249 were able to carry out this subtask. That means, more than half of the girls gave wrong answers to 5 or more of the addition or 5 or more of the subtraction questions in the previous sub-tasks. Amongst these girls who made it to this exercise, 41% (102) of them provided 1-40% accurate answers while 51.4% (128) others gave incorrect answers to the questions and had to leave early – Afar with the highest proportion in this regard. Very few girls, on the other hand, (6.4%) provided 41-80% of the correct answers, with only 2 in Afar and 1 in Oromia achieving the highest score. The majority of girls could not accurately calculate more than 40% of the mathematical problems given.

6.2.6. EGMA – IFAL (girls age 15-19)

Exercise 6: Number identification: (timed)

For this exercise, the girls were given a set of individual numbers on a booklet to point out and tell the numbers to the enumerators.

Example:

6	**1**	**2**	**4**	**8**	**/5**
12	**18**	**14**	**24**	**26**	**/5**
			Total score (Data entry person to complete)		**/20**

What did this subtask assess?

It assessed the girls' numeral knowledge

Table 46: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 6 score per minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Ex 6 (60')	Non-learner 0%	1	2.3	39	18.1	55	51.9	39	27.7	134	26.5
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	2	4.5	55	25.6	11	10.4	41	29.1	109	21.5
	Established learner 41%-80%	2	4.5	72	33.5	20	18.9	32	22.7	126	24.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	39	88.6	49	22.8	20	18.9	29	20.6	137	27.1

- **Scores at 60 seconds (1 minute)**

In the first 60 seconds, sampled girls in all the regions achieved different level of scores for this subtask. The vast majority of girls from Amhara secured the highest score while a notable proportion of girls in the other regions could not score greater than 1%. Identifying numbers did not challenge most of the girls in all the regions as identifying letters or sounds in the previous test. A considerable proportion of the girls did very well in this exercise that 27.1% of them were labelled as proficient learners for identifying more than 81% of the numbers.

Table 47: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 6 score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 6 (120')	Non-learner 0%	1	2.3	39	18.1	55	51.9	39	27.7	134	26.5
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	2	4.5	49	22.8	9	8.5	40	28.4	100	19.8
	Established learner 41%-80%	2	4.5	75	34.9	16	15.1	29	20.6	122	24.1

	Proficient learner 81%-100%	39	88.6	52	24.2	26	24.5	33	23.4	150	29.6

- **Scores at 120 seconds (2 minute)**

The girls' level of accuracy particularly in Amhara remained the same after using the additional second for this task. However, there are still girls who made use of the added 60 seconds to identify more numbers in the exercise. Most of the girls managed to accurately identify more than 41% the numbers using the additional time.

Exercise 9: Addition (timed)

Exercise
2 + 2 =
2 + 4 =
5 + 3 =

What did this subtask assess?

It assessed the girls' knowledge and confidence of basic addition facts.

They mentally solved addition problems with sums less than 20

For this exercise, girls were given addition problems to solve and give the answer for each problem.

Table 48: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 9 score per minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 9 (60')	Non-learner 0%	2	4.5	94	43.7	74	69.8	84	59.6	254	50.2
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	6	13.6	30	14.0	18	17.0	18	12.8	72	14.2
	Established learner 41%-80%	22	50.0	81	37.7	12	11.3	30	21.3	145	28.7
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	14	31.8	10	4.7	2	1.9	9	6.4	35	6.9

- **Scores at 60 seconds (1 minute)**

From the overall sampled 502 girls, 65% of them could not go beyond scoring 40% in this sub-task. 50.2% of the girls were, in fact, those who did not even score as high as 1%. There were also 28.7% who scored 41-80% of the answers with girls in Amhara notably outperforming the others in this score category. The majority of girls from Amhara still continued to do better on the test. Half of the girls in

this region accurately solved more than 41% of the problems while 31.8% of them proficiently provided the answers to the questions. Hence, only less than 7% girls got the highest score in the regions.

Table 49: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 9 score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 9 (120')	Non-learner 0%	2	4.5	94	43.7	72	67.9	84	59.6	252	49.8
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	4	9.1	13	6.0	10	9.4	11	7.8	38	7.5
	Established learner 41%-80%	19	43.2	50	23.3	11	10.4	19	13.5	99	19.6
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	19	43.2	58	27.0	13	12.3	27	19.1	117	23.1

- **Scores 120 seconds (2 minutes)**

More girls managed to effectively use the additional second provided and scored better results. It is noticeable that 16% (82) more girls were able to score the highest result for giving more than 81% accurate answers to the mathematical problems. Still, girls from Amhara performed very well than most of the girls in the other regions. 5 girls in this region improved their scores and achieved the '*Proficient learner'* band score.

Exercise 10: Subtraction (timed)

Example:

Exercise
4 - 2 =
22 - 6 =
15 - 7=

Like the previous exercise, girls were provided with subtraction problems. They were asked to solve the problems and say the answer.

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' knowledge on basic subtraction facts
- They mentally solved subtraction problems with differences less than 20

Table 50: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 10 score per minute

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 10 (60')	Non-learner 0%	5	11.4	101	47.0	73	68.9	84	59.6	263	52.0
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	13	29.5	49	22.8	23	21.7	26	18.4	111	21.9
	Established learner 41%-80%	22	50.0	60	27.9	8	7.5	28	19.9	118	23.3
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	4	9.1	5	2.3	2	1.9	3	2.1	14	2.8

- **Scores at 60 seconds (1 minute)**

Half of the girls (52%) scored 0% on this subtask. The majority, that is 68.9% of the girls in Afar did not do very well in the first 60 second of the test that all of them could not provide more than 1% of the required answers. In Oromia and SNNPR as well 51.9% of the girls did not solve a single subtraction problem as per the required accuracy. On the other hand, 21.9% of the girls answered less than 41% of the questions while 23.3% (70) managed to go up to getting 80% of the answers in the first 60 seconds. Less than 3% girls out of the 506, however, achieved the highest score in this subtask within the first minute.

Table 51: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 10 score per 2 minutes

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 10 (120')	Non-learner 0%	5	11.4	101	47.0	71	67.0	84	59.6	261	51.6
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	12	27.3	28	13.0	17	16.0	12	8.5	69	13.6
	Established learner 41%-80%	13	29.5	57	26.5	9	8.5	32	22.7	111	21.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	14	31.8	29	13.5	9	8.5	13	9.2	65	12.8

- **Scores in 120 seconds (2 minutes)**

In the first 60 seconds, less than 3% of the girls were proficient enough to answer more than 81% of the questions. But making use of the additional minute, 10% more girls managed to achieve the same score. Girls from Amhara still outperformed most of the girls in the other regions that 31.8% of them accurately solved the subtraction problem. The same could be true for girls in Oromia with the highest achievement that relatively they far better than girls in Afar and SNNPR.

Exercise 7: Quantity Discrimination (not timed)

Here, girls were given a pair of numbers to identify the bigger ones from the pairs

Example:

Exercise	
8	**6**
12	**21**
34	**26**

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' ability to compare numbers

Table 52: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 7 score - untimed

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 7	Non-learner 0%	2	4.5	50	23.3	63	59.4	47	33.3	162	32.0
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	1	2.3	61	28.4	16	15.1	39	27.7	117	23.1
	Established learner 41%-80%	6	13.6	54	25.1	10	9.4	32	22.7	102	20.2
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	35	79.5	50	23.3	17	16.0	23	16.3	125	24.7

Scores

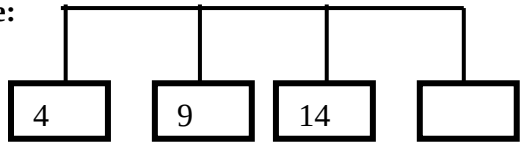
For 32% of the girls, it was not possible to identify the larger numbers from the specified sets of questions. 59.4% of these were from Afar while 33.3% from SNNPR and 23.3% from Oromia. Nevertheless, 23.1% scored better by providing 1-40% of the correct answers when 20.2% others did

even better and gave 41 to 80% accurate answers. 24.7% exceeded all scoring the highest mark for this subtask with 79.5% girls in Amhara, whose score again surpassed most of the girls in the other regions.

Exercise 8: Missing Number (untimed)

This exercise contained row of numbers with one missing number in between. Girls were asked to specify which number goes in the empty space to complete the pattern of the numbers.

Example:



What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' ability to identify number patterns
- They identified the missing number in a pattern of four numbers

Table 53: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 8 score - untimed

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 8	Non-learner 0%	4	9.1	50	23.3	63	59.4	54	38.3	171	33.8
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	16	36.4	99	46.0	28	26.4	66	46.8	209	41.3
	Established learner 41%-80%	22	50.0	47	21.9	7	6.6	20	14.2	96	19.0
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	2	4.5	19	8.8	8	7.5	1	0.7	30	5.9

Scores

Understanding the number patterns and identifying the missing numbers was not very easy for the vast majority of the girls, in that only 5.1% were able to achieve the highest score. In this task, 33.8% of girls scored 0% while 41.3% struggled to provide 1-40% of the answers. Except Amhara, the majority of girls in the other regions are found in these categories – some are under *'non-learners'* while the others are under *'emergent learners'* band scores. However, half of the girls in Amhara managed to perform better and scored 41-80%. Few girls in Oromia and SNNPR as well did relatively do well in identifying the missing numbers by scoring 41-80% in this task.

Exercise 12: Word Problems

For this specific exercise, counters were provided to the girls to help with the tasks. The girls were told to use the counters if only they needed to.

Example:

	Answer	Correct	Incorrect
Exercise 1 **7 ducks are swimming in a pond. [pause and check]** **2 more ducks join the swimming. [pause and check]** **How many ducks are swimming in the pond altogether?**			

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' skill on interpretation of a situation, planning, and problem solving.
- The girls solved problems presented orally using any strategy they wanted, including the use of paper or counters.

Table 54: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 12 score - untimed

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 12	Non-learner 0%	1	2.3	38	17.7	34	32.1	38	27.0	111	21.9
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	6	13.6	37	17.2	18	17.0	31	22.0	92	18.2
	Established learner 41%-80%	15	34.1	58	27.0	24	22.6	43	30.5	140	27.7

	Proficient learner 81%-100%	22	50.0	82	38.1	30	28.3	29	20.6	163	32.2

Scores

Most of the girls did relatively better in this task. 21.9% (141 of 462) girls achieved the highest score while 27.7% scored more than 41% in this subtask. However, this does not mean lower performances were not spotted. There were 21.9% girls who could not provide a single accurate answer while there were 18.2% others who did not go beyond scoring 40%. More girls from Amhara, as usual, scored higher than the rest of the girls in the other regions.

Exercise 11: Written Exercise (untimed)

This exercise was only completed by girls who had correctly solved 5 or more addition or 5 or more subtraction items in the previous two subtasks. For those who did not achieve this, the next exercise (Exercise 12- analyzed above) was carried out. For this exercise, white papers were given to the girls to write their answers on with a pencil. Basic mathematical exercises were included for the girls to calculate. The questions included addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, with sums of a range of difficulty given.

Example:

Exercise
18 + 7=
25 – 8 =
30 ÷ 6=
6 x 5 =

What did this subtask assess?

- It assessed the girls' ability to apply procedural addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division knowledge

Table 55: EGMA – IFAL Exercise 11 score - untimed

Categories		Amhara		Oromia		Afar		SNNPR		Total	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Ex 11	Non-learner 0%	14	36.8	8	19.0	49	38.6	25	41.7	96	36.0
	Emergent learner 1%-40%	15	39.5	22	52.4	67	52.8	31	51.7	135	50.6
	Established learner 41%-80%	7	18.4	10	23.8	9	7.1	3	5.0	29	10.9
	Proficient learner 81%-100%	2	5.3	2	4.8	2	1.6	1	1.7	7	2.6

Scores

Because the majority of girls performed weakly in the previous addition and subtraction subtasks, almost half, 48% of the 506 girls were not able to carry out this sub task. This is, of course, with the exception of Amhara which 86.3% of sampled girls were qualified to continue doing this task. Expectedly, only 2.6 % girls achieved the highest score while just 10.9% managed to score more than 41% of the answers. Meanwhile, the rest of the girls, that is 86.5% for instance, could not score more than 40% out of which 36% not able to provide a single accurate answer at all.

6.2.7. EGMA Analysis Summary

All the girls across the regions achieved a relatively better score in the numeracy test than the literacy one in spite of their age difference. Of course, girls aged 15-19 (IFALs) somewhat outperformed the girls aged 10-14 particularly on the numeracy test. But still, in both age groups, 80-90% of the girls scored 0% in most of the subtasks of EGRA while in EGMA, it is 30-70% of the girls that were mostly labelled as 'non-learners' for scoring just 0%.

Like they did in the literacy test, most girls from Amhara scored a relatively better result in this test. For the most part, these girls were able to effectively make use of the additional 60 seconds for the timed exercises to achieve more score – often more than 41%.

6.3 Characteristic subgroup analysis of the learning outcome

To identify base learning levels by barriers the girls face and their characteristic subgroups, the following thorough analysis was made:

Table 56: Learning Scores by regions- ABE and IFAL

All girls in	Average literacy score (aggregate)		SD		Average numeracy score (aggregate)		SD	
	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL
Afar	13.6	22.0	17.9	24.4	13.4	24.0	19.2	27.8
Amhara	-	72.2	-	22.5	-	65.5	-	20.6
Oromia	14.7	25.1	21.5	28.4	23.8	38.9	22.8	28.9
SNNPR	14.1	14.5	15.1	15.2	26.7	28.7	22.9	25.9
Total	14.2	25.6	18.3	28.3	23.1	35.3	22.7	29.3

The average literacy and numeracy scores of girls aged 10-14 were less than 30% in all the regions. Girls from Afar registered the least level of score in both the skills with 13.5%. Afar is the second region after Oromia with high proportion of girls who have never been to school. Unlike girls in the other regions, here, no major score difference was observed for the literacy and numeracy tests. However, in Oromia and SNNPR, the sampled girls achieved a relatively higher score in the numeracy tests than in the literacy ones. In both regions, girls scored an average of only 14% in the reading test while they scored 26.7% and 23.8% in the numeracy test – indicating the girls somehow have better number knowledge than words. Comparatively, girls from SNNPR achieved a better score in both tests than the other regions even though they still performed poorly in the tests – below 30%.

As per the girls aged 15-19 (IFALs), with an exception to the girls from Amhara who all have had the chance to be enrolled in formal education once, most of them did not perform well on the tests that their average scores were all below 40%. But yet, these girls scored relatively higher than those girls aged 10-14. More particularly, the table above clearly shows that the girls from Amhara achieved the highest score in both the tests than those in the other regions. Girls from Oromia also achieved a relatively higher score in both the skill tests next to Amhara while those in SNNPR and Afar follow suit. In addition, a notable pattern was observed in the girls' literacy and numeracy scores as in the one observed with ABE girls that they relatively performed better in the numeracy test than they did in the literacy test.

Table 57: Learning Scores by key Characteristics Sub-groups- ABE and IFAL

	EGRA Aggregate score		SD		EGMA Aggregate score		SD	
	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL	ABE	IFAL
All girls	14.2	25.6	18.3	28.3	23.1	35.3	22.7	29.3
Disability subgroups								
Seeing	3.8	8.8	7.6	8.8	10.1	21.6	8.0	32.2
Hearing	6.8	10.1	6.9	10.8	12.8	10.2	16.4	14.3
Walking	15.5	26.6	6.9	23.9	12.6	19.5	9.4	28.5
Self-care	15.6	16.5	20.1	16.4	29.6	33.2	27.6	30.5

Communication	14.8	12.4	10.8	15.9	3.6	10.7	6.2	21.4
Learning, Remembering and Concentrating	13.1	14.7	9.3	23.8	20.1	11.3	29.8	21.1
Accepting Change, Controlling behavior and Making Friends	11.3	21.1	10.3	24.5	14.1	22.6	19.1	27.9
Mental Health (Anxiety and Depression)	11.6	25.8	15.5	30.2	18.7	34.2	20.0	31.6
Total	11.6	17.0	10.9	19.3	15.2	20.4	17.1	25.9
Project Specific Sub-groups								
Girls living in extreme Poverty	15.0	25.5	20.1	27.6	23.9	36.2	22.4	28.9
Girls with lack of physical access to education	11.1	44.9	11.7	30.9	18.9	54.1	17.2	31.3
Girls with high Domestic Chores	13.5	26.2	18.5	28.3	21.4	37.2	22.3	29.5
Girls experiencing early marriage	15.4	29.3	14.1	27.5	35.0	37.0	25.1	28.8
Girls experiencing early childbirth	17.3	25.7	23.4	23.6	16.7	33.2	25.1	28.5

The average literacy and numeracy scores of girls aged 10-14 did not go beyond 23% which indicates that their level of literacy and numeracy is very low. Overall, the average literacy score of all girls aged 10-14 is only 14.2% while their scores in the numeracy test is 23.1% implying that the girls as a whole seem to be slightly better in their numeracy skills than their literacy skills. As per the disability sub-groups aged 10-14, girls with seeing and hearing difficulty achieved the least scores each with averages of only 7 and 9.8%. Girls with communication disorder (those who face difficulty being understood by others) also achieved a very low score in both EGRA and EGMA with only 9.2%. These girls relatively did better in the literacy test achieving 14.8% score than the numeracy test which was only 3.6%. Nevertheless, girls with self-care disorder relatively scored better in both tests. They scored 15.6% in the literacy test and 29.6% in the numeracy one on average.

Girls aged 15-19 scored relatively better in the tests than girls aged 10-14. Their aggregate numeracy score is 35.3% while their literacy score accounts to 25.6% which shows that they registered better scores in the numeracy test than the reading one. Amongst the disability groups, girls with hearing disorder scored the least with only 10.2% aggregate score in both tests. Girls with seeing impairment did not also do well with particularly the literacy test that they scored only 8.8% on average. In the meantime, girls with mental health (anxiety and depression) and self-care issues, achieved relatively better in both tests with 25.8% and 34.2% aggregate scores in the literacy and numeracy tests.

The specific subgroup learning outcome analysis did not reveal any notable difference amongst the scores of the girls. As stated previously, girls aged 10-14 scored less in both the tests than girls aged 15-19. In addition, the girls in both age groups did relatively well in the numeracy test than the literacy one. As per the regional analysis previously indicated, girls from Amhara achieved the highest scores in both the tests

and that is clearly reflected on the sub-groups analysis of this section. The majority of girls found in the 'lack of physical access to education' sub-group are from Amhara. Thus, the literacy and the numeracy scores of girls aged 15-19in this subgroup are higher than the rest of the scores in the other subgroups. The literacy aggregate score of girls in this subgroup is 44.9% while the numeracy is 54.1%.

6.4 Transition outcome

Table 58: Transition pathways

Intervention pathway tracked for transition	Please describe the possible transition pathways for this group	Aim for girls transition for next evaluation point	Aim for girls' transition level by the time project stops working with cohort
(Intervention pathway group 1 (girls aged 10-14)	ABE level 1 / 2 respectively: After passing the final exam at the end of the academic year, the girls can start attending ABE level 2 / 3 respectively. After passing the final exam level 3, girls can enroll into formal schools or TVET education. Considering the context, a certain level of drop-out is expected. Those girls might be reached by the project to doublecheck the reason for drop-out. In any case, it is expected that the drop-out girls will have at least some knowledge, information and access regarding education and other options.	It depends on the girls' current level of education. The project set up benchmarks for improvement based on the standardized ABE/IFAL levels. The beneficiary girls should reach the learning outcome related to their latest year of attendance within the project. Therefore, it is expected for girls to follow the CHANGE transition diagram. Since all ABE girls are enrolled at level 1, the next phase will be level 2.	ABE girls who are enrolled at the age of 10-12 will finish the program at the age of 13-15 and join to grade 5 in formal schools. Those who are at the age of 16 will join TVET or will start self-employment.
Intervention pathway group 2	IFAL level 1 / 2 respectively: After passing the final exam	It depends on the girls' current level of education. The project set up benchmarks for improvement based on the standardized	After the full intervention they will join

(girls aged 15-19)	at the end of the second academic year, the girls can start attending IFAL level 2. After passing the final exam level 3, girls can enroll into formal schools or TVET education. Considering the context, a certain level of drop-out is expected. Those girls might be reached by the project to doublecheck the reason for drop-out. In any case, it is expected that the drop-out girls will have at least some knowledge, information and access regarding education and other options.	ABE/IFAL levels. The beneficiary girls should reach the learning outcome related to their latest year of attendance within the project. Therefore, it is expected for girls to follow the CHANGE transition diagram. Since the IFAL girls are enrolled at level 1, the next phase will be level 2.	TVET, SHG and / or they will start working.

Pathway analysis

The baseline result indicates that majority of the girls are interested to be enrolled in schools. 81.4% of them are already aware of the importance of education. During discussions in particular, the girls were far more likely to raise the issue of earning an individual or personal income to fund their study costs so they manage to stay at school. This indicates that the girls in spite of their age groups are interested to continue education through finding ways to overcome their challenges. However, just 0.6% of the girls are currently employed and still unable to attend a formal education. In Amhara, some girls implied during discussion that they had dropped out to work and generate income, while in Oromia, most work was related to household tasks or supporting family agriculture or cattle-rearing businesses. However, the mention of vocational or technical training in SNNPR was also notable. Therefore, the proposed pathways of the project could benefit these girls to either attend formal school, TVET or start working to generate income which is inclusive of all the opportunities for the better future of the girls.

6.4.1 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis of project pathways

Table 59: GESI analysis on project pathways

Would project pathways ...	Yes or No	How?
Constrain equal participation of and benefit girls in the project	No	The girls have different opportunities to seize – they can either be re-enrolled/ enrolled in school, attend

areas		TVET or start working
Contribute to changes in the beneficiary girls' quality of life	Yes	Girls will be able to acquire new knowledge and experience that could positively impact their living quality
Allow girls choice and control over their own life – increase girls' decision-making power	Yes	Girls will be able to acquire new knowledge and experience that could positively impact their living quality
Constrain equal participation of girls with disabilities	No	Girls with disabilities are the major focus of the project
Increase girls' productivity and economic empowerment	Yes	Girls will be able to acquire new knowledge and experience that could positively impact their living quality

6.5. Barrier Analysis

Table 60: Status at baseline

Status	Intervention
Never been to school (%)	**53.8%**
Been to school, but dropped out	**46%**
Currently enrolled in formal school	**0**
Currently employed	**0.6**
Source: **PCG survey** N = **1054**	

Characteristic subgroups and barrier analysis

In Oromia, 65.6% of the girls live in poverty where their basic needs are not met. This region (Borena) was described by discussants in this study as a remote area with little to no infrastructure available. The communities here are pastoralists who highly depend on rearing cattle for living. Because of limited water, these communities face seasonal migration in search of water where they could graze their herds. This could have contributed to this region's highest number of girls who have never been to school. 76% of the girls in this region have never had the opportunity to go to school.

In SNNPR, 62% of the girls live in poverty. 39.2% of the girls in this region have never been to school while 60.8% have once had the chance even though they ended up dropping out. Next to most households' inability to meet the basic needs of these girls, 40.6% of the girls with 85.7% of the married and mothers are identified as those who carryout high domestic chores in their houses for half to a whole day. In addition, unsafe journey to school due to poor roads and school distance were found to be the major barriers in this region.

In Afar and Oromia, proportionately higher numbers of girls are not currently enrolled in formal education because they have to work, earn money or help-out at home. As the two regions with nomadic pastoralist communities who move from place to place in search of water mainly for their livestock, 60.6% of primary caregivers in Oromia and 45.6% in Afar implied their girls' high domestic chores which mostly have to do with undertaking livestock-related works as the major cause for their girls out of school status. 53.8% of girls in Oromia with 90% of married and mother girls spend half to a whole day in their houses working for the families, but none of the girls in this region work outside their houses and earn money. Similarly, 45.6% of the girls in Afar with more than 60 % of the married and mother girls,

undertake housework chores for half to a whole day with just only one girl working outside her house with an employment status.

In Amhara, all the girls have once been to school, but have currently dropped out. More than half of these girls (59.1%) spend half to a whole day undertaking domestic works – this being acute for all the married and mother girls in this region. This must have contributed to their current out of school status. In addition, 31.8% of these girls (the highest proportion amongst the regions), implied school distance as a barrier. These girls are required to walk for 31 minutes to hours to access a nearby school.

- All in all, the baseline result has identified the encouraging positive level of awareness most study participants have towards girls' education. Above 80% of parents and girls in this study strongly believe in educating girls. However, in actual practice, all the 1054 girls in this study are currently out of formal school amongst which more than half of them have never had a schooling opportunity even once. This indicates that lack of awareness is not a critical issue for the vast majority of study participants. It is rather the major previously mentioned barriers such as high domestic chores and poverty that are playing a decisive role in the marginalization of the girls.

6.6. Sustainability Outcome

Table 61: Sustainability indicators

Level	Outcome 3	Baseline value	[14]Rating
Community	**Outcome Indicator 3.1:** Current attitude of girls, men and women in target communities towards girls' education and their role in society	**<u>Attitude</u>** ▪ Opinions of caregivers who think their girls have the right to education even when not at school and their commitment to send their daughters to school when even funds are limited: **Afar (78.1%)--Amhara (96.5%)--Oromia (91.9%)—SNNPR (97.9%)** ▪ Perception of girls who think going to school is important and that girls, boys, and children with disabilities all have the right to go to school: **Afar (66.3%)--Amhara (88.6%)--Oromia (88.4%)—SNNPR (82.3%)** ▪ Qualitative data confirms the positive attitudes of the majority of girls and caregivers towards girls' education in all regions ▪ Yet, few families' negative attitudes towards girls' education particularly on the utility of girls' education was registered – Afar taking the lead	Afar -3 Amh-4 Oro-4 SNN-4 Afar -3 Amh-4 Oro-4 SNN-3
Community& System	**Intermediate Outcome 5.1** *% of girls' education agenda officially raised in forums and stakeholders meetings by the local communities*	Girls education agenda **often officially raised** in forums by the local communities ↳ **Afar (47.9%)** ↳ **Amhara (44%)** ↳ **Oromia (22.7%)** ↳ **SNNPR (36%)**	Afar -2 Amh-2 Oro-1 SNN-1

[14] Score range: chronological 0-4 – positive increment / reverse chronological 4-0- negative increment (*) – that means values without the (*) are positive and achieving more will bring more positive result, but values with (*) are negatively high numbers and decreasing those figures is required for a positive result.
0% - 12.5% (0) (4)*
12.6%-37.5% (1) (3)*
37.6% -62.5% (2) (2)*
62.6%-87.5% (3) (1)*
87.6%-100% (4) (0)*

	and lower level education office's representatives that were fully addressed by the local authorities.	Girls education agenda **often fully addressed** in forums by the local authorities ↳ **Afar (34.2%)** ↳ **Amhara (0%)** ↳ **Oromia (19.4%)** ↳ **SNNPR (28.4%)**	Afar -1 Amh-0 Oro-1 SNN-1
School	**Outcome Indicator 3.2:** Current status of schools demonstrating knowledge and practice about girls education	Teacher-related barriers girls faced in schools ↳ Boys treated better than girls **Afar (64.3%)--Amhara (5.9%)--Oromia (33%)—SNNPR (25.5%)**	Afar -1* Amh-4* Oro-3* SNN-3*
		↳ Teachers ask more questions to girls **Afar (3.9%)--Amhara (11%)--Oromia (10.5%)—SNNPR (43.7%)**	Afar -4* Amh-4* Oro-4* SNN-2*
		↳ Teachers not explain usefulness of lesson to girls' life **Afar (19.4%)--Amhara (5.9%)--Oromia (24.4%)—SNNPR (10.3%)** Overall, School managements appear to do relatively better in SNNPR and Amhara than the other regions: - identifying girls at risk of dropping out - supporting those girls with material and financial resources - teachers try to deal with parents so as to encourage the child to go back to school - Continuous follow up on girls' attendance - Girls' clubs run by female teachers – but underutilized across all the regions - one school described an income-generation project - SNNPR - make-up classes - identifying difficult subjects and topics to provide support in key areas - Teachers' voluntarily work - making use of Parent-teacher Associations - School feeding programs	Afar -3* Amh-4* Oro-3* SNN-4*

System	**Outcome Indicator 3.2:** Current status of REBs and WEOs demonstrating knowledge and practice about girls' education	Girls' education cases often referred to an appropriate and quality support services such as Community Action Groups, House to House Visits, Campaign on girls' education, community forums, family counseling **Afar (14.4%)--Amhara (0%)--Oromia (11.6%)—SNNPR (20.4%)**	Afar -1 Amh-0 Oro-0 SNN-1

The sustainability indicators of the project are found to be very adequate to curb the challenges beneficiary girls face in their respective contexts for a long-lasting impact. To set benchmarks for the next evaluation point and the overall outcome of the project, the following insights are provided:

Community: All in all, attitude of girls, men and women towards girls' education is very positive in this study. Therefore, from a score range 1-4 – 4 being the highest, all the regions scored relatively high implying that the community is fairly aware of the importance of girls' education even though the girls are still out of school for a number of other reasons (mostly because of other barriers identified in this study).

Community and System: When it comes to the commitment of the community and system in dealing with girls' education issues, lower scores are achieved in all the regions. In particular, the result indicates that girls' education issues could be raised in the regions to some extent but addressing the issues is relatively very low. This could help project identify that there is a notable gap within the system of the respective localities which requires utmost attention for the sustainability of the project.

Schools: The school-related issues raised in this study have to do more with the teachers' pedagogy knowledge, classroom practice, and deprivation of school facilities. The scores of these findings are accompanied by (*) to show that the high percentage is negative and that working towards minimizing such result can assure sustainability.

7. Key intermediate outcome findings

Table 62: Intermediate outcome indicators as per the logframe

IO	IO indicator	**Sampling and measuring technique used**	**Who collected the data?**	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
1. Increased girls' enrolment, re-enrolment and attendance in alternative accelerated learning centers	*1.1 % of enrolled OOS girls who attend ABE/IFAL program throughout the course duration at least 80% of the class time*	-	-	Class did not start before baseline	50%	Y
	1.2 % of supported ABE/IFAL centers providing safe and girls-friendly learning environment	-	-	Class did not start before baseline	50%	Y
2. Improved quality of teaching and inclusive learning environment to support equitable access to education for girls	*2.1 % of target ABE/IFAL centers with established mechanism for reporting a violation of the facilitators' code of conduct*	-	-	Class did not start before baseline	50%	Y
	2.2 % of supported non-formal schools with safe inclusive and improved learning environment	-	-	Class did not start before baseline, so the teaching environment of the intervention was not assessed	50%	Y
3. Marginalized girls acquire relevant	*3.1*	Girls'	-	Proportion of girls with good level of	TBC	Y

skills to overcome social, economic and contextual factors that leave them behind in life	*Number of supported girls demonstrating newly acquired life skills*	survey		perceived self-efficacy[15] : ↳ Afar – 19.3% ↳ Amhara – 41.4% ↳ Oromia – 28% ↳ SNNPR – 11%	Target number currently under revision, considering the feasibility	
	3.2 *Number of youth girl trainees who have not met the VET competency standard for the given occupation*	-	-	Not assessed	0	Y
	3.3 *% of girls who have started income generating of economic activities*	Girls' survey	EE	Baseline status of girls in income generating economic activities ↳ Afar – 1% ↳ Amhara – 6.8% ↳ Oromia – 0% ↳ SNNPR – 0.8%	TBC Will be tracked by using tracer study	N
4. Improved perception and willingness of communities to foster positive social attitudes towards girls' education and their progression in life	*4.1* *% of girls, boys, men, & women in target communities demonstrating improved attitudes towards girls' education and their role in society*	Primary Caregivers and Girls' survey	EE	% of caregivers who think their girls have the right to education when even not at school ↳ Afar – 82.1% ↳ Amhara – 97.7% ↳ Oromia – 91.6% ↳ SNNPR – 96.7% % of girls' with a perception that going to school is important and that girls, boys,	30%	Y

[15] Self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to complete a task or achieve a goal

				and children with disabilities have the right to go to school ↳ Afar – 66.3% ↳ Amhara – 88.6% ↳ Oromia – 88.4% ↳ SNNPR – 82.3%		
	4.2 *# of cases referred to appropriate and quality support services GAC-community forums*	Primary caregivers' survey	EE	Girls education cases **often referred to support services** (e.g. Community Action Groups, house-to-house visits, campaigns ↳ **Afar (14.4%)** ↳ **Amhara (0%)** ↳ **Oromia (11.6%)** ↳ **SNNPR (20.4%)**	Indicator under revision, possibly to be deleted	Y
5. Strengthened partnership with government and other key actors to influence national level policy, system, & practice	*5.1* *% of girls' education agenda officially raised in forums and stakeholders meetings by the local communities and lower level education office's representatives that were fully addressed by the local authorities.*	Primary Caregivers' survey KII REB, religious, clan & Kebele officials KII WEO, WWYCA	EE	Girls education agenda **often officially raised** in forums by the local communities ↳ **Afar (47.9%)** ↳ **Amhara (44%)** ↳ **Oromia (22.7%)** ↳ **SNNPR (36%)** Girls education agenda **often fully addressed** in forums by the local authorities ↳ **Afar (34.2%)** ↳ **Amhara (0%)**	30%, indicator under revision	Y

				↳ **Oromia (19.4%)** ↳ **SNNPR (28.4%)** Common across the regions: ↳ Parent Teacher Associations' often organize meetings but discussion points are often on education as a whole not on girls' education in particular ↳ Woreda Education Offices working with schools or educational bodies only raised in SNNPR and Amhara – yet no clear practices mentioned		

8. Conclusions

This section of the report summarizes each of the major critical factors that affect girls' school dropout or OOS rates. Although most of the barriers mentioned in this study were independently reported, in some cases, one of the barriers can augment the impact of another. Therefore, it is crucial to understand these individual barriers and their interrelations in impacting girls' education. Below, the most prioritized and accentuated demand and supply side-barriers faced by sampled girls to access education are listed in order of magnitude:

8.1 Demand-side Barriers

1. **Household level factors (aspiration for girls' education and high level of housework chores on girls):** financial constraint of households is a barrier often referenced in this study. Most sampled households earn their living through agriculture; yet, in most cases, produce does not go beyond feeding the household. As such, families do not have the financial means to cover the education costs of their girls. Girls from Oromia and SNNPR are mostly in this sub-group that they live in a household where their basic needs are not at all met. The majority of sampled parents are also uneducated but most reported that education is a conduit for improving their daughter's or family's prospects. However, although positive relationships were described between education and girls' future on one hand, girls are still tied up with considerable amounts of housework in their homes, implying that no attempt is yet in place to curb girls' situation regardless of most families' positive perception towards education. Sampled girls particularly in Amhara, Oromia, and Afar spend half to a whole day undertaking domestic works in their households – more than 90% fetching water and more than 60% helping with agricultural or livestock-related activities in particular. In addition, the data from girls' survey and of the PCGs' provided different statistics about girls' current education status. Perhaps, this could be attributed to caregivers' lack of essential attentiveness on their girls' education which requires special attention during project undertakings.

2. **Individual-level factors (girls' efficacy, schooling perceptions, marriage and pregnancy; employment status):** Most of the girls lack the confidence and knowledge to overcome many of the likely challenges of life they will face. They do not have control over their own education, neither do they have a say on what they would like to do and not do. And even if they could, many of them lack the necessary supportive environment to push them forward. Proportionately high numbers of girls in Afar are in this situation. Afar takes the lion's share in having 21.6% of married girls and 36.1 mother girls in this study. In this region, 15% of the girls who are mothers are not married. Amongst these girls who mothered a child/children outside of marriage, 12% are just below the age of 15 which could potentially be an indicator of forced marriage in this region. The majority of girls not only in Afar but in all regions would like to pursue a better future through their education. Conversely, they feel so burdened by the poor economic status of their parents that they drop out of schools in search of paid work to help their families particularly those in Amhara. In some instances, girls get married of their own desire or that of their families while in school, and the fate of their education falls under the control of husbands from then on.

This is not to mention the unfeasibility of attending school once they have a child. Especially for those who mothered a child outside of marriage like those in Afar, the probability of attending school becomes scarce as the practice is considered a taboo. Limited family planning knowledge also plays a decisive role in the heightened struggles of the girls. Still, girls in Afar are in this state of being that60% of them are barely aware of the benefit of using contraception during opposite sex relationships.

3. **Community-level factors (gender norms):** the eventual conclusion as to why girls are less likely to attend school is the feeling that girls fulfill more useful roles at home than they would do if they were attending education. This reflects the structural, patriarchal imbalances that disproportionately curtail women and girls' opportunities. That girls, in particular, are more likely to fail at this hurdle demonstrates that they have less time to study and that they are more likely to skip class – which is due to the fact that they are more obliged to take time on household tasks than their male counterparts. In Oromia and Afar the majority of the girls are not currently enrolled in a formal school mainly because they need to work, earn money or help out at home. Particularly in Oromia, the region with the largest number of girls who have never been to any school, 60.6% of their caretakers implied that their girls are rather required to undertake domestic chores in their households than attend schools. There is nothing inherent in the concept of carrying out domestic work that makes girls more likely to be successful other than the patriarchal culture that a woman's responsibility is in the household. This explains why she is more likely to secure such work: because she has already carried out so much and spent so much of her life perfecting these chores.

4. **Learning Outcomes (very low literacy and numeracy levels):** the average literacy and numeracy scores of girls aged 10-14 did not go beyond 23% which indicates that their level of literacy and numeracy is very low. Girls aged 15-19 scored relatively better in the tests with an aggregate score of 30.5% - still below 40% but relatively higher than the previous age groups. With an exception to the girls from Amhara who all have had the chance to be enrolled in formal education once, the vast majority of girls in this age group from the other regions did not perform well on the tests. Girls from Afar achieved the least level of score in both the skills with just 13.5%. Afar is the second region after Oromia with high proportion of girls who have never been to school.

8.2 Supply-side Barriers

5. **Location of schools (particularly secondary schools, safety issues**): School distance mostly augmented concerns regarding safety issues in this study – which includes both travelling to and from schools. The farther schools are located from homes, the more girls' safety is threatened. The feeling of safety when accompanied by others is the other mentioned phenomenon in this study, implying that, in some contexts, safety is defined as being in a group rather than in isolation. Proportionately higher number of girls from Amhara and SNNPR would be required to walk for more than 31 minutes to an hour to a nearby school.

6. **Lack of potable water (mostly the case for mobility):** the unavailability of water in most households and schools is severe, which in some cases triggers migration (Oromia-Borena) in search of it. In schools, clean water is mostly unavailable causing even more complications for girls who need to travel for over half an hour to and from schools - not to mention the considerable amount of time girls could spend fetching water for households.

7. **Existing school infrastructure (basic facilities):** schools lack basic facilities to the extent that they do not even meet the requirements of non-disabled girls, let alone girls with disabilities. Lack of drinking water was echoed in all the regions as the major part of school deprivation. 86.5% of the girls in the regions implied this as the major barrier they face at schools. In Oromia, lack of toilet was the other critical issue girls face in schools next to absence of potable water.
8. **Lack of qualified teachers (absence of gender sensitive and child-centered pedagogy knowledge, absenteeism):** teachers are said to be often absent from work. In some instances, teachers were reported to lack the necessary pedagogy knowledge to teach girls or children. The use of unsuitable punishments and insulting students for making errors in class is one demonstration of teachers' lack of necessary expertise. High number of girls from Afar indicated this.
9. **Institutional support (girls' education agenda in meetings):** commitment of the community and system in dealing with girls' education issues in all the regions is low. Girls' education issues are scarcely raised and discussed about in community meetings especially through Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) but the particular measure taken to address the issues is said to be very low particularly in Amhara.

9. Recommendations

As a baseline assessment, the overall aims of this study is to set benchmark value in key indicators for future evaluation of the project as well as provide a contextual analysis where the project (CHANGE) operates and the profile of the direct and indirect beneficiaries. Overall, this paper demonstrated and identified the common barriers direct beneficiaries are facing to learning and transition in spite of their age differences. Therefore, the indicators already put in place by the project are appropriate enough to achieve the Intermediate Outcomes in the process of implementation. CHANGE (the project) has already considered almost all the major barriers identified in this study. The project ToC considers many possible barriers on the level of households / communities, schools / institution, and system. In the meantime, however, paying special attention to the following critical areas will positively impact the outcome of the project:

Project sustainability:

As per the results from this baseline study, attitude of girls, men and women towards girls' education is very positive that more than 90% advocate girls' education. When it comes to the commitment of the community and system in dealing with girls' education issues, however, totally opposite results were obtained. In all the regions, girls' education issues are scarcely raised and barely addressed. This could negatively affect the sustainability of the project in a way that practicality is missing more than the theoretical knowledge of the aspect amongst the community and system. Therefore, IOs 4.2 and 5.1 would require utmost attention and intervention for the better sustainability outcome of the project.

Region-specific barriers for focus on intervention:

Oromia and Afar are the two nomadic pastoral communities often moving from place to place in search of water for their household and livestock. These two regions have a lot of commonalities in the barriers their girls face to education. Despite the fact that a very high level of positive perception towards girls' education is registered in these regions, the majority of their girls have never been to school and those who were, have already dropped out. High level of household chores are said to be the major reasons for their girls Out Of School status. Thus, the vast majority of their girls have the least aggregate scores in the literacy and numeracy tests. Particularly in Afar, there is a high level of early marriage and child birth and yet in both regions higher proportions of girls have very limited knowledge and awareness about family planning. Their schools are also said to lack potable water. Secondary schools are as well more distant from the homes of notable number of girls. Therefore, focusing on the fact that livelihoods in these regions are never stable would lead to intensified interventions on the households, communities, systems, and schools' level in these regions to achieve the desired IOs 1,2 and 3

Girls in Amhara and SNNPR, with few discrepancies, also share common barriers that could guide project activities. All girls in Amhara and the vast majority in SNNPR have had the chance to be enrolled in a formal education. Relatively, girls from these regions, particularly from Amhara, demonstrated better literacy and numeracy levels in the tests. Even though the perception of the community towards educating girls like in the previous regions is very positive, the girls in these regions have ended up dropping out of school for barriers that could slightly be different from the previous regions. Though not very severe as for the girls in Amhara, the girls in these two regions spend half to a whole day undertaking daily household chores. This particular barrier was not, however, primarily identified as the major reason for why the girls dropped out of schools. Rather, primary school distance and inability to cover school costs were the two major barriers indicated. In Amhara, secondary schools were as well said to be very far from a considerable number of girls' homes. Lack of potable water in schools was also identified as a barrier. Therefore, girls in these regions seem to be more affected by supply-side barriers. They mostly require economic empowerment, physically accessible schools with all the necessary basic facilities such as potable water, and the commitment of concerned official stakeholders to achieve all the proposed IOs.

Annex 1: Data collection summary

Evaluation questions and summary of quantitative and qualitative data/analysis required to answer question

CHANGE Project evaluation questions:	Evaluation question definition /explanation	Evaluation Indicator(s)	Data collection method/source 1	Data collection method/source 2	Data collection method/source 3	Data collection method/ source 4
1.1 How effective was the project in out-of-school girls' enrolment, re-enrolment and attendance in alternative/ accelerated learning centres?	Did enrolment and retention levels increase as a result of the program?	The number of eligible girls who enrolled at the beginning of the September 2019 school year and remained in school for the project duration.	Attendance tracking database developed by PIN will be used. The REB EMIS enrolment data will serve to set a benchmark	School head counting	HH survey of girls, boys and primary care givers	KII with (school teacher, School Director interview
		Proportion of CHANGE cohort girls who express that they were able to enroll in school/continued attending school as a result of CHANGE related initiatives.	FGD Girls, boys	KII cohort girls (midline and end line)		
1.2 How effective was the project in developing out-of-school adolescent girls' cognitive and non-cognitive life skills to overcome social, economic and contextual	Is there an increase in the number of supported girls demonstrating newly acquired life skills? Is there improved access to education at individual,	Number of supported girls demonstrating newly acquired life skills; Number of youth girl trainees who have met the VET competency standard for the given occupation;	REB reports and project EMIS	HH Survey of Primary Caregivers (midline and end line)	KIIs with education officers, community representatives, girls	

factors that leave them behind in life?	community and institutional levels? Are there strengthened partnerships with government and other key actors to influence national level policy, systems and practice?	Policy and programme interventions established by the REB and WEB to improve access to education among marginalized girls; Proportion of households, religious leaders and clan leaders who send all girls in their household (aged 10-19) to school; Number of girls' education agenda officially raised in forums and stakeholder meetings by the local communities and lower level education offices' representatives; Proportion of girls at ABE centers/ schools using the available, well maintained gender-segregated latrines			
1.3 How effective was the project in terms of Value for Money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness) in reaching its goals?	Is resource allocation linked to previous performance data in a similar context? Have different alternatives for delivering the project and respective benefits and costs been considered? Did the project generate important learning through the intervention? Did the project have clear and realistic objectives? How successfully have the project goals been achieved?	Number of project activities which considered previous performance data in a similar context; Number of completed project activities in time, less cost and effort; Number of project activities which were not completed on time, which spent more money and effort; Number of project goals accomplished and project outcomes observed; Proportion of CHANGE cohort girls who express that project interventions	REB reports and project EMIS	HH Survey on REB, WEO, Schools, Primary Caregivers (midline and end line) Girls FGD (midline, end line)	Observation KII girls cohort

	Did the project consider the needs of people living with disabilities?	addressed their specific needs.		
2.1 What impact did the project have on the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities?	Transition of marginalized girls, including girls with disabilities, will be assessed using a 'survival rate' approach whereby a girl's current circumstance is compared to her status in the previous evaluation point (ABE/ IFAL/ primary to lower secondary, lower secondary to upper secondary, training, employment or other.) Learning outcomes of marginalized girls, including girls with disabilities, will be assessed based on their ability to read a short passage, answer several comprehension questions and apply deductive reasoning to solve practical questions.	Number of marginalised girls (including girls with disabilities) who have transitioned through key stages of education, training or employment; Number of marginalized girls (including girls with disabilities) with improved learning outcomes based on assessment scores for each stages of transition which will be adopted from the national ABE/IFAL guidance; Teacher/parent/girl observations of improved learning outcomes amongst girls; Number of marginalized girls and girls with disabilities who have transitioned into safe, fairly-paid employment or self-employment; Number of marginalized girls and girls with disabilities who have transitioned into vocational training relevant to the pursuit of their career; Number of marginalised girls and girls with disabilities who have transitioned into formal or informal education	EGRA/EGMA test records FGD girls, boys, HH Surveys with Primary Caregiver Teacher/ Trainer questionnaire Community surveys, FGDs, KII (midline, end line)	Teacher KII/FGD Employment skills measurement tool SHG questionnaire (midline, end line) Database which is under development by PIN to track successful transition

		programmes.			
2.2 How and why was this impact achieved?	Approaches used to bring impact in the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities; Reasons for bringing impact in the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities.	Number and types of most successful approaches used in bringing impact in the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities; Number and types of reasons mentioned for bringing impact in the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities.	FGDs with girls, boys, HH surveys with Primary Caregiver Teacher/ Trainer questionnaire (midline, end line)	Community surveys, FGDs, KII (midline, end line)	
2.3 What is the role of the project's specific components, like SHGs in transition?	Did the project's specific components, like SHGs contribute for OOS girls in transition?	Types of project's specific components which contribute for OOS girls in transition; Description of the roles of the project's specific components in OOS girls' transition.	FGD girls, HH Surveys with primary caregivers	KII with community, teachers/ trainer	KIIs with SHGs
2.4 How, if at all, did the project succeed in creating enabling learning environments in schools, families, and communities, for the out-of-school girls to pursue their life plans?	Did the project reduce inhibitors and increase key enablers of learning environments in schools, families, and communities, for the out-of-school girls to pursue their life plans? What methods did the project use to create enabling environments?	Number and proportion of out-of-school girls who pursue their life plans; Key enablers/ inhibitors identified by girls who pursue their life plans; Key enablers/ inhibitors for out-of-school girls who pursue their life plans identified by teachers/ABE facilitators.	REB reports, school records and project EMIS HH survey girls Teacher's Survey (include open ended questions)	FGD girls FGD (community)	
2.5 Were there different	Did the project result in	Number and proportion of out-of-	EGRA/ EGMA	KIIs with	HH Surveys

impacts for different sub-groups?	different level of pursuing life plans for out-of-school girls across regions, age groups (10 – 14 and 15 to 19) and type of marginalization (disabled, very poor, early married, etc.)?	school girls who are affected by the project intervention disaggregated by regions, age groups and type of marginalization.	tests	girls,	with primary care givers
3.1 How is the progress of the project when is measured against the sustainability scorecard? How sustainable are the changes brought about which increase learning and transition through education cycles? How sustainable were the activities funded by the GEC and was the project successful in leveraging additional interest and investment?	Did community & school stakeholders develop knowledge; show some change in attitude towards girls' education & specific project approaches? Did officials engage with project aspects, develop knowledge/support for girls' education? Did community & school leaders & critical mass of stakeholders convinced of benefits & have independent capacity to deliver changed practice? Did the REBs, WEOs, Schools and the community have capacity to sustain the CHANGE outputs following project	Key characteristics of sustainability observed against the sustainability scorecard; Number and proportion of parents who changed their attitudes about girls continuing to attend school and learn beyond the project intervention; Observed and reported improved practice in schools & communities targeted in increasing support for girls' education; Observed practice of the project in driving change and starting to raise funds locally; Improved capacity & engagement of local officials to support girls' education; Change in practice / attitude well established. Communities & schools can act with no support from project,	HH survey, REB reports, school records and project EMIS	REB, WEO, School KIIs, and KIIs with other Key Stakeholders	

	closure?	develop further / new initiatives & secure funding to respond to their local needs. Proportion of REBs EMIS, WEOs, Schools staff and community demonstrate improved knowledge and capacity in identified gap areas.	

Annex 3: Cohort approach evaluation

There are multiple cohorts and their evaluation is commissioned to the external evaluator .

Annex 4: Beneficiaries table (sample data)

Table 24: Characteristic subgroups and barriers of sample for portfolio level aggregation and analysis

Characteristic/Barrier	Proportion of baseline sample (%)
Single orphans	**NA**
Double orphans	**NA**
Living without both parents	7.4%
Living in female headed household	20.2%
Married	8.9%
Mother under 18	5.5%
Mother under 16	3.7%
Difficult to afford for girl to go to school	22.2%
Household doesn't own land for themselves	8.6%
Material of the roof (material to be defined by evaluator)	Thatch 22%; Tin/Iron 21.9%; Mud 16.1%; wood 15.3%; Asbestos 14.9%
Household unable to meet basic needs	56.1%
Gone to sleep hungry for many days in past year	17.4%
LoI different from mother tongue	**NA**
Girl doesn’t speak LoI	1.5%
HoH has no education	71.2%
Primary caregiver has no education	87.1%
Didn’t get support to stay in education and do well (%)	**NA**
Sufficient time to study: High chore burden (evaluator to specify threshold, %)	64.9%
Source: **PCG and Girls’ survey** N = **1054**	

Annex 5: Beneficiaries table (Project mapping data)

Project to complete

- Please fill in the tables below and overleaf. In the first instance, use your project monitoring data. If you haven't collected the relevant data, use your sample data to extrapolate to your whole beneficiary population. If you do not have data from your beneficiary data or sample, please put 'NA' in the relevant cell.
- Describe the methodology used for calculating the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries for cohort one and, if applicable, the assumptions you have made for calculating the number you expect to reach by the end of the intervention.
- Comment on the number of direct beneficiaries that you estimate as still meeting your definition of educational marginalisation and how you've verified this.
- If any direct beneficiaries do not meet your definition or are outside the age criteria (<10 and >20), are already in formal school or have already completed the grade level your project is aiming to get the girls up to, please outline your rationale for this and why they were selected as a beneficiary.
- If the direct and indirect beneficiary numbers of girls meeting your definition of educational marginalisation is different to the numbers outlined in your original proposal, please comment on the reasons why.
- How accurate you feel your data is on the age of beneficiaries. For instance, did you collect birth certificates or just rely on the girls' self-reported data?

Table 25: Direct beneficiaries by age

Age (adapt as required)	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Aged <10		Project monitoring data (data from community assessment, updated list of cohort1)
Aged 10	17%	
Aged 11	7%	
Aged 12	14%	
Aged 13	8%	
Aged 14	10%	
Aged 15	10%	
Aged 16	7%	
Aged 17	6%	
Aged 18	5%	
Aged 19	2%	
Aged 20 +	2%	
Unknown	3%	
N = 6068		

Table 26: Target groups - by out of school status

Status	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
E.g. Never	**63%**	Project monitoring data (data from community assessment,

been to formal school		updated list of girls in cohort 1)
E.g. Been to formal school, but dropped out	**37%**	
E.g. Enrolled in formal school		
N = 6068		
Please adapt this table to present the data you collected on each direct beneficiaries current status. Please aim to populate all the data you have (e.g. if you have data on how long it has been since the girl attended school, please add it). At a minimum, we need to know the number who have never been to school, the number who have been to school but dropped out and the number currently in formal school.		

Table 27: Direct beneficiaries by drop out grade

Level of schooling before dropping out (adapt wording as required)	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Never been to school		Project monitoring data (original list of eligible beneficiaries after the screening – last phase of CA)
Grade 1	55%	
Grade 2	10%	
Grade 3	11%	
Grade 4	7%	
Grade 5	7%	
Grade 6	5%	
Grade 7	3%	
Grade 8	1%	
N = 6068		1%
Please note, if this data was not collected during the beneficiary identification, please use data from your sample, which the external evaluator collected. If this data was not collected, please delete this table.		

Table 28 Other selection criteria

Selection criteria	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
married	3%	Note : this is based on the community assessment data that might include girls that are no more in cohort 1
N = 8410		
By other selection criteria, we mean the other data, aside from age and school status, that you collected on girls during the beneficiary identification to decide if the girl could be		

enrolled into the project as a direct beneficiary. You should have already described these characteristics in the introduction section of the baseline report. If you do not have any other data relating to this, please delete this table.

Table 29: Other beneficiaries

Beneficiary type	Total project number for cohort 1	Total number by the end of the project.	Comments	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Other OOS girls age 10-19	4700	14200	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort.	Cohort 1 – project monitoring data Total by end of project – assumption
OOS boys age 10 – 19	2300	7,000	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	
In-school girls	3600	10,800	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	Total by end of project – assumption
In-school boys	5600	16,800	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	Total by end of project – assumption
Parents/carers	5900	17,550	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	Total by end of project – assumption
Community members (including parents/carers)	75,000	200,000	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	Total by end of project – assumption
Teachers/Facilitators	1300	1,075 4,000 teachers trained by the cluster supervisors at school level	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	
Authorities and Ministry	80	12 staff members at the Education, Social Affairs and Health Ministry levels 100 Local Authorities	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	Total by end of project – assumption

		representatives 100 health workers at woreda level joining the training on PSS 40 Representatives of Women and children joining the training on girls' friendly spaces		
Education Bureau Staff – Woreda, zone and regional	50	Relevant regional, zonal and woreda staff from the four target regions: 150 staff	3 cohorts – aiming for 1/3 of total per cohort	Project monitoring data

EE's Response

- Estimated number of beneficiaries to be reached by the end of intervention in table 29 requires a bit of an adjustment since the figures proposed do not look reliable. Particularly, reaching out to 200,000 community members seems to be overestimated.
- The baseline study did not include in-school girls since the project is focusing only on OOS girls. So, we advise revision on this section.
- In-school boys are included in the project as indirect beneficiaries to make them agents of change on girls' education. JaRco believes this is a significant move since boys are tomorrow's fathers and parents. Even if the baseline study indicates that there is little to be done on the communities' attitudes towards girls' education since the majority are positive, sensitizing boys on the issue will surely bring about sustainable change on girls' education.

Annex 9: Learning test pilot and calibration

- Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) standard tools developed by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) were adopted for this study. These assessments test the level of literacy and numeracy of sampled girls. EGRA and EGMA cover a range of sub-tests. The oral fluency section comprises a significant portion of EGRA. The test determines oral fluency by giving a value of words per minute (WPM). The WPM score measures and sets targets for the literacy component of learning under CHANGE project's intended outcomes. The EGMA, in turn, includes measures of both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency, such as number identification, addition and subtraction.
- In consultation with the Fund Manager (FM), the tools were modified or altered by increasing the time to 120 seconds. That means, additional 60 seconds were added to all the timed sub-tasks.JaRco's past GEC evaluations and educational research suggests that students sometimes perform poorly in exams because the testing situation creates anxiety that hinders their capability. To avoid this, the time of the test was changed from 60 seconds to 120 seconds after the pre-testing for the girls to have enough space to demonstrate their numeracy and literacy skills.
- For Exercise2 **'Familiar Words'** and Exercise 3 **'Invented word reading', the number** of words were modified to 25 from 50. This change has been made in consultation and guidance of the FM (Fund Manager).
- The midline and end line tests will not be identical to those administered at the baseline as the cohort of girls participating are expected to not change. As a result, the contents of the tests will be calibrated differently to maintain the level of difficulty and scoring.

Midline and Endline learning test

- The midline and the endline test are scheduled to be implemented during the month of December 2021 and August 2023 respectively. The midline was postponed for a few months to reflect the enrolment in formal schools, and therefore to be sure that only OOS girls will be involved in the project.
- The midline and Endline learning tests are already drafted during the baseline test preparation.

- Fine-tuning and finalization of the EGRA and EGMA test for midline and endline will take place during October 2021 and June 2023, respectively.
- The testing time will remain 120 seconds. That means, additional 60 seconds will be added to all the timed sub-tasks to equate the level of difficulty with the baseline test contents.
- Adjustments made on the number of words for the EGRA's Exercise2 and 3 will remain the same for the midline and endline tests. That means the sub sections will include 25 words rather than 50 as in the standard tools.
- The contents of the tests will be different during midline and endline while in the meantime maintaining the similarity of the levels of difficulty with the baseline test.

Annex 11: External evaluator declaration

Name of project: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project

Name of External evaluator and contact information: JaRco Consulting PLC, Tel +251 - 115577276/59

Names of all members of the evaluation team: Dr. Getnet Demissie, Dr. Derje Andarge, Dr. Awake Shishigu, Koye Kassa, Shemeles Msifin and Betelhem Taye.

I Tsegahun Tessema certify that the independent evaluation has been conducted in line with the Terms of Reference and other requirements received.

Specifically:

- All of the quantitative data was collected independently (Initials: ___).
- All data analysis was conducted independently and provides a fair and consistent representation of progress (Initials: ___).
- Data quality assurance and verification mechanisms agreed in the terms of reference with the project have been soundly followed (Initials: ___).
- The recipient has not fundamentally altered or misrepresented the nature of the analysis originally provided by JaRco consulting (Initials: ___).
- All child protection protocols and guidance have been followed ((initials: ___).
- Data has been anonymised, treated confidentially and stored safely, in line with the GEC data protection and ethics protocols (Initials: ___).

Tsegahun Tessema

(Name)

JaRco Consulting PLC

(Company)

September 2, 2020

(Date)

Annex 13: Project response

The project should ensure to respond to each recommendation made by the EE.

Project sustainability:

As per the results from this baseline study, attitude of girls, men and women towards girls' education is very positive that more than 90% advocate girls' education. When it comes to the commitment of the community and system in dealing with girls' education issues, however, totally opposite results were obtained. In all the regions, girls' education issues are scarcely raised and barely addressed. This could negatively affect the sustainability of the project in a way that practicality is missing more than the theoretical knowledge of the aspect amongst the community and system. Therefore, IOs 4.2 and 5.1 would require utmost attention and intervention for the better sustainability outcome of the project.

This is very well understood and observed by the project. The due attention on working further with the communities (existing and newly built/empowered structures) and the system (Govt representation on kebele – woreda – region – federal levels) is going to be given especially through activities planned within Expected Outcome 4: Outputs 4 and 5. Till now, the project gained a very positive experience with Community Action Group members who played a key role in introducing the Home-based learning model in the communities due to Covid-19 pandemic. Different working groups and sub-groups have been established to serve as a focal point with both communities, target groups as well as local level Govt representatives, which proved to be the most effective way to push some topics and agendas through to be raised at various meetings and discussed on different levels. Also, as another opportunity that came with the pandemic, the project teams happened to be in much closer communication and negotiation with the local authorities as, very often, we were the only organisation in the area to introduce alternative education model once schools had to be shut down. Building on these positive experiences and best practices will continue.

Region-specific barriers for focus on intervention:

Oromia and Afar are the two nomadic pastoral communities often moving from place to place in search of water for their household and livestock. These two regions have a lot of commonalities in the barriers their girls face to education. Despite the fact that a very high level of positive perception towards girls' education is registered in these regions, the majority of their girls have never been to school and those who were, have already dropped out. High level of household chores are said to be the major reasons for their girls Out Of School status. Thus, the vast majority of their girls have the least aggregate scores in the literacy and numeracy tests. Particularly in Afar, there is a high level of early marriage and child birth and yet in both regions higher proportions of girls have very limited knowledge and awareness about family planning. Their schools are also said to lack potable water. Secondary schools are as well more distant from the homes of notable number of girls. Therefore, focusing on the fact that livelihoods in these regions are never stable would lead to intensified interventions on the households, communities, systems, and schools' level in these regions to achieve the desired IOs 1,2 and 3.

The project finds this recommendation very relevant and important. We are observing that due to the extra level of pressure and insecurity as a result of multiple factors: C-19, floods in Afar, civil war in Tigray and high number of refugees fleeing the country nowadays is further deteriorating the situation in the target communities and cause e g even higher number of early marriages and early pregnancies. Special (and further) attention needs to be given to those areas, based on the proper analysis and data available. Project is now finalizing a Rapid Assessment on the Home-based learning approach, that will serve as a spring-board for further project design adoption and introducing changed modalities of working with those vulnerable communities. Also, we plan to collect region-specific data within GESI Analysis soon. Along with this, intensified work with individual households/families and communities need to be carried on to understand the given context and situation in detail and come up with tailored-made approach.

Girls in Amhara and SNNPR, with few discrepancies, also share common barriers that could guide project activities. All girls in Amhara and the vast majority in SNNPR have had the chance to be enrolled in a formal education. Relatively, girls from these regions, particularly from Amhara, demonstrated better literacy and numeracy levels in the tests. Even though the perception of the community towards educating girls like in the previous regions is very positive, the girls in these regions have ended up dropping out of school for barriers that could slightly be different from the previous regions. Though not very severe as for the girls in Amhara, the girls in these two regions spend half to a whole day undertaking daily household chores. This particular barrier was not, however, primarily identified as the major reason for why the girls dropped out of schools. Rather, primary school distance and inability to cover school costs were the two major barriers indicated. In Amhara, secondary schools were as well said to be very far from a considerable number of girls' homes. Lack of potable water in schools was also identified as a barrier. Therefore, girls in these regions seem to be more affected by supply-side barriers. They mostly require economic empowerment, physically accessible schools with all the necessary basic facilities such as potable water, and the commitment of concerned official stakeholders to achieve all the proposed IOs.

This recommendation is going to be addressed through different activities. Within Output 2, Activity 2.6, the project will assist the schools with their improvement plans that will focus on improving the school environment in terms of access, safety, but also building water related infrastructure to make sure it is available in every school/centre. Within Output 3, the main focus is in enabling the target girls to attend TVET that seems to be more of an alternative rather than secondary school in most of the communities. In the 2 above mentioned intervention regions, the TVET centres are available and the project will make sure the link to those is created and extra support to the girls provided that they are able to receive their training. Regarding the high engagement of the target girls in house-hold chores, the aim of Self-help groups is to empower the girls and women in the communities to prioritise the education over some of the, less urgent, chores through e g distributing the different tasks among the house-hold members, rescheduling some of the activities etc. Also, conditional cash is to be provided (Activity 3.6) to enable those most vulnerable families to continue sending the girls to receive education when having very tight budget available. Further ways to lift the heavy burden of the house-hold chores off the girls will be studied and integrated into the project, based on the inputs from the Rapid and GESI Assessments to address the related issues.

We would also request the project provide reflection on the following:

<u>Appropriateness of project interventions and transition pathways for ABE/IFAL (based on specific characteristics and barriers faced in each region)</u>

Based on the specific information from the Baseline study we believe that the project interventions and planned activities are still highly relevant. Also, the transition pathways outlined are appropriate. Considering the findings on Afar and Borana (coming from this Report as well as further project observations), TVET seems not to be suitable in some of the (very remote) target communities, some of the reasons for this being that the skills provided by TVET are not always addressing the (very specific) focus of the given communities and also, the centres are not easily accessible (if existing within 1 + hour proximity from the village). Therefore, further and/or different transition ways especially for IFAL girls (14-19) in those 2 regions are going to be added based on the assessment on the real needs, crafts and skills required. One of the most significant challenge, as well as opportunities of the project is to

Implications for beneficiary identification for future cohorts. Particularly any implications in Amhara?

Due to Covid-19 and, also, significantly worsened security situation, there are modifications to be considered in identifying 2nd learning cohort in all of the target regions. This assessment is going to be carried out with using the internal resources, based on the good knowledge of the situation on the ground (after fulfilling 1 full academic year working with the target communities). Based on the discussion with the different community members and relevant stakeholders, it is very likely that the number of out of school or at high risk of drop out girls has increased due to the above-mentioned factors and so the project can offer an option for lot of the families currently not sending the kids to school. In Amhara, where the Government doesn´t support the ABE, project will expand to new target locations and focus on older, IFAL targeted girls. Also, in Amhara specifically, but also in other regions, the need is very clear that the project needs to focus more on those girls enrolled into formal school and dropping out very soon after. The aim of the project is to target those girls with various activities and involve them e g in Girls clubs (Activity 3.3) or SHGs (Activity 3.4).