Project Evaluation Report

Report title:	First Cohort Project Impact Review Report for CHANGE: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project
Evaluator:	JaRco Consulting
GEC Project:	CHANGE: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls
Country	Ethiopia
GEC window	Leave No Girl Behind
Evaluation point:	Endline (Cohort 1)
Report date:	August 2022

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

UKaid
from the British people

First Cohort Project Impact Review Report for CHANGE: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project

Submitted to: People in Need (PIN)

Submitted by: JaRco Consulting

August 2022
Addis Ababa

<u>Acronyms</u>

CAGs	Community Action Groups
CIAI	Italian Association for Aid to Children
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FSA	Friendship Association Network
GEC	Girls Education Challenge
GEC-LNGB	Girls Education Challenge – Leave No Girl Behind
IFAL	Integrated Functional Adult Literacy
KII	Key Informant Interview
OOS	Out of School
PCGs	Primary Caregivers
PIN	People In Need
SHGs	Self Help Groups
SNNPR	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Region
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
T&L	Teaching and Learning
WHH	Welthungerhilfe

Table of Figures

1. Executive Summary

Through the GEC's Leave No Girl Behind (GEC-LNGB) fund, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom has financed CHANGE: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls project. This project is implemented by People in Need (PIN), along with international partners Concern Worldwide, Helvetas and Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and local implementing partner Friendship Association Network (FSA), with technical support provided by the Italian Association for Aid to Children (CIAI). It is a five-year project scheduled to run from 2019 to 2023, with a six-month extension. The project aims to reach out-of-school (OOS) adolescent girls from the four Ethiopian regions of Afar, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR. The project is implemented to address the underlying barriers that prevent girls from leading healthy, safe and educated lives: their low social status.

The CHANGE Project has three expected outcomes:

1. Improved learning outcomes and life skills for highly marginalised girls,
2. Increased transition rates for highly marginalised girls at key points in their pathway, and
3. Improved community and government support, acceptance, and commitment to sustain girls' education.

The direct beneficiaries targeted by the project are girls aged 10 to 19 years old who are not in formal education. Most girls in the target group are highly marginalised and have either never attended school or dropped out at an early age without having acquired any literacy or numeracy skills. At present, the project is in its fourth year of implementation. A total of four cohorts will be part of the project lifecycle.

This Project Impact Review is conducted with the first cohort of the project beneficiaries to facilitate learning on what has and has not worked to help refine the project activities and approach for the remainder of the project period. The specific objectives of the Impact Review are to:

1. Identify the impact of COVID-19 and internal conflict on the education of girls from cohort 1, as well as the strategies employed in mitigating this impact,
2. Articulate the key lessons learned and devise recommendations that would help to improve project impact and effectiveness,

3. Assess how successful the project was in supporting girls' transitions to formal schools, (self-) employment opportunities and participation in self-help groups (SHGs),
4. Assess the sustainability of project activities.

Primary and secondary data were collected from selected woredas of Gedeo and Borena zones of SNNPR and Oromia regions respectively. The other two regions were not considered due to security issues. The primary data was solely qualitative while the secondary data included quantified project document references. For the qualitative data, twelve Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Girls (10-14 & 15-19), Female Caregivers (10-14 & 15-19) and Male Caregivers (10-14 & 15-19) were conducted. In addition, eight Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Community Action Group members, Woreda Education Officers, Woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs officers, and Project facilitators were conducted. Project monitoring data was also collected on the number of first cohort girls enrolled in Vocational Skills training and Self Help Groups (SHGs), number of girls who started income-generating economic activities, number of community sensitization events and number of functional Community Action Groups (CAGs) established.

The findings of this impact review showed that COVID-19 created psychological stress on most of the communities in the regions due to dissemination of wrong and exaggerated information via various media outlets. The project has tried to minimize the impact of the pandemic on the project activities by adapting their delivery mechanisms, especially in case of teaching and learning activities. The T&L activities could to some extent continue even during the COVID-19 restrictions, because the project adjusted its strategy by assigning tutors to assist the girls in their education at their own homes. In addition, the project also distributed facemasks and sanitizers to protect beneficiary girls and the project staff from contracting the virus while employing the new strategy. Although the project restructured its project implementation strategy to reduce the significant impact of the pandemic, it is evident that the project activity has been delayed due to shorter class hours.

However, the main disruption to the project came from a drought in Borena zone, which forced beneficiary girls and their families to migrate to other places in search of water and pasture. The project attempted to mitigate this problem by following these internally displaced girls and providing assistance in their education.

On the other side, respondents from both regions did not mention a conflict or security incidents as an issue that would prevent them from participation on the project activities.

Several lessons were extracted from the findings. The importance of adapting the activities of the project to the situation of the time thereby catering for the needs of the beneficiary girls was highlighted. The project was quick to adapt the protective measures required during the peak of the COVID pandemic by distributing protective devices and introducing home-to-home educational support. The provision of mobile educational assistance during the displacement of beneficiary girls due to the drought was also swiftly adapted.

The other lesson drawn from the findings is to focus more on underlying cause(s) that could prevent girls from attending formal education such as many families' expectation that daughters' primary responsibilities are household chores. Finding solutions for this problem will make the impact of the project more sustainable.

In addition, the project's timely and continuous supervision and follow-up has resulted in the achievement of the expected project outcomes. Also, respondents appreciate that the project combines theoretical approaches such as raising awareness on importance of education with practical approaches – supporting specific marginalized groups and adolescents. This could lead to achievement of a sustainable impact on the education of the girls.

When focusing on transition, the project monitoring (quantitative) data showed that in Yirgachefe woreda, Gedeo zone, from the first cohort of beneficiary girls, 52 girls were enrolled in vocational skills training and in two Self Help Groups (SHGs). In this woreda, the project is in the process of forming groups for income-generating activities. In addition, the qualitative data shows that 200 girls have been transitioned into governmental schools in Gedeo zone.

However, no student was registered in transition activities in El Waye Woreda, Borena zone, during the time of the data collection since they were going to transit at the end of June 2022. Similarly, in this woreda, beneficiary girls are expected to form groups for income-generating activities after they transit to SHGs.

From the sustainability perspective, the majority of respondents expect that the project activities will continue after the project's end because the girls and their caregivers will be able to reap the

benefits of education. The presence of role models among the girls who participated in the project and the practicality of the education which girls have attended in the project attracted more girls to enroll and stay in education. This indicates the impact of the project will likely be sustainable after the project ends. However, a considerable number of participants suggest that for the project activities to be sustainable among the wider community, the project should form links with other NGOs that have similar interests (if there are any).

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are suggested:

- PIN and implementing partners to foresee potential upcoming challenges such as drought which can affect the project and devise a feasible means of overcoming them in a timely manner. In light of this, the mobile school, which was previously started in a few cases, shall be strengthened and implemented in all intervention areas at full scale (if such challenges are about to come).

- PIN and implementing partners shall provide psychological support such as primary counselling during times of stress and severe challenges. This can be done through coordination with the government and other NGOs.

- In Borena zone, implementing partners shall verify the major reasons of the community for not sending girls to school so that they can put appropriate measures in place to solve the root cause. Preliminary findings in this assessment showed that one of the major reasons for communities to keep their daughters at home is because girls are needed to provide a lot of labour work such as herding cattle. Solutions for such issues shall be investigated jointly with them through an in-depth analysis of their traditional activities and piloting other techniques which need small number of people and which are not so labour intensive.

- The project activities were delayed, particularly in Borena zone, due to the drought. Therefore, efforts in the coming years will need to be increased or a strategy changed to compensate the lost time due to pandemic and drought, in order to achieve the set objectives.

- Further work in coordination with government, private and non-government organizations is recommended in all intervention areas so that the project activities can be sustainable. This is to highlight the above suggested link with NGOs and other government and private organizations to sustain the project impact.

2. Introduction

This report describes the objectives, study design and methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations of CHANGE's first cohort Project Impact Review in Oromia (Borena) and Southern Nationals Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR)–(Gedeo). It provides an overview of the evaluation questions, data collection tools, sample size and data collection methods of the study. The main body of the report also includes the procedures used for data collection and management, data presentation and analysis of the study. The procedures used for data storage, quality assurance, risk management and data collection tools are presented in the annex.

Through the GEC's Leave No Girl Behind (GEC-LNGB) fund, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom has financed CHANGE: Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls project. This project is implemented by People in Need (PIN), along with international partners Concern Worldwide, Helvetas and Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and local implementing partner Friendship Association Network (FSA), with technical support provided by the Italian Association for Aid to Children (CIAI). It is a five-year project scheduled to run from 2019 to 2023, with a six-month extension. The project aims to reach out-of-school (OOS) adolescent girls from the four Ethiopian regions of Afar, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR. The project is implemented to address the underlying barriers that prevent girls from leading healthy, safe and educated lives: their low social status. The CHANGE Project has three expected outcomes:

1. Improved learning outcomes and life skills for highly marginalised girls,
2. Increased transition rates for highly marginalised girls at key points in their pathway, and
3. Improved community and government support, acceptance, and commitment to sustain girls' education.

The direct beneficiaries targeted by the project are girls aged 10 to 19 years old who are not in formal education. Most girls in the target groups are highly marginalised and have either never attended school or dropped out at an early age without having acquired any literacy or numeracy skills. These girls need support to enter or re-enter and remain in formal or alternative education systems. All target girls are likely to be engaged in domestic work, such as taking care of younger siblings and/or older family members, as well as other responsibilities such as milling, fetching

water, collecting firewood, constructing houses, preparing food, assisting at farms, milking camels and herding cattle.

At present, the project is in its fourth year of implementation. A total of four cohorts will be part of the lifecycle of the project. A baseline evaluation was conducted with the first cohort of the project (cohort 1) in March 2020. A comprehensive set of data was collected from different sources to provide benchmarks against which progress can be measured. The findings of this study were used to guide program staff, partners and beneficiaries (both direct and indirect) in the process of achieving the program's stated objectives. Most importantly, the evaluation set benchmark baseline values for the indicators presented in the project's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, which underpins the measurement of results and assessment of the project impact over time at the midline and end line. However, re-contacting many of the baseline first cohort girls for the midline evaluation was not possible due to a high rate of attrition (45 %) of girls in the project[1]. As a result, another baseline is currently conducted with new entrants of the project beneficiaries (cohort 3) to ensure impact evaluation can be conducted longitudinally with the same cohort of girls when the project is completed.

In the meantime, this project Impact Review is conducted with the first cohort of the project beneficiaries to facilitate learning on what has and has not worked to help fine-tune project activities and refine the approach for the remainder of the project period. This impact review is conducted by sampling a representative group of girls aged 10 to19 years old from selected

---

1 The C1 the identification and enrolment of OOS girls started during a semester break for formal education, creating the possibility for some of the registered girls to join government schools when formal education began; as a result, they became a dropout even before the start of T&L by the project. Based on a rapid assessment conducted by PIN, out of 271 dropout girls registered in Amhara, Oromia, and SNNPR, 172 girls left the project before the T&L started for cohort 1.

Also, in Afar, lost 48% of its C1 total target because of the natural disaster (flooding) that happened in the region and followed by the COVID19 pandemic that makes it difficult to relocate (retain) the dropout girls in the aftermath of the drought. In Oromia, in addition to the socio-economic factors in Borena, the area is frequently affected by drought that leads the girl's families to relocate (displaced) from their permanent residence to search for water and grazing land for their cattle. In SNNPR, the coffee harvesting season in Gedeo is also a contributing factor as the girls in the project engaged in a daily labour work in coffee processing firms.

woredas in the two regions of Oromia and SNNPR. The other two regions – Amhara and Afar – are not covered due to the current security issues in these areas.

3. Current Project status

The CHANGE project is currently in its fourth year of implementation and has so far reached 10,549 marginalized girls across all intervention regions. In particular, it has reached to Oromia [Borena – 1,611] and SNNPR [Gedeo – 5,440]. Two cohorts of beneficiaries have already been enrolled in the project in each region.

The major achievements of the project to date are as follows:

1. Girls' Clubs have been initiated in all intervention locations apart from Afar. Girls explained that participating in girls' clubs was very important for them because "it increased our association and love… it also helped us to solve our education related problems on time by communicating with our teachers and families." (Girls from El Waye). These girls also mentioned that the girls' clubs helped them to minimize their home burden by advising their families to give them the time required to study and do their homework.

2. Teachers' and facilitators' Continuous Professional Development was fully implemented in SNNPR and Amhara, and partially implemented in Oromia and Afar. Facilitators Learning Circles have been taking place monthly to encourage facilitators to discuss best practices, challenges faced and solutions adopted.

3. A strong cooperation has been established between project implementers and TVET institutions. Concern Worldwide in Amhara is the first project implementer to have established such a cooperation. The first batch of graduates from Integrated Functional Adult Literacy (IFAL) classes to finish their vocational skills trainings were hosted at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutes in Amhara at the end of the third year.

4. Cooperation with Community Action Groups (CAGs) has been improved through provision of training and support by recognising the potential of these groups to positively improve the project's impact on the wider community. In SNNPR, and Oromia, CAGs

became a catalyst for improving the attitudes of the wider community to girls' education. These groups will be strengthened further over the remainder of the project.

4. Purpose and scope of the evaluation

This Impact Review has taken place with a representative sample of girls aged 10 to19 years old from selected woredas in the two zones of Oromia and SNNPR. It is aimed at informing project staff and stakeholders of the overall project implementation process and presenting the key lessons learned from project activities to inform ongoing implementation and future improvements, course-correction and scale-up/replication of the project. The Impact Review assessed the project's performance in relation to achieving the intended goal – particularly those on transition pathways and sustainability – during the first half of the project implementation period. It identified and presented key lessons to inform decision-making and improve the efficiency of the project during the remaining implementation period.

The specific objectives of the Impact Review are to:

1. Identify the impact of COVID-19 and internal conflict on cohort 1 girls' education, as well as the strategies employed in mitigating the impact,
2. Articulate the key lessons learned and devise recommendations that would help to improve project impact and effectiveness,
3. Assess how successful the project was in supporting girls' transitions to formal schools, (self-) employment opportunities and participation in self-help groups (SHGs),
4. Assess the sustainability of project activities.

4.1 Evaluation Questions

- To what extent have COVID-19 and political unrest had any impact on target girls' education (e.g. attendance, learning environments and attitudes to education)?
- To what extent has the project adapted its activities and implementation approaches to overcome the influence of COVID-19 and the conflict?
- What lessons can be learned to increase the effectiveness and impact of the project for the remainder of the period, and what adaptations or changes are recommended?
- To what extent has the project succeeded in improving girls' transition to formal education, (self-) employment opportunities and participation in SHGs?

- Which specific project activities contributed to the successful transition of OOS girls and how?

- To what extent can the project teaching and learning activities be considered sustainable in terms of their likely continuation after the project ends?

4.2 Scope of work

The following activities are fulfilled by JaRco for this evaluation:

1. Developing data collection tools and providing technical expertise on methodological development,
2. Translating interview and discussion guides in local languages (Amharic and Oromifa),
3. Managing overall logistics and coordination of activities,
4. Providing any administrative support including liaising with local authorities during field data collection.
5. Recruiting and training a research team,
6. Planning and carrying out data collection in selected kebeles and woredas in the implementation areas,
7. Liaising with PIN, implementation partner staff and regional government offices to manage all logistics and community mobilisation,
8. Data analysis and report writing.

5. Methodology of the Review

5.1 Evaluation design

This review is intended to provide insight into the project implementation and provided lessons learned for the reminder of the project implementation period. As such, primary and secondary data was used to inform this report. Although primary qualitative data was used as main sources of the information, quantitative data was also used from secondary sources. The qualitative data was collected from multiple project participants including beneficiary girls and their care givers, relevant government offices and project staff.

5.2 Type of data collected

Primary and secondary data were collected for this evaluation. The primary data was solely qualitative while secondary data included quantified project document references. Table 1 below shows the type of data collected, the tools used and the source of the data:

Table 1: Type and source of data

Type of data		Data source – Oromia & SNNPR
Primary data: Qualitative	KIIs	• Community Action Group (CAG) members • Woreda Education Officers • Woreda Women and Children Affairs officers • Project facilitators (project team)
	FGDs	• Girls (aged 10-14) • Girls (aged 15-19) • Female Caregivers of participant girls (aged 10-14) • Female Caregivers of participant girls (aged 15-19) • Male Caregivers of participant girls (aged 10-14) • Male Caregivers of participant girls (aged 15-19)

Secondary data: Quantitative	Checklist	• Project monitoring data
		  ➢ # of first cohort girls enrolled in Vocational Skills training and SHGs
		  ➢ # of girls who started income generating economic activities
		  ➢ # of community sensitisation events conducted
		  ➢ # of functional CAGs established

5.2 Sample size determination for qualitative interviews

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with relevant stakeholders. Table 3 below presents a detailed qualitative sample of participants.

Table 2: Qualitative interviews sample size

Region	# Of Woreda	Type of Interview	Interviewee/ Woreda	Total # of interviews
SNNPR	1, Gedeo Zone, Yirgacheffe Woreda,	FGD	• 2 groups of Girls (10-14 & 15-19) • 2 groups of Female caregivers (10-14 & 15-19) • 2 groups of Male caregivers (10-14 & 15-19)	6 groups (26 females & 13 males)

Region	# Of Woreda	Type of Interview	Interviewee/ Woreda	Total # of interviews
	Dumerso Kebelle	KII	• 1 Community Action Group member • 1 Woreda level education officer • 1 Woreda level Women & Children Affairs officer • 1 Project facilitator	4 males
Oromia	1, Borena Zone, El Waye Woreda, Hidi Ale Kebelle.	FGD	• 2 groups of Girls (10-14 & 15-19) • 2 groups of Female caregivers (10-14 & 15-19) • 2 groups of Male caregivers (10-14 & 15-19)	6 groups (30 females & 15 males)
		KII	• 1 Community Action Group member • 1 Woreda level education officer • 1 Woreda level Women & Children Affairs officer • 1 Project facilitator	4 (2 females & 2 males)
Total	2	FGD	12 (56 females and 28 males)	**58 females & 34 males**
		KII	8 (2 females and 6 males)	

5.2.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Members of Community Action Groups, Woreda-level Education Officers, Woreda Women and Children's Affairs Officers and project facilitators were purposively selected for KIIs. These individuals are deemed to have a suitable level of knowledge and experience of the project's effect on girls' educational and social outcomes to offer reliable insight into the challenges faced, as well as an understanding of the broader institutional and social norms relating to girls' marginalisation in the local contexts. Qualitative sample selection was done in collaboration with project implementing partners.

Interviews were only conducted with those who have given informed consent. Some individuals may be uncomfortable, hesitant or unwilling to discuss marginalisation and social norms related to gender as these are considered taboo topics. Therefore, it was anticipated that some respondents might actively withhold information. To mitigate this from impacting the reliability of the data as far as possible, all KIIs were conducted by members of the core Evaluation Team who are experienced in introducing difficult topics and creating an environment of trust. The core evaluation team was supported by trained local interviewers and facilitators to counteract the language barrier and the local culture. A short interview guide listing the main topics to be covered

under each evaluation question were used, with different guides created for different informants, to ensure that interviews were comprehensive and structured appropriately.

5.2.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were conducted with the first cohort project beneficiary girls and their PCGs. The final registration list of the first cohort of girls was used as the sampling frame to purposively arrange the selection of discussion participants with the following characteristics:

- Girls aged 10 – 14 (*with no disability and not married/with no children*)
- Girls aged 15 – 19 (*with no disability and not married/with no children*)
- Girls living with a disability
- Married girls or those with children

The purposively selected samples from the lists helped the evaluation team identify the actual girls and households where their PCGs or parents were also selected for another FGD to give differently-positioned individuals the opportunity to offer their insights. The optimal number of participants for FGDs is between 6 to 12 people, depending on the topic under discussion. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, FGDs had a maximum of 8 people to reduce the likelihood of transmission. Discussion participants were invited from areas of proximity to the FGD location in addition to the above-mentioned characteristics. During FGDs, facilitators guided the process using a semi-structured guide to ensure that the discussion remains relevant and on topic, while also encouraging participants to elaborate on the points made so that a deeper understanding can be achieved.

Discussion facilitators are experienced in creating trusting and culturally sensitive environments in which all participants feel safe and comfortable sharing their experiences. Discussions were held in private spaces where participants cannot be overheard and all participants were asked not to repeat the contents outside of the FGD. Discussions regarding personal experiences of protection issues were held individually. FGDs with girls under 18 years old and/or not yet married were handled with particular care and used a range of exercises to encourage comprehension and free discussion. Mechanisms were also put in place to offer support for any participants that are affected by the topics raised or those who wish to talk to someone privately about marginalisation and lack of access to education. These include delivering safeguarding training to all facilitators and providing signposting to appropriate support services available in the area local to participants. Facilitators were recruited based on their qualification (minimum masters), experience in

qualitative data collection, language, knowing the culture, etc. All these criteria led us to get only male facilitators in the area.

5.2.3 Secondary Data

In close collaboration with project implementing partners in Oromia and SNNPR, secondary data was collected from project monitoring documents. The following secondary data was deemed to be relevant for the evaluation:

- ➢ # of first cohort girls enrolled in Vocational Skills training and SHGs
- ➢ # of girls who started income generating economic activities
- ➢ # of community sensitisation events conducted
- ➢ # of functional CAGs established

5.3 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection took place from April 27 to May 13 in Gedeo and from May 31 to June 17 in Borena. Different data collection periods were used in Gedeo and Borena due to the necessity of adjusting appropriate time for finding the project beneficiaries in Borena after they returned to their original place. Most of the project beneficiaries in Borena were pastoralists who move from place to place searching for water and grazing land due to the drought. JaRco collected qualitative data from a total of 20 groups and individual participants (12 FGDs and 8 KIIs) in Gedeo and Borena. In total, there were 92 participants in this study (58 females and 34 males).

Sampling Protocol: At first, the woredas from each region were selected randomly and then random selection of a Kebele from each woreda was made. From each Kebele, first girls were selected randomly and then their female and male caregivers were invited to participate in the study. All the research protocols including voluntary participation and using consents were followed.

Since we recruited facilitators from the respective areas and trained them to support us in the data collection, we have not faced serious language or cultural issue. In fact, the interviews and focus group discussions were carried out using the participants' local language and utmost care was taken to reduce the possibility of losing information during translation.

5.4 Study limitations

The study faced several limitations. At first, the study was conducted at a time where one of the groups of respondents (from Oromia) were just returning home from drought driven displacement. In such occasions, it may be difficult to get the full attention of the participants for education. Naturally, participants give priority for survival over education and this might have affected their focus and insight on the responses they provided.

The second limitation is related to the timing of the data collection. Unfortunately, the time of data collection overlapped with the participants pick time of farming especially for SNNPR. This again takes much of the attention of the participants to their farming duties and might have reduced their focus on the responses of the study.

The study would have given a more inclusive and broader insight if it included more quantitative data; that is, if mixed approach was used. This was not possible due to budget issues.

6. Impact Review Findings

The findings are organized vis-à-vis the research questions as below.

6.1 To what extent have COVID-19 and political unrest impacted the education of the target girls (e.g., attendance, learning environments and attitudes to education)?

There are mixed responses to this question in Gedeo and Borena. Both the KII and FGD participants in Gedeo explained that COVID-19 did not have any observable impact on target girls' education. However, COVID -19 restrictions had negative influence on families' economic situation, girls' social life and in some cases also on their attitude to girls' education in general. In Borena, respondents were frequently and spontaneously mentioning the negative impact of drought.

Although regular schools were closed, the CHANGE project continued its education program during the peak time of the pandemic by assigning one tutor for three houses. It distributed face masks and sanitizer to the project beneficiaries to protect both the tutor and students from the virus during the tutor's visit. The Gedeo participants also mentioned that there was no death due to COVID-19 in the area (Yirgachefe). The words of one KII participant read:

"There was no impact because the project attempted to address the girls' education at their home by keeping COVID-19 protocol. Teaching/ learning process was conducted at home with assigned teachers. In order to address it, a teacher is assigned to visit three students at home." (KII with CAG member from Yirgachefe, Gedeo)

Although participants believe that COVID-19 did not have a major impact on their education, closing schools by itself had a big impact. As a result of the closure, girls miss the real learning environment. Moreover, when project staff goes to the girls' homes, we may pressurize to change their living condition at home. In Ethiopian culture, when a guest comes to your home, you need to invite whatever available which disturbs your living situation financially.

Based on the information collected from multiple sources in Gedeo woreda, political unrest, environmental and other security issues were not raised as factors affecting girls' education. The only issue raised during the FGD with Gedeo participants was the psychological stress and tension which the community suffered due to the information broadcasted from media about COVID-19. All FGD participants agreed that "local communities suffered from negative psychological effects due to broadcasted information from different media" (FGD with Male Caregivers from Yirgachefe, Gedeo).

Although COVID-19 was not an issue for the majority of the participants in Borena other than the shorting of the class duration and change in learning modalities, drought has affected the community extensively and forced them to be displaced from their residential area in search of water. This caused many girls to be absent from class. Participant girls mentioned that they did not have time to do their homework because they were busy searching for food for their animals. One participant expressed this as "during the drought period, many students migrated and were absent from the class frequently" (FGD with Girls from El Waye, Borena). A sample of what most participants shared is presented as follows:

"The environmental-related incident that affected our lives was the drought. The drought impacted us greatly because our life directly or indirectly relies on animal products. It also impacted our girls' life/ education because our girls migrated with us to feed the animals." (FGD with Female Caregivers from El Waye, Borena)

19

Some participants in Borena also responded that, in addition to the drought, COVID-19 affected their families' economy. They described that the pandemic increased the cost of living. Moreover, the participants disclosed that the closure of both formal and informal schools during the pandemic has affected girls' education. Some families considered that schools were closed for good and forced their daughters to get married early. Regarding this, FGD participants mentioned that "during the school closure, few girls dropped out of school and got married" (FGD with Girls from El Waye, Borena).

6.2 To what extent has the project adapted its activities and implementation approaches to overcome the influence of COVID-19 and the conflict?

The project has tried to adapt its activities and implementation approaches to overcome the influence of the drought in Borena by moving to the area where the girls stay and providing education thereby reducing attrition. This kind of mobile schooling, by following the route of beneficiary girls when they moved in search of pasture and water, helped many girls to stay in education. In line with this, a KII participant said "during the drought period, the project staff moved to the area where the girls are and continued the lessons which helped to reduce the rate of girls' withdrawal from education" (KII with Woreda Women, Children & Youth Official from El Waye, Borena).

In addition, CHANGE's adaptation of its implementation approach to the drought, by moving to the beneficiary girls' temporary residence when they migrated, probably contributed to reduction of the number of girls who got married early. Supporting this, girls' FGD showed that "the project adjustment helped many girls. For example, it saved many girls from getting married" (FGD with Girls from El Waye, Borena). Another respondent also reported that due to the drought, "there has been a change in the project activity delivery mechanism. However, the frequency of absence of the students from the school was highly increased. During this time, the adjustment we took was to arrange the time and the teacher to move to the area where the student exists and provide the lessons to them. Due to this adjustment, after they returned to their home, they continued their education" (KII with Project Facilitator from El Waye, Borena).

In both Borena and Gedeo, the project adjusted its implementation during COVID-19 outbreak, as mentioned in 7.1, by distributing face mask, soap and sanitizer to the project beneficiaries to reduce the possibility of the transmission of the virus and the project continued the education at the girls'

homes. One participant from Gedeo confirmed this as "when government schools were closed due to the pandemic, the teaching learning activities [of the project] continued via home to home by assigning a teacher for three girls to teach at their individual home and keeping COVID-19 protocol" (FGD with Female Caregivers from Yirgachefe, Gedeo).

6.3 What lessons can be learned to increase the effectiveness and impact of the project for the remainder of the period, and what adaptations or changes are recommended?

The general lesson taken from the implementation of this project so far is the unpredictability of the situations of the areas during intervention. Although COVID-19 is a global pandemic, it was not predicted before the start of the project. In fact, drought is not unusual in Borena zone but its severity and level of impact on the girls' education was beyond expectation. Above all, when COVID-19 and drought occurred simultaneously, their impact was severe on girls' education. Due to this reason, participants in both regions felt the need for girls' education support soar due to the unexpectedly changing context of their area.

Lesson learned 1: Provision of sufficient educational materials such as reference books, bags and uniforms; sanitary products such as soap; school meals, etc where PIN was doing many of them in some occasions.

Respondents described their needs as "we need the CHANGE project to provide us with reference books, infrastructure for education, bags, uniforms, adequate soap, and building separate schools for such types of marginalized learners" (FGD with Female Caregivers from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). Since the drought and COVID reduced their income and affected their economy, most participants mentioned, "we are troubled to buy clothes, exercise books, pens, etc. for our children and feed our children. At this time, we are dependent on governmental and NGO support to survive and educate our students" (FGD with Male Caregivers from El Waye, Borena). Similarly, other participants revealed "if food is provided during the class time in the school, we will achieve better result … If possible, we would like to have our own schools because our ages are different from other students in the government school" (FGD with Girls Aged 15–19 from Yirgachefe, Gedeo).

Another participant responded that:

> *"To attain better achievements for the remaining period, the project should focus*
> *on disabled girls' materials for reading, writing, and support for transportation*

from home to school. It is good if the project increases its capacity to perform similar activities in the remaining remote areas and formal schools. Besides, the professional fee of the supervisor and teachers was very small. So, if possible, it is better to improve their professional fee." (KII with Woreda Education Official from El Waye, Borena)

Lesson learned two: Critically assessing the major causes of parents for not sending their children to school and focusing the intervention related to these causes. Although PIN conducted community assessment on the needs of beneficiaries from the very beginning, we could not get data whether that was related with the causes of low school enrolment.

The second major lesson is focusing on (investigating) the critical reason of the community which hinders daughters from attending school and finding solutions for this problem. Many interview participants believe that the pastoralist community is the one who does not want to send their children to school because they need their children for herding their cattle. Hence, participants suggested that solving this problem maybe a solution for improving girls' education enrolment and attendance. The voice of one of the participants reads as:

"Somehow pastoral people show resistance to the education of girls because they want the girls to keep animals. For example, if one father has 4 children, one will keep cattle, the second keep camels, the third keep goats, the fourth keeps sheep and he does not send any of them to the school... [Hence], to positively influence the attitude of the society on education, still awareness including how they can manage their animals and send their children to the school is important." (KII with CAG member from El Waye, Borena)

The third major lesson we learned from the CHANGE project is that timely and continuous follow-up is important in any intervention. This is also possible with PIN ToC. Many participants agreed that the project had timely and continuous supervision and follow-up which resulted in the achievement of the expected project outcomes.

The fourth lesson is supporting theoretical awareness with practical work is very important. This was also based on PIN's activity. One participant clearly put this as:

"Before this project a lot of projects from NGOs and government organizations did a lot of things on awareness creation but when the result was evaluated, the expected change was not achieved. When we see the CHANGE project, they did

awareness creation with practical work on adolescents and disabled groups. This brought observable positive change on the girls as well as the community attitudes toward girls' education." (KII with Woreda Education Official from El Waye, Borena)

Regarding the above positive change in the attitude of the community on girls' education, respondents remarked that "a lot of girls and disabled groups observed the importance of education for their future life and enrolled in informal and formal education" (KII with Woreda Women, Youth and Children Affairs Officer from El Waye, Borena).

We believe that almost all lessons learned are based on the activities of PIN and hence they are under PIN's ToC.

Participants were also asked "what could be done differently in the project to attain better achievements for the remaining period?" Their responses include "working with all stakeholders particularly parents of the marginalized girls… Supplying bags and uniform to attract some students and parents not to prevent children from the school" (KII with CAG member from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). Others said "continue supporting the girls until they reach the level of generating income and self-help group" (FGD with Male Caregivers from Yirgachefe, Gedeo).

There were also suggestions to motivate the caregivers of the children as "to attain better achievements for its remaining period, the project should give awards or motivation not only to the students but also to the caregivers… Other parents can also be motivated to educate their girls and take a similar award" (KII with CAG member from El Waye, Borena).

There are also other respondents who are already satisfied with what has been done so far and would like to see the continuation of the project in a similar way. They said that:
> *"To help girls lead a better life, the project must strengthen the activities it started and go forward for us. We the community as a whole are very interested in the project's activity… In addition, during any environmental and natural occurring incidences, this project should stand behind us with material and financial support to educate our children, feed our families, and keep our life."* (FGD with Male Caregivers from El Waye, Borena)

Others added that:

> "*If possible, it is good if the project increases its capacity and work on boys as well as girls in the formal schools… If possible, it is better to do also in the formal education. Most of the girls in the formal education were forced to withdraw their education due to economic/ financial problems and we cannot help them… The activity of the project needs improvement. For example, some centers have no school. So if possible, again the project should improve its capacity to build the schools for the centers.*" (KII with Woreda Women, Youth and Children Affairs Officer from El Waye, Borena)

Supporting the above idea, respondents reported that "in the remaining period, it is better to improve what is going on now. For example, some centers have no classes. So, they need a class. Even the existing classes are not conducive for the students and teachers. Because the area is categorized under highly desert areas in the country" (KII with Project Facilitators from El Waye, Borena). Girls also aired out their idea about they would prefer to see in the future as "if possible, it should change the school shift to the morning" (FGD with Girls from El Waye, Borena).

6.4 To what extent has the project succeeded in improving girls' transition to formal education, (self-) employment opportunities and participation in SHGs?

This review question is answered with respect to the three major perspectives: (1) transition to formal or informal education; (2) transition to vocational training; and (3) transition to safe, fairly-paid employment or self-employment. The project monitoring (quantitative) data showed that in Yirgachefe woreda, Gedeo zone, from the first cohort of beneficiary girls, 52 girls were enrolled in vocational skills training and in two Self Help Groups (SHGs) – as per the data obtained from the project staff in the woreda. In this woreda, the project is in the process of forming groups for income-generating activities.

However, no student was registered in vocational skills training (and the project is not planning at all to do TVET transition in Borena zone, according to the project staff) or in Self Help Group (SHG) in El Waye Woreda, Borena zone, during the time of the data collection since they were going to transit at the end of June 2022. Similarly, in this woreda, beneficiary girls are expected to form groups for income-generating activities after they transit to SHGs.

The qualitative data showed that in Yirgachefe, "200 girls have transitioned into grade 5, governmental school" (KII with CAG member from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). Other participants informed us that adolescent girls "who stayed in school for two years are at a transition period. Their interest to transit into the next step is identified and an assessment carried out. 60% of them want to join TVET and the rest 40% are interested in generating an income by joining SHGs" (KII with Project Facilitator from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). However, as it was verified through the project's Needs Assessment report from April 2022, only 38 % of girls actually would like to transit to TVET activities and 60% of the target girls responded that they want to be self-employed and would like to run their own business.

In the other region, one of the participants of the KII reported "the project is benefiting girls to transition to formal schools, TVET colleges, and/or SHGs. I say this because I observed the motivation and interest of the girls, the caregivers, the teachers, and the office for the project" (KII with Project Facilitator from El Waye, Borena). This idea is also supported by the Woreda Women, Children and Youth Officer as:

> *"The project is benefiting girls to transition to formal schools. The basic problem of our girls' education is lack of awareness on the importance of education and the danger of illiteracy. However, nowadays, this project is creating awareness and our girls have good information about the importance of education. They know that they can have a better future if they learn. Therefore, I hope that after they graduate from adolescent education, they may move onto formal school, TVET college and self-help groups."* (KII with Woreda Women, Children and Youth Officer from El Waye, Borena)

The project facilitators in Gedeo zone confirmed that they have formed four functional CAGs (each with 25 individuals). Fourteen CAGs were also established in 14 kebeles (one per each kebele) in the entire intervention area of Borena zone. Moreover, three community sensitization events were conducted during the last three years in Borena zone but the facilitators in Gedeo reported that they were in the process of organizing community sensitization events and the events have never been conducted up to the time of the data collection.

The Woreda Education Officers were also asked on the transitions of girls to formal education and one of them responded that "accessing education for marginalized girls is very important in order to transition to the governmental schools, generate their own work or to join TVET based on the

signed agreement" (KII with Woreda Education Officer from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). This is a general idea of consensus with the project's plan. The other education officer provided an insight in relation to the overall attitude of the community as "nowadays the community observed and changed their attitude and accepted as education is important for girls more than anything. So, unless they face any external/ environmental factors they want to educate their girls at any educational level" (KII with Woreda Education Officer from El Waye, Borena).

6.5 Which specific project activities contributed to the successful transition of OOS girls and how?

Most participants agreed that the community awareness creation, through various means including community conversation, on the importance of girls' education has contributed for the successful transition of OOS girls toward the three transitional pathways: transition to formal or informal education, transition to vocational training and transition to safe, fairly paid employment or self-employment. For instance, in one Goth (village), the government was not able to attract many OOS girls into formal education. However, after the project created awareness, 51 ABE adolescent girls were registered. Currently, due to the positive changes being observed in the girls' life through the project, there are, according to respondents in Borena, many requests from families to include their adolescent girls in the project. Girls also mentioned that "the advice and awareness creation changed our life and brought us to the right track. Prior to this awareness, we preferred marriage and bearing children more than going to schools. Now we understand that marriage is possible after education and priority is given to education" (FGD with Girls from El Waye, Borena).

More importantly, participant girls confirmed that the classroom lessons changed their lives more than anything and put their lives on the right track. They said "before we attended school, we were not able to read and write. But now, we can read and understand written materials and take notes" (FGD with Girls from El Waye, Borena).

Participants also noted that community conversations initiated by the CAGs contributed highly towards the successful transitioning of OOS girls to education. They remarked that although there were community conversations before the start of this project, those conversations focused solely on conflict resolution among individuals and between community groups. But, after the formation of the CAG, the agenda of the community conversation has included the education of girls and how to minimize the awareness gap of the community on the importance of girls' education.

Some of the project activities, including the community conversations, school lessons, etc. increased the social interaction of community members and girls in the community. Participants such as Male Caregivers remarked that girls' social life has improved and they are now more confident to communicate and react to family-related issues in the house. In line with this, one participant witnessed that:

> *"In our community, we have one disabled girl who cannot speak and hear. Before the project, she would hide when she saw anyone around the area, including her relatives and other community members. After she was included in this project and got some education, she improved her social skills and gives everyone a greeting through verbal communication."* (FGD with Male Caregivers from El Waye, Borena)

CHANGE project has also provided another relevant activity for girls related to income generation which increases their ability to work creatively following their ability to read and write. This has improved their creative skills and helped them to develop a business mindset and lead to a better future through self-employment. In other words, the income generating activities of the project helped the OOS girls to think creatively and transited into a better world of work.

Another major activity, although not directly related to transition, repeatedly mentioned by participants is the project's awareness creation on hygiene and the distribution of hygiene-keeping materials for the girls. According to the participants, "before the project, we and our girls did not know how to keep our hygiene. Now, after the project, our girls know how to take of their hygiene needs and give us advice on how to take care of ours" (FGD with Female Caregivers from El Waye, Borena).

6.6 To what extent can the project teaching and learning activities be considered sustainable in terms of their likely continuation after the project ends?

Although it is difficult to assess the project sustainability from mainly qualitative resources, there are several clues that support its potential for the sustainability of the teaching and learning activities after the project ends. This is reflected by female caregivers reporting "since we have seen achievement in their learning, we never want them to discontinue their study" (FGD with Female Caregivers from Yirgachefe, Borena).

KII participants including CAGs, Woreda Education officers and Woreda Women, Children and Youth Officers believe that the girls will continue their education after the project ends because they have seen its benefits. The girls who attended school and took part in learning activities of the project became role models and the practical use of education increased their interest to continue in their education. Participants expressed the potential of sustainability as:

> *"Our office has got a lot of feedback from the project about girls' education. For example, before the project, we did so many things to bring girls to the school. But it was impossible because simply creating awareness is not enough to bring change. In addition, having role models is an important thing. That is what makes this project different from activities done by government organizations. In some cases, the community also saw practically how education changes the lives of girls participating in the project. We have a good role model for the education of girls that helps us influence and bring the rest of the girls to school."* (KII with Woreda Women, Children and Youth Officer from El Waye, Borena)

Other participants also explained from the experiences of current beneficiary girls, "the importance of girls' education is accepted in the family. Understanding the education leads to better life when we compared students earlier and present progress in the project. Families of other girls are eager to see changes in the lives of their girls through the generation of income after the completion of the CHANGE project" (FGD with Male Caregivers from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). According to the participants, this practical experience will encourage other girls to continue with their education after the project ends. There are participants in both Gedeo and Borena woredas who also suggested for the education of girls followed by new income-generating life skills to be sustainable after the completion of the CHANGE project, the project should create links with other NGOs that have an interest in similar activities, if there are any.

The interviews with Woreda Education Officers also showed similar result. One of them confirmed that the "local community, government and other offices in the Woreda are responsible to sustain the project in order to teach all concerned body in the community" (KII with Woreda Education Officer from Yirgachefe, Gedeo). His expression of the "concerned body" includes girls. The other education officer reassured the above idea as well as suggested the need for creating a link with other NGOs as:

> *"The critical problem for girls' education was lack of awareness in the community in general and girls in particular. But, now, everyone has awareness about the*

importance of education for girls. So even if the project will complete its mission as an organization, we are ready to do its activities. Secondly, the majority of the community gets a good awareness of the importance of education for their girls and is ready to educate them. Thirdly, the girls themselves are aware of the importance of education for them and ready to learn before anything. In addition to the community as well as the educational office, it is good, if possible, to create a link with other NGOs which have an interest to do on similar activities." (KII with Woreda Education Officer from El Waye, Borena).

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusions

The findings of this impact review showed that COVID-19 created psychological stress on most of the communities in the regions due to dissemination of wrong and exaggerated information (as respondents perceive it) via various media outlets.

Although the COVID-19 restrictions significantly influenced whole education sector due to closed schools, the impact on the project T&L activities was to some extent limited because a strategy of assigning tutors to assist the girls in their education at their own homes was implemented. The project also distributed face masks and sanitizers to protect beneficiary girls and the project staff from contracting the virus.

Additional disruption to the project came from drought in Borena zone. The drought was a major obstacle for the education of beneficiary girls in Borena zone as the situation forced them and their families to migrate to other places in search of water and pasture. The project attempted to mitigate this problem by following these internally displaced girls and provide assistance in their education.

On the other side, respondents from both regions did not mention a conflict or security incidents as an issue that would prevent them from participation on the project activities.

Several lessons were extracted from the findings. The importance of adapting the activities of the project to the situation of the time thereby catering for the needs of the beneficiary girls was highlighted. The project was quick to adapt the protective measures required during the peak of

the COVID pandemic by distributing protective devices and introducing home-to-home educational support. The provision of mobile educational assistance during the displacement of beneficiary girls due to the drought was also swiftly adapted.

The other lesson drawn from the findings is the verification and investigation of the community's critical reason(s) that is stopping the formal education of their daughters. Finding solutions for this problem will make the impact of the project more sustainable. In addition, the project's timely and continuous supervision and follow-up has resulted in the achievement of the project expected outcomes. Also, respondents appreciate that the project combines theoretical approaches such as raising awareness on importance of education with practical skills development – supporting specific marginalized groups and adolescents. This could lead to achievement of a sustainable impact on the education of the girls.

When focusing on transition, the project monitoring (quantitative) data showed that in Yirgachefe woreda, Gedeo zone, from the first cohort of beneficiary girls, 52 girls were enrolled in vocational skills training and in two Self Help Groups (SHGs). In this woreda, the project is in the process of forming groups for income-generating activities. In addition, the qualitative data shows that 200 girls have been transitioned into governmental schools in Gedeo zone.

However, no student was registered in transition activities in El Waye Woreda, Borena zone, during the time of the data collection since they were going to transit at the end of June 2022. Similarly, in this woreda, beneficiary girls are expected to form groups for income-generating activities after they transit to SHGs.

From the sustainability perspective, the majority of respondents expect that the project activities will continue after the project's end because the girls and their caregivers will be able to reap the benefits of education. The presence of role models among the girls who participated in the project and the practicality of the education which girls have attended in the project attracted more girls to enroll and stay in education. This indicates the impact of the project will likely be sustainable after the project ends. However, several participants suggest that for the project activities to be sustainable among the wider community, the project should form links with other NGOs that have similar interests (if there are any).

8.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are suggested:

- First of all, the home visits were necessary at the time of COVID. Hence, we do not suggest to continue with this practice when there is relief from the pandemic. However, in the occasion of a pandemic, our recommendation is to use the single classes in the school or community meeting rooms for one-to-one education support. This should be implemented with careful planning in such a way that appropriate supervision is made and a timetable for multiple facilitators in different classes of the same school is prepared (by keeping all health-related protocols). Hence, only few students will go to school for few hours and each student will be supported by single facilitator as in the home visits but all classes of the school can be used during day time in several shifts.

- PIN and implementing partners to foresee potential upcoming challenges such as drought which can affect the project and devise a feasible means of overcoming them in a timely manner. In light of this, the mobile school, which was previously started in a few cases, shall be strengthened and implemented in all intervention areas at full scale (if such challenges are about to come). PIN and implementing partners shall provide psychological support such as primary counselling during times of stress and severe challenges. This can be done through coordination with the government and other NGOs.

- In Borena zone, implementing partners shall verify the major reason(s) of the community for not sending girls to school so that they can put appropriate measures in place to solve the root cause. Preliminary findings in this assessment showed that one of the major reasons for communities to keep their daughters at home is because girls are needed to provide a lot of labour work such as herding cattle. Solutions for such issues shall be investigated jointly with them through an in-depth analysis of their traditional activities and piloting other techniques which need small number of people and which are not so labour intensive.

- The project activities were delayed, particularly in Borena zone, due to the drought. Therefore, efforts in the coming year will need to be increased or a strategy changed to compensate the lost time due to pandemic and drought, in order to achieve the set objectives.

- Further coordination with government, private and non-government organizations is recommended in all intervention areas so that the project activities can be sustainable.

8. Annex

Annex 1: Quality Assurance

The necessary Quality Assurance systems and procedures will be applied across all aspects of the assignment. The sections below outline in detail the quality assurance mechanisms, from recruitment through to the completion of the final deliverables.

1.1 Recruitment

Qualitative researchers who are experienced in conducting studies of this type in Oromia and SNNPR will be recruited from JaRco's list of researchers who have previously worked in these regions in similar studies in the recent past. These researchers will need to have a proficient level of knowledge of the local languages and meet other key criteria to be recruited such as at least a Masters level qualification in the social sciences and experience in collecting qualitative data.

1.2 Training

Recruited qualitative researchers will receive two days of training. The training workshop will cover all relevant aspects of the research, including background information on the study, ethical and safeguarding principles, COVID-19 mitigation protocols, communication guidelines, logistical and practical information related to field deployment, and the contents of all the tools to be used. Detailed job descriptions will be developed for the researchers based on the requirements of the evaluation activities to depict their day-to-day duties and responsibilities during the fieldwork. These job descriptions will be discussed at length during the training. A field guide will be provided during training for researchers to take with them, providing all the information needed for them to conduct the interviews reliably and professionally.

1.3 Interview Guides

Interview guides will be provided to structure FGDs and KIIs. The guides will include opening, key and closing questions that cover all relevant aspects of the evaluation. Where necessary, probing questions related to key themes and ideas will also be included to help researchers lead more in-depth discussions. Researchers will be encouraged not only to rely on these guides but to also ask relevant follow-up questions to probe the contents of the discussion in greater depth.

1.4 Data Analysis and Reporting

The data from KIIs and FGDs will be sent by researchers to the Evaluation Team Lead at JaRco using 'intelligent verbatim transcription' forms, according to which researchers will omit certain

elements if they add no meaning to the script. A manual thematic analysis method will be applied to analyse the qualitative data and identify common themes including topics, ideas and patterns of meaning. Secondary quantitative data sourced from project monitoring data will be incorporated with findings from qualitative data during compilation of the final report to triangulate and situate findings within the remit of the project and the broader context.

1.5 Ethical Protocols

Significant ethical considerations will be considered during KIIs and FGDs, especially during the data collection from highly marginalised girls. All members of JaRco's team will strictly follow JaRco's Safeguarding and Protection Policy which is also in line with the policies and protocols of PIN, GEC and FCDO.

JaRco has a comprehensive child safeguarding and protection policy for engaging minors as well as vulnerable groups in studies. In addition, all members of the evaluation team will also undergo safeguarding and protection training. This will be part of the training for the qualitative researchers. Strict protocols will be in place during any discussions that directly engage young and vulnerable people, particularly given that these will raise difficult topics such as participants' own marginalisation.

Informed voluntary consent and/or assent will be obtained prior to the start of the interviews. In the case of minors, consent will be obtained from the parent or caregiver and assent will be obtained from the minor. Any refusals to participate by either the parent/caregiver or minor will be upheld. The major guidelines to be followed by the researchers are:

- Seek the permission of an adult caregiver before involving a child in any part of the research.
- Always avoid all physical contact with children.
- Make no inducement to a child, parent or caregiver for a child's participation in any part of the research.
- Respect local cultures regarding child protection.
- Be prepared to break cultural practices and traditions when they are harmful to the physical, emotional, or psychological wellbeing of the child. Abstain where there is ambiguity.
- Report any breaches of the code immediately to JaRco's senior management.

Annex 2

2. Risk and Risk Management Plan

With the significant experience JaRco has in conducting similar studies, a great number of challenges are not anticipated that will unduly delay or deter the assignment. However, JaRco has anticipated few common issues along with the mitigations and strategies that will help manage the challenges as per the perceived level of risk.

Table 3: Risk and risk mitigation plan

CHALLENGE	RISK LEVEL	MITIGATION STRATEGY TO MANAGE CHALLENGE
Lack of clarity on data collection and data presentation	**Low**	Lack of clarity on data collection and data presentation can result in getting incomplete or useless data. JaRco is very experienced with designing and implementing accurate training and developing a quality and timely control procedure. In addition to setting a periodic review of personnel performance and regular feedback mechanisms, JaRco will ensure this risk stays minimal.
Refusal to answer or actively take participate in interviews	Low	When researching sensitive issues such as cultural barriers to girls' education, it is not uncommon to encounter resistance or mistrust from respondents. JaRco will ensure that this is not due to a lack of information or confidence in the project's researchers by setting an appropriate strategy to approach the different groups of respondents. This strategy will draw on our institutional and researchers' experience conducting studies with young girls, their parents, and community leaders around Ethiopia.
Health Risks relating to COVID-19 and movement restriction	Medium	While COVID-19 remains an active public health threat, JaRco has developed a comprehensive COVID-19 safety protocol (Annex 3) that adheres to government restrictions on the movement and gathering of people and aims to protect field research staff as well as participating communities. With the procurement of appropriate

		personal protection equipment and measures in place, the risk for infection is minimised. Section 8 details theCOVID-19 protocols to be followed during field data collection.
Security	**High**	The security situation is changing rapidly. Certain areas of Oromia, Amhara and Afar may experience insecurity during this research, as well as other areas including SNNPR. Security issues might prevent travel to specific regions at inconvenient times, which may result in delay to the scheduled timeline. While these events are not within our control, there are several strategies we will adopt to mitigate these risks. Firstly, JaRco will keep up to date with regards to national security issues and regional conflicts, using its regional networks and contacts. Secondly, JaRco will develop plans for alternative timeline scenarios and travel. Thanks to our in-house vehicle procurement, we have the capability and flexibility to rapidly change travel plans as needed. Thirdly, JaRco will develop security protocol and train all field staff. If travel to research areas is not feasible, a decision on alternative options will be made jointly with PIN as soon as possible.

Annex 3

3. COVID-19 mitigation plan

The following major COVID-19 risk mitigation plans will be implemented during field work for the data collection of the evaluation:

Table 4: COVID-19 mitigation plan

Activities that may generate risk	Action to be taken to mitigate risk	Responsible personnel	Frequency
Evaluation team while on the road – travel to and from project locations/ enumeration areas	- All evaluation team members will be provided transportation by JaRco to and from enumeration areas. - The number of people in a vehicle will not exceed the licensed number of passenger-carrying capacity. - Prior to boarding the vehicles, the vehicle door handles will be disinfected with an alcohol-based disinfectant by the responsible drivers who are equipped with personal protective equipment. - Researchers will only be allowed to board vehicles if they are properly masked, and hands are sanitized. - Vehicle windows will be kept open to allow adequate ventilation during travel. - Upon return from the project site at the end of day, the responsible driver will clean and sanitize the vehicle. - Researchers will be advised to avoid going to crowded places.	Evaluation Team, all researchers and Driver	Daily routine

Activities that may generate risk	Action to be taken to mitigate risk	Responsible personnel	Frequency
During interviews- Researchers	- Researchers will avoid handshake or other forms of greetings that involve physical touch. - Face masks will be worn throughout the interview process - Interviews will be held in open or wide spaces to increase air circulation - 2 meters distance (two arm lengths) between the interviewee and interviewer will be kept. - Group discussions will be kept to eight people (and the interviewer) with appropriate distances between all participants.	All researchers	Daily routine
During interviews- study participants	- Study participants will be asked to cover their nose and mouth with mask (JaRco will provide masks). - Hand sanitizers will be available onsite for participants to be used before interview. - If needed, participants will be asked to sneeze and cough into their elbow.	All researchers	Daily routine

Annex 4

4. Data Collection Tools

Girls Education Challenge (GEC): CHANGE – Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project First Cohort Impact Review
Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide for GIRLS aged 10-14 & 15-19

1.Region: _____ Zone:_____ Woreda: _____

Kebele: _____ Village/Goth:_____

2.Date: _____Time Start: _____ Time Ended: _____

3. Total Number of participants: _____

4. Informed consent obtained? Circle one: yes   no

5.Interviewer Name: _____

Please list the names of the FGD participants with their age and education level

	Anonymized Name	Age	Have participants been to school? (Y/N) If Y – grade reached – If 'No', write N	Date girls started in project (specify E.C. or G.C.)	Current status in project (e.g. IFAL, ABE, SHG…)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

Introduction

Hello everyone, my name is [name] and I will be facilitating this discussion. Thank you very much for taking the time to be here today. I am here on behalf of a research program which is aiming at improving girls' education in many countries around the world. The main topic of our discussion for today is your participation and gain from the CHANGE project. We are interested in finding out the benefits you got and the challenges you faced in the project with your recommendation of what should be done differently for the remainder of the project. This information will be anonymized and will be treated as confidential. If at any point you do not want to continue participating in this discussion, you are free to leave the group and we will no longer be asking you any more questions. The information discussed today will help us to understand what can be done to improve girls' education in Borena/Gedeo.

Assent/Consent for participating and Recording

We will be audio recording this discussion. Even though we will be taking notes, we will not be able to write everything down and want to be able to go back and listen to any information we might have missed. All notes and the recording will be kept safely and securely. Is everyone okay with recording this conversation? [*Confirm that all participants consent before starting discussion*]

Discussion procedure to follow

During our discussion we kindly ask you to take turns while speaking and by no means interrupt anyone. We are interested in what all of you have to say, so please be respectful of each other's opinions.

Before we begin, does anyone have any question?

Opening Questions
1. Were there any interruptions to your participation in the project?
   Probe: Covid-19, flooding, drought, conflict… Was this because the project had stopped having sessions or because your circumstances didn't allow you to go? (i.e. were sessions still running that you did not attend or did you not attend the project because sessions had stopped?)

Key Questions: Project teaching- learning

2. Let us talk about classes in CHANGE project. How would you describe the level of knowledge girls managed to get out of them in general?
   Probe: what new skills were you taught? Were lessons too easy or too difficult? Would you say participation in the project would change girls' life for good? If so, in what way? If not, why not?

3. Let us now talk about teachers in the project. Do girls have favorite teachers? What qualities do these favorite teachers have?
   Probe: have you experienced teachers' repeated absence from class? What about teachers' treatment? How would you describe them? **Probe:**[as friendly? Fatherly, motherly? Authoritative? Rigid?] How would you describe your teachers' ways of teaching? **Probe**: [interesting? Participatory? Boring? Unclear?] What makes you label their classes as such?

4. How would you describe the relevance of what you learned in CHANGE project for what most girls want to do or become in the future?

5. What are the common challenges girls faced during participation in the project?
   Probe: frequent absence from class due to issues at home? Unfriendly teaching environment? Lack of assistive devices? Loss of interest for learning?

6. What do you think could be changed in the project so that it is more helpful for other girls in the future?

Key Questions: Girls' transition pathway

7. Let us talk about girls' clubs? Are there girls' clubs? What are the common activities carried out in these clubs? How would you describe the importance of participating in such clubs?

8. Of all the different activities girls took part in the project, which ones would you say helped them the most? And in what way have these activities helped them?

   Probe: which activities helped you achieve or put you on the right track to achieve your goals in life?

Key Questions: Project sustainability

1. How would you describe most family's level of support on what girls are doing in the project? How do you describe their level of acceptance on girls' journey to a better life through education in comparison to their perception before the project?

2. How would you describe the project's effort on creating positive atmosphere in the community to help girls like yourself lead a better life through education?

   Probe: what particular activities have you witnessed[meetings, rallies, campaigns]

3. How would you label the community's attitude on educating girls at present in comparison to what it was previously? Any change attained because of the project?

4. What do you think should be done at family and community level to continue helping girls to go to or stay in schools, or learn new income generating and life skills after the completion of the CHANGE project?

Key Questions: Girls with disability

5. How are girls with disabilities treated in the project?

Probe: special classes? Provided with assistive devices? Learning facilities fulfilled?

6. What are the major challenges girls with disabilities faced in the project?
7. What do you think should be done differently in the project to make sure girls with disabilities benefit better from such initiatives?

Key questions: Covid-19 and instable security issues impact

8. How seriously has Covid-19 impacted the overall livelihood of the society here?

Probe: have there been high number of cases and deaths? Were schools closed? Social lives distorted?

9. How has Covid-19 impacted girls' participation in the project particularly?

Probe: Were classes closed? Were there girls told not to attend class or not go to school at all in fear of the virus? Were there girls personally stressed about the situation?

10. How would you describe your environment's security status especially after the start of this project? Have there been any security-related incidents around here? If yes, please tell us about these incidents.

Probe: if security issues are mentioned, please ask how that has impacted their education in project and overall livelihood.

11. What changed in project activities due to covid-19? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment to the situations was effective?

Probe: if not mentioned, ask about remote learning. The challenges they faced and the successes they attained.

12. What changed in project activities due to security issues? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment to the situations was effective?
13. What could be done differently in the future to deal with such incidents effectively and continue project activities?

Closing Question

14. What would you say have happened in girls' lives because of their involvement in the project that could have not happened if they were not in this project?
15. How has the project changed girls' lives?
16. Overall, what do you think could be done better in the project to help you and other girls like you live a better life?

------------------------ *End of discussion guide* --------------------------

Girls Education Challenge (GEC): CHANGE – Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project First Cohort Impact Review
Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide for PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

1.Region: _____ Zone:_____ Woreda: _____

Kebele: _____ Village/Goth:_____

2.Date: _____ Time Start: _____ Time Ended: _____

3. Total Number of participants: _____

4. Informed consent obtained? Circle one: yes   no

5.Interviewer Name: _____

Please list the names of the FGD participants with their age, relationship with represented girl and education level

	Anonymized Name	Age	Relationship with represented girl [mother, father, relative...]	Length of time girl has been in project
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				

Introduction

Hello everyone, my name is [*name*] and I will be facilitating this discussion. Thank you very much for taking the time to be here today. I am here on behalf of a research program which is aiming at improving girls' education in many countries around the world. The main topic of our discussion for today is your girls' participation and gain from the CHANGE project. We are interested in finding out the benefits you believe your girls got and the challenges they faced in the project with your recommendation of what should be done differently for the remainder of the project. This information will be anonymized and will be treated as confidential. If at any point you do not want to continue participating in this discussion, you are free to leave the group and we will no longer be asking you any more questions. The information discussed today will help us to understand what can be done to improve girls' education in Borena/Gedeo.

Assent/Consent for the participation and recording

We will be audio recording this discussion. Even though we will be taking notes, we will not be able to write everything down and want to be able to go back and listen to any information we might have missed. All notes and the recording will be kept safely and securely. Is everyone okay with recording this conversation? [*Confirm that all participants consent before starting discussion*]

Discussion procedure to follow

During our discussion we kindly ask you to take turns while speaking and by no means interrupt anyone. We are interested in what all of you have to say, so please be respectful of each other's opinions.

Before we begin, does anyone have any question?

Opening Questions

1. In your opinion, what is the main reason that one should have education?

2. How would you say education will help [Girl] lead a better life in the future? In your opinion, would anyone lead a better life without education?

3. To what extent do you think Primary Caregivers or employers of girls been involved in the project? How much do you know about [girl's] participation in the project? What challenges do girls face?" How would you describe the benefits of this project to girl(s) in general?

 Probe: if not mentioned, ask, how supportive do you thing are parents, PCGs, or employers of the project?

Key Questions: project impact on girl

4. How do you believe the project helps improve girls' lives?

    Probe: what differences have you observed on girl – literacy/ numeracy/ less or more confidence/ social skills/ life skills/ new ideas

5. What skills do you think is more relevant for girls to learn from projects like CHANGE that would help them lead a better life in their context?

Key Questions: Sustainability- Family support

6. How openly do you think families around here discuss about [girl's] education and related issues?

7. How would you describe families' level of support on what girls are doing in the project? How do you describe families' level of acceptance on girls' journey to a better life through education in comparison to their perception before the project?

8. How much time do you think girls spend on domestic chores in comparison to the amount of time they spend studying?

9. To what extent do you believe that families have a role in improving girls' lives? What would be the simplest activities they can do at home to help girls?

10. What do you think will happen to girl when she completes her engagement in the project? What would be the next steps for her?

Key Questions: Sustainability - Community Conversation & Support Services

11. What kind of community conversations do usually take place in this community? Who organizes these conversations?

Probe: if not mentioned, ask, since when any of the mentioned activities started taking place in the community if there are any.

12. What are the major agendas often discussed in these conversations?

13. How active are women in these community conversations and what do you think are the major reasons for less participation of women in such conversations if there is any?

14. How often has girls' education agenda been officially raised in your community conversations?

15. Have you ever witnessed any practice on promoting or mobilizing the community towards educating their girls in your community? If yes, who has been doing that and what are the major activities carried out?

16. How would you describe the level of community perception on educating girls with disability?

17. What do you think should be done at family and community level to continue helping girls go to or stay in schools, or learn new income generating and life skills after the completion of the CHANGE project?

Key Questions: Covid-19 and instable security issues impact

18. How seriously has Covid-19 impacted the overall livelihood of the society here?

Probe: have there been high number of cases and deaths? Were schools closed? Social lives distorted? People lost jobs. Living got expensive?

19. How has Covid-19 in particular impacted PCG's' or employers' lives in this community?

Probe: did they have to lose their job? Did their social life weaken? Were they personally stressed about the situation?

20. How would you describe your environment's security status? Have there been any security-related incidents around here? If yes, please tell us about these incidents.

Probe: if security issues are mentioned, please ask how that has impacted theirs and girls' lives.

21. What changed in project activities due to covid-19 or security issues? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment to the situations was effective?

Probe: if not mentioned, ask about remote learning. The challenges they faced and the successes they attained.

22. What could be done differently in the future to deal with such incidents effectively and continue project activities?

Closing Question

23. What would you say have happened in girls lives because of their involvement in the project that could have not happened if they were not in this project?
24. Overall, what do you think could be done differently in the project to help girls lead a better life?

Girls Education Challenge (GEC): CHANGE – Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project First Cohort Impact Review
Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for Project Facilitators/Teachers

1.Region: _____ Zone:_____ Woreda: _____

Kebele: _____ Village/Goth:_____

2.Date: _____Time Start: _____ Time Ended: _____

3. Name of KII respondent: _____ Job position: _____

4. Informed consent obtained? Circle one: yes   no

5.Interviewer Name: _____

[INTERVIEWER: Introduce yourself & explain the purpose & importance of the evaluation.]

Opening Questions

1. Are you originally from this community? If not, how long have you lived here for?
2. Can you tell me a bit about your position in the project and for how long you have been working in that position?
3. What were you doing before working in the project?
4. Did you receive any training in order to start working in the project? What did it consist of? How helpful do you think this training was? Are there any other aspects of training that were not covered that you think would have helped you to better carry out your current role?
5. What are the major activities that have been carried out with the first Cohort of beneficiary girls?

Key Questions: Project teaching- learning

1. Could you describe your understanding of the CHANGE project – what is it and what does it aim to do, overall?
2. How relevant do you think the teaching sessions are in terms of helping CHANGE to achieve its overall aim?
3. How are lessons set up and what content is delivered in different classes? How was this decided? Do you think there could be any improvements to the set-up of classes that would help girls to attend class or learn in a better way?
4. What is the objective of the project teaching? And how would you describe your and your fellow colleagues' pedagogical skills in teaching the girls?

Teaching outcome	Performance assessment	Context	Student-teacher relationship	Challenges
Content-wise: what are the desired student outcomes? **Skill-wise:** what are the desired student outcomes?	How have you been assessing students' performance?	How would you describe the feasibility of teaching contents with regard to available resources and facilities? **Probe:** textbooks, logistical issues, any alternative mechanisms to cope with such issues?	How do you motivate students? How would you describe your relationship with students?	What challenges have you encountered so far? What have been done to alleviate challenges?

5. What basic skills would you say girls have learned from the project that will help them lead a better life in the future? Give example that would be sited as a role model. If not, why not?
6. How would you describe the level and effectiveness of effort put forward by the project to create conducive learning environment for girls living with disabilities?
7. In your opinion, what do you think could be done differently to register better results in the project's teaching and learning program in the future?

Key Questions: Girls' transition pathway

8. How relevant or attainable do you think it is for project beneficiary girls to transition to formal schools, TVET colleges, and/or SHGs[2]?
9. Let us talk about SHGs? What are the common activities carried out in these groups? How would you describe how girls are benefiting out of them?
10. Of all the different activities girls take part in the project, which ones would you say help them the most? And in what way do you believe these activities help them?

    Probe: which activities would help girls achieve or put them on the right track to achieve their goals in life?

11. What do you think could be done differently for the next time?

Key Questions: Project sustainability

12. In your opinion, how would you explain the sustainability of project activities once project is completed?

    Probe: if not mentioned, ask, has there been anything done with relevant stakeholders such community leaders, government offices, or families to sustain project activities?

13. What do you think should be done to further ensure project sustainability?

Key Questions: Community conversations & existing initiatives

6. What sort of community conversations take place in this woreda? Who organizes these conversations? How often do they happen?

---

[2] Self Help Groups (SHGs)

7. How active is the community in such conversations? Are there some people that tend not to go community conversations? Why?
    Probe: richer/poorer, younger/older, men/women, people with disabilities, migrants… If these people were to go, what might the other attendees think?
8. How often are girls' education issues are covered in community conversations? What is talked about in particular? Is it a priority or are there topics that are discussed more often?
14. Generally speaking, what, if anything, is currently being done by the project and/or other relevant entities to make it easier for girls to access education and lead a better life in the future?

    Probe: if not mentioned, ask, who are the main individuals or groups involved, have efforts increased or decreased over the past years, have these things made a difference

Key Questions: Covid-19 and instable security issues impact

15. How seriously has Covid-19 impacted the community here in general and project's implementation in particular?

    Probe: have there been high number of cases and deaths? Were project classes closed? Social lives distorted? People lost jobs. Living got expensive?

16. What changed in project activities due to covid-19? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment was effective?
17. How would you describe your environment's security status? Have there been any security-related incidents around here? If yes, please tell us more.

    Probe: if security issues are mentioned, please ask how that has impacted the project's implementation.

18. What changed in project activities due to the security issues? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment was effective?
19. What could be done differently in the future to deal with such incidents effectively and continue project activities?

Closing Questions

20. Overall, how impactful do you think has the project been in providing support to improve lives of adolescent girls?
21. What could be done differently in the project to attain better achievements for the remainder of the project?
22. Please tell us if there is anything relevant you would like to talk about before we end this interview. Would you say there are critical and concerning issues in girls' education that are often overlooked?

Girls Education Challenge (GEC): CHANGE – Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project First Cohort Impact Review
Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for CAG[3] members

1.Region: _____Zone:_____ Woreda: _____

Kebele: _____ Village/Goth:_____

2.Date: _____Time Start: _____ Time Ended: _____

3. Name of KII respondent: _____   Position in the society: _____

4. Informed consent obtained? Circle one: yes   no

5.Interviewer Name: _____

[INTERVIEWER: Introduce yourself & explain the purpose & importance of the evaluation.]

Opening Questions

1. Can you tell us a bit about your involvement in the community? What do you do? And how close are you with the community?

    (**Probe**: if not mentioned, ask, which part of the community do you communicate the most, what are your responsibilities)

2. What do you think is the benefit of education especially for girls?
3. How would you say education will help [Girl] lead a better life in the future? In your opinion, would anyone lead a better life without education?

Key Questions: About Project

4. What do you know about the CHANGE project? What major activities are carried out in this project? Please explain if you had/have any involvement in the CHANGE project? What did/do you do?
    [*if respondent is not aware of the project, please proceed to the next question*]
5. How would you describe the level and effectiveness of effort put forward by the project to create positive attitude on girls' education within the community compared to before the project start?
6. How engaged are you/ is your organization in girls' education issues?
7. In your opinion, how would you explain the sustainability of such project activities once project is completed?
    Probe: if not mentioned, ask what they think should be done to ensure project sustainability

Key Questions: Community attitude on girls' education

---

[3] Community Action Group (CAG)

8. How would you describe the community's attitude towards educating girls compared to before the project start? How would you describe the community's perception on the importance of education in general?
9. How aware is the community about the importance of education for girls over getting married and bearing children compared to before the project start?
10. Which particular group of people would you say are somehow against the idea of educating girls? What do you think is their rationale behind the opposition?
11. In your opinion, what do you think have been done to positively impact the attitude of the society's attitude on education?

Key Questions: Community conversations & existing initiatives

12. What sort of community conversations take place in this woreda compared to before the project start?
13. How active is the community in such conversations compared to before the project start?
14. To what extent would you say girls' education issues are covered in community conversations compared to before the project start?
15. Generally speaking, what, if anything, is currently being done by the project and/or other stakeholders to make it easier for girls to access education and lead a better life in the future?

   Probe: if not mentioned, ask, who are the main individuals or groups involved, have efforts increased or decreased over the past years, have these things made a difference

Key Questions: Covid-19 and instable security issues impact

16. How seriously has Covid-19 impacted the overall livelihood of the society here?

   Probe: have there been high number of cases and deaths? Were schools closed? Social lives distorted? People lost **jobs.** Living got expensive?

17. How has Covid-19 particular**l**y impacted girls' lives?
18. How would you describe your environment's security situation? Have there been any security-related incidents around here? If yes, please tell us more.

   Probe: if security issues are mentioned, please ask how that has impacted theirs and girls' lives.

19. What changed in project activities due to covid-19 or security issues? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment to the situations was effective?

   *[if not **aware of specific project activities, please proceed to the next question]***

20. What could be done differently in the future to deal with such incidents effectively and continue project activities?

Closing Question

21. Overall, how impactful do you believe has the project been in providing support to improve lives of adolescent girls in your woreda?
22. What could be done differently in the project to attain better achievements for the remaining period?
23. Please tell us if there is anything relevant you would like to talk about before we end this interview. Would you say there are critical and concerning issues in girls' education that are often overlooked?

Girls Education Challenge (GEC): CHANGE – Improving Access to Education in Ethiopia for Most Marginalized Girls Project First Cohort Impact Review

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for Woreda Education and Women, Children & Youth Officials

1. Region: _____ Zone:_____ Woreda: _____

Kebele: _____ Village/Goth:_____

2. Date: _____Time Start: _____ Time Ended: _____

3. Name of KII respondent: _____ Job position: _____

4. Informed consent obtained? Circle one: yes   no

5. Interviewer Name: _____

[INTERVIEWER: Introduce yourself & explain the purpose & importance of the evaluation.]

Opening Questions

1. Can you tell me a bit about your position in your organization and for how long you have been working in that position?

   Probe: if not mentioned, ask, what are the main mission your office works on, which part of the community do you work with the most, what are your responsibilities

2. What is life like in this community? How do most people earn an income? What are the main challenges people face in leading their lives? Are there many NGO or Governmental activities in the area in general – if so, what kind of activities do they carry out and who is targeted?

3. What do you know about the CHANGE project? What major activities are carried out in this project?

   Probe: if not mentioned, ask if the officer is aware of similar other projects in the area. If there have been, what were the best things and challenges of these projects? what lessons could be learned from these projects?

Key Questions: Project initiatives

4. How would you describe the importance of implementing projects like CHANGE in this woreda? What do you think are the major benefits to girls in particular and the society in general?

5. How involved is your office with the project? What are the major activities that your office has taken part in with the project?

6. How relevant or attainable do you think it is for project beneficiary girls to transition to formal schools, TVET colleges, or SHGs[4]?

7. How would you describe the level of effort put forward by the project to create conducive learning environment for girls?

---

[4] Self Help Groups (SHGs)

Probe: if not mentioned, ask how girls with disabilities are particularly prioritized in the activities of the project.

8. How would you describe the effectiveness of effort put forward by the project to create conducive learning environment for girls?
9. In your opinion, how would you explain the sustainability of such project activities once project is completed?

   Probe: if not mentioned, ask, has there been anything done with your office or amongst the community to sustain project activities? what they think should be done to ensure project sustainability

---

Key Questions: Community attitude on girls' education

10. How would you say education will help [Girl] lead a better life in the future? In your opinion, would anyone lead a better life without education?
11. How would you describe the community's attitude towards educating girls? How would you describe the community's perception on the importance of education in general?
12. How aware is the community about the importance of education for girls over getting married and bearing children?
13. Which particular group of people would you say are somehow against the idea of educating girls? What do you think is their rationale behind the opposition?
14. In your opinion, what do you think should be done to positively impact the attitude of the society's attitude on education?

Key Questions: Community conversations & existing initiatives

15. What sort of community conversations take place in this woreda? Who organizes these conversations? How often do they happen?
16. How active is the community in such conversations? Are there some people that tend not to go community conversations? Why? Probe: richer/poorer, younger/older, men/women, people with disabilities, migrants… If these people were to go, what might the other attendees think?
17. To what extent would you say girls' education issues are covered in community conversations? Is it a priority or are there topics that are discussed more often? What other topics are covered more than girls' education in community conversations?
18. Generally speaking, what, if anything, is currently being done by the project and/or your office to make it easier for girls to access education and lead a better life in the future?

   Probe: if not mentioned, ask, who are the main individuals or groups involved, have efforts increased or decreased over the past years, have these things made a difference

---

Key Questions: Covid-19 and instable security issues impact

19. How seriously has Covid-19 impacted the overall livelihood of the society here?

   Probe: have there been high number of cases and deaths? Were schools closed? Social lives distorted? People lost jobs. Living got expensive?

20. How has Covid-19 particularly impacted girls' lives?

21. How would you describe your environment's security status? Have there been any security-related incidents around here? If yes, please tell us more.

   Probe: if security issues are mentioned, please ask how that has impacted theirs and girls' lives.

22. What changed in project activities due to covid-19 or security issues? To what extent would you say the project's adjustment to the situations was effective?

   *[if not **aware of specific project activities, please proceed to the next question]***

23. What could be done differently in the future to deal with such incidents effectively and continue project activities?

Closing Question

24. Overall, how impactful do you believe has the project been in providing support to improve lives of adolescent girls in your woreda?
25. What could be done differently in the project to attain better achievements for the remaining period?
26. Please tell us if there is anything relevant you would like to talk about before we end this interview. Would you say there are critical and concerning issues in girls' education that are often overlooked?