Project Evaluation Report

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Notes:

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Girls' Education Challenge

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External Evaluation of Aarambha Project

Baseline evaluation report

Foundation for Development Management (FDM)

A MOOS girl studying in CLC with her child (Photo courtesy: Abijit Sharma)

April 2020

Acknowledgments

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Foundation for Development Management (FDM)

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List of Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organization
CLC	Community Learning Center
CHV	Community Health Volunteer
DEO	District Education Office
EE	External Evaluator
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematical Assessment
FDM	Foundation for Development Management
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FL	Financial Literacy
FLT	Financial Literacy Training
FP	Family Planning
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GEC	Girls Education Challenge
GoN	Government of Nepal
GSE	General Self Efficacy
IO	Intermediate Outcome
IS	In-School
KII	Key Informant Interview
KAP	Knowledge Attitude Practice
LNGB	Leave No Girl Behind
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
M-OOS	Married Out Of School
NDHS	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
WPM	Words per Minute/Average reading speed

Executive summary

Aarambha is a project funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) flagship Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) programme's Leave No Girls Behind (LNGB) window. The project aims to mitigate the risk of early marriage, pregnancy and child birth among young girls, in order to uplift their social status and help them lead healthy, safe and, educated lives in two districts of province-2, namely Bara, and Rautahat. PIN Nepal, therefore, aims to work with 8,500 married out of school adolescent girls, 17,000 of their family members, 4,000 in-school girls and 4,000 in-school boys, 400 newly elected local government officials and community/religious leaders.

The evaluation for this project undertook a quasi-experimental approach, with a stepped-wedge randomised trial that involved sequential crossover of groups from comparison to intervention conditions. The project will track Married Out Of School (M-OOS) adolescent girls in treatment and comparison groups across each evaluation points of data collection – baseline, and endline each year. Furthermore, the project will track girls based on two intervention pathways i.e. Learning and Transition. The baseline evaluation used a mixed method approach comprising both quantitative and qualitative method for data collection. The quantitative survey comprised of household survey (400 in each cohort), and girls' survey including EGRA and EGMA (400 in each cohort), while the qualitative data collection comprised of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interview (KII) with various stakeholders.

Based on the distribution of households by ethnicity, majority of the sample M-OOS girls from both treatment and comparison were Muslim. In case of treatment group, 87.2 % girls belonging to (10-14) age group in treatment were Muslim, while it was 40.4% for age group (15-19). Data depicted that agriculture was the main source of income for most of the girls. 55.1% and 57.1% of the household for the age group (10-14) and (15-19) respectively relied on agriculture. The second most mentioned source of income was daily labour. This was true across both the age group (10-14) and (15-19) for treatment.

In terms of language, M-OOS girls who speak Bhojpuri language was the highest for treatment group within the age group (15-19). For the age group (10-14), Bajika was the most used language (66.7%). For the comparison group, M-OOS girls within the age group (10-14) share the same percentage 50% for both Bhojpuri and Bajika language. However, for the age group (15-19) 64.9% speak Bhojpuri language and 35.1% speak Bajika.

The baseline evaluation showed poverty, restricted mobility, and household chores as key barriers to M-OOS girls' learning. For girls living in poor household, data depicted that treatment group had poorer household population than the comparison group. For treatment group, more than half (51.3%) of M-OOS girls aged between (10-14) lived in a poor household whereas for age group (15-19) 34.5% lived in a poor household. In terms of comparison group 44.4% and 34.6% aged (10-14) and (15-19) respectively lived in a poor household.

Restricted mobility came up as one of the key barriers during the baseline study. While quantitative data did not clearly show this, qualitative data strongly pointed out girls' mobility was highly restricted. The main reason for this was safety. While quantitative data suggested that only 2.6%of the M-OOS girls between the age group (10-14), and 7.1% between the age group (15-19) thought that going to school was unsafe for girls, qualitative findings provided a contradictory view suggesting that parents felt unsafe when girls went outside.

Responsibility of performing household chores was another barrier identified by the study. Data suggested that girls from treatment spent more hours doing household chores than the girls from comparison group. Moreover, for the treatment group, 74.4% of the M-OOS girls from age group (10-14) had to contribute to the household chores most of the days than M-OOS girls between the age (15-19) with 56.2%. However, for the comparison group, 54.2% of the M-OOS girls between the age group (10-14) performed more household chores compared to M-OOS girls of age (14-19) at 44.4%. This barrier stemmed from the prevailing cultural norm which expected girls to perform much of the household chores. Moreover, apart from the key identified barriers, early marriage and Gauna (married and waiting for gauna girls are the projects' beneficiaries) are also barriers which restricted girls from many life opportunities.

The overall performance of girls in terms of learning was that they scored better in EGMA than in EGRA. The EGRA score suggested that reading skill of girls was weak. Girls aged (10-14) only scored 12% and girls aged (15-19) scored 18% in the reading task of EGRA. The ethnicity disaggregation for EGRA scores show that Terai Madhesi Brahmin and Chhetri were found to be doing well in EGRA. The mean score for EGRA was the lowest for Muslim. The significance test showed that the differences in the mean EGRA score between various ethnic groups was statistically significant whereas no significant difference existed between ethnicity for the EGMA score.

There was an inverse correlation between household chores and learning. This directly points to the fact that girls' learning is affected due to their obligation to perform household chores. Another characteristic that was cross-tabulated with the learning score was the poverty level of the girls' household to see if girls coming from poor families were more educationally marginalised than the other girls. The baseline findings did not find any relationship between the economic condition of a family and their girls' learning performance.

The baseline data depicted that the value of transition was 0 because no M-OOS girls have yet transitioned into their respective pathways. Transition pathways were different for different subgroups. Overall girls were seen more fascinated by the idea of learning tailoring skill. Almost all the girls between the age group (15-19) showed no interest in enrolling into formal education. They mentioned that enrolling in school was time consuming and they had no time to invest. However, for girls between age group (10-14), they did not have a clear idea on what they wanted. Handful of girls mentioned they wanted to re-join formal provided that their parents or their would-be in-laws/ husband allow them to do so. Some of the girls mentioned tailoring, however, they did not know if they would be able to initiate their own business. Moreover, Muslim girls did not want to enrol in formal education but rather wanted to be

literate enough to understand Nepali scriptures so that they could read signboards or other papers.

Household decision making index captured information on M-OOS girl's decision-making capacity. For both the cohorts across the age group (10-14), majority -56.4% treatment, and 61.1% comparison- M-OOS girls fell under 'Poor HDM capacity' category while for the age group (15-19), 34.5% from treatment group and 37.4% from comparison group fell under 'Moderate HDM capacity' category. Although most of the girls said that they had moderate decision-making capacity, the qualitative finding contradicted this information. Qualitative findings suggested that the girls did not have final decision-making power at all. Decision making rested mostly on men's hand, particularly the father-in-law or the husband of the M-OOS girls.

Life skill index had three major domains, attitude, knowledge and practice. These three domains were based on the project's intervention that included financial literacy, family planning, and self-efficacy. The overall life skill score showed that M-OOS girls across all age groups in both the cohorts scored less than 70%. None of the girls fell in the range of having more than 70% knowledge. This indicated that knowledge, attitude, and practice of M-OOS girls across three domains financial literacy, family planning and general self-efficacy were weak because it was less than 70%.

By the end of the project, PIN aims to foster positive social norms among parents and community members to encourage delayed marriage and allow M-OOS girls pursue her life plans. In terms of delayed marriage, qualitative finding suggested that people were aware about the legal age of marriage. However, parents still married their daughters off at a young age due to societal pressure.

Recommendations were also provided around project planning and implementation. In light of FDM's field experience, it has been suggested that PIN should plan a robust intervention for creating awareness among the families of M-OOS girls to mitigate issues like deep rooted social norms, domestic violence, and importance of girls' freedom.

1. Background to project

1.1 Project context[1]

Province 2, one of the seven provinces of Nepal, is home to a mix of different ethnic groups – most notably Madhesis, a category of Hindu ethnic and linguistic groups historically distinct from the Gangetic plain and Pahadis from Nepal's hill region. Maithili and Bhojpuri are the most spoken languages in this region, with some other ethnic minorities speaking their dialect such as Bajjika, Tharu and Urdu in some parts. The area has the highest rates of illiteracy (41%) in the country, with the highest proportion of females who have never attended school (58.7% of females compared to 32% of males). Adolescent girls in the region face several barriers on the individual, community, and systemic levels in their access to education stemming from their low social status, which lowers their agency, access to information and services, and self-value. The recent Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2016 showed that the province's net attendance ratio for female adolescents in secondary level is the lowest of all provinces (42%), due to high school dropout rates. Consequently, these lead to lower levels of numeracy and literacy among adolescent girls.

Child marriage in Nepal is considered a void marriage, which is a criminal offense punishable under the National Penal Code, 2017. The legal age of marriage is 20 years for both of the parties to the marriage. There is a provision of imprisonment up to three years and fine up to thirty thousand rupees for the persons committing the offence relating to child marriage. Similarly, the marriage concluded without the consent of the persons getting married is also regarded as a void marriage. If anyone ends or causes to end a marriage without the permission of the concerned parties getting married, the person is liable to sentence of imprisonment and fine. The low reporting of child marriage cases is not new to the areas where these practices exist in the form of commonly accepted custom and culture.

Despite the existing legal framework, marriage before 20 years is much prevalent in Province 2. Early marriage is one of the significant factors leading to higher dropout rates among adolescent girls in the Province. The NDHS 2016 survey also showed that the adolescent marriage rate in Province 2 is 23%, while 18% of girls aged 15-19 had already begun childbearing, both being the highest of all provinces. In Nepal, early marriage/pregnancies were found to have the highest percentage linkage (32%) to early drop out among girls aged (12-17). Early marriage is, therefore, closely matched and linked to the rates of early dropout, low attendance, and illiteracy for girls. The M-OOS adolescent girls in the region also have a significant age difference between their spouses, which lowers their bargaining power with their husbands, in-laws, and acts as a barrier to their fulfilment of life plans and education. In fact, 42.2% of girls in Terai between the age of 15-19 have husbands who are five or more years older than them. This is the second-highest among all the sub-regions.

[1] The project background is extracted from PIN's MEL framework

Rautahat and Bara districts are two of the least performing districts within Province 2 in terms of development indicators, especially relating to girls' education and life outcomes. For instance, both districts are ranked in the bottom (red-zones) in the Equity Index 2018. The Equity Index uses core dimensions of inequity and ranks the districts based on three educational outcomes: access, participation, and learning. Bara, which has some of its municipalities bordered with India in the South, presents with unique socio-economic and cultural practices. For instance, cross-border marriages are quite prevalent in Devtal Rural Municipality, which borders India, especially among Dom and Muslim communities. The findings from the formative research conducted by PIN Nepal in 2019 also strongly highlighted the social acceptance of early marriages and other harmful social practices, such as the dowry system in these districts contributing early dropouts of adolescents from schools. Furthermore, the presence of law enforcement agencies was low, and almost zero action was taken towards controlling such acts in research areas. The project thus carefully considers the significant issues identified during context and marginalization analyses while planning and implementing its interventions.

1.2 Target Beneficiary Group

The project's direct beneficiaries include married out-of-school adolescent (10-19 years) girls of Province 2. Based on the project's marginalization framework, the following inclusion criteria were used to select the primary beneficiaries:

- Age: 10-19 years
- Marital Status: married or in a union or is waiting for "Gauna" ceremony
- School Status: out-of-school girls who have never attended school, out-of-school girls who have attended schools but have dropped out
- Residence: living in the project target area

In some communities in the terai region of Nepal, marriages happen in two stages, a formal marriage ceremony first, followed some years later by a ceremony called a *gauna. Gauna* takes place mostly after bride reaches her puberty. The bride only after *gauna* goes to live with her husband and in-laws, and the marriage is consummated only after the ceremony.

The number of targeted primary beneficiaries of Aarambha is further outlined in table 1.

With regards to Cohort 1, the initial identification of primary beneficiaries was conducted through communication with schools, Female Community Health Volunteers, health posts, and local authorities. Further identification and verification were conducted by the External Evaluator on the household level during pre-baseline. And later, the beneficiaries identified during pre-baseline were enrolled in the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) by the project team, during which further verification of the eligibility was done. Because of the specific beneficiary criteria, the project will enroll new beneficiaries for each cohort two months prior to working with that given cohort (it is impossible to establish with any certainty in advance

who from a given Municipality will be married and out of school in the following years). For this reason, towards the end of each cohort, beneficiary identification and recruitment process for the next year will be carried out.

1.3 Theory of Change

The project's theory of change is based on addressing the foundational barrier that has caused these girls to drop out and marry early: the low social status and value of girls in Nepal.

Through Output 1, the intervention will ensure girls have access to, and are therefore able to attend, literacy and numeracy courses that will improve their learning outcomes, and that they have acquired at least one additional grade-equivalency of literacy and numeracy skills. The literacy and numeracy courses will provide a minimum of 250 hours of learning per student and will include basic level formalized classes, the use of letter and number-based early writing materials and gradual introduction of more adaptive, negotiated content. Courses will incorporate competency and task-based content designed according to the particular health and safety needs of M-OOS adolescent girls (e.g. maternal nutrition). The literacy course will use culturally sensitive and contextualized adaptive learning approaches in the Freiran-Stuart tradition with a particular emphasis on interactive student-centered teaching practices, and gender-responsive pedagogies.

Within Output 2, the intervention will allow girls to acquire the additional skills needed to develop personal agency and pursue their life plans. Life skills trainings will be based on PIN's gender transformative workshops and improve girls' non-cognitive skills such as negotiation skills, self-esteem, problem solving, and communication. These sessions will also provide critical cognitive skills for M-OOS adolescent girls that will enable them to navigate health and safety related issues: nutrition, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), menstrual hygiene management (MHM), infant care, and GBV related knowledge: legal provisions, prevention, response, and resources. Life plans are pragmatic and realistic blueprints for girls to pursue formal and informal educational opportunities and careers according to their specific individual capacities, interests, and barriers. These life plans will be developed through coaching session with community mentors to directly identify how girls will transition into these fields considering the existing opportunities provided through the project (reenrolment) and outside of the intervention (informal and vocational trainings).

Schools, teachers, and student bodies will become enabling environments for M-OOS adolescent girls whose life plans include transitioning into formal education (Output 3). Teachers will be capacitated to use gender-responsive teaching styles and non-violent class management methods. Students will undergo gender transformative workshops that enable the reporting of violence and harassment within schools and create supportive student-led peer networks. School Support Groups will be formed at schools who will work together with school management committees to ensure the schools have functional mechanisms and systems that promote gender equality. Such engagements will encourage students and OOS adolescents to continue their educations and avoid early marriage by having the skills to negotiate important life decisions. It will also promote the sustainability of M-OOS adolescents' life plans to

transition back into formal education. PIN's existing work with schools in Nepal has produced evidence that this output has directly led to the reenrolment of out-of-school girls and boys into formal education.

Change Champions from the community will be engaged to challenge harmful social norms that affect M-OOS adolescent girls and create conducive environment within which they can pursue their life plans (Output 4). The project's work with M-OOS adolescent girls' families, government officials, community decision makers, and women-led community networks will ensure that the wider social context will enable M-OOS adolescent girls to pursue their informal and formal education aspirations after the conclusion of the intervention. The Intermediate Outcomes 3 and 4 will also help ensure bi-causal linkages between early marriage and early dropping out are broken – helping future girls and boys from the community continue their education.

Table 1: Summary of direct beneficiaries

Direct beneficiary numbers	**Total figures**
Total number of girls reached in cohort 1	1709
Total number of girls expected to reach by end of project	8500
Education level	**Proportion of total direct beneficiaries in cohort 1 (%)**
Never been to school	53%
Been to school but dropped out.	47%
Age banding (The age bandings used is appropriate to the ToC)	**Proportion of total direct beneficiaries in cohort 1 (%)**
10 to 14	6%
15 to 19	94%

Table 2: Level of schooling before dropping out

Level of schooling before dropping out	**Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)**	**Data source**
Never been to school	53%	Project's CLC enrolment data
Grade 1	1%	
Grade 2	7%	
Grade 3	6%	
Grade 4	8%	
Grade 5	11%	
Grade 6	3%	
Grade 7	2%	

Grade 8	5%	
Grade 9	2%	
Grade 10	2%	
Note: As per the pre-baseline report for cohort 1, the average duration of time M-OOS adolescent girls dropped out is four years.		

Table 3: Intervention pathway

Intervention pathway	Which girls follow this pathway?	Number of girls following this pathway for cohort 1	Time duration of the intervention	Number of cohorts	Status of literacy and numeracy levels girls are starting at	Success for girls	Success for transition
Literacy and Numeracy classes Life skills courses	Younger (10-15) married OOS adolescents without children	162	10 months	4	Level 0-1 of functional literacy and numeracy defined by the project	Improved functional literacy and numeracy by onegrade/level, the highest being Level 3.	Formal school reenrolment to the grade corresponding to their literacy/numeracy post participation Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000 (less than or equal to 14 years) and Labor Law (above 14 years)
	Younger (10-15) married OOS adolescents who are mothers	10					Informal literacy enrolment, informal vocational training Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000

	Older (16-19) married OOS adolescents without children	850					Formal school reenrolment to the grade corresponding to their literacy level post
	Older (16-19) married OOS adolescents with children	687					Informal literacy enrolment, informal vocational training Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000

Table 4: Indirect beneficiary groups

Group	Interventions received	Total number reached for cohort 1
Other OOS girls aged 10-19 (Output 3)	Gender transformative workshops	40
OOS boys aged 10-19 (Output 3)	Gender transformative workshops	40
In-school girls (Output 3)	Gender transformative workshops	760
In-school boys (Output 3)	Gender transformative workshops	760
Families (Output 4)	Gender transformative workshops, events led by Change Champions	1700
Community gatekeepers (Output 4)	Gender transformative workshops, events led by Change Champions	70
Women-led community networks and other active literate women from the community (Output 1, 2 and 3)	Literacy and numeracy training, Life skills training to work with adolescent girls	228
Young male community members (Output 3)	Life skills training to work with adolescent boys	100
Teachers (Output 3)	Gender responsive pedagogical training	80

Government authorities (Output 4)	Gender transformative workshops	60
Community members (Output 4)	Community orientation at CLC level, events led by Change Champions	175
Note: These are the targets for cohort 1, and since the cohort 1 is still in the early phase, the actual reached is yet to calculate.		

1.4 Comments on program

1.4.1 Data collected for direct beneficiaries

The project is primarily working with Married Out of School (M-OOS) girls (with or without children) between 10 to 19 years of age. These girls have either dropped out of school or have never been to school.

Initially, the project had envisioned identifying 1700 M-OOS girls from two rural municipalities, each of Bara and Rautahat districts, which would constitute an equal proportion of girls between the age group 10-14 and 15-19. However, due to inadequate beneficiaries in the initially proposed municipalities, one rural and one urban municipality, each in Bara and Rautahat respectively, was added. As a result, the total enrolled girls in the project's CLCs increased to 1634 in August 2019, based on which FDM developed the sampling framework. As the CLCs started to run, new eligible beneficiaries were identified and were enrolled across the CLCs. The final enrolled beneficiaries reached to 1709, as of September 2019.

The assumption of the project to identify an equal number of M-OOS girls from each of its given subgroups did not hold because of the lower number of married adolescent girls between the age group 10-19 and even a lesser number of married adolescent girls within the age range of 10-14. The reason for this could be due to the population of married girls nationally in province 2 was less.

1.4.2 Accurate age of beneficiaries, and challenges encountered when capturing age of the beneficiaries

FDM conducted a pre-baseline survey in April that gathered general demographic information, including the age of the M-OOS girls. It was not easy for the enumerators of FDM to collect the actual age of the respondents because they were not aware of it. Even most of the parents of these M-OOS girls did not know the exact age. This was because parents did not keep track of the age when the girls were born. When respondents could not mention their age or when the age specified by the respondent appeared skeptical, enumerators asked parents their year of marriage and after how long they gave birth to their first child. The difference of the current year and the year of the first child was the correct age of the M-OOS girl.

Moreover, in most cases, parents who could not tell the age could tell the year of birth from which actual age was derived. After the pre-baseline, when PIN team verified the data they found that age for many M-OOS girls were wrongly entered. Local partners from PIN corrected the mistakes, removed girls who did not meet the criteria and added more girls who met the

requirements. The process from pre-baseline to respondents' recruitment took a long time which pushed the intervention by a few weeks. Even though the intervention was pushed, the team could reasonably identify and recruit girls who met age disaggregation criteria.

1.4.3 Reliability of proposed number of beneficiaries

The project aims to reach to 8500 M-OOS adolescent girls by the end of the project in a duration of 4 years; which makes up reaching to 2125 girls each year. In year I, the total M-OOS adolescent girls enrolled are 1709. The rest of the target will be reached by including the deficit number of year 1 (i.e.416) in the next evaluation.

The initial identification of the beneficiaries was done through pre-baseline survey after which the re-verification was done by the project team which allowed confirmation that each beneficiary met the selection criteria. The sample 400 girls from each treatment and comparison groups was calculated thereafter where the sample represented at least 50% of the learning centres. Furthermore, to calculate the sample for each of the sub-groups as defined by the project the sample for each sub-group was drawn from total number of beneficiaries and was divided proportionately among each subgroups. The subgroups are as follows:

- M-OOS adolescent girls who have never been to school of age 10-14
- M-OOS adolescent girl who have never been to school of age 15-19
- M-OOS adolescent girls who dropped out from certain grade of age 10-14
- M-OOS adolescent girls who dropped out from certain grade of age 15-19

This ensured that the sample was representative and reliable for the analysis.

2. Baseline evaluation approach and methodology

2.1 Evaluation purpose(s) and evaluation questions

The project's theory of change is based on addressing the foundational barrier that has caused girls to drop out and marry early. In this regard, the project worked primarily with Married, Out-Of-School (M-OOS) adolescent girls between the age group 10-19 years from Bara and Rautahat district of province 2, along with other key stakeholders like the girls' families, community groups, religious leaders, schools and government officials. Through its interventions of empowerment and advocacy, the project aims at addressing the underlying barrier that prevents girls from leading healthy, safe, and educated lives: their low social status. Outcome and output level indicators have been developed to measure the progress of the intervention, which are as follows:

Table 5: Evaluation questions and summary of quantitative and qualitative data/analysis required to answer question

Evaluation question	Qual data/analysis required to answer question	Quant data/analysis required to answer question
What is the situation of learning of girls at the baseline?	N/A	Score from EGRA and EGMA test established the baseline for literacy and numeracy score.
What is the baseline transition status of girls?	FGD with M-OOS girls and parents to explore reasons and barrier to transition.	Proportion of girls engaged in different activities in the past year and in the present (Girls and Household survey)
How effective the project was in developing married out of school adolescent girls' cognitive and non-cognitive life skills?	FGD with M-OOS girls to explore knowledge attitude, and practice in terms of Financial literacy, Family planning and self-efficacy	Life skill index which includes knowledge attitude and practice relating to financial literacy, family planning, and self-efficacy (Girls Survey).
How, if at all, do literacy, numeracy, cognitive and non-cognitive life skills translate into household decision making and agency?	FGD with M-OOS girls, parents KII with change champions to understand the general practice of household decision making.	Household decision making index
How, if at all, did the project succeed in creating enabling learning environments in schools, families, and communities, for the married, out of school	KII with Teachers, head teachers	Aggregated score for Gender sensitive teacher tool, Score card and approach classroom observation

adolescent girls to pursue their life plans?		
What is the community doing and how is it engaged to challenge harmful social norms that affect M-OOS adolescent girls and create conducive environments within which they can pursue life plans	KII with DEO, head teacher, parents, and change champions/ religious or community leaders to understand general, present and past trend of the society relating to marriage, and education. Activities being conducted as a part of the campaigns to make community people aware about the issue of early marriage.	N/A

Through Output 1, the intervention will ensure girls have access to, and are therefore able to attend, literacy and numeracy courses that will improve their learning outcomes.

Within Output 2, the intervention will allow girls to acquire the additional skills needed to develop personal agency and pursue their life plans.

Within output 3 Schools, teachers, and student bodies will become enabling environments for M-OOS adolescent girls whose life plans include transitioning into formal education.

Under Output4 Change Champions from the community will be engaged to challenge harmful social norms that affect M-OOS adolescent girls and create conducive environments within which they can pursue their life plans. The Intermediate Outcomes 3 and 4 will also help ensure that the bi-causal linkages between early marriage and early dropping out. The specific purposes of the baseline evaluation are outlined below.

- Explore and analyse the context of the areas in which project operates and map the situation of project beneficiaries in the initial stages of the project

- Generate the baseline values for the indicators to inform target setting for the project and allow comparisons in the subsequent evaluation points

- Identify and assess the barriers faced by the M-OOS girls for learning and transition

- Test the declarations made by the Theory of Change of the project and generate necessary evidences to inform the improvements in project design

2.2 Evaluation Timeline

The baseline data collection was planned between May -June 2019, however, due to delays in verification and enrolment owing to the monsoon, it was postponed.

Table 6: Evaluation Timeline

Key MEAL Activities	Timeline
Testing and piloting data collection tools	September 2019
Collect benchmarking data and baseline data	September 2019
First draft of baseline report and clean datasets	November 2019
Final Baseline Study Report + clean datasets submitted to PIN and the FM (First Evaluation Point)	January 2019
Second Evaluation Point	June 2020 (Learning) July/August 2020 (Transition)
Third Evaluation Point	June 2021 (Learning) July/August 2021 (Transition)
Fourth Evaluation Point	May/August 2022
Fourth evaluation point final report submitted to the FM	October/November 2022
Final endline study report of last cohort submitted to the FM	November 2023

2.3 Overall evaluation design

The evaluation undertook a quasi-experimental approach, with stepped-wedge randomised trial that involved sequential crossover of groups from comparison to intervention conditions. The changes in the comparison group (non-intervention group) provided counterfactual scenario to the project's interventions. The key approach to demonstrating causality in the project will be the 'Difference-in-Differences' approach. This approach will measure the effect of the intervention as the change in the outcome observed for a group of beneficiaries before and after the intervention against the change observed for a comparison group of comparable non-beneficiaries. With learning from the first cohort, the project may adapt its evaluation design with joint consultations from the FM and EE. The implementation capacity of project is to work directly with approximate 2125 girls each year (i.e. evaluation for each year will have approximate 2125 girls). In order to establish treatment and comparison conditions for each group (one new cohort of 2125 girls each year), the project has rolled out its intervention in Year 1 in four municipalities (two each) as treatment group and two municipalities (one each) in Bara and Rautahat as comparison group.

This (geographical segregation of treatment and comparison groups) approach reduced the risk of contamination. The municipalities were selected based on key educational and socio-demographic indicators. To ensure comparison and treatment groups were comparable PIN

made sure the location selected for comparison group was the same as treatment keeping in mind ethnicity, access to road and other demographics.

In Year 2, the comparison group will cross over to intervention conditions, and 2125girls in new identified municipalities will be selected as comparison group. Baseline and endline/outcome data will be collected from each intervention and comparison group for each time. Endline for comparison group will serve as baseline for the given group before crossing over to intervention conditions. This system will repeat in year 2 and 3. There will not be comparison group established for the year 4 (for ethical reasons, given the risk of backlash if they do not eventually receive the intervention).

A final evaluation will be conducted after the end of Year 3 and will draw samples from all cohorts to allow for longitudinal assessment of the early cohorts. In case of year 1, the team made sure, the sample was representative of the source population. Pre-baseline was conducted to identify Married out of school adolescent (M-OOS) girls between the age 10-19 who had never been to school or who had dropped out of school from both the cohorts. This suggests that the population of comparison and treatment had the same characteristics. FDM used simple random sampling as the sampling technique to select M-OOS girls from both the cohort.

For the baseline, FDM used both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data and evidences for the baseline evaluation. While quantitative tools provided a numerical measurement of the assessments, the qualitative tools validated and contextualized quantitative findings. Sequencing approach was carried out to inform the areas of inquiry for the quantitative data collection. This allowed for the comprehensive contextual analysis of the factors that affected the trends as shown by the quantitative data. For quantitative data collection household and girls survey was conducted with M-OOS girls and their parents. A joint sampling approach was used where the household of the randomly selected M-OOS girls was visited for collecting the household information.

2.4 Establishing relationship between IOs and outcomes

The theory of change is based on addressing the foundational barrier that has caused girls to drop out and marry early: the low social status and value of girls in Nepal. The baseline emphasises on evaluating relationship between IO and outcomes. As the achievement of IOs are imperative for achieving the overall outcomes the objectives of IOs are given below and their analysis is included in (section Married out of school (M-OOS) adolescent girls' improved attendance.

Through output 1, the intervention seeks to ensure girls have access to, and are therefore able to attend, literacy and numeracy courses that will improve their learning outcomes by 1 grade level and enrol into formal schooling. Baseline evaluation shows that the learning score of M-OOS girls are weak. This could be because they just have enrolled in CLC. Moreover, the findings also suggested that girls have less interest to enrol into formal education.

Through output 2, the intervention allows girls to acquire the additional skills needed to develop personal agency and pursue their life plans and improve girls' non-cognitive skills such as negotiation skills, self-esteem, problem solving, and communication. However, the baseline evaluation showed that the knowledge of girls pertaining to different agencies like financial literacy, family planning and self-efficacy completely different than the practice.

Under output 3, the intervention gender transformative workshop among students, and gender responsive teaching to teachers, formation of school support groups at schools who will work together with school management committees to ensure the schools have functional mechanisms and systems that promote gender equality will help achieve the outcome of creating an enabling environment at school so that other adolescents to continue their educations and avoid early marriage by having the skills to negotiate important life decisions. It will also promote the sustainability of M-OOS adolescents' life plans to transition back into formal education. For the baseline this particular output has not been effective to meet the outcome as the M-OOS girls have not yet transitioned in schools, and since the project has not started its intervention yet, no schools are equipped with any gender responsive mechanism. Correlations between the IOs and outcome have also been included in the finding section and recommendation to improve the status of the IOs for the project to achieve its outcomes have been included in the recommendation section of the report.

2.4.1 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) standards

The evaluation team was oriented by PIN on the GESI before the evaluation. The GESI standard was maintained from the initial phase of the baseline planning. The sampling for the evaluation itself took into account the marginalization criteria. As the sample was calculated to be representative of the actual target population, girls across different age groups were fully represented in the sample. Even while developing the tools it ensured that language of the tools was gender and culturally appropriate. Furthermore, all tools were reviewed by the safeguarding and protection focal person from PIN.

2.4.2 Evaluation adherence to log frame and MEL framework

The baseline evaluation was guided by the log frame and MEL framework. The evaluation followed all the factors included in the log frame and MEL framework. However, there were some minor difference in the anticipated and actual sample size which is discussed in table 7 of the report. In addition, few stakeholders were added during the qualitative research to gather grass root level information.

2.5 Evaluation ethics

Ethical standards were in place throughout the phases from planning and data collection, to data analysis, storage, report writing, and dissemination. The evaluation team followed strict research ethics, ensuring that it operated using agreed standards, upholding principles of fairness and respect. Following were the core areas followed by the evaluation team.

2.5.1 Questionnaire design and data collection

While designing the questionnaire FDM ensured to use respectful language easily understood by the respondents. FDM keeping in mind that M-OOS girls below 19 are children, did not ask question pertaining to sexual relationship irrespective of their marital status i.e either married

or are waiting for gauna. In addition, during the time of data collection enumerators made sure they did not create any additional burden or distress for the participants by making sure the data collection process was comfortable where M-OOS adolescent girls could freely express themselves, without being judged.

2.5.2 Recruitment and training

FDM hired enumerators who were above 18 years for the purpose of data collection. To be culturally and gender sensitive, FDM hired female enumerators with local language competency. During recruitment, external evaluator followed the GECT and LNGB guidance note steps for safe recruitment, and ensured that it met minimum GEC standards. Following appointments, the enumerators were trained in protocols related to safeguarding and code of conduct including child rights issues in general. To ensure ethical research process, the enumerators were further trained in the principles of ethical research. The training covered and emphasized the following:

- Case handling and risk management
- Cultural and gender sensitivity
- Protocol to follow in case someone discloses violence
- Recognition of signs of mental or emotional distress and related protocol
- Facilitator skills
- Washington Group- Child Functioning Questions

2.5.3 Written informed consent

All members participating in the study provided informed consent. The consent was sought not only from parents, but also from children who participated in the surveys. The views of the children with regard to their consent to participate in a group interview or individual interaction were paramount. The participants were provided with the following information which they had to sign after reading:

- The purpose of the evaluation
- The funder of the evaluation
- Contact information for the evaluation team
- Why the individual has been selected for participation
- What participation in the evaluation will entail
- Any risks or benefits of participating in the evaluation
- Provisions for privacy, confidentiality and anonymity and any limitations
- Future use of information given
- Right not to participate and to withdraw at any point

2.5.4 Confidentiality

The evaluation team ensured that all data was collected securely and kept confidential. Enumerators were oriented and made aware of the importance of confidentiality and ethical standards during the process of data collection. FDM ensured that survey participants did not feel threatened, abused or exploited during the data collection. Furthermore, to maintain confidentiality the data set shared with FM and PIN was fully anonymised.

2.5.5 Child protection and safeguarding policy

The evaluation team adhered to the child protection and safeguarding policies prescribed by PIN while implementing the field plan. Evaluation team mobilized in the field were provided three days training which had a dedicated session on child protection and safe guarding policy. Ensuring that the environment for data collection is safe, that the data collection was carried out in the time best suited to them and parents are kept informed about the data collection were some of the fundamentals that the evaluation team followed.

2.5.6 Do no harm

Researchers and enumerators followed the principle of do no harm during the data collection duration. None of the respondents faced any risk. FDM oriented field enumerators and researchers to make them aware regarding do not harm policy and not expose people to any unnecessary and/or potential risk.

2.5.7 Data analysis, storage and reporting

FDM has also adhered to PIN's Information Sharing & Data Confidentiality Agreement where data collected and all the information was stored in a safe place.

2.6 Comment on ethnical and safeguarding plan

Overall, the plans related to ethnical and safeguarding issue was effective. No issue was identified during the quantitative field work. The language of the questionnaire was easily understood by the respondents. FDM ensured that survey participants did not feel any kind of abuse, exploitation, and harassment following child protection and safeguarding policies. Researchers and enumerators followed the principle of do no harm during the data collection duration. However, it was found that written consent was difficult to obtain. Parents of the girls were hesitant to sign the written consent. It was only after much convincing they agreed to do it. Some of the parents in the comparison group even refused to give the interview. Replacement of girls as well as parents had to be done to mitigate the issue.

During qualitative data collection in Bara, CLC facilitator in presence of social mobilizer shared information on domestic violence. Even though the child protection and do no harm policy of PIN mentions to report any cases of violence as per the case handling framework and case category, this could not be done immediately as FDM was bounded by maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the respondent. Moreover, FDM themselves had to confirm the case reported and in what context it was shared by listening to the recording before disclosing the information to PIN. FDM team upon return to Kathmandu shared the information with the Senior MEAL coordinator and program staff of PIN to make them aware on the grass root level situation of the field. Furthermore, FDM conducted rounds of meetings to analyse the pros and cons of disclosing the name of the respondent and the impact it might have for the following evaluations. Based on the past experience of handling such cases for other GEC projects, FDM shared the information on location where the case was reported, context on how that information came up, and the remaining details with PIN team to take corrective measures.

2.7 Quantitative evaluation methodology

The table below illustrates all quantitative tools used in the evaluation.

Table 7: Quantitative evaluation tools

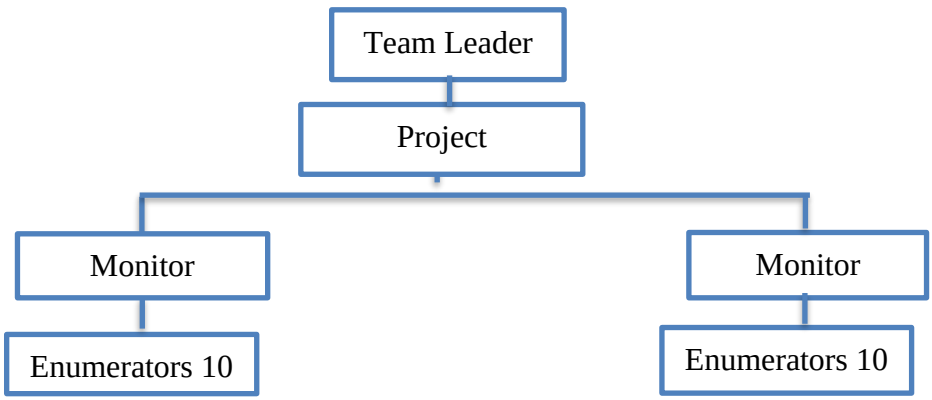
Tool name	Relevant indicator(s)	Tool development	Tool piloted	How the piloting findings acted upon	Tool shared with the FM	Feedback provided by FM
EGRA (Girls survey)	% of M-OOS adolescent girls who gain 0.2 standard deviations in literacy per year	EE	Yes	• The name of characters used in the passage changed to local context for example, name Anita could be replaced by Rinku. • Removed difficult words • Changed the font of the tool	Yes	Yes
EGMA (Girls survey)	%of M-OOS adolescent girls who gain 0.2 standard deviations in numeracy per year	EE	Yes	• Omitted three-digit numbers and numbers greater than 30 • Reduced addition and subtraction question to 10 questions per item		
Transition Girls and Household survey	%of M-OOS adolescent girls who successfully transition	EE	Yes	• No changes required	Yes	Yes
Attendance Sheet	IO1 %of M-OOS adolescent girls who have attended 85% or more literacy and numeracy sessions	PIN	N/A	• N/A	Yes	N/A
Life skill index Girls Survey	IO2 %M-OOS adolescent girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skills to develop and pursue life plans	EE	Yes	• Changed the question format to Likert scale	Yes	Yes
Household decision making index (Girls Survey and Household Survey)		EE-Amalgamation of Indi kit, DHS, Sisters for sisters project and Stem I project	Yes	• No changes were required	Yes	Yes

Gender sensitive teacher tool (Classroom and school observation)	IO3. Schools have created enabling and supportive environments for M-OOS girls' learning	EE - Amalgamation of Indi kit, DHS, Sisters for sisters and Stem I project	Yes	Rephrased questions Removed questions not relevant to the project's context Changed the format of the question to make it measurable	Yes	Yes
Attitude Change Index for in-school adolescents (In-school adolescent)		PIN	Yes	Unwanted questions removed	Yes	Yes
Attitude change index score for parents (Household survey)	IO4.Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realization of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	Yes	Rephrased questions Removed questions not relevant to the project's context Changed the format of the question to make it measurable	Yes	Yes

2.8 Enumerators

FDM has a large pool of enumerators from which enumerators for this survey were recruited. Priority was given to those who had been involved in previous GEC surveys. This is because these enumerators were familiar with the format and context of the survey. The key qualifications sought in the enumerators was language competency - they needed to be able to converse in local languages spoken in the sampled Terai districts. Monitors to oversee the work of the enumerators were chosen based on their experience in conducting previous FDM surveys and who were well-accustomed to the process and methods of social surveys.

2.8.1 Field organization diagram



2.9 Enumerators and monitors training

Day 1: 27 August 2019

The training commenced with discussion on the training agenda. After this, hard copies of the Nepali version of the questionnaire were distributed and discussed in detail. All the questions pertaining to household and girls survey were explained thoroughly one by one.

Day 2: 28 August 2019

On the second day, enumerators and monitors were trained on the basic use of tablet which was the medium of data collection. After this session, all the questions in the android version were discussed one by one. After completing all the questions, the enumerators were divided in a group of two and for the mock session.

Day 3: 29 August 2019

The first half of the day was spent mostly conducting mock interviews. The exercise was essential to make the enumerators and monitors familiar with the questions. After the mock interview session, the roles and responsibilities of enumerators, and monitors were discussed. The session also included things like fieldwork planning, going through the filled-up questionnaire, data quality, reporting, and uploading the data. During the second half of the day, a pilot test, a part of the training itself, was conducted in the nearby village of Bara and Rautahat of districts. A team comprising of ten enumerators (six girls and four boys), one monitor in each of the two districts were deployed for the pilot test. In the field, enumerators interviewed at least two individuals each. The feedback session from the pilot test was held at the respective location. In the pilot test, most of the bugs and errors in the android questionnaire were identified and resolved later before the commencement of the actual baseline fieldwork.

2.10 Quantitative data collection

Baseline data collection commenced on 30 August, 2019 in both Bara and Rautahat district. The data collection took 15 days to complete in both the districts. Data collection was done through ODK software in a tablet. Each enumerator used a tablet with ODK application installed that contained the structured questionnaire for the survey. An additional printed copy of the questionnaire and backup chargers were provided to the survey team in case of emergency use.

2.11 Quality Assurance

Appropriate measures were taken to ensure the quality of the study in each step of the survey. Before the actual fieldwork was underway, FDM team with conjunction with PIN team and FM, went through revisions on the format and the contents of the questionnaire in order to eliminate ambiguities, language complexity and complicated skip patterns. In addition, mature and experienced field staff who meet minimum education qualification, who have local language proficiency, and the contextual understanding of the study, were selected for the project.

Field work training was an essential part of the quality control process. The training focused on an in-depth discussion of the questionnaire in order to familiarize the enumerators with the

questions, options, skip patterns and other details. Besides, the enumerators conducted mock interviews in order to train themselves on how to conduct interviews. Furthermore, detailed field plan was placed with a total of 20 enumerators and two monitors. Field plan was devised to meet planned as well as unforeseen challenges and thereby to ensure the smooth operation of day to day field activities.

Monitors were essential parts of the FDM team that helped further to ensure data quality. The monitors ensured data quality by assessing the performance of the enumerators. Monitors checked whether or not the enumerators were executing the tasks they were expected to perform. Below are some important specific checks the monitors and supervisors conducted to ensure the smooth functioning of the fieldwork. There were few other quality control methods, which are as follows:

- *Spot-checks*

Spot-checks were done by monitor to ensure that correct respondents were selected for interview, and the selection process are also correct.

- *Back-end check*

Back end check was continuously being performed by core FDM team in Kathmandu to find the missing data and errors.

Due to these protocol in place, no such issue came up with people collection poor data.

2.12 Data cleaning and storage

The android software, ODK, itself allowed for range-checks. During the data collection process FDM team in Kathmandu regularly checked and cleaned the database for complete blank entries and conditional field cleaning. Various errors in the data that would come during the fieldwork could come about due to the negligence of the enumerators rather than due to the limitations of the software. It is difficult to rectify such errors just by looking at the data. Thus, if the person in charge of data monitoring at FDM had doubts in the data sent in by enumerators, he/she contacted the concerned enumerator to identify the issue and rectify the error. Thus, at the time the fieldwork was going on, one person from FDM was constantly monitoring the data that came in. FDM exported the data in Excel sheet for data cleaning. Steps for data cleaning followed by FDM is given below:

- Ensured that the base is what it should be. For instance, in this survey the actual sample size was 800. FDM first checked whether the responses received were that of 800 respondents. For every question after taking into account the filters, the base should be 800

- In case of extreme outliers, FDM checked how this has come about and whether or not such a response is justified. For example, the actual age of the respondent, and the age when the respondent got married was sometimes recorded too high than the current age. Cases such as these were informed to the concerned enumerators. Then the suitable course of action for dealing with such discrepancies was adopted.

- It is important that all the logic and skipping pattern in the questionnaire are correct. There might be filtered question where the base of the question is inherited from its parent question. Such questions were thoroughly checked.

- Erroneous data detected were removed or altered accordingly. It is usually the case that wrongly entered data and duplicate entry are detected during data cleaning process.

- Once all the correction was entered into Excel, data were exported into SPSS. All the values were then properly labelled.

- For learning tests (paper based), data entry was carried out at FDM office. While entering the data it was made sure the unique id matched the girls' survey. Once data entry was completed, it was checked to ensure all the ids match and the scores are entered correctly. Furthermore, in order to ensure data was entered correctly, paper based EGRA and EGMA tests were randomly matched with the computer entered score. Error and invalid entries were then corrected.

- A double entry mechanism was maintained to establish a backup database if the working file or sheet gets deleted or data is lost. In order to mitigate the risks of data loss, a master database was maintained in more than two computers and external storage devices.

Moreover, FDM project coordinator did a real time monitoring of data through which mistakes were identified and were asked to correct immediately. The data collected by the enumerators were primarily monitored by the monitors, who also kept the research coordinator informed about the data collection activities. Based on the field-based monitoring and data monitoring, field monitor ensured that the enumerators followed the field work protocols and data verification was also done respectively including back-checking. When the data checked for the codes and other aspects were uploaded by the field monitors, the data was again checked by the research coordinator on a regular basis and the relevant feedbacks and suggestions were forwarded whenever deemed necessary.

2.13 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the preliminary data analysis was conducted immediately after completion of quantitative data collection and data cleaning. Before the analysis, the questions in the tools were aggregated as one index. Below is a brief description of how all the indices were aggregated:

2.13.1 Learning

Each question of each subtask carried 1 mark. The total score was obtained based on the number of correct answers. At the end of each subtask, a total score was calculated. In the end the sum of the score obtained by M-OOS girls in each subtask was divided by total subtasks to get the average mean EGRA and EGMA score. The learning score is reported in mean score.

2.13.2 Household Decision-Making Index Score

The responses for each of the questions were changed to binary. In the sense, if the girls made her own decision the score was 1, if decisions were made by somebody else or if it was a joint decision it was scored 0. The sum of scores were later converted to scores.

2.13.3 Life Skills Index Score

Life skill index had three parts (Knowledge, Practice and Attitude). Each of these parts had their own set of questions which were multiple choices. Variables were firstly changed into binary and then index was calculated.

2.13.4 Attitude Change Index for in-school adolescents

Questions were administered in Likert scale format. The Likert scale format was changed into binary with strongly agree scored as 5, agree scored 4, neutral scored, 3, disagree score 2, and strongly disagreed scored as 1. The sum of each response were recorded and the total was calculated to make an index.

2.13.5 Average score in the gender-sensitive teacher tool

Classroom observation was done to measure this indicator. To every positive answer it was scored 1 and every negative were scored 0. These were aggregated to calculate the average score. To get a general picture from the preliminary analysis basic descriptive statistics techniques including frequency measurement, cross-tabs, central tendency measurements were applied to identify general trend and areas that needed to be explored through qualitative consultations. The findings of the preliminary analysis helped in informing the qualitative checklist based on the outcomes and the intermediate outcomes. Secondly, for report writing purpose, all full-fledged data analysis such as descriptive statistics techniques including frequency measurement, cross-tabs, central tendency measurements, including bivariate analysis, one way/two-way anova test, chi-square tests, correlation, significance test among others. Data were disaggregated based on intervention subgroups and other groups wherever applicable. Below is a brief description of how each indicator were analysed.

2.14 Learning tests

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) were tools aimed at assessing the literacy and numeracy level of early grade children. The EGRA included five subtasks while EGMA included six subtasks. All the subtasks were administered by the girls. M-OOS girls who took the test were allowed to stop a subtask and move to the next task if they were not able to answer questions in a subtask. For instance, if a girl was not able to perform addition question, she was asked to try the subtraction questions. If she still was not able to perform any of the two then she was asked to go for the next subtask. These instructions were clearly outlined to the enumerators.

Both the tests were administered in Nepali language. The main rationale behind this was- first, Nepali is the official language used in the formal education system. It is essential that the girls must be able to read and write in Nepali in order to reenrol and/or access other government services, which are provided in Nepali. Second, although the girls understand local language

in its spoken form, this does not necessarily mean they can read and write in their local language. Thirdly, using only local languages in the learning centres would mean further restricting the girls to their own home/family spaces where they speak their language, and limiting their linguistic capacity to communicate with wider communities. Each subtask of EGRA and EGMA is described in detail below:

2.14.1 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)

Comprehension: This section had a comprehension passage to be read out aloud by the enumerators. Girls taking tests were required to listen to the passage and answer five simple questions based on the test.

Letter identification: There were hundred random Nepali letters which the girls were expected to identify. The scores were provided on the basis of alphabets that they were able to identify correctly in a minute.

Symbol identification: There were hundred Nepali alphabets associated with symbols. The score was on the basis of symbols correctly recognized.

Word identification: There were 50 simple words commonly used in the project intervention areas. The girls were expected to read the words correctly. The score was provided on the basis of words that correctly identified in a minute.

Reading and comprehension: This was considered to be the most complex subtask out of all in the EGRA test. The girls were expected to read the passage and further answer questions based on the text that they read. The test measured the word read out correctly in a minute and the number of correct answers provided for the five comprehension questions.

2.14.2 Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA)

Number identification: The section had two -digit random 20 numbers to be identified by M-OOS girls in a minute. The girls were scored based on the correct numbers they identified in a minute.
Larger number identification: This subtask had ten questions in which M-OOS girls were required to find out the larger number among the two numbers. They were scored by the number of correct answers given.

Missing number identification: There were ten questions in this section. In each question, there were three numbers spanned by equal intervals. The girls were required to fill in the missing fourth number.

Addition and subtraction: There were ten addition and ten subtraction questions in the section from the logic of simple to complex within one and two digits. The girls were scored by number of correct answers provided.

Division and multiplication: Subtask had multiplication and division questions. Altogether 10 questions (five multiplication questions and five division questions) were included in this sub-task. Score was given on the basis of total correct answers given by the girls.

Word problem: The last subtask included six of the word problems assessing students' ability to solve the problems through proper interpretation and planning. The word problem had a mix of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division questions. Score was given on the basis of total correct answers given by the girls.

2.15 Scoring and analysis of learning tool

The girls were scored on the basis of total correct answers given. The sum of the score obtained by M-OOS girls in each subtask was divided by total subtasks to get the average EGRA and EGMA score. For each individual subtask, the total number of correct answers were divided by the total number of questions for the subtask to arrive at the average %. To convert this to a %, WPM scores at 100 or higher received 100%. For every WPM under 100, the standardised score out of 100 was discounted by 1 mark (For instance, 75 WPM = 75/100). All the subtasks were then weighted equally and the average score across all subtasks was calculated to take out the percentage score.

2.16 Quantitative sample selection

The quantitative sample size for direct and indirect beneficiaries is described below:

2.16.1 Direct beneficiaries

To identify 8500 M-OOS adolescent girls, pre-baseline was carried out in both Bara and Rautahat districts after which a sampling frame was designed. The list of identified girls in treatment and comparison groups was the sampling frame. After having the sampling frame, sample size was calculated based on GEC evaluation guideline, which suggested using minimum standards (p0=0.58, pa=0.50, Power=80%, Power=80%, Confidence interval= 95%, Margin of error = 0.05, Test=2-sided test). Stat.ubc.ca website suggested by FM was used to calculate the total sample. Adding a further attrition buffer of 30%, the final sample size was 395 for each cohort (treatment and comparison). Hence, 400 girls from each of the group was selected as sample covering at least 50% of the CLCs so that clustering need not to be applied for sample size calculation. Furthermore, to calculate the sample for each of the sub-groups as defined by the project the sample for each sub-group was drawn from total number of beneficiaries and was divided proportionately among each subgroup. The sub-groups are as follows:

- M-OOS adolescent girls who have never been to school of age 10-14
- M-OOS adolescent girl who have never been to school of age 15-19
- M-OOS adolescent girls who dropped out from certain grade of age 10-14
- M-OOS adolescent girls who dropped out from certain grade of age 15-19

As M-OOS adolescent girls aged 10-14 were less than girls aged 15-19, all of the girls of this particular age group were included in the sample. Rest of the girls aged 15-19 was proportionately divided into sub-groups based on the aforementioned stratification criteria. On this basis, the actual sample size per strata is presented in the table below:

Table 8: Sample distribution anticipated

	Age 10-14		Age 15-19	
	Never been to school	Dropped out	Never been to school	Dropped out
Treatment	57	30	156	157
Comparison	11	11	159	219

Additionally, the project has envisioned learning outcome as one of the transitions among many other pathways that girls might choose. As the project has not defined the proportion of girls who will transition; the same sample size for transition will be the same as the learning sample.

2.16.2 Benchmarking

Benchmarking was conducted as a part of quantitative data collection to collect information on girl's literacy level so as to set target that the beneficiaries were expected to attain. Benchmarking was conducted in some of the schools the M-OOS girls are expected to enrol. Schools were selected purposively based on feasibility. A total of 75 students (30% of the total sample size) was taken, and proportionately divided across grade 1-4 for this purpose.

2.16.3 Indirect beneficiary category

A purposive sampling was used to identify schools for the intervention as well as data collection. Distance from the community Learning Centres (CLCs), was the major criteria in selection of these school. This was because girls interested into transitioning to re-enrolment have access to the nearest schools from their communities. The in-school girls and boys aged 12-16 years, and school teachers were randomly selected as sample because of PIN's intervention of gender transformative workshop particularly targeted for them. The table below reports the sample sizes achieved at baseline compared with the sample sizes agreed in the MELF Framework for each of the tools used.

Table 9: Quantitative sample sizes

Tool name	Sample size agreed in MEL framework		Actual sample size		Remarks on why anticipated and actual sample sizes are different
	T	C	T	C	
EGRA/EGMA test & Girls Survey:					
M-OOS girls aged 10-14 never been to school	57	11	47 (11.8%)	11 (2.8%)	Anticipated sample for age group 10-14 is different than the actual sample because girls aged 10-14 dropped out of CLC The representation of girls from 10-14 age group were already low in the final CLC enrolment list.
M-OOS girl aged 10-14 dropped out	30	11	31 (7.8%)	7 (1.8%)	
M-OOS girls aged 15-19 never been to school	156	159	159 (39.8%)	179 (44.8%)	Met the requirement

M-OOS girls aged 15-19 dropped out	157	219	163 (40.8)	203 (50.8)	Met the requirement
Household Survey					
	400	400	400	400	Met the requirement
In-school sample					
Attitude change index:					
In-school boys and girls	800		521		Even though the name of the students were registered in the school, many of them rarely attended hence the difference in anticipated and actual sample size.
Barefoot assessment (Teacher tool and classroom observation)	7 schools		7 schools		Met requirement
Note: The analysis in the preceding sections are based on the actual sample size of M-OOS girls and not the agreed sample size.					

2.17 Representativeness of the sample

The sample selected for the evaluation was fully representative. Representativeness of sampling was ensured in every stages of the planning process. Considering the project's marginalization framework, the following inclusion criteria was used to select the primary beneficiaries from both the cohorts:

- Age: 10-19 years
- Marital Status: married or in union or waiting for Gauna
- School Status: out-of-school girls who have never attended school, out-of-school girls who have attended schools but have dropped out
- Residence: living in project target area

It was ensured all beneficiaries met the above-mentioned criteria to enrol in the project, regardless of their disability status, literacy levels, caste/ethnicity, or any other socio-economic and cultural factors, as well as literacy level. Once the sample size was calculated, stratified random sampling was done to select the target M-OOS adolescent girls to draw out individuals for baseline from the sampling frame. During stratification, the proportionate inclusion of sub groups was taken into account. The sample for treatment group was representative of the project intervention while comparison group sample was best matched to the treatment sample for comparison. The identified treatment and comparison groups was representative of at least 50% of the learning centers. The evaluation team made a conscious attempt to ensure the representativeness of the sample which is reflected in the following tables.

The sample breakdown by intervention pathway showed that 95.5% and 80.5% of the M-OOS girls from comparison and treatment group respectively wanted to pursue their life plan. While only 19.5% of girls from treatment and 4.5% from comparison wanted to enrol in school.

Table 10: Sample breakdown by intervention pathways (in percentage)

Intervention pathway (adapt as required)	Sample proportion of intervention group (%)	Sample proportion of comparision group (%)
Enrolment into school	19.5	4.5
Pursue their life plans	80.5	95.5

Source: Girls Survey N = 400

The sample was equally distributed among Bara and Rautahat district representing 50% of the total sample.

Table 11: Sample breakdown by Region (in percentage)

Region	Sample proportion of intervention group (%)	Sample proportion of comparison group (%)
Region A (Bara)	50%	50%
Region B (Rautahat)	50%	50%

Source: Girls Survey N = 400

Table 12: Sample breakdown by age (in percentage)

Age (adapt as required)	Sample proportion of intervention group (%)	Sample proportion of comparison group (%)
Aged 10 (%)	0.3 %	0.3%
Aged 11 (%)	1.0 %	0.3%
Aged 12 (%)	3.5 %	0.3%
Aged 13 (%)	4.5 %	1.0%
Aged 14 (%)	10.3 %	2.5%
Aged 15 (%)	7.0 %	5.5%
Aged 16 (%)	9.0 %	9.5%
Aged 17 (%)	12.3 %	17.0%
Aged 18 (%)	32.0 %	35.3%
Aged 19 (%)	20.3 %	28.5%

Source: Girls Survey N = 400

The sample breakdown by age showed that for the treatment group, 32% of the girls were 18 years of age, followed by 20.3% girls of 19 years. For the comparison group, 35.3% of the girls were 18 years old while 28.5% were 19 years old. From the treatment group girls aged 11 years was the lowest. Whereas in comparison group, girls of age 13 years were the lowest with just 0.1% representation.

The disability data is disaggregated based on the prevalence of disability. Data from the treatment and as well as comparison group showed that there were only handful of MOOS girls who shared that they have either 'a lot of difficulty' or they are in a stage that they 'cannot do anything'. Most of the girls fell into the category of having 'some difficulty, or 'no difficulty at all'. For example, in the treatment group, 1.5% of the MOOS girls shared that they had a lot of difficulty in communication and 0.75% said that they 'cannot communicate at all'. However, percentage as high as 87.5% said that they did not have any difficulty followed by 10.25% of the girls who said they only have 'some difficulty'. Similarly, even in the comparison group, 0.75% of the MOOS girls reported that they had a 'a lot of difficulty' while percentage as high as 86.75% shared they had 'no difficulty'. This trend is consistent throughout all domains of disability. However, However, in the case of anxiety 2.8% of the moos girls from treatment group said that they got anxious every day and 5.3% and 2.8% of the MOOS girls from comparison group shared that they got anxious and depressed on a daily basis. It can therefore be inferred that mental health among others is one of the underlining issues for M-OOS girls. This could be because of the traditional environment they live in and the burden of household chores they have to perform.

Table 13: Sample breakdown by disability for treatment group (in percentage)

Intervention Group					
Domain of difficulty	**(%) A lot of difficulty**	**(%) Cannot do at all**	**(%) Some Difficulty**	**(%) No Difficulty at all**	
Seeing	0.25%	0%	0%	1.5%	
Hearing	0%	0%	0.25%	1%	
Walking	0.75%	0.5%	0.5%	1.75%	
Self-care	0%	0%	4.6%	95.4%	
Communication	1.5%	0.75%	10.25%	87.5%	
Learning	0%	.3%	4.3%	95.4%	
Remembering	.3%	0%	5.8%	93.9%	
Concentrating	.5%	0%	7.1%	92.4%	
Accepting Change	.8%	0%	6.9%	92.4%	
Controlling Behaviour	0%	0%	5.1%	94.9%	
Making Friends	.8%	0%	5.6%	93.7%	
Domain of difficulty	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Monthly**	**A few times**	**Never**
Anxiety	2.8%	15.7%	23.9%	16%	41.6%

Depression	.8%	21.6%	A9.5%	16.2%	41.9%

Source: Girls Survey= 400

MOOS girls who identified as they had a lot of difficulty and cannot do at all in more than one of the domains were categorised as multiple impairment. Data showed that 0.25% of the MOOS girls were in the state of not being able to do anything across domains like walking, communicating, learning, and remembering things.

Table 14: Sample breakdown by girls with multiple impairment for treatment group (in percentage)

	Intervention group				
Domain of difficulty	**(%) A lot of difficulty**	**(%) Cannot do at all**	**(%) Some Difficulty**	**(%) No Difficulty at all**	
Seeing	0%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Hearing	0%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Walking	0%	0.25%	0%	0.25%	
Self-care	0%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Communication	0%	0.25%	0%	0.25%	
Learning	0%	0.25%	0%	0.25%	
Remembering	0%	0.25%	0%	0.25%	
Concentrating	0.25%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Accepting Change	0%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Controlling Behaviour	0.25%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Making Friends	0%	0%	0%	0.25%	
Domain of difficulty	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Monthly**	**A few times**	**Never**
Anxiety	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.25%
Depression	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.25%

Girls survey= 400

Table 15: Sample breakdown by disability for comparison group (in percentage)

	Comparison group				
Domain of difficulty	**(%) A lot of difficulty**	**(%) Cannot do at all**	**(%) Some Difficulty**	**(%) No Difficulty at all**	
Seeing	0.5%	0%	2.75%	96.75%	
Hearing	0.25%	0%	2.5%	97.25%	

Walking	0.75%	1%	11.5%	86.75%	
Self-care	0%	0%	3.5%	96.5%	
Communication	0%	0%	11%	89%	
Learning	0%	0%	2%	98%	
Remembering	0%	0%	2%	98%	
Concentrating	0%	0%	5.8%%	94.2%	
Accepting Change	0%	0%	5%	95%	
Controlling Behaviour	0%	0%	3%	97%	
Making Friends	.5%	%	5.3%	94.2%	
Domain of difficulty	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Monthly**	**A few times**	**Never**
Anxiety	5.3%	25.1%%	31.1%	11.5%	27.1%
Depression	2.8%	29.1%	29.8%	11.5%	26.8%

Source: Girls Survey= 400

Table 16: Sample breakdown by girls with multiple impairment for comparison group (in percentage)

	Comparison group				
Domain of difficulty	**(%) A lot of difficulty**	**(%) Cannot do at all**	**(%) Some Difficulty**	**(%) No Difficulty at all**	
Seeing	0.5%	0%	2.75%	96.75%	
Hearing	0.25%	0%	2.5%	97.25%	
Walking	0.75%	1%	11.5%	86.75%	
Self-care	0%	0%	3.5%	96.5%	
Communication	0%	0%	11%	89%	
Learning	0%	0%	2%	98%	
Remembering	0%	0%	2%	98%	
Concentrating	0%	0%	5.8%%	94.2%	
Accepting Change	0%	0%	5%	95%	
Controlling Behaviour	0%	0%	3%	97%	
Making Friends	.5%	%	5.3%	94.2%	
Domain of difficulty	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Monthly**	**A few times**	**Never**

Anxiety	5.3%	25.1%%	31.1%	11.5%	27.1%
Depression	2.8%	29.1%	29.8%	11.5%	26.8%

Source: Girls Survey= 400

2.18 Challenges in quantitative data collection and limitations of the evaluation design

The challenges that came up during the quantitative data collection and the mitigation measure used to tackle the challenges are mentioned in the table below:

Table 17: Data collection challenges and limitation

Challenges	Mitigation Measure
Field Level	
The girls' survey as well as learning test were deemed as time consuming, it was difficult to engage M-OOS girls for a long time.	Interviews were stopped and reschedule for the next day.
Geographic distance between the hamlets within the wards were another major challenge for the enumerators. The VDC was very spread-out so they had to walk long distances, taking several hours, to get from one hamlet to another for conducting household surveys.	Data collection days were added
It was difficult to conduct interview in the comparison group as many parents were hesitant to answer questions and many parents did not allow girls to be interviewed. Therefore, this increased the data collection days.	Convinced parents for the interview. For the next day, enumerators went one day ahead to inform them about the interview and fix an appointment for the interview. Going to the same household two times increased familiarity. However, for further evaluation points, FDM feels data collection will be more efficient if the comparison group is removed altogether. Given that the comparison group was already hesitant to answer the questions at baseline, it is likely that FDM will face a challenge even during the endline.
Methodological	
The main issue challenge was meeting sample requirement for subgroup 10-14. During the time of data collection many M-OOS girls from age group 10-14 dropped out therefore, the actual sample for this subgroup is less than the anticipated sample.	Replacement mechanism was adopted to mitigate this issue. However even the replacement sample was not sufficient because the population of 10-14 were already less.
Some enumerators mentioned that they had some difficulties administering questions pertaining to household decision making, and family planning because most of the respondents were illiterate, they could not easily understand self -efficacy questions. So, more time was spent making respondents understand the question, thus more time was taken up during the interview.	Instructed the enumerators to explain the same question two-three times.

FDM adopted mitigation measures to overcome the challenges that came up during evaluation. Therefore, the robustness, reliability, and comparability were not affected in any way. However, for sub-group aged 10-14, meeting the sample requirement was difficult as the population of 10-14 was less. Hence, the actual sample for this subgroup was less than the anticipated sample. FDM discussed this with one of the team members of GEC, who suggested that it was an acceptable sample for ensuring robustness or compassion. Furthermore, FDM identified that the actual sample was acceptable standard and did not affect the reliability or robustness of data collection.

In addition, attrition could come up as a challenge in the subsequent evaluation points. Considering the fact that a few of the sampled girls might not be re-contactable during the endline, FDM has calculated the sample taking into account a 30% attrition rate. Hence, the inability to re-contact some of the samples will not pose any challenge to the integrity of the findings. If in case, the attrition rate is high (more than 30%), FDM will use a substitution strategy to select a new girl in place of the lost one. In addition, FDM also recognizes the risk of potential bias in using data provided by the PIN for IO3. This is because FDM is unaware of the experience of the enumerators and the level of training the enumerators for data collection have received prior to data collection.

2.19 Limitation

Apart from the challenges mentioned above, there were few limitations which might have affected the robustness or reliability of the evaluation design. Therefore, quantitative results reported herein should be considered in the light of some limitations which is given below:

- Recording the correct age of the respondents: Despite a strong mechanism to note down the age only after verification, there might have been some respondents who might have given their wrong age due to the intention of getting something from the program.

- Phrasing the question during administration: Quality and relevance of research is dependent on how well the enumerators phrase the questions and administer it. Despite the rigorous training, there might be chances of enumerators who did not phrase the questions correctly.

- Self-reported bias: As research involves opinions and behaviours of human, it is difficult to address the challenge of identifying biased answers.

2.19.1 Cohort tracking and next evaluation point

M-OOS girls selected for interventions as well as the comparison samples selected to establish counterfactuals will be tracked through all subsequent points of evaluation. Since this is the panel survey, same cohort groups selected randomly in baseline will be tracked for the endline evaluation. The next evaluation to access learning and transition of M-OOS girls is envisioned to take place immediately after the completion of bridge classes to primarily assess their learning and transition. For the evaluation of the learning outcome, the girl should have attended at least 80% of the total hours of bridge class. The girls who have not been to school and/or have attended less than 80% of the bridge classes then, they will not be considered for

any learning assessment at the subsequent evaluation points. However, as a part of cohort study, girls will be tracked for their transition. For the purpose of evaluation, attrition rate considered during the baseline will cover for the girls who drop out of the interventions. Further, the evaluators will replace her as per the replacement strategy mentioned in the MEL framework.

In order to ensure that girls can be tracked, a comprehensive dataset of all the baseline samples was created using girls' personal details including unique identification, home address, phone numbers of parents, and the GPS coordinates to locate the household. A replacement strategy is established to mitigate the problem of attrition. For the endline, all the beneficiaries will be evaluated for the same outcome and intermediate outcomes. Comparisons across cohort samples will explore differences between comparison and treatment girls as well as changes/ progress in the knowledge, attitude, behavior and practice of intervention girls themselves from baseline to endline. Both comparison as well as treatment groups across learning and transition will be analyzed for core outcomes—learning and transition, and sustainability—as well as the given four intermediate outcomes.

2.20 Qualitative evaluation methodology

The table below shows the tools, indicators and other details of the tools:

Table 18: Qualitative evaluation tools

Tool name	Relevant indicator(s)	Tools developed	Tools piloted	Piloting findings acted upon	feedback provided by FM
FGD with M-OOS girls 10-19	Outcome1 Learning: literacy and Numeracy Outcome 2 Transition IO2: M-OOS girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skill	EE	No	N/A	Yes
FGD M-OOS girls parents/in-laws	Outcome 2 Transition IO2: M-OOS girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skill IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	No	N/A	Yes
FGD in school girls and boys	IO3: School creating enabling environment	EE	No	N/A	Yes

KII with head teacher and scorecard	Outcome3: Sustainability IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	No	N/A	Yes
KII Project Staff from Aasaman and Social Mobilzer	Outcome1 Learning: literacy and Numeracy Outcome 2 Transition IO2: M-OOS girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skill Outcome3: Sustainability IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	No	N/A	Yes
KII CLC facilitator	Outcome I Learning Literacy and Numeracy Outcome 2:Transition IO 1: Married out of school (M-OOS) adolescent girls' improved attendance in literacy & numeracy courses IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	No	N/A	Yes
KII Community leaders/change champions	Outcome3: Sustainability IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	No	N/A	Yes
KII District education officer	Outcome3: Sustainability IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	EE	No	N/A	Yes

2.21 Qualitative sample selection and sample sizes

A preliminary analysis of quantitative data was done before developing qualitative checklist. This was done to identify areas for further exploration such as unusual trend, difference in knowledge and practice of the respondents. Based on these findings qualitative checklist was developed for each stakeholder. The MEL framework, which had outlined the qualitative sample was taken into consideration while mapping the stakeholders and the number of consultations.

Prior to the qualitative fieldwork, CLCs from each district were stratified based on their location. From the stratified list, three CLCs from each district were randomly selected for qualitative data collection. CLC was considered to be the primary sampling unit. Furthermore, purposive sampling method was adopted to identify respondents in the communities in order to yield rich information on status of girls' education, early marriage, and other underlying contexts. Purposive sampling was also useful to ensure the representativeness in the qualitative discussions. The methods used for data collection were focus group discussions (FGDs) and key-informant interviews (KIIs). A total of 22 FGDs and 26 KIIs were conducted with direct and indirect beneficiaries (11FGDs and 13 KIIs from each of the two districts).

M-OOS aged 10-14 and 15-19, along with CLC facilitators, parents, change champions, and social mobilizers were consulted. To triangulate the information gathered, parents, religious leader (change champions), and social mobiliser from a different location other than the sampled location were also interviewed. In order to gather overall community perspective, and school level information, head teachers, teachers, in-school boys and girls were also interviewed in which the girls were more likely to enrol into were mapped and visited. Primarily, sex, age and ethnicity were the factors that determined the participation of the stakeholders in the qualitative discussions. Respondents for the interviews were selected keeping in mind they represented different ethnic and age group.

The table below illustrates sample sizes achieved compared with the sample sizes agreed in the MEL Framework for each of the qualitative tools used at baseline.

Table 19: Qualitative sample sizes

Tool (used for which outcome and IO indicator)	Beneficiary group	Sample size agreed in MEL framework	Actual sample size	Remarks on why there are differences between anticipated and actual sample sizes
FGDs				
Outcome1 Learning: literacy and Numeracy **Outcome 2** Transition **IO2:** M-OOS girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skill	M-OOS girls aged 10-14	8 FGDs	4 FGDs (2 in each district)	Met the requirement
	M-OOS girls aged 15-19	8 FGDs	4 FGDs (2 in each district)	

IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	M-OOS girls parents/in-laws	8 FGD	6 FGDs (3 in each district)	Reached a saturation point
IO3: School creating enabling environment	In-school girls	4 FGDs	2 (in each district)	Met the requirement
	In-school boys	4 FGDS	2 (in each district)	Met the requirement
KIIs				
IO 4: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	Project Staff from Aasaman	Added respondent	1 (in each district)	Added to understand how the project activities were being implemented.
	Social Mobilizer	Added respondent	2 in each district	Added to get ground level information of the challenges faced in the field level
	CLC facilitators	Added respondent	3 in each district	Added to get an overview of the challenges and the attendance scenario of girls.
	Community leaders/change champions	4 KIIs	2 in each district	Met the requirement
Outcome3: Sustainability	Head teacher	4 KIIs	2 in each district	Met the requirement
IO3: Average score in the "gender-sensitive teacher tool"	School Teacher	4 KIIs	2 in each district	Met the requirement
Outcome3: Sustainability **IO 4:** Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realisation of M-OOS girls' life plans	District education officer	2 KIIs	2(1 in each district)	Met the requirement

2.22 Qualitative field researchers

A team of two qualified researchers within FDM team were deployed in two districts simultaneously. Researchers who had previously conducted qualitative research for other GEC projects were given priority. While selecting the team members for study, gender balance was maintained to ensure the comfortable sharing environment for the research participants. Previous experiences of FDM shows that female participants feel comfortable to talk to female rather than male researchers, especially when there are sensitive questions.

Prior to the field mobilization, the research coordinator provided a day orientation on the qualitative checklist along with the discussion on the project objectives, log frame and the preliminary quantitative. It was ensured that the researchers grasp the main idea of each question to gather rich information.

2.23 Qualitative data collection

The baseline study adopted a sequential mixed method where the qualitative checklists were informed by the preliminary quantitative findings. The qualitative check list was prepared by FDM based on preliminary analysis of the quantitative data. The checklist for qualitative data collection was formulated first in English language. Once the checklist was thoroughly worked upon by FM and FDM, the checklist was translated from English into Nepali language. While translating the checklist into Nepali language, it was ensured that no complex language with technical terms was used. Questions were not translated word to word, but it ensured that the questions did not lose its essence. Moreover, questions were simplified so that it was easy for the respondent to comprehend. Team leader checked translation before finalizing the checklist. Field level qualitative exercise was rolled out thereafter. Both FGDs and KIIs were carried out with the relevant stakeholders in two districts simultaneously.

All the interviews and discussions were electronically recorded by the researchers with the consent from the respondents. Every qualitative consultation was initiated with general talks and rapport building. Questions pertaining to the projects and intervention were only asked when the stakeholders felt comfortable sharing their opinions.

Since there were two teams deployed in different districts simultaneously, general trend, experience, happenings of one district was shared with the researchers of another district. This helped to get a generalized and differences in view from both the districts to triangulate the information gathered. This further identified the areas that needed to be prioritised and probed when deemed necessary. Researchers' reflections during the qualitative consultations were also recorded. There was no such issue came up with people collection poor data. After the qualitative exercises concluded in the two districts, an extensive debriefing session was held among all the field researchers who shared and discussed their experience, findings and observations during the qualitative exercise.

2.24 Qualitative data handling and analysis

All the interviews and group discussions were recorded electronically with respondents' consent which were later transcribed and translated to English language. Additionally, the qualitative field researchers also prepared field notes with their reflections based on the recording and their observation. A one-day extensive debriefing session was held among all the field researchers where all the questions were discussed comprehensively and the findings, observations and researchers' reflections were recorded. The research coordinator had noted the analysis of the researchers based on their reflections shared during the debriefing session.

For the qualitative analysis, the research coordinator had referred to the transcripts, analysis note from the debriefing session and the field notes prepared by the field researchers. The

names of the participants were removed from the transcripts and field notes and stored in an external storage device along with the computer of the research coordinator.

The qualitative data analysis adopted the following steps.

Data translating and transcribing: The recorded information was first translated and transcribed from Nepali to English. A verbatim method was adopted to transcribe qualitative interviews. This required, transcribing the information in first person word to word. Coding of the information was only done after transcribing and translating from Nepali to English was completed.

Data coding: The coding of the qualitative data was done by thorough scanning of the transcripts. The key terms were identified and the responses were grouped. The study used descriptive coding to enable research team to efficiently pull out and refer back to the qualitative data while the report writing was underway.

Theme generation: In this step, the data with preliminary coding were further grouped into themes through the process of "focused coding"- combining smaller, related coded data into one category, subdividing more common coded data into subcategories or eliminate themes/categories that became outliers. Matrices were used for grouping of the coded data into themes which were identified based upon the log-frame indicator, evaluation questions, and preliminary findings from quantitative data. The process enabled the systematic organization of information from qualitative consultations and in determining trends among groups and contexts. An inter-rater agreement of 80% or above was sought for validation.

Data Interpretation: This step involved analysis of the data which were coded and categorized into themes for drawing conclusions. The interpretation i.e. analysis and conclusion of the information focused on explaining trends and findings casual interference to the quantitative data. This step also included the presentation of opposing views, the use of quotes and sought to establish inter-thematic validation and relation of data.

Finally, the quantitative and qualitative data analysed and then consolidated into a report which included inter method validation, explanation, and inferences. This also included disaggregation of data based on different groups and subgroups.

2.25 Challenges in baseline qualitative data collection

Table below gives a detail on some of the challenges faced by researchers during qualitative field work.

Table 20: Challenges and mitigation measures

Challenges	Mitigation Measure
Language barrier was one of the major challenges. Even though participants/respondents could understand Nepali language it was difficult for them to reply back using Nepali language.	To ensure that participants were not intimidated by language and to ensure they expressed their views openly, local translator was hired for translation and interpretation. Prior to the

	interview, the interpreter was oriented about the program, questions and the intent so that they translate the interviews as it is. Moreover, researchers themselves understood the local language to some extent therefore, no information was lost during translation.
No school level intervention had started yet, therefore it was not relevant to ask specific questions pertaining to attitude change. Moreover, head teachers and teachers were hesitant in answering questions regarding School Management Committee (SMC), School improvement plan (SIP) among others.	General perception of the students and teachers regarding school environment, teacher's pedagogy, school environment was gathered
During FGDs conducted among parents, only male parents expressed their view openly while females were silent most of the time. This was because in presence of men, women did not feel comfortable to express their views/opinions.	FGDs with male parents and female parents were later conducted separately.
M-OOS girls specially aged 10-14 were hesitant to express her opinion and talk altogether. A fair amount of time was invested to build rapport with the girls.	Before proceeding with the checklist questions, researchers started with informal conversation a bit longer than usual and then only proceeded with the questions.

2.26 Limitation of qualitative data collection

Some of the limitation of qualitative data collection and analysis that might have impacted the robustness and reliability of the evaluation is described below:

- Statistically not representative: Since qualitative research is a perspective-based, the responses given cannot be not measured. Comparisons can be made but this might lead toward duplication.
- Biased view: The researcher's presence during data gathering, which is often unavoidable in qualitative research, might have affected the respondents' responses.
- Verification: qualitative research is open-ended, and participants have more control over the content of the data collected. So, the researcher is not able to verify the results objectively against the scenarios stated by the respondents.
- The volume of data makes analysis and interpretation time consuming.
- Issues of anonymity and confidentiality can present problems when presenting findings

3. Key characteristic subgroups and barriers of baseline samples

3.1 Educational marginalisation

Girls survey was conducted with a total of 800 girls belonging to both treatment and comparison groups. 400 girls from treatment and comparison group each was selected as sample covering at least 50% of the CLCs making a total sample of 800. The total sample was further sub- categorized based on their age groups. The sample for M-OOS girls belonging to age group 10-14 was already low than the girls belonging to the age group 15- 19. Therefore, throughout the analysis, the denominator for age group 10-14 was 78 for treatment and 18 for comparison group. Similarly, the denominator for age group 15-19 was 322 for treatment and 382 for comparison group.

Apart from the girls' survey, household survey was also conducted with parents of these M-OOS girls making a total sample size of 800 from both treatment and comparison groups. Therefore, the denominator for household survey was 800. Moreover, for in-direct beneficiaries, seven schools (three from Bara and four from Rautahat) was selected and survey was conducted with a total of 521 in-school adolescent from these schools meaning that the denominator for in-school was 521. The analysis was done taking each denominator as 100%

Table 21: Distribution of sample size across groups

Girls Survey	Treatment	Comparison
M-OOS girls aged 10-14	78	18
M-OOS girls aged 15-19	322	382
Household Survey	400	400
Attitude change index		
In-school boys and girls	521	
Barefoot assessment (Teacher tool and classroom observation)	7 schools	

3.2 Characteristics

In line with the GEC objective of understanding and addressing educational marginalisation of girls in terms of sub-groups, this section discusses the characteristics of the sample population along with the key barriers they face. An intersection of the key characteristics and the key barriers has also been provided to show how girls with certain characteristics are more educationally marginalised than others. The intersection helps not only understand education marginalisation but also provides inputs for the project on how it can tailor its intervention differently for different sub-groups. The characteristics are presented below:

3.2.1 Ethnicity

Based on the distribution of households by ethnicity, majority of the sample M-OOS girls from both treatment and comparison were Muslim. In case of treatment group, 87.2 % girls belonging to (10-14) age group in treatment were Muslim, while it was 40.4% for age group

(10-15). This was followed by Terai Madhesi with 29.8 % representation for (10-15) age group, and 6.4% for (14-19) age group. Pahadi Dalit and Terai Madhesi Brahmin and Chhetri had the lowest representation across both the age groups with only .3% and .6 respectively for (15-19) age group and none from (10-14) age group.

Table 22: Distribution of sample on the basis of ethnicity (in percentage)

Ethnicity	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Terai/Madheshi Brahmin or chhetri	-	2.2%	11.1%	3.1%
Terai/Madhesi dalit	6.4%	22%	27.8%	25.9%
Terai/Madhesi janajati	2.6%	11.8%	-	15.2%
Terai/Madhesi others	5.1%	23.3%	5.6%	17.0%
Muslim	85.9%	40.7%	55.6%	38.7%
Pahad Dalit	-	-	-	-
Total:	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: = HH survey/ n= 800

As mentioned above, for the comparison group also, Muslim formed the majority of the population with 55.6% for (10-14) age group and 38.5 percent for (15-19) age group. This was followed by Terai/Madhesi/Dalit with more than 22% representation across both the age groups. Like in the treatment group, Terai/Madhesi Brahmin or Chhetri had the lowest representation of 2.5% for the age group (15-19) and none for the age group (10-14). In both treatment and comparison groups, age group (10-14) had less representation than 15-19 age groups because the population of (10-14) were already less in the sample.

3.2.2 Household Income

Data depicted that the majority of the sample households for treatment relied on agriculture as the source for income. 55.1% and 57.1% of the household for the age group (10-14) and (15-19) respectively relied on agriculture. This was followed by daily labour which was true across both the age group (10-14) and (15-19) for treatment.

Similarly, data for the comparison group also showed a similar trend. The majority of the household relied on Agriculture as a major source of income for the age group (15-19). However, for the age group (10-14) wage labour was the primary source of income with 55.6% working as labourers and 44.4%, followed by agriculture 44.4%. Wage labour was the second

most source for people belonging to the age group (15-19). Job/Series had the lowest as a contributor to household income across both the age groups for treatment as well as the comparison group.

Table 23: Sources of income for sample households (in percentage)

Source of household income	Category			
	Treatment		comparison	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Agriculture	55.1%	57.1%	44.4%	62.0%
Livestock rearing	-	1.9%	-	3.1%
Job/Services	1.3%	.9%	-	.8%
Business	-	7.8%	-	3.4%
Wage Labor	42.3%	30.4%	55.6%	29.3%
Foreign employment	1.3%	1.9%	-	1.3%

Source: = HH survey/ n= 800

3.2.3 Language

M-OOS girls who spoke the Bhojpuri language were the highest for the treatment group within the age group (15-19). Bajika was the most used language with (66.7%) of the girls between the age group (10-14) using it at home. For the comparison group, M-OOS girls within the age group (10-14) shared the same percentage, 50% for both Bhojpuri and Bajika language. However, for the age group (15-19), 64.9% spoke Bhojpuri language and 35.1% spoke Bajika. Despite the variation in percentage between Bajika and Bhojpuri, data clearly showed that girls extensively used only their primary language as a medium of communication.

Table 24: Language spoken at home (in percentage)

Mother tongue	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Bhojpuri	33.3%	56.8%	50.0%	64.9%
Bajika	66.7%	43.2%	50.0%	35.1%

Source: = Girld survey/ n= 800

3.2.4 Household

The household characteristics have three sub-categories, which are ‘M-OOS girls with children,’ ‘education of parents’, and ‘girls having more than five members in the family.’ For both treatment and comparison groups, 50% of the M-OOS girls belonging to the age group

(15-19) had children. Likewise, for the age group (10-14), 3.8% and 5.6% of the M-OOS girls were mothers for treatment and comparison groups, respectively.

In terms of the education level of parents, data depicted that most of the M-OOS girls' parents either had little to no education. Data for the treatment cohort showed that 85.9% of parents of (10-14) aged M-OOS girls had little or no education. Likewise, for parents of (15-19) aged M-OOS girls, 78% had little to no education at all. Data for comparison groups also showed similar trend. 88.9% of parents for age group (10-14) and 76.4% of parents for the age group (15-19) had no education or only had basic level education.

In terms of having more than 5 household members, in both the cohorts across all groups, more than 94% of the household had five or more than five members in the household. For the age group (10-14) of treatment, all the number of five or more than five household members were 100%. Similarly, for the age group (15-19) for the same cohort, it was slightly low at 97.5%. In the case of comparison, M-OOS girls who belonged to (10-14), 94.4% of them had five or more members in the household. The number was high by a margin for the age group (15-19) with 96.3%.

Table 25: Household characteristics (in percentage)

Characteristics	***Category***			
	Treatment		***Comparison***	
	10-14 (78=100%)	**15-19 (322=100%)**	**10-14 (18=100%)**	**15-19 (382=100%)**
Household Characteristics				
Girls with children	3.8%	50.9%	5.6%	50.3%
Head of household has no/ limited education	85.9%	78.0%	88.9%	76.4%
Households having 5 or more than 5 members	100%	97.5%	94.4%	96.3%

Source: = HH survey/ n= 800

3.2.5 Poverty

The poverty characteristics were sub-categorized by 'household not having land for themselves,' 'roof made out of hay,' 'unable to meet basic need,' and 'gone hungry without sleep.' For poverty characteristics, the majority (14.1% for treatment) (22.2% for comparison group) of the M-OOS girls belonging to the age group (10-14) said that they did not have land to themselves. However, the percentage was almost the same at 7.5% for M-OOS girls belonging to the age group (15-19) in both treatment and comparison groups.7.7% of the M-OOS girls from the age group (10-14) in the treatment group reported that their house was made out of hay. The number was slightly higher for the age group (15-19) at 11.2%. For comparison group, 6.8 % of the M-OOS girls belonging to age bracket (15-19), and 11.1% belonging to the age group (10-14) had houses made of hay unlike in treatment cohort where the percentage for the age group (10-14) was lower, and it was higher for age group (15-19).

For treatment group data suggested that 35.9% of the M-OOS girls from the age bracket (10-14) and 27.6% from (15-19) were unable to meet their basic needs. Similarly, for the comparison group, 22.2% of (10-14) age range and 29.8% of (15-19) age range were unable to meet their basic need. Although the majority of the girls said that they could not meet their basic needs, it was unlikely that all of them had to go hungry to sleep. Only a limited percentage of girls went to sleep hungry at night across all age groups to sleep. Only limited percentage of girls went to sleep hungry at night across all age groups.

Table 26: Poverty characteristics
(in percentage)

Characteristics	*Category*			
	Treatment		*Comparision*	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Poverty Characteristics				
Household not having land for themselves	14.1%	7.5%	22.2%	7.6%
Roof made of hay	7.7%	11.2%	11.1%	6.8%
Unable to meet basic needs	35.9%	27.6%	22.2%	29.8%
Gone hungry to sleep many days in the past year	7.7%	8.1%	5.6%	7.6%

Source: Girls Survey | n = 800

3.2.6 Additional characteristics identified by EE

Apart from these key characteristics mentioned above, FDM identified girls belonging to Muslim ethnicity as a new key subgroup that was not identified by the project. Data showed that the Muslim girls' population in the treatment group is almost the same as the Non-Muslim population. In the treatment group, 49.5% of girls are Muslim and 50.5% of girls are non-Muslim. In the comparison group, the Muslim population is almost half than the Non- Muslim population. Since the representation of Muslim girls is virtually the same as the Non-Muslim girls in the sample across both the intervention and comparison groups and Muslim ethnicity is one of the marginalized groups identified by the government of Nepal (CBS, 2011). It is, therefore, important that the project considers Muslim ethnicity as one of the vital characteristic subgroups for its intervention.

Table 27: Muslim and Non-Muslim M-OOS girls
(in percentage)

Ethnicity	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim girls	Non-Muslim girls	Muslim girls	Non-Muslim girls
Muslim	49.5%	50.5%	39.5%	60.5%

Source: Girls Survey | n = 800

To summarise, the main characteristics group identified in our sample are outlined in the table below.

Table 28: Summary of characteristics and subgroup

Characteristic subgroup	Treatment	Comparison
M-OOS girls aged 10-14	19.5%	4.5%
M-OOS girls aged 15-19	80.5%	95.5%
M-OOS Muslim girls	49.5%	39.5%
Never been to school	51.5%	47.5%
Dropped out	48.3%	51.8%
Married but waiting for Gauna	41%	19.3%
M-OOS girls with children	41%	48%
M-OOS girls whose primary language is not Nepali	100%	100%
Household whose primary source of income is labour work	29.3%	30%
Household head with no education level	40%	42.8%

Source: Girls Survey | n = 800

The purpose of this section is to summarize the characteristics subgroups that were identified by PIN, and additional subgroups that were identified by FDM. These subgroups were the basis for outcome and output level analysis throughout the report.

PIN identified girls aged 10-14 and 15-19 as the major characteristic subgroups. The baseline report was disaggregated based on these two sub-groups. Apart from the subgroups mentioned above, another characteristic i.e., M-OOS Muslim girls had been identified as an additional subgroup due to a higher number of girls belonging to this ethnicity and also because these girls were marginalized in terms of learning than the non-Muslim girls. Moreover, the government of Nepal also identified the Muslim community as a religious minority and socially excluded group that need upliftment.

Girls have never been to school, and girls who have dropped out were also identified as subgroups. The analysis for these two groups has only be done with the learning and numeracy scores. Girls who had not been to school and girls who had dropped out of school were taken as a subgroup due to their high representation in the sample. It was also to see the differences between learning and numeracy level of girls those who had dropped out and those who never went to school.

'Married but waiting for Gauna,' also has high representation in the sample. However, this has not been considered to be a significant subgroup for detailed analysis because majority of these girls belong to the age group of 10-14, having a separate subgroup would not generate any significant findings as the findings would be the same as for girls aged 10-14 years.

Likewise, in terms of language, Nepali was not the primary language of all the girls in the sample. Despite the fact that 100% of the girls did not speak Nepali, this characteristic was not considered to be either a subgroup or a barrier because no significant result was generated when language and learning scores were cross-tabulated. In addition to this, qualitative findings also suggested that language was not a barrier for girls as most of them, including Muslim girls,

wanted to learn Nepali to be able to read information written on the board, newspapers, and other documents. They further added that learning Nepali would make them less dependent on their husbands and in-laws.

Characteristics like 'girls with children,' 'agriculture/ labour work as a primary occupation,' and 'parents with no education' were also initially considered to be potential subgroups. However, these were not taken to be the major subgroups despite having high representation in the sample because they did not generate any significant result when cross-tabulatedd with different barriers.

3.3 Barriers

The baseline evaluation showed 'poverty', 'restricted mobility', and 'household chores' as key barriers to M-OOS girls' learning. This section describes the key barriers mentioned above in in detail.

3.3.1 Poor household

For girls living in poor household, data depicted that treatment group had poorer household population than the comparison group. For treatment group, more than half (51.3%) of M-OOS girls aged between (10-14) lived in a poor household whereas for age group (15-19) 34.5% lived in a poor household. In terms of comparison group 44.4% and 34.6% aged (10-14) and (15-19) respectively lived in a poor household. Various factors such as 'household who did not own land', 'gone hungry to sleep for most of the days in last 12 months', 'gone without clean enough clean water for most of the days in last 12 months', 'gone without medicines and medical treatment for most of the days in last 12 months', 'gone without cash income for most of the days in last 12 months' and 'household unable to meet basic needs' were combined to define poor household.

Table 29: Poor household as barrier for different age groups (in percentage)

Barriers	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Poor household	51.3%	34.5%	44.4%	34.6%

Source: Girls Survey | n = 800

Data depicted that 42.9% Muslim M-OOS girls in treatment group lived in a poor household. The percentage of Muslim girls living in the poor household is greater than those who were Non-Muslim. Data also shows a significant difference between poor household and ethnicity, suggesting that Muslim girls are from poorer household than Non-Muslim girls. However, for the comparison group, the population of girls living in the poor household is higher for Non-Muslim than Muslim M-OOS girls.

Table 30: Poor household as barrier for Muslim M-OOS girls (in percentage)

Barriers	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim girls	Non-Muslim girls	Muslim girls	Non-Muslim girls
Poor household*	42.9%	32.7%	26.6%	40.5%

Source: Girls survey/ n= 800

3.3.2 Restriction in mobility

Restricted mobility came up as another key barrier during the baseline evaluation. While quantitative data did not clearly show this, qualitative data strongly pointed out that girls' mobility was highly restricted. The main reason for this was safety and lack of trust. Quantitative data suggested that only 2.6%of the M-OOS girls between the age group (10-14), and 7.1% between the age group (15-19) thought that going to school was fairly safe for girls. The data is almost the same for comparison group with 5.6% from age group (10-14) and 6.5% from age group (15-19) mentioned that going to school was safe.

Table 31: Restricted mobility as a barrier across different age groups (in percentage)

Barriers	Category			
	Treatment		Comparision	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Fairly unsafe or very unsafe to travel to school	2.6%	7.1%	5.6%	6.5%
Doesn't get support to participate in training (support in life plan)	0%	0.6%	0%	0.5%
Doesn't get support to initiate business (support in life plan)	10.3%	2.8%	5.6%	5.5%
Doesn't get support to join school/formal class (support in life plan)	12.8%	2.8%	5.6%	8.1%

Source: Girls' survey | n = 800

Table 32: Restricted mobility as a barrier for Muslim M-OOS girls (in percentage)

Barriers	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim girls	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Fairly unsafe or very unsafe to travel to school	4.5%	7.9%	10.1%	4.1%
Doesn't get support to participate in training (support in life plan)	0%	1%	0%	0.8%
Doesn't get support to initiate business (support in life plan)	6.1%	2.5%	6.9%	4.5%

Doesn't get support to join school/formal class (support in life plan)	7.1%	2.5%	9.5%	7.1%

Source: Girls survey/ n= 800

Qualitative findings suggested a contradictory view on the restriction of girls. During interactions, most of the parents of the M-OOS girls expressed concern about sending their daughter/daughter in law outside the house for more than an hour. In FGDs conducted with parents in Rautahat, parents feared their daughters 'interacting with other men while outside the house' could hurt their image in the society. Moreover, parents in Bara perceived girls as a threat to their family's name. They, therefore, think that it is a better idea to marry their daughter before they reach puberty as a safety measure to protect the family's reputation.

There had been an incident in Bara which had contributed to re-enforcing this belief held by parents. A boy had clicked a photo of one of the CLC participants while going for the CLC and posted it on social media, that reinforced some of the parents' belief that traveling outside the house was 'unsafe' for girls. Traditional blind belief that 'husbands have the right over the mobility of wives' was also was another reason for the restricted mobility of the M-OOS girls. Moreover, it was also added by M-OOS girls that parents and guardians do not trust girls because they think girls can easily elope. Therefore, the lack of trust towards girls could be the reason for the guardians to feel ensure, thus restricting them from going to CLC or other places.

The baseline generated information regarding restriction in mobility which corresponds to the TOC. Social norms and culture played a part in influencing a woman's movement because some of the cultural beliefs do not support the idea of women going out of their homes to fend for their families or for training/education. This is viewed as a man's role, and women who do not adhere to this are ostracized in the community. When asked the reason for the restriction, M-OOS girls from both the district said that it is due to the social norms and fear that they will elope with some other men they are restricted. They further added that this could be the very reason for their early marriage. M-OOS girls further shared that, with the amount of household chores they have to perform, there is no time to even think about going out of the house. In addition to this, the social mobilizer of Bara further elaborated that the biggest challenge for CLC facilitators is to retain girls in the class because of restriction by their parents to go to CLC. For instance, in one KII conducted with the facilitator, she mentioned that the husband of one girl beat her because she continued going to CLC despite her husband's restriction. When asked the reason for this, the facilitator said that husbands often 'get jealous and feel threatened by their wife's achievement'.

This was further validated by CLC facilitators from both Bara and Rautahat district. CLC facilitators opined that the most challenging part of being a facilitator is managing household chores and coming out of the house. They said that for those facilitators who have babies, have to stop the class in the middle to go home to feed their children. When asked the reason for such restriction, a CLC facilitator from Rautahat said that even to conduct a three hours class, it becomes a challenge because of the social norms which views women spending too much time outside home as a sin. This often resulted in the CLC facilitator dropping out of CLC. A

closer analysis of restriction in mobility gave a clear picture that girls, irrespective of their ethnic background or age, had to face the same problem. The restriction was not shaped by ethnicity but by the patriarchal practice in the community. Lack of mobility may negatively impact the transition life path of M-OOS girls and act as an impediment for their successful transition as they may not be in a position to exercise her skills outside the home.

Moreover, the project did not show any specific category of girls being more disadvantaged or marginalized than the others. Since the key barrier at household level stemmed from cultural norms which are prevalent across the district, restriction in mobility applied to all, irrespective of their characteristic. Therefore, limitation in movement is relevant for the project intervention.

3.3.3 Household chores

Responsibility of performing household chores was another barrier identified by the study. Data suggested that girls from treatment spent more hours doing household chores than girls from the comparison group. Moreover, for the treatment group, 74.4% of the M-OOS girls from the age group (10-14) had to contribute to the household chores most of the days than M-OOS girls between the age (15-19) with 56.2%. However, for the comparison group, 54.2% of the M-OOS girls between the age group (10-14) performed more household chores compared to M-OOS girls of age (14-19) at 44.4%. This information was verified by parents and change champions. This barrier stemmed from the prevailing cultural norm, which expects girls to perform much of the household chores.

Table 33: Household chores as barrier across different age group (in percentage)

Barriers	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14 (78=100%)	15-19 (322=100%)	10-14 (18=100%)	15-19 (382=100%)
Has to perform household chores most of the day	74.4%	56.2%	44.4%	54.2%

Source: Girls' survey | n = 800

Data for Muslim girls suggested that in the treatment group 65.7% of the Muslim girls performed household chores most of day. The percentage of Muslim girls who performed household chores was higher than Non-Muslim girls. The significant difference in the values also suggest that Muslim girls had to perform more household chores than Non-Muslim girls. However, the finding is the opposite in the comparison group. In the comparison group, 65.7% of the Non- Muslim girls performed household chores most of the day than the Muslim girls. However, there is no significant difference between the scores for comparison group. When asked Muslim girls the reason for performing household chores most of the day, almost all of the girls said that it was their responsibility. M-OOS girls further shared that before marriage they performed more work as a part of marriage preparation, and after marriage it became their responsibility.

Table 34: Household chores as barrier for M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Barriers	Category			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim girls	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Has to perform household chores most of the day	65.7%	54%	35.4%	65.7%

Source: Girls' survey | n = 800

Qualitative data also suggested that girls more often than not missed CLC classes because of having to work for longer hours. When asked the girls if their mother-in-law gave them a helping hand, majority of them said that mother-in-law did not help at all instead they would give girls more work than needed to perform. One of the girls in Bara mentioned that mood of the mother-in-law often had a direct role in influencing the amount of household chores which had to be performed by girls. M-OOS girls from both the district mentioned that the only time they did not devote much time for household chores was during menstruation when they were not allowed to enter in the kitchen or collect water. The notion that girls should do the household chores stems from gender roles which begins in early childhood and intensifies as girls reach adolescence. Girls in poor households bear a disproportionate share of the work and responsibility of feeding and caring for family members through unpaid household work. The toil and its time-intensive demands greatly limit girls' choice of productive activities such as attending CLC or trainings.

3.4 Intersection between key characteristics subgroups and barriers

This section provides a cross tabulation of the characteristics and significant key barriers mentioned in the earlier sections. Since 'high burden of household chores' (significant) and poor household (not significant but higher percentage of M-OOS girls reported to be poor) were identified as two key barriers. Therefore, only these two have been cross-tabulated with key characteristics. While restricted mobility was also one of the key barriers identified in the study, it did not come up strongly from quantitative data, therefore it has not been cross-tabulated with the characteristics in this section.

3.4.1 Household chores

Overall, the relation of M-OOS girls' household chores with characteristics like 'more than 5 members in the household/less than 5 members in the household'; HH head illiterate / HH head literate were non-significant. This suggests that these factors did not have the impact on girls' household chores. Moreover, girls having children, also did not have any impact on the household chores performed by girls.

Characteristics like 'HH not owning land', however, did have a significant relationship with the household chores (Table 35: Key barriers to education by characteristic subgroups for household chores) shows that a higher percentage of girls' who did not have land ownership

performed more household chores as compared to those girls who owned land. This means that M-OOS girls who had land ownership performed fewer household chores.

Similarly, relationship of 'household chores' with 'gone to sleep hungry/ not gone to sleep hungry' and 'unable to meet basic need/able to meet basic need' showed significant difference. This suggests that only these factors had impact on the household chores. It can therefore be inferred that higher percentage of girls who went to sleep hungry and girls who were unable to meet basic need had to perform more household chores. Although this could be because girls in poor household usually have to work more, no such information was generated through the qualitative data. On the contrary, FGD and KII respondents pointed out the fact that irrespective of the M-OOS girls' family's characteristics, they were burdened with household chores.

Table 35: Key barriers to education by characteristic subgroups for household chores (in percentage)

Characteristics	Treatment	Comparison
Girls spent most of their time in HH chores		
More members in the household		
more than 5 members in the household	60.2%	53%
less than 5 members in the household	37.5%	73.30%
M-OOS girls with children		
Girls with children	58.90%	58.00%
Girls without children	53.20%	54.60%
Family illiteracy		
HH head illiterate	61.6%	56.50%
HH head literate	52.4%	44.60%
No land ownership		
HH does not own land (significant in for HH chores only	77.1%	72.70%
HH owns land	58.1%	52%
House made up of hay		
Roof made of hay	64.30%	64.30%
Roof made of others	59.20%	53.00%
Gone to bed without food		
Gone to sleep hungry (significant in for HH chores only	87.50%	86.70%
Not gone to sleep hungry	57.30%	51.10%
Unable to meet basic need		

Unable to meet basic need (Significant for hh chores only)	75.20%	65.30%
Able to meet basic need	53.40%	48.90%

Source: Girls survey/ n= 800

3.4.2 Poor household

Poor household was identified as another key barrier for M-OOS girls learning as majority of girls reported that they were from a poor household, however, all of the characteristics like 'more than 5 members in the household/ less than 5 members in the household', 'Girls with children/ Girls without children', 'Roof made of hay/ Roof made of others', were not significant. This suggests that 'poor household' did not have any impact on these factors.

As mentioned above, poor household was defined by combining characteristics such as 'household who did not own land', 'gone hungry to sleep for most of the days in last 12 months', 'gone without clean enough clean water for most of the days in last 12 months', 'gone without medicines and medical treatment for most of the days in last 12 months', 'gone without cash income for most of the days in last 12 months' and 'HH unable to meet basic needs'. Due to this reason cross tabulation between poor household and combined characteristics was not conducted as it would give a significant result anyway.

Although quantitative findings did not show significant result between poor household and its defined characteristics, qualitative findings suggested that people from poor families were more constrained with social norms that devalued girls' opportunity of freedom, and decision making. Poor families had to make difficult decisions about how to use scarce resources, and gender norms set the parameters for these choices. A common example is where poor families prioritised their sons' education because sons had more earning prospect. People from the poor households may be ready to comply with the idea of women working independently to fend the family but the prevailing gender norms that girls should not be going outside the household generally overrides their desire to comply. It was also seen that better-off families had greater social status which gave them the power to defy certain norms, particularly if they regarded them as constraining. For example, a change champion in Bara district had sent his daughter to the city for higher education, despite disapproval from the rest of his community. However, this was not the case in the poorer household. People complied with norms because they feared negative reactions from others. People were often acutely aware when others were not conforming to social norms, and policed this behaviour through comments, and gossip. Not complying with norms devoured negative impact on their own livelihoods.

It should be noted that although some level of qualitative information can be provided to explain the key findings from the intersection shown above, all the findings could not be backed by qualitative data. This was because they were not touched upon in the FGD/KII checklist. The checklist was finalized based on the general trend of preliminary findings. The fact that relationship between these factors was established only during the analysis phase meant that FDM could not add anything in the FGD/KII checklist during the field visit. These trends can hence, be explored at endline.

Table 36: Key barriers to education by characteristic subgroup for poor household (in percentage)

Characteristics	Treatment	Comparison
More members in the household		
more than 5 members in the household	38%	35.1%
less than 5 members in the household	25%	33.3%
M-OOS girls with children		
Girls with children	38.9%	34.2%
Girls without children	31.8%	41.5%
Family illiteracy		
HH head illiterate	39.6%	38.0%
HH head literate	30.5%	25.0%
House made up of hay		
Roof made of hay	50%	75%
Roof made of others	36.3%	32%

Source: Girls survey/ n= 800

3.5 Correspondence of sample characteristics with total population

The key characteristics used by the project to map the beneficiaries were age range (10-14 and 15-19), and status of schooling (dropped out and never been to school) and girls belonging to Muslim ethnicity. The sample selected from these groups were divided proportionately. Hence, the data collected by the evaluator naturally corresponded to the total population.

3.6 Correspondence of barriers with the project ToC

As mentioned above, household chores, restriction in mobility and poor households were identified as key barriers to M-OOS girls learning by FDM- the analysis has been done with the key characteristics above. However, apart from these barriers mentioned above, negative attitude of parents towards learning is a barrier for which projects' assumptions appear to be challenged by baseline results. It is important to note that while barriers relating to poverty, household chores, restricted mobility have been fairly straightforward to evidence by findings, barriers such as attitudes were harder to capture, suggesting that attitudinal barriers to girls' learning may be more prevalent than reported. PIN in its TOC had also identified some barriers that affected M-OOS girls learning and transition. The barrier mentioned in the TOC that did not come up strongly and those barriers which were in-line with the project's intervention are explained in detail below:

3.6.1 Social isolation, lack of peer support network.

Social isolation and lack of peer support network did not come up as a barrier during qualitative or quantitative data collection. Therefore, FDM suggests to remove social isolation, lack of peer support network from the TOC.

3.6.2 Limited access to literacy, numeracy or transitional programs

Project identified limited access to literacy, numeracy, or transitional programs as barriers for M-OOS girls. However, FDM findings suggest that limited access to literacy numeracy or transitional program was caused by household chores and restriction in mobility (section 3.3 Barriers) which has already identified as one of the key barriers to girls' learning. FDM therefore, thinks this barrier is irrelevant for the project and PIN should consider removing access to literacy and numeracy or transitional programs as a barrier.

3.6.3 Low Nepali language competency (IO1)

Low Nepali language competency was identified as one of the barriers by the project. Although 100% of the girls spoke in their primary language, it was identified during qualitative data collection that girls could read and speak Nepali language. Even the quantitative data showed no stark difference in the learning test scores of the girls. Girls across different age group and education level have almost similar scores. Therefore, language cannot be considered a barrier for Non- Muslim girls. However, for Muslim subgroup due to limited to no interaction and communication in Nepali, girls scored relatively lower scores in EGRA than the Non-Muslim girls. Moreover, most of the Muslim girls are learning Nepali scripture for the first time. This therefore suggests that language might be a barrier for Muslim girls. The project's intervention to teach Nepali in CLC as it is the language of instruction in the school is relevant for overcoming the language barrier. It is recommended that PIN revise this barrier to make it Muslim group specific.

3.6.4 Limited access to family planning, motherhood, early pregnancy and childbirth related health problems.

Access to family planning was identified as one of the barriers by PIN. This barrier therefore is relevant for the project. However, this did not come up strongly during the quantitative finding. Questions surrounding family planning were a part of life skill indicator, which suggests that the score for practice in family planning is lower than the knowledge. This means that even though girls have knowledge, they do not use their knowledge into practice due restriction to avail such resources. This has been explained in the latter section (Intermediate Outcome Indicator 2.2: Life Skills Index). Moreover, quantitative findings from the baseline study also suggests that 35.5% of the M-OOS girls are not using any contraceptive method to control pregnancy. When explored this through a qualitative lens, girls with children mentioned that they are not allowed to go to the health post alone without family member's consent. While girls without children mentioned that they follow their husbands will. Furthermore, qualitative findings also suggested that girls from Muslim community avoid using contraception because it is deemed culturally wrong. Therefore, the project should focus on providing more trainings to girls on the use of contraception, how to get an access to health post and create awareness about family planning.

3.6.5 Early marriage, pregnancy and childbirth.

Early marriage, pregnancy and childbirth were another barrier identified by the project in the TOC. This particular barrier was neither the key barriers nor characteristics, because project had already identified girls between the age group of (10-19) who are married, pregnant and those who are mothers as primary beneficiaries. Although the findings suggested that parents are aware regarding the legal age of marriage, the trend of marrying early is still prevalent in the society. M-OOS girls reported that parents marry off their daughter at a young age as a way out for less dowry. M-OOS girls' parents shared that it is due to fear of girls eloping with a random boy. Project through its intervention aims to reduce child marriage by raising awareness through change champions, and government official. However, FDM think such deep-rooted practice will require more effort from the government's side as well as from the side of the change champions. Hence, the project should increase the number of awareness programs.

3.6.6 Limited life skills: low levels of self-esteem, agency, confidence, and ability to negotiate important life decisions.

Limited life skill (low self-esteem, confidence, and ability to negotiate) was identified as a barrier by the project, however, FDM did not find this as a significant barrier. Data depicted that majority of the M-OOS girls fell under the category of having '50-70'% and 'more than 70%' self-efficacy. This meant that majority of the girls already had the ability and the confidence to solve life problems and to tackle with them. When explored self-efficacy through a qualitative lens there seemed to be a contradicting view. Even though the self-efficacy for all these girls seemed high, it is due to self-reported bias. Most of the girls said during qualitative data collection that they were dependent on their elders to make even the smallest decisions for them. The given barrier is relevant for the project, and project should plan its intervention in such a way that it focuses on building confidence, and ways of meeting future aspiration.

3.6.7 Vulnerability to or experience of GBV

The project had identified vulnerability to or experience of GBV as one of the barriers which was also identified by FDM. Although this was not explored quantitatively, qualitative findings suggested that girls when they disobeyed their husband usually fell in the trap of abuse or violence. During the qualitative survey only two girls were identified as victims of violence. There might have been many other girls as well who might have faced the same problem, but the issue of only two girls from Bara was disclosed. Even though project identified this as a barrier, there are no distinctive intervention planned by the project to mitigate the issue.

Coloured table below explains the barriers, appropriateness of the intervention, and considerations for a new subgroup. The green colour in the table explains that no change is required to the intervention, amber colour represents minor change, and red colour implies major change needed in the intervention.

Table 37: Assessment of the project interventions in relation to sub-groups and key barriers

Sub-group	Intervention	Appropriateness of sub-group	Considerations for intervention for subgroup
10-14	CLC classes, life skill courses FL, FP, and GSE	10-14 (19.5%) and 15-19 (80.5%) as the major characteristic subgroups. These subgroups were identified by PIN to implement its activities. The baseline report was disaggregated based on these two sub-groups. Life skill activities designed by the project was not effective in improving good attitude and practice for both the age groups. It was because activities implemented by the project was too broad for girls to comprehend and CLC facilitator to deliver. Moreover, qualitative findings suggested that CLC facilitator were not confident enough to conduct sessions on FL, FP and GSE. Since the life skill intervention did not start during/before the baseline survey, this may have factored to this finding.	Girls between the age group 10-14 showed interest in enrolling into formal education provided that their parents or would be in-laws allow them. Therefore, project should plan intervention to raise awareness among parents. Knowledge attitude and practice on FP, FL and GSE were low in these girls therefore the project should focus on effectively implementing its life skill activities. It is suggested that the project focus on just one of the three themes for effective implementation.
15-19	CLC classes, life skill courses FL, FP, and GSE		Enrolling into formal education was not seen as a life path these girls would choose given the household chores, and restriction in mobility. Therefore, different avenues apart from tailoring should be introduced to girls. At present, tailoring is the only option they can think of. Knowledge attitude and practice on FP, FL and GSE were low in these girls therefore the project should focus on effectively implementing its life skill activities. Knowledge attitude and practice on FP, FL and GSE were low in these girls therefore the project should focus on effectively implementing its life skill activities. It is suggested that the project focus on just one of the three themes for effective implementation.

Never been to school	CLC classes, life skill courses FL, FP, and GSE	Girls never been to school (51.5%), and girls who have dropped out (48.8%) was also identified as subgroups. The analysis for these two groups has only be done with the learning and numeracy scores. Girls who had not been to school and girls who had dropped out of school was taken as a subgroup due to their high representation in the sample. It was also to see the differences between learning and numeracy level of girls those who had dropped out and those who never went school.	Curriculum for girls who have never been to school should be separated from those who have dropped out as girls who have been to school scored very low compared to those who had been to school.
Dropped out	CLC classes, life skill courses FL, FP, and GSE		Different curriculum for girls who have dropped out of school because qualitative finding suggested that girls of these subgroup were irregular in class because they were familiar with the curriculum.
Muslim girls	CLC classes, life skill courses FL, FP, and GSE	M-OOS Muslim girls had been identified as an additional subgroup due to higher number of girls belonging to this ethnicity (49%) and also because these girls were marginalized in terms of learning than the non-Muslim girls. Moreover, the government of Nepal also identified Muslim community as a religious minority and socially excluded group that need upliftment.	There are no Muslim girls' specific intervention for learning. Muslim girls have shown keen interest in learning Nepali therefore there should be language specific intervention to these girls.
Barrier	**Intervention(s) to overcome barrier**	**Appropriateness of intervention for barrier**	**Considerations for intervention for subgroup**
Girls spent most of their time in HH chores	Engagement and involvement of families to prevent drop out, and develop life plans	74.4% of the M-OOS girls from age group (10-14) and 56.2% of M-OOS girls from age group (15-19) had to contribute to the household chores. When asked M-OOS girls the reason behind doing more household chores, they shared that before marriage	Irrespective of the age group or ethnicity, girls face the same challenge that is, performing more household chores. Data showed a significant difference between household chores and Muslim girls. Therefore,

		they performed more work as a part of marriage preparation, and after marriage it became their responsibility. Parental engagement intervention will not suffice to improve the current status of girls given the social norms. A more parent-focused intervention is therefore necessary.	intervention should also focus on the need of Muslim girls.
Barriers mentioned in the TOC that the project as well as FDM considered to be relevant but did not come up strongly during the quantitative evaluation			
Limited access to family planning, motherhood, early pregnancy and childbirth related health problems	Life skills courses delivered by trained female facilitators	A short one-day trip was organized to the health post for M-OOS girls to understand family planning, and how to tackle problems. However, girls mentioned the problem was 'availing the resources' due to restriction rather than lack of knowledge. Parental awareness regarding family planning is a must to bring change. Project should plan intervention with the health workers or social mobilizer to create an environment that will help M-OOS girls avail the resources.	The intervention for girls without children should be focused on increasing knowledge and use of contraception because of the following reasons: Girls with children have the problem to avail resources as they due to restriction to go outside the house. Girls without children have limited knowledge on family planning. Girls irrespective of their age group easily submit to their husbands' needs.
Low Nepali language competency	Teaching girls Nepali in CLC	In general, even though girls did not speak Nepali, girls could easily understand and take the learning test. There is no stark difference observed between the scores of girls from different age group.	The girls who were drop out found Nepali easier than those who had never been to school. This is pertinent across both the age groups (10-14) an (15-19). Muslim girls is the new subgroup identified which the project should consider.

Early marriage, pregnancy and childbirth	Trainings for influential community members to become the Change Champions Community events led by Change Champions Training for local government Gender transformative workshops for M-OOS girls' families	Evidence suggests that even though parents are aware about the legal age of marriage, they still get their daughters married at a young age due to societal practice. The intervention should focus more on changing the attitude of parents regarding the same. In both Bara and Rautahat, it was seen that some change champions themselves were not clear about their roles and were not receptive to the idea of changing to the current belief. Therefore, the project intervention to change champions should be intensive. Increase in the number of big events and small events conducted by the project. Project should ensure participation of the community during the events which focuses on decreasing early marriage. Premature pregnancy and childbirth. Given the harmful social norms in the community, a small-scale gender transformative workshop/training will not be enough to bring change. An intensive and interactive approach is required to bring awareness.	The findings for all the sub-groups were the same.
Limited life skills: low levels of self-esteem, agency, confidence, an ability to negotiate important life decision	Life skills courses delivered by trained female facilitators	Even though the self-efficacy for all these girls seems high, it is due to self-reported bias. Qualitative findings suggest that girls are yet to build up confidence, negotiation skill and self -esteem. The current intervention seems weak as the CLC facilitator who conducts the life skill class seemed to have little knowledge on conducting life skill classes. Therefore, the project should firstly coach the	The situation across all sub-group is the same.

		facilitator thoroughly so that M-OOS girls can learn better.	
Vulnerability to or experience of GBV	-	During the evaluation two incidents were reported regarding gender-based violence. The project does not have a separate intervention on GBV. Therefore, project must consider awareness program targeting husbands and other family members on GBV.	Pertinent across all age group

In terms of gender approach and integration, the baseline finding showed that the nature of the project intervention was 'Gender responsive.' This is mainly because the project is aimed not only at M-OOS girls but in- school boys and husbands of M-OOS girls. The intervention focused on increasing awareness of boys in terms of gender equality. When asked the in-school boys regarding gender equality they felt that it was an important issue, but given the context of the village, they said that it was not possible to implement it in their village. They said that when gender inequality started from the school itself. When asked how the boys said that girls were frequently absent in their class because they had to perform household chores. Many of them even dropped out before completing their SLC because they were unable to bear the costs (school uniform and coaching class cost). Had it been boys, parents would have encouraged their son to study even in dire constraints such as poverty.

Moreover, boys in Bara said that gender equality was difficult to attain because of the mind-set of the parents themselves. They gave examples of how parents preferred to send their sons to private schools whereas their daughters were not provided such an option. When inequality starts from the homes itself, they questioned how it would be possible to reduce it in the community or even nationally.

> *"'We have learnt about gender equality and know about it. But some things are difficult to change considering that our community is mostly patriarchal".*
>
> *-Head teacher, Suwarna*

Qualitative findings suggested that men in the household can change the gender-biased cultural norm if they wish to. However, the preconceived notion that women's duty is to work in the household and not outside makes women more vulnerable to domination. This highlights a need to bring about a change in the attitude of boys as well as husbands. In this regard, provision of gender transformative training for in school-boys, family dialogue to husband, mother-in-law of the M-OOS girls, as well as their participation in the 'family dialogue' by change champions intervention recommended by FDM, can go a long way in making the project 'Gender Transformative.'

3.7 Reflection

The baseline evaluation showed 'poverty,' 'restricted mobility,' and 'household chores' as key barriers to M-OOS girls' learning. Girls who belonged to poor households faced more restriction relatively as compared to girls who came from a better-off family background. Restricted mobility came up as another key barrier during the baseline evaluation. The main reason for this was safety and lack of trust. Social norms and culture played a part in influencing a women's mobility because some of the cultural beliefs did not support the idea of women going out of their homes to fend for their families or training/education. Household chores was another barrier due to which they lost opportunities to achieve something productive. Qualitative data also suggested that girls more often than not missed classes CLC because of having to work for longer hours. Therefore, keeping restricted mobility and household chores in mind, the project should closely work with parents and husbands of M-OOS girls The project only has envisioned a few days of training with them; however, it should be noted that only a few days of training will not be sufficient to change the deep-rooted social norms.

The project had identified social isolation, lack of peer support network as a barrier. However, this was not identified as barrier through both qualitative and quantitative survey; therefore, it is suggested for PIN to remove it from the TOC. Similarly, findings indicated that limited access to literacy numeracy or transitional program was caused by household chores and restriction in mobility, which has already identified as one of the key barriers to girls' learning. FDM, therefore, thinks this barrier is irrelevant for the project, and PIN should consider removing access to literacy and numeracy or transitional programs as a barrier.

Based on the analysis of barriers and characteristics, FDM feels that some of the interventions need scaling up. Although the project activity focuses on training parents of M-OOS girls, a few days of training will not be enough to bring change in their attitude and practice. Therefore, an intensive training program is required for parents and the husbands of the M-OOS girls. Moreover, although low Nepali language competency was not identified as a barrier for non-Muslim girls, it did act as one for the Muslim girls. Therefore, it is suggested that PIN gives special attention to Muslim girls learning in the CLC and revise this barrier in the TOC to make it Muslim ethnicity-specific.

Access to family planning was identified as one of the barriers by PIN. This barrier, therefore, is relevant for the project as most of the girls lacked knowledge on family planning, therefore, the project should focus on providing more training to girls on the use of contraception, how to get access to the health post, and create awareness about family planning. In addition, early marriage, pregnancy, and childbirth were another barrier identified by the project in the TOC. This particular barrier was neither the key barriers nor characteristics because the project had already identified girls between the age group of (10-19) who are married, pregnant, and those who are mothers as primary beneficiaries. Although the findings suggested that parents are aware of the legal age of marriage, the trend of marrying early is still prevalent in society. The project, through its intervention, aims to reduce child marriage by raising awareness through

change champions, and government official. However, FDM thinks such deep-rooted practice will require more effort from the government's side as well as from the side of the change champions. Hence, the project needs to collaborate with local governments and change champions should take an active role in creating awareness in the community regarding early marriage.

Limited life skill (low self-esteem, confidence, and ability to negotiate) was identified as a barrier by the project; however, FDM did not find this as a significant barrier through quantitative data. However, qualitative data suggested that girls lacked self-confidence and had low-self-esteem. The fact that girls could not decide what is right or wrong for them clearly defines their lack of confidence. Moreover, girls relying on their husbands even to make the smallest of decisions also showed girls a lower confidence level. To boost girls' self-confidence, the project has not clearly defined how it is aiming to work off low self-esteem and build the confidence of the girls. Therefore, it is suggested that the project plan its intervention focused on building confidence.

The project had identified vulnerability to or experience of GBV as one of the barriers. The same barrier was also identified by FDM. Although this was not explored quantitatively, qualitative findings suggested that girls, when they disobeyed their husbands, usually fell in the trap of abuse or violence. Even though the project identified this as a barrier, there is no distinctive intervention planned by the project to mitigate the issue.

3.8 Project Response

After almost a year of project implementation, the project feels that many of the assumptions which are continuously being tested in the field, do hold. For instance, the assumptions involving M-OOS girls' families and their support is working, as the project is being able to gain much support from them through the engagements of Change Champions and the CLC management committee. However, other assumptions concerning school interventions are yet to be tested. There are also different assumptions concerning IO2 and IO3, which are yet to be tested. However, the assumption concerning Change Champions may not hold, as per the project's experience.

Most Change Champions need capacity development and additional support from the project. In light of this experience, the project has made a revision to this particular assumption in its ToC document. The baseline evaluation does show that the results support the assumptions made by the project, except for barriers concerning social isolation and peer-networks. The recommendation of the External Evaluator is to remove them from the ToC. However, the project feels that it may be too early to remove them yet, as the actual fieldwork of the project is yet to explore more on these matters when the project runs in full fledge. Additionally, since the project has not started implementation of life skills intervention, the above-mentioned baseline findings further complements the needs for contextual life skills contents that project is currently working on.

4. Outcome findings

4.1 Learning outcomes

Table below describes five subtask of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and six subtasks of Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) in detail.

Table 38: EGRA and EGRA subtask description

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)	Subtask	Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA)
Comprehension: This section had a comprehension passage to be read out aloud by the enumerators. Girls taking tests were required to listen to the passage and answer five simple questions based on the test.	1	*Number identification:* The section had two -digit random 20 numbers to be identified by M-OOS girls in a minute. The girls were scored based on the correct numbers they identified in a minute.
Letter identification: There were hundred random Nepali letters which the girls were expected to identify. The scores were provided on the basis of alphabets that they were able to identify correctly in a minute.	2	*Larger number identification:* This subtask had ten questions in which M-OOS girls were required to find out the larger number among the two numbers. They were scored by the number of correct answers given.
Symbol identification: There were hundred Nepali alphabets associated with symbols. The score was on the basis of symbols correctly recognized.	3	*Missing number identification:* There were ten questions in this section. In each question, there were three numbers spanned by equal intervals. The girls were required to fill in the missing fourth number.
Word identification: There were 50 simple words commonly used in the project intervention areas. The girls were expected to read the words correctly. The score was provided on the basis of words that correctly identified in a minute.	4	*Addition and subtraction:* There were ten addition and ten subtraction questions in the section from the logic of simple to complex within one and two digits. The girls were scored by number of correct answers provided.
Reading and comprehension: This was considered to be the most complex subtask out of all in the EGRA test. The girls were expected to read the passage and further answer questions based on the text that they read. The test measured the word read out correctly in a minute and the number of correct answers provided for the five comprehension questions.	5	*Division and multiplication:* Subtask had multiplication and division questions. Altogether 10 questions (five multiplication questions and five division questions) were included in this sub- task. Score was given on the basis of total correct answers given by the girls.
	6	Word problem: The last subtask included six of the word problems assessing students' ability to solve the problems through proper interpretation and planning. The word problem had a mix of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division questions. Score was given on the basis of total correct answers given by the girls. As suggested in the baseline template, both the EGRA and EGMA scores were converted into 100 by weighting all the subtasks equally.

4. 2 Literacy Score

The EGRA score for M-OOS girls aged (10-14) who had dropped out from formal schooling was 13.34% for the treatment group while it was slightly higher at 13.64% for the comparison group. Likewise, for the same age group, the overall mean percentage score of girls who had never been to school was 3.80% for treatment and 2.67% for the comparison cohort.

In the case of M-OOS girls between the age group (15-19) the overall score for dropped out was 19.54% for treatment and 22.02% for comparison group while for those who had never been to school, for treatment group the percentage was 5.89% and it was 22.02% for comparison. Overall the M-OOS girls from the comparison group have scored higher than M-OOS girls from the treatment group. However, data showed that the difference between the scores of treatment and comparison sample was not statistically significant.

Table 39: Aggregate of overall EGRA score (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
	Sub-group	Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	13.34 %	13.64%	12.90
	Never been to school	3.80%	2.67%	5.51
15-19	Drop out	19.54%	22.02%	21.29
	Never been to school	5.89%	2.83%%	9.69

Source: EGRA test | n = 800

Data disaggregation between Muslim and Non-Muslim girls showed that Muslim girls in both treatment and comparison group scored lower than the Non-Muslim girls. M-OOS Muslim girls in treatment scored an overall of 10.72% in EGRA while Non-Muslim girls scored 12.8%. However, the trend is the opposite in the comparison group. M-OOS Non-Muslim girls scored relatively higher than the Muslim M-OOS girls. Overall, for Muslim and Non-Muslim subgroup, the comparison group scored better than the treatment school.

Table 40: Aggregate of overall EGRA score of Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category			
Treatment		Comparison	
Muslim	Non -Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
10.72%	12.8%	14.71%	18.65%

Source: Girls survey/ n= 800

Subtask 1 of the EGRA test included comprehension passage to be read out aloud by the enumerators. Girls taking tests were required to listen to the passage and answer five simple questions based on the test. Based on the test, dropped out girls aged (10-14) scored higher than girls who had never been to school across both the cohorts.

For the treatment cohort, M-OOS girls scored 38.6% and scored 28.57% in the comparison group. Similarly, for never been to school, M-OOS girls from treatment scored 11.91%, and M-OOS girls from comparison scored 14.55%. Similarly, for the age group (15-19), M-OOS girls from the treatment cohort who had dropped out from formal schooling scored 31.53%, while M-OOS girls from the comparison group scored 30.64%. The percentage of students who never went to school was 18.24%, while it was 14.18% for the comparison group. Therefore, in this particular subtask, M-OOS girls aged (10-14) from treatment cohort who were once a drop outscored the highest of 38.06%

Table 41: EGRA subtask 1 scores across different age groups (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	38.06%	28.57%	40.12%
	Never been to school	11.91%	14.55%	17.52%
15-19	Drop out	31.53%	30.64%	37.44%
	Never been to school	18.24%	14.18. %	30.72%

Source: EGRA test | n = 800

For the same subtask, Muslim girls from the treatment group scored higher than Non-Muslim girls. However, the trend is the opposite in the comparison group. Non- Muslim girls have scored higher than Muslim girls

Table 42: EGRA subtask 1 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
26.56%	22.4%	15.7%	27.4%	35.5%	32.8%

Source: EGRA test n= 800

There were hundred random Nepali letters that M-OOS girls were expected to identify under subtask 2. For the age group (10-14), M-OOS girls from the treatment cohort who had dropped out of formal school scored 9.71%, whereas those who never attended school scored 2.15. Similarly, for the comparison group for the same age group, M-OOS girls who had dropped

outscored 10.57%, which was a little higher than the treatment group. Those girls who never went to school only scored 1.45% Likewise, for the age group (15-19), M-OOS girls from treatment who had dropped out of school scored 21.80%, whereas those who had never been to school scored 3.56. For the comparison group for the same age group, dropped out and girls who had never been to school both scored 22.99 %

Table 43: EGRA subtask 2 scores (in percentage)

Age group	Category			Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	9.71%	10.57%	10.16%
	Never been to school	2.15%	1.45%	4%
15-19	Drop out	21.80%	22.9%	24.70%
	Never been to school	3.56%	1.21%	5.65%

Source: EGRA test/ n= 800

In subtask 2, Muslim girls from treatment group scored 26.56% while Non-Muslim girls scored 22.4%. However, in the comparison group, Non-Muslim girls scored better than the Muslim girls.

Table 44: EGRA subtask 2 of Muslim M-OOS girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
26.56%	22.4%	15.7%	27.4%	35.5%	32.8%

Source: EGRA test | n = 800

Subtask 3 required M-OOS girls to identify the Nepali alphabets associated with symbols. Data showed that the age group (15-19) who had dropped out of school had scored the highest. However, the score from the comparison group was slightly higher than that of the treatment cohort by 2.18%. The lowest score was for M-OOS girls between the age group (10-14) who had never been to school. For the age group (10-14) from the treatment cohort, M-OOS girls who had dropped out of school scored 8.32% while it was 10.43 for the comparison group. For the same age group, those girls who had never been to school were 1.72%, whereas it was 0 for the comparison group.

Table 45: EGRA subtask 3scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	8.32%	10.43%	16.86%
	Never been to school	1.72%	0.0%	4.45%

15-19	Drop out	15.74%	17.92%	24.5%
	Never been to school	3.34%	0.43%	10.87%

Source: EGRA test | n = 800

For the age group (15-19), those who had dropped outscored 15.74%, while those from the comparison group scored 17.92%. For M-OOS girls who had never been to school, the score of girls from the comparison group was on a lower side at 3.34 much higher at 17.92% than that of the comparison group at 0.43%

For the same subtask, Non-Muslim girls have scored relatively better than the Muslim girls in the treatment as well as in the comparison group. This might be because the task was difficult for the Muslim girls to administer.

Table 46: EGRA subtask 3 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
7.3%	9.9%	5.6%	11.9%	35.5%	32.8%

Source: EGRA test/ n= 800

There were 50 simple words commonly used in the project intervention areas. The girls were expected to read the words correctly. The score was provided on the basis of words that correctly identified in a minute. Data showed that for the age group (10-14), M-OOS girls who had dropped outscored 9.74% from the treatment cohort, while they scored 11.4% from the comparison group. However, the score for never been to school was 0 for M-OOS girls from the comparison group, while it was 3.79% from the treatment cohort. For the age group (15-19), M-OOS girls who dropped out of formal schooling scored 20.70% from the treatment group, which was 2 % lower than that of the comparison group. The score for never been to school was 4.63% for treatment and 0.78% for the comparison group.

Table 47: EGRA subtask 4 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	9.74%	11.14%	12.25%
	Never been to school	3.79%	0%	10.6%
15-19	Drop out	20.70%	22.7%	27.21%
	Never been to school	4.63%	0.78%	12.4%

Source: EGRA test/ n= 800

For the same subtask which required girls to identify the commonly used words, Non-Muslim girls in both treatment and comparison group scored better than Muslim girls. This might be because Muslim girls are new at understanding Nepali scripture as they only write and read in Urdu learned through Madarsa.

Table 48: EGRA subtask 4 score of Muslim M-OOS girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
10.5%	12.4%	7.2%	14.6%	19.5%	22.4%

Source: EGRA test n= 800

This subtask required students to read long sentences and present their ideas and sentences in a structured format, which they found challenging. M-OOS girls aged (15-19) from treatment got a maximum score of 15% while the same group of comparison groups outperformed treatment M-OOS girls by scoring 21.58%. However, the lowest also was from the comparison group where none of the girls aged (10-14) who had never been to school could read or understand a passage. This response suggested that the girls lacked analytical skills, which was later clarified by CLC facilitators.

Table 49: EGRA subtask 5 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	10.32%	11.43%	22.43%
	Never been to school	2.55%	0%	9.88%
15-19	Drop out	15.09%	21.58%	23.84%
	Never been to school	3.02%	0.22%	11.95%

Source: EGRA test/ n= 800

Overall, Non-Muslim girls scored the highest than the Muslim girls in both treatment and comparison groups. However, Non-Muslim girls in the comparison group scored the highest than the Muslim and Non-Muslim girls in the treatment group.

Table 50: EGRA subtask 5 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
6.6%	10.2%	5.6%	14.9%	15.9%	21.9%

Source: EGRA test / n= 800

An assessment of the foundation literacy skills gap of treatment sample showed that in subtask 1 the majority of the sample girls fell under 'Non-learner' bracket meaning that most of the treatment girls (48.3%, 56.3%, 57.5%, 78.8%, and 41.8% from subtask 2 to subtask six respectively) secured 1% to 40% of the total score. However, only in subtask 1, 44.3% of the M-OOS girls fell under the bracket of 'Emergent learner,' scoring 1- 40%.

Table 51: Foundational literacy gaps: Treatment group (in percentage)

Categories	Subtask 1 Listening comprehension	Subtask 2 Symbol identification	Subtask 3 Matra identification	Subtask 4 Familiar word reading	Subtask Oral Reading comprehension	Subtask 5 Oral Reading Fluency
Non-learner 0%	57.8%	37.3%	62.8%	61.0%	78.0%	74.8%
Emergent learner 1%-40%	20.0%	56.0%	31.3%	29.5%	17.8%	20.8%
Established learner 41%-80%	11.8%	4.8%	3.5%	7.3%	2.8%	2.8%
Proficient learner 81%-100%	10.5%	2.0%	2.5%	2.3%	1.5%	1.8%
Source: N=	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: EGRA test/ n= 800

4.3 Target setting

Benchmarking was conducted with 80 girl students from grade 1-4 (20 in each grade) with the purpose of setting target the beneficiaries are expected to attain. The EGRA score for benchmarking shows that grade 4 students scored the highest, while students from grade 1 scored the lowest in all the subtasks.

It can be seen from the table below that irrespective of the grades, students scored higher in grade 1, but the scores dropped drastically for subtask 2. There was only a mild fluctuation in scores of students after that till subtask 6. For example, students from grade 1 scored 21% in subtask 1, but for subtask 2, the score drastically fell to 3.80% and then mildly fluctuated till subtask 6. This could be because subtask 1 was the easiest for students than subtask 2 and the other following subtasks. FDM at this moment cannot set a target based on the scores received by students because PIN has not yet defined their target. Looking at the data and understanding PIN's intervention, the reasonable thing for PIN to do is to define a proficient level across different subtasks for measuring the success and setting a target.

Table 52: EGRA subtask 4 score of Muslim M-OOS girls (in percentage)

Grade	Subtask 1	Subtask 2	Subtask 3	Subtask 4	Subtask 5	Subtask 6
1	21%	3.80%	1.60%	1.80%	2.95%	5.69%

2	31%	13.35%	9.55%	10.80%	8.70%	13.57%
3	38%	17.90%	12.55%	12%	8.35%	16.63%
4	43%	27.75%	18.5%	22.80%	16.60%	24.70%

Source: Benchmark EGRA test | n = 80

4.4 Reflection on EGRA

Among all the subtasks performed, M-OOS girls scored the highest in subtask 1, i.e., listening task, where the enumerators read out the passage for them, and they answered the questions. It appears that girls have had a hard time identifying letters, words, and experienced difficulty in reading and comprehending passages. This could be because the girl's listening skill is better than their reading skill. Some of the girls who have scored better in subtask-2 letter identification, and subtask 3, word identification, have not done well in subtask 5– reading comprehension. This might be because girls' analytical skills to read and comprehend it is less. When asked CLC facilitator why girls cannot read and understand sentences, they mentioned that they are not used to reading sentences that are long. They further added that it is also due to the lack of practice of reading that they cannot read it. Therefore, the CLC facilitator should focus on improving the reading of the girls by making them read longer passages. This could be done by devoting more time to reading. The project, therefore, should instruct the CLC facilitator to focus more on reading passages.

The EGRA data showed a clear trend where dropped out girls scored relatively better than girls who never went to school. However, no definite trend could be identified for the age group (10-14) or (15-19). The stark difference can be seen in the scores of those who have never been to school or who have dropped out. Therefore, it is suggested that the project conduct more intensive classes for girls who have never been to school and girls who have dropped out.

In addition to this, a clear trend could be seen between Muslim and Non-Muslim groups. Muslim M-OOS girls scored relatively lower in all subtasks than Non-Muslim girls. This could be because Muslim girls are not familiar with the Nepali scripture as they are only used to reading and writing Urdu scripture learned through Madarsa. Therefore, the intervention should focus on investing more time on Muslim girls to improve their Nepali.

In terms of measuring the target of the project, the project has highlighted its target as 'achieving learning ambition' for the success of the project. FDM at this moment cannot comment if the goal is realistic until PIN accurately defines it. Looking at the data and understanding PIN's intervention, the reasonable thing to do for the next evaluation is to determine the 'proficient level' of each subtask so as to make it measurable.

4.5 Numeracy Score

For the age group (10-14) the overall EGMA score of those who had dropped out of school was 21.47% from treatment cohort while it was only 8.97% from the comparison group. Similarly, for the same age group, M-OOS girls who had never been to school in their life scored 8.85% from the treatment cohort, and 3.48% from the comparison group.

For the age group (15-19) M-OOS girls who had dropped out scored the highest 32.80% from the comparison group while from treatment group, the score was only 25.99%. However, M-OOS girls who had never been to school scored 10.70% from treatment cohort, which was almost double from what the girls scored in comparison group. The overall EGMA score of treatment and comparison group did not show any significant difference.

Table 53: Aggregate of overall EGMA score (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	21.47%	8.97%	21.93%
	Never been to school	8.87%	3.48%	11.13%
15-19	Drop out	25.99%	32.80%	23.42%
	Never been to school	10.79%	5.40%	14.07%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

For Muslim subgroup, the overall EGMA score showed that across both treatment and control groups, Non-Muslim girls have outperformed Muslim girls. M-OOS Muslim girls from treatment group have received a score of 15.7% while Non-Muslim got 19.5%. Similarly, for the comparison group, Non-Muslim scored 21.7% while Muslim girls only scored 12.2%.

Table 54: Overall EGMA score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category			
Treatment		Comparison	
Muslim	Non -Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
15.7%	19.5%	12.2%	21.7%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

EGMA subtask 1 required M-OOS girls to identify two-digit 20 random numbers in a minute. Girls were scored based on the correct numbers they identified in a minute. M-OOS girls from the age group (10-14) who had dropped out from school got a score of 30% from the treatment group, and the girls from the same age group from the comparison group scored only 15%. Similarly, for those who had never been to school, treatment cohort girls scored percentage as high as 13% while comparison group girls only scored 4.09%. For the age group (15-19), M-OOS girls from the treatment group who had dropped outscored 35.55%, whereas it was a bit high for M-OOS girls from the comparison group at 41.16%. For M-OOS girls who had never been to school in the treatment cohort, they scored 15%, whereas those of the comparison group got 5.41%.

Table 55: EGMA subtask 1 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	30%	15%	30.93%
	Never been to school	13.62%	4.9%	18.20%
15-19	Drop out	35.55%	41.16%	34.24%
	Never been to school	15%	5.41%	23.14%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

Overall, Non-Muslim girls from both the treatment and comparison group have scored the highest in subtask 1. M-OOS Muslim girls in the treatment group have scored 21.79%, while Non-Muslim girls scored 26.9%. Similarly, in the comparison group, Non-Muslim girls scored 30.2% while Muslim girls scored only 13.7%.

Table 56: EGMA subtask 1 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
21.79%	26.9%	13.7%	30.2%	28.31%	31.4%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

Subtask 2 required M-OOS girls to find out the larger number among the two numbers. In this, M-OOS girls from treatment cohort, aged (10-14) who had dropped out of school got a 24.52%. However, the score was low at 5.71%. For the same age range, M-OOS girls from the treatment cohort who had never been to school scored 13.40%, while girls from the comparison group scored only 3.64%. For the age group (15-19), M-OOS girls from the treatment cohort who were school dropouts only scored 32.09%, which was about 3% lower than that of the comparison group. For never been to school, M-OOS girls from treatment have scored better than those of the comparison school with scores similar to the age group (10-14).

Table 57: EGMA subtask 2 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	24.52%	5.71%	32.44%
	Never been to school	13.40%	3.64%	22.58%
15-19	Drop out	32.09%	35.96%	33.93%
	Never been to school	13.40%	4.74%	23.24%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

In subtask 2, Non- Muslim girls scored higher than Muslim girls. In both the treatment and comparison group. Non-Muslim girls in the treatment group scored 23.1%, while Muslim girls scored slightly low by 1%. For the comparison group, Non-Muslim girls scored 28.51% while Muslim girls scored at 11.3%.

Table 58: EGMA subtask 2 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
20.64%	23.1%	11.3%	26.5%	28.51%	31.4%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

The third subtask required M-OOS girls to fill in the missing number. The highest score of 21.29% was scored by (15-19) aged M-OOS girls from the treatment group who were also dropouts. M-OOS girls belonging to the age group (10-14) scored the lowest from the treatment cohort. M-OOS girls from the age group (10-14) who had never been to school before scored the lowest of 4.47%. However, for the comparison group, M-OOS girls of age (15-19) who were dropouts scored 28.52% (slightly higher than that of treatment cohort) while the lowest was from the age group (10-14) where girls who had never been to school scored 0.

Table 59: EGMA subtask 3 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	18.71%	4.29%	22.47%
	Never been to school	4.47%	0%	9.51%
15-19	Drop out	21.2%	28.52%	25.15%
	Never been to school	7.48%	2.6%	15.59%

Data depicted that even for subtask 3, Non-Muslim girls outperformed Muslim girls for both treatment and comparison groups. The score of Muslim girls in the treatment group was 12.7%, while it was 14.4% for Non-Muslim girls. Similarly, for the comparison group, the score for Muslim girls was 9.7%, whereas it was almost double for Non-Muslim girls.

Table 60: EGMA subtask 3 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
12.7%	14.4%	9.7%	19.2%	20.3%	22.2%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

There were ten addition and ten subtraction questions in the section from the logic of simple to complex within one and two digits. M-OOS girls between the age group (15-19) who were drop outscored the highest 19.08% and 26.95 % from both treatment and comparison groups, respectively. The lowest score was 4.47% for treatment and 4.09 for the comparison group. The lowest was scored by M-OOS girls aged (10-14) who had never been to school.

Table 61: EGMA subtask 4 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	17.10%	10.71%	21.32
	Never been to school	4.47%	4.09%	9.57
15-19	Drop out	19.08%	26.95%	21.82
	Never been to school	6.64%	1.50%	13.85

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

For this subtask, Non-Muslim girls scored the highest 13.2% and 19.2% from treatment and comparison group respectively. Muslim girls from treatment group scored the lowest in this subtask.

Table 62: EGMA subtask 4 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
11.3%	13.2%	12.3%	19.2%	20.3%	22.2%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

Subtask -5 had multiplication and division questions. The highest the M-OOS girls could score was 11.66% for the treatment cohort. M-OOS girls between ages (15-19), those of whom were dropouts scored the highest while the lowest was 1.28 for M-OOS girls between ages (10-14) who had never been to school. However, for the comparison group, the highest was a score of 19.85% while the lowest was 1.43%

Table 63: EGMA subtask 1 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	8.39%	1.43%	18.46%
	Never been to school	1.28%	4.55%	4.48%
15-19	Drop out	11.66%	19.85%	23.10%

	Never been to school	2.70%	5.58%	9.92%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

Data depicted that even for subtask 5, Non-Muslim girls have outperformed Muslim girls for both treatment and comparison groups. The score of Muslim girls in the treatment group was 4.6%, while it was 8.6% for Non-Muslim girls. Similarly, for the comparison group, the score for Muslim girls was 5.7% while it was almost double for Non-Muslim girl.

Table 64: EGMA subtask 5 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
4.6%	8.6%	5.7%	14.2%	14.7%	19.5%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

The last subtask included six of the word problems assessing students' ability to solve the problems through proper interpretation and planning. Among all the EGRA subtask, students found this particular subtask the easiest as most of them have scored well. For the treatment cohort, girls between the age (10-14) have scored 30.11% while for the comparison group, they have scored only 16.67%. Similarly, for M-OOS girls from treatment who had never been to school, they got 15.96% and only 4.55% for the comparison group. For the age group (15-19) who had dropped out of school, the maximum score was 44.33% for the comparison group while it was 36.30% for treatment. For those of the same age range but had never been to school, the score was 19.50% for treatment and 13.12% for the comparison group.

Table 65: EGMA subtask 6 scores (in percentage)

Age group		Category		Std. Deviation in treatment group
		Treatment	Comparison	
10-14	Drop out	30.11%	16.67%	32.04%
	Never been to school	15.96%	4.55%	21.69%
15-19	Drop out	36.30%	44.33%	30.93%
	Never been to school	19.50%	13.12%	19.49%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

For this subtask, Non-Muslim girls scored the highest 8.6% and 14.2% from treatment and comparison group respectively. Muslim girls from treatment group scored the lowest of all in this subtask.

Table 66: EGMA subtask 6 score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category				Std. Deviation in treatment group	
Treatment		Comparison			
Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
4.6%	8.6%	5.7%	14.2%	14.7%	19.5%

An assessment of the foundation numeracy skills gap of treatment sample showed that majority of the sample girls fell under 'Non-learner' bracket meaning that most of the treatment girls (48.3%, 56.3%, 57.5%, 78.8%, and 41.8% from subtask 2 to subtask 6 respectively) secured 1% to 40% of the total score. However, only in subtask 1, 44.3% of the M-OOS girls fell under the bracket of 'Emergent learner', scoring 1- 40%.

Table 67: Foundational numeracy skill for treatment group (in percentage)

Categories	Subtask 1 Number Identification	Subtask 2 Quantity Discrimination	Subtask 3 Missing Numbers	Subtask 4 Addition and Subtraction	Subtask 5 Multiplication and division	Subtask 6 Word problems
Non-learner 0%	35.0%	48.3%	56.3%	57.5%	78.8%	41.8%
Emergent learner 1%-40%	44.3%	31.3%	33.8%	33.8%	17.0%	32.5%
Established learner 41%-80%	11.5%	13.8%	8.5%	8.0%	2.5%	17.3%
Proficient learner 81%-100%	9.3%	6.8%	1.5%	.8%	1.8%	8.5%
Source: N=	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

An assessment of the foundation numeracy skills gap of comparison sample showed that majority of the sample girls fell under 'Non-learner' bracket meaning that most of the girls from comparison group (43.3%, 57.8%, 63.5%, 50.8%, 78.8% and 44.8% from subtask 1 to subtask 6 respectively) secured 0% of the total score.

Table 68: Foundational numeracy skills: comparison group (in percentage)

Categories	Subtask 1 Number Identification	Subtask 2 Quantity Discrimination	Subtask 3 Missing Numbers	Subtask 4 Addition and Subtraction	Subtask 5 Multiplication and division	Subtask 6 Word problems

Non-learner 0%	43.3%	57.8%	63.5%	50.8%	78.8%	44.8%
Emergent learner 1%-40%	33.5%	22.0%	22.8%	35.3%	10.8%	22.3%
Established learner 41%-80%	12.8%	10.0%	8.0%	12.8%	6.3%	20.0%
Proficient learner 81%-100%	10.5%	10.3%	5.8%	1.3%	4.3%	13.0%
Source: N=	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: EGMA test | n = 800

4.6 Target setting

Overall, the score of students is higher for higher grades across subtask -1 to subtask – 4. Students from grade four scored the highest (35%) in subtask 1, which is the highest among all the subtasks. This could be because grade four students thought subtask 1 was the easiest. The lowest was scored by students from grade 3, who only scored 2.50% in subtask 5. The scores of subtask 5 are relatively lower than the scores for other subtasks. When compared the EGMA scores of in-school girls with that of M-OOS girls, even M-OOS girls have scored the highest in sub-task-1 and relatively lower in subtask 5. This could mean that girls found subtask-5 the hardest to administer.

As mentioned above, benchmarking was done with an aim to set a target for the next evaluation point. However, since the project has not clearly defined its target yet, FDM at this moment cannot comment if the target is realistic. Looking at the data and understanding PIN's intervention, the reasonable thing for PIN to do is to define a proficient level across different subtasks for measuring the success and setting a target.

Table 69: Benchmark sample's EGRA scores (in percentage)

Grade	Subtask 1	Subtask 2	Subtask 3	Subtask 4	Subtask 5	Subtask 6
1	14.75%	10.00%	5.50%	11.50%	3.00%	16.67%
2	15.75%	10.50%	8.50%	13.25%	5.50%	17.50%
3	21.50%	11.00%	13.00%	17.25%	2.50%	25.00%
4	35.00%	25.50%	17.00%	25.00%	9.00%	15.83%

Source: Benchmark EGRA test | n = 80

4.7 Reflections on EGMA finding

Overall, M-OOS girls between the age group (15-19) scored better than girls of age group (10-14). In addition to this, an unusual trend was seen in the scores throughout the subtasks. Girls 'who have never been to school' between the age group (10-15) from the comparison group scored highest in all the subtasks than girls who had attained a certain level of education and had dropped out girls. The reason behind this is unclear to FDM at this point and this will be explored in the next evaluation point. In addition to this, data clearly depicted that Non-Muslim girls outperformed Muslim girls in all the subtasks. This could mean that Muslim girls are weaker in maths, which might be because girls have not studied maths extensively in their Madarsa classes. Therefore, the CLC facilitator should invest more time in Muslim girls compared to other girls.

In subtask 3- which requires girls to perform multiplication and division, girls scored the lowest, compared to other subtasks. This might be because girls found multiplication and division difficult. Nevertheless, in general, students have performed better in EGMA as compared to EGRA. When asked the CLC facilitators the reason, they mentioned that girls perform basic mathematics in their everyday life. However, they do not read or write in Nepali every day unless it is required. Therefore, mathematics is easier for them than Nepali. This was verified by M-OOS girls themselves when they said it is easy to complete maths problems as it can be counted by using their hands, unlike Nepali, which requires extra effort. It can also be seen that the score for the comparison group is much lower than the treatment school for girls who have never been to school. There is no information to back this finding as it was not explored during qualitative fieldwork.

4.8 Summary of subgroup analysis for learning outcome

The purpose of this section is to provide a clear understanding of scores across different subgroups. The analysis for learning is based primarily on four major subgroups that are: M-OOS girls 10-14, M-OOS girls 15-19, Girls never been to school, Girls dropped out, and M-OOS Muslim girls. The analysis in section 4.3 Target setting and 4.5 Numeracy Score, showed obvious results that girls who had dropped out from higher grades performed better than those who had never been to school. This could be because of the curriculum designed by PIN, which is the same for all the girls irrespective of their education level. Therefore, PIN should treat these two as different groups and plan a separate intervention. Likewise, there are 49.5% of girls from the treatment group and 39.5% of the girls from the control group who are Muslims. Qualitative findings suggested that these girls are entirely new to the literacy curriculum because they are only used to reading and writing in Urdu through Madarsa. Therefore, it was necessary to see the analysis between Muslim and non-Muslim groups with the learning scores.

4.9 Characteristics of subgroup analysis of learning outcome

This section presents the disaggregation of EGRA and EGMA scores on the basis of different characteristics and barriers. This helps to understand the characteristics and obstacles associated with the lowest levels of learning. Since the project will be targeting only the treatment girls, only their scores have been analysed. In addition, apart from the poor teaching quality of CLC facilitators themselves, this section will also explore whether other factors lead

to low learning scores. Disability data showed that M-OOS girls with functional limitations find literacy test the hardest and numeracy skill comparatively the easiest. It is because the literacy scores across all functional limitations are less compared to that with the numeracy score. It is true that M-OOS girls with functional limitation scored less than other girls in both the tests; however, it also showed that functional limitation did not come as a barrier for the EGRA test. The significance test result showed that the difference in EGRA score and disability was statistically significant. However, the scores were not statistically significant for EGMA.

Table 70: Disability Sub group for treatment group (in percentage)

	Average literacy score (aggregate)	Average numeracy score (aggregate)
All girls		
Disability subgroups: (compulsory)		
Seeing	.70%	10.76%
Hearing	.08%	11.66%
Walking	13.%	14.51%
Self-care	.66%	12.22%
Communication	11%	9.94%
Learning, Remembering and Concentrating	10%	15.59%
Accepting Change, Comparison Behaviour and Making Friends	8.22%	13.47%
Mental Health (Anxiety and Depression)	2.11%	6.59%

Source: Girls survey n= 400

In terms of ethnicity, the Terai Madhesi Brahmin and Chhetri were found to be doing well in EGRA. This was followed by Terai/Madhesi and others. The mean score for EGRA was the lowest for Terai Madhesi Dalit and Muslim, for EGRA Terai/Madhesi, Janajati were found to be doing well. This was followed by Terai Madhesi, others. The Terai Madhesi/Dalit and Muslim had the same level. The significance test showed that the differences in the mean EGRA score between various ethnic groups were statistically significant, whereas no significant difference existed between ethnicity for the EGMA score.

Table 71: Learning scores of according to ethnicities for treatment group (in percentage)

Ethnicity	Average EGRA scores	Average EGMA scores
Terai/Madhesi brahmin and Chhetri	17.59%	17.85%
Terai/Madhesi Dalit	10.96%	15.92%
Terai/Madhesi Janajati	12.60%	26.29%
Terai/Madhesi others	14.28%	19.52%

Muslim	10.72%	15.68%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 400

When the relationship of average time devoted to household chores and literacy/numeracy scores was explored, scores suggested that girls who spend lesser time in households have lower scores as compared to those who spend more time doing household chores. However, an inverse correlation was seen between household chores and the scores of girls, meaning that with the increasing burden of household chores, led to a decrease in score. Qualitative data also showed that for Terai Dalit and Muslims, the burden of household chores was indeed higher than for girls from other ethnic groups, which explains their relatively poorer scores. In addition to this, for Muslim girls, since they had dropped out from Madrasa where Nepali was not taught, they had poor Nepali comprehension and reading skills. Qualitative findings suggested that all the children were taught the Quran, and in a few years' time, Madarsa will cater to the education need of Muslim children by introducing general curriculum like in the school.

Table 72: Time spent on household chores and learning scores for treatment group (in percentage)

Time spent on household chores	Average EGRA scores	Average EGMA scores
Spending most of the time in HH chores	15.13%	18.42%
Spending few hours, a day in HH chores	6.81%	16.33%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 400

Another characteristic that was cross-tabulated with the learning score was the poverty level of the girls' household to see if girls coming from low-income families were more educationally marginalized than the other girls. The quantitative findings did not show a significant relationship between the economic condition of a family and their girls' learning performance. However, qualitative findings suggested that low-income families due to spare resources to invest considered girls to be burdened and deprived them of basic opportunities such as education and freedom. As shown in the table below, girls coming from comparatively well-off families were still scoring lower than girls coming from relatively more impoverished families meaning that economic condition had little role to play in the girls' learning. The difference between the scores was not statistically significant.

Table 73: Household types and learning scores for treatment group (in percentage)

Household characteristic	Average EGRA scores	Average EGMA scores
Unable to meet basic needs without charity	16.31%	12.48%
Able to meet basic needs	17.02%	10.48%
Able to meet basic needs with some non-essential goods	21.55%	14.95%

Able to purchase most non-essential goods	.0%	.0%
Plenty of disposable income	16.80%	3.91%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 400

4.10 Reflection

When learning scores were cross-tabulated with ethnicity, it was found that Muslim girls scored lower than the non-Muslim girls. Therefore, the teaching mechanism inside the CLC should be modified so that it caters to the need of those who are weak.

In terms of household chores and learning chores, an inverse correlation between household chores and learning scores was seen. This directly points to the fact that girls' learning is affected due to their obligation to perform household chores. This is, in fact, one of the key barriers highlighted by the baseline finding and should be the main focus of PIN. Gender biased cultural norm is the main factor resulting in this practice, and the project should implement its intervention by placing utmost value to this fact.

Although quantitative data did not show a significant difference between learning scores and poverty, qualitative findings suggested that girls learning were highly affected by poverty. Low-income families had complied with social norms, which set the parameters that girls should perform household chores and other duties. This kind of practice resulted in girls not revising the things learned in CLC.

5. Transition outcome

This sub-section should present the key findings on the transition outcomes.

Table 74: Transition pathways

Intervention pathway tracked for transition	Please describe the possible transition pathways for this group	Aim for girls' transition for next evaluation point	Aim for girls' transition level by the time project stops working with cohort
Younger (10-15) married OOS adolescents without children Intervention pathway- Literacy and Numeracy classes, Life skills courses	• Formal school reenrolment to the grade corresponding to their literacy/numeracy after the intervention • Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000 (less than or equal to 14 years) and Labor Law (above 14 years)	• Re-enrolment into formal schools • Engagement with vocational trainings as per life plans prepared • Safe employment	• Enrols into formal school, or starts safe employment or engages in TVETs as per their life plans
Younger (10-15) married OOS adolescents who are mothers	• Enrolment into non-formal education/informal literacy • Vocational trainings • Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000 (less than or equal to 14 years) and Labor Law (above 14 years)	• Enrolment into informal literacy classes/non-formal education • Engagement with vocational trainings as per life plans prepared • Safe employment	• Enrols into informal literacy classes, or starts safe employment or engages in TVETs as per their life plans
Older (16-19) married OOS adolescents without children	• Enrolment into non-formal education/informal literacy • Vocational trainings • Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000 (less than or equal to 14 years) and Labor Law (above 14 years)	• Enrolment into informal literacy classes/non-formal education • Engagement with vocational trainings as per life plans prepared • Safe employment	• Enrols into informal literacy classes, or starts safe employment or engages in TVETs as per their life plans
Older (16-19) married OOS adolescents with children	• Enrolment into non-formal education/informal literacy • Vocational trainings • Safe employment, as allowed by the Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Act 2000	• Enrolment into informal literacy classes/non-formal education • Engagement with vocational trainings as per life plans prepared	• Enrols into informal literacy classes, or starts safe employment or engages in TVETs as per their life plans

	(less than or equal to 14 years) and Labor Law (above 14 years)	• Safe employment	

5.1 Pathway analysis

The proposed pathway for enrolling girls to school whether or not they have children appears to be a challenge to the project. Qualitative findings suggested that most of the girls deemed school as an added burden to household chores. Although students did show interest in learning new things, they were hesitant to enrol back to school. This was because some of the M-OOS girls said that they felt 'embarrassed' to go back to school, and others said they would not be able to manage their time to give their occupation with household chores.

One of the key findings of the study was that both parents and M-OOS girls were not keen on re-enrolment. The commonly cited reasons for joining the CLC was to 'to learn how to sign documents' and 'be able to go to banks to withdraw money.' A handful of the girls also said that since they were planning to join their husbands abroad, they felt the CLC would be resourceful in enhancing their reading skills. However, re-enrolment was rarely cited as the reason for joining CLC. In this context, FDM feels that the proposed pathway should be providing vocational training to the girls.

In terms of feasibility, enrolling in formal school and taking vocational training to open shops were both options for the girls if allowed by their parents (in-laws) and husbands. The schools where the girls are to be enrolled are walking distance from where the girls live. Therefore, if girls are to be enrolled in school, the distance will not be a problem. Moreover, the project's gender-transformative workshop conducted with students in the schools, teachers training, will also allow M-OOS girls to have a safe school environment.

> *"If they want to start some work within the village, preferable in the house, we would be OK with it."*
>
> *-Parents, Bara*

Headteachers of all the schools visited during baseline data collection from both the district were positive to accommodate M-OOS girls if they were interested in enrolling back in school. In terms of tailoring, or other vocational venture, M-OOS girls can open up shops at their homes, or nearby market. However, these pathways were difficult for girls to attain, given the restriction on mobility and lack of decision-making capacity at home.

Qualitative findings suggested that parents will only allow girls to start a new venture provided that it is done inside the home. Many parents mentioned that spending time outside homes will only be feasible if husbands or other family member accompanied them. Moreover, parents also mentioned that they would not invest a single amount of money on either education or to

open shops or for buying tailoring machines. They would only allow girls to start her business or go for trainings if the project invests money.

The project identified girls with a disability and some of them were also enrolled in CLC. However, qualitative findings suggested that the opportunity for them was limited. Almost all the schools selected by the projects for M-OOS girls to enrol lacked disability-friendly infrastructure, nor did teachers of the school have the capacity to teach students with disabilities. In terms of choosing a different life plan like taking vocational training, a lack of support from the family might act as a major impediment. The project design is suited well to the proposed pathways, and unless efforts are made to change the perception of parents (in-laws), it will be difficult for the project to maintain sustainability. Therefore, the project should continue its intervention with parents as well as the school continuously even after the completion of the intervention.

5.2 Difference in terms of aspiration / pathway by subgroup

Transition in GEC is best understood in terms of the pathways that M-OOS girls follow. These pathways map the different points to which the girls could move overtime during the duration of the project. Both the qualitative, as well as quantitative tools, were used to explore these pathways. While the household and girls survey with parents of transition cohort girls generated information on the status of transition rates, the qualitative research explored the enablers and barriers to transition. The baseline data depicted that the value of transition is 0 as of now because no M-OOS girls have yet transitioned into their respective pathways. Data showed that for the treatment group, there were almost 52% and 53% of the M-OOS girls, respectively, who had never been to school. Girls who had been to school even once in their life, but had to drop out, were 49% for treatment, and 48% for comparison groups.

To understand the general transition trend of the girls, they were asked what they were involved in, in the previous year. 88% of the girls from treatment and 82.5% of the girls from the comparison group said that they were doing nothing. This was followed by girls who were busy looking after a new-born. 3.8% of the girls from the treatment group spent time looking after the baby, while 11.5% of the M-OOS girls in the comparison group spent time looking after the baby.

> *Coming to CLC gives us the freedom to interact with friends which is more like break from the mundane lifestyle at home.*
>
> *-MOOS girls- Rautahat*

There were only about 2.5% of the treatment M-OOS girls and 2% of the comparison M-OOS girls who said that they were going to school last year. This was followed by another question which asked the girls regarding their current situation, the majority of the treatment M-OOS girls said that they were involved in training 62.8% while 17.8% said they joined CLC centres. When asked M-OOS girls what it meant by training, they mentioned that the CLC centre was deemed as a place for training. M-OOS girls were further asked why they thought CLCs were

training centres; the majority of them said that they joined CLC only to take tailoring training later. However, for most of the M-OOS girls in comparison to school, 68% of them were staying at home. Until last year there were 2% of the comparison group M-OOS girls who were going to school, but currently, none of them go to school. Data showed that looking after the newborn was 11.5% last year, which increased by 1% this year. This could mean that M-OOS girls might have dropped out of school to take care of the new-born.

Table 75: Status at baseline based on age group (in percentage)

Status	Intervention (%)			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14	15-19	10-14	15-19
Never been to school	60.3 %	49.4%	61.1%	38.9
Been to school, but dropped out	39.7%	50.6%	38.9%	46.9
Currently enrolled in formal school	0%	0%	0%	0%
Currently employed	0%	0%	0	0%

Source: Girls Survey N = 800

Data further suggested that there were 69.7% of the Muslim girls from the treatment group, and 62% of Muslim girls from the comparison group who had never been to school whereas 65% of the Non-Muslim girls in treatment school and 62 of the same girls in Comparison group had been to school but had dropped out. This could be the reason for girls from Non-Muslim ethnicity scoring higher in the learning tests.

Table 76: Status of baseline based on Muslim ethnicity

Status	Intervention			
	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Never been to school	68.7%	34.7%	62%	38%
Been to school, but dropped out	31.3%	65.3%	38%	62%
Currently enrolled in formal school	0%	0%	0%	0%
Currently employed	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Girls Survey N = 800

The qualitative finding explored the M-OOS girls' motivation for joining CLC and their future aspirations. For the majority of the M-OOS girls, regardless of their age group, joining training, specially tailoring, was the primary motivation for joining CLC. When asked what they wanted to do, most of them said it was tailoring because they thought tailoring was a better option and the most convenient business they could initiate, without having to go outside their homes. Girls in Bara wanted to go for tailoring training because their husbands were tailors themselves, so these girls wanted to be a helping hand for their husbands. M-OOS girls from Rautahat shared similar view. Almost all the girls completely shelved the idea of going to schools saying that their priority was not education. There were only handful of girls from the age group (10-

14) who were yet to be married but were engaged who considered going to school provided that their in-laws allow them.

Multiple factors were responsible for motivating the MOOS girls to join CLC. To begin with, for girls who had never been to school, the CLCs provided an opportunity to become literate. With this, the girls claimed that they could 'sign official papers' rather than using their 'thumbprints' which appeared embarrassing for them. For Muslim girls, since they did not have Nepali classes in the traditional Madarsa, the CLCs gave them an opportunity to learn Nepali. Moreover, for many of the girls, CLC was a place to make friends and interact with them freely. It also gave them an opportunity to meet girls who lived in similar conditions as them. Since the CLC provides an escape from their mundane schedule, they had decided to join the CLC.

> *"If we send our daughters-in-law to school, who will look after the children? Who will perform the household chores?"*
>
> *-Parents, Rautahat*

Parents who attended FGD were well aware of CLC classes that their daughters- in- law were attending. They sent their daughters- in- law to the CLC, thinking that it would raise their learning, which they could utilize in banks, reading, or signing documents. Some of the parents also expected that after attending 10 months long CLC class, their daughter- in- law would be provided with training and skills, which would help them pursue some kind of entrepreneurship session within their own village. Ironically, there were only limited opportunities for girls locally. When asked whether they would allow their daughters-in-law to go to the city or even to a *Chowk* for business, the in-laws were hesitant to do so.

In terms of school re-enrolment, qualitative findings suggested that in both Rautahat and Bara district, there were only a few M-OOS girls who wanted to re-enrol in schools. When asked the reason for drop out, many said it was due to poverty, marriage, and unwillingness to study.

M-OOS girls aged (10-14) in Rautahat were asked the reason for their disinterest in going to school. M-OOS girls mentioned that they were in school only until their marriage was arranged. Once marriage was arranged, it was either the boy or his family who decided whether or not to go to school. The restriction was often due to fear of interaction with other boys. Quantitative data suggested that 41%of the M-OOS girls had their marriage arranged. The girls shared that they do not like to enrol back to school because of embarrassment that they were married also because they will have forgotten most of the lessons taught. M-OOS girls in Rautahat also shared that they did not like to go to school because of the fear of homework and exam.

In addition to this, since most of the daughters'- in- law already had children, their in-laws showed concern saying that there would be no-one to perform household chores in case the daughters in law joined schools. Moreover, social mobilizers mentioned that the project might

not be able to change the transition pathway of all the M-OOS girls, but for those who were interested in pursuing an entrepreneurial future, the project could be helpful. However, the project staff had a positive outlook towards girls choosing a different pathway rather than enrolling in school. The project staff mentioned that it is less likely the MOOS girls will enrol back into school considering the context of the district. However, he was hopeful that they might opt for a different transition pathway provided that they received training and fund from the project. Moreover, the project head accepted that parents still held the belief that studying at this point was not much beneficial in terms of career. The motivation, thus, behind sending their daughters-in-law to the CLC was simply so that they would become literate and have some knowledge. Therefore, in this context, the project might not be able to change the transition pathway.

> *"We cannot expect the MOOS girls, who until now, did not even venture out of their houses alone, to have a completely different transition pathway. However, for those interested in pursuing an entrepreneurial future, the project has provided an opportunity.*
>
> *Project Staff, Bara*

5.3 Reflection

Overall, the transition pathway is different from one subgroup to another subgroup. Described below is the reflection of what pathways girls would like to pursue in the future.

Reflection on transition for age group 10-14:

Findings suggested that only handful of MOOS girls between (10-14) years showed interest in enrolling into formal education provided that their parents or their would-be in-laws/ husband allow them to do so. It was found that parents did not allow girls to go to school due to fear that they would interact with unknown boys and elope. This very reason restricted these girls from life opportunities. Moreover, most of the girls between the age group (10-14) feared going to school despite their will due to fear of being bullied or teased at school. Girls mentioned that they would be embarrassed to face their friends because of arranged marriage. Girls between 10-14 did not have an idea of what skill they wanted to learn if they did not enroll in school. Although some of them mentioned tailoring, they did not know if they would be able to initiate their own business.

Reflection on transition for age group 15-19:

Girls between the age group (15-19) showed no interest in enrolling in formal education. They mentioned that enrolling in school was time-consuming, and they had no time to invest. Qualitative findings suggested that most of the girls deemed school as an added burden to household chores. The family of these girls also shared similar views. Parents viewed going to school as a waste of time, because ultimately, girls would have to stay at home taking care of the family. However, girls showed interest in learning tailoring because they thought tailoring was a better option and the most convenient business they could initiate, without having to go outside their homes. Girls in Bara wanted to go for tailoring training because their husbands were tailors themselves, so these girls wanted to be a helping hand for their husbands. All of

the girls interviewed during qualitative data collection mentioned they wanted to learn tailoring skills. It appeared that girls had no idea regarding other opportunities that might be available to them.

Reflection on transition for Muslim girls:

Madarsa education was fairly common among the Muslim community, where they were taught only the Quran. Qualitative findings suggested that more girls who had never been to school, their exposure to the Nepali language was recent (after joining CLC). Therefore, for these girls attending formal education was farfetched. Moreover, these girls did not want to enroll in formal education but instead wanted to be literate enough to understand Nepali scriptures so that they could read signboards or other papers. These girls also suggested that they would attend classes regularly if classes are only for a few hours, like in the CLC. The motivation of Muslim girls to join CLC was solely to learn Nepali and to learn a new skill. Girls mentioned that they had no intention of starting their own business as their husbands were already a breadwinner. Girls mentioned that CLC was a place where they can interact and make new friends.

Overall reflection:

Apart from the above-mentioned reflection, girls who had 'never been to school' thought that CLCs were effective. However, for those who were 'dropouts' shared that since they had learned a lot of the content in the school itself, the curriculum was not new to them. These girls only wanted to learn the necessary skill rather than informal education. Moreover, for many girls tailoring seems to be the only option for their life path. Therefore, it is important that the project makes these girls in coordination with their parents/ in-laws about different avenues that exist in their community.

The proposed pathway for enrolling girls in school appears to be a challenge for the project. Various issues like parents' permission, girl's willingness, parent's restriction to let girls go out of the house for more than an hour, the trust of parents towards their daughters/daughters in law, and various other social norms should be carefully tackled. Therefore, to maintain sustainability of the transition activities, it would be viable for the project to remove re-enrolment as a pathway for older aged group girls.

5.4 Summary of sub group analysis for transition

Among all the characteristics mentioned in **Table 25: Household characteristics (in percentage)** identified, analysis for only five subgroups, i.e., M-OOS girls aged 10-14; 15-19, girls never been to school and dropped out and girls belonging to Muslim ethnicity was conducted. because girls from these subgroups had different transition pathways. For instance, for girls aged 10-14, they were interested in enrolling in formal education provided that their parents agree to this. Most of the girls belonging to the age group 10-14 were yet to be married. Therefore, these girls did not have many burdens or household chores than girls who were married. For the age group 10-15, girls did not show interest in enrolling in formal education as they thought it was time-consuming; they rather wanted to run their own business from home

than to go to school. Even for Muslim girls, their pathway was neither enrolling into formal education nor starting a business; all they wanted to do was to be literate enough to understand Nepali scriptures to be capable of reading signboards or other papers. The transition pathway was different for these three different groups; therefore, the project should consider subgroup-specific intervention for the transition.

6. Sustainability status for baseline

Since most of the sustainability indicators are linked with the project interventions, they could not be assessed during the baseline. The sustainability score therefore is low for all the sustainability indicators. Only relevant information generated during the baseline evaluation, mostly from the FGDs and KIIs, and school observation have been included in the table below.

Table 77: Sustainability scores at baseline stage

Indicator	Sustainability measures
Community level	
Indicator 1: % key family members (Husband, parents/in-laws) of M-OOS girls who demonstrate their support to their life plan	The fact that 58.8% of the parents stated they would allow their daughters to work, and 56% stated they would let them join formal education evidences support regarding girls' life plans. However, qualitative findings suggested that parents/in laws were not receptive to the idea of girls working outside the house. Furthermore, this very indicator also explored the support by household members on household chores. Data suggested that only 24% of the household members supported girls while doing household chores, like cooking, fetching water, caring for the younger ones among others. The remaining 61% of the girls spend most of the days doing the chores with no support from family whatsoever. Nevertheless, qualitative data suggested that it was after much convincing by the program team, parents/other in law sent girls to CLC. M-OOS girls mentioned that they go back home from CLC and complete the remaining household chores like washing clothes and colleting feeds for cattle.
Indicator 2: % of community members who feel it is harmful for a girl to get married below the legal age	Qualitative interview with parents and in laws suggested that the legal age for girls to get married is above 20-year-old. However, it was seen that girls as young as 12 years old were married. It was observed that knowledge of the community members was completely different than the practice in the community. The qualitative data suggested that parents want their daughter to marry early as they will have less burden on themselves.
Score	A score of 1 has been given considering that parents/in-laws have sent their daughters/in laws to CLCs
School level	
Indicator 1: Gender sensitive school sustainability index	The overall score in the score card assessment is 0 None of the schools had SIP let alone GESI-sensitive SIP. The schools have not formed SMC, nor has any school conducted regular meeting with parents, students and community members to exchange information on importance of girls' education. There were no documents that highlighted roles of formed communities. Therefore, there is no progress in this indicator. This was because the project was yet to start its intervention in those schools.

Indicator 2: % of school support committees scoring acceptable or above in sustainability assessment	The baseline value for school support committees is 0. Most of the schools did not have SMC committee which is a mandated activity implemented by the government of Nepal. When schools have not yet formed SMC it seems like they will unlikely form other committees that will remain sustainable. Therefore, attaining sustainability for this particular indicator is bleak.
Score	*Score of 0 has been given as schools have not yet complied by the government's basic mandate of making SIP and establishing SMC.*
System level	
Indicator 3: % of government officials who can demonstrate their support to delayed marriage and alternative roles of girls	PIN identified a mix group of government officials and community members who would play role in decreasing child marriage by conducting engagement with community members to reduce child marriage. Some of the awareness program had already been conducted for this. The data for this will only be gathered during the endline.
Indicator 3.2: Local government incorporating some or all components of Aarambha project into local plan.	Since project interventions are yet to begin, this will be measured only during the endline
Score	*Score 1 has been given as some of the activities such as parental engagement for reducing child marriage has already been conducted.*

Overall sustainability score = 2 out of 10

Table 78: Changes needed for sustainability

	Community	School	System
Change: what change should happen by the end of the implementation period	Change in attitude of parents, in laws, to support girls in their life plans by allowing them to transition to school or support in other life plans by helping them do the household chores so that they can invest time in other fruitful things. Ensure both the ownership and utmost cultural sensitivity of adolescent girls by reducing early marriage.	Schools should have developed GESI inclusive SIP to create enabling environment to girls' students. Schools should have report on GESI Gap Assessment, Schools should form committees with define roles to address GESI issues in your school Have gender focal point and have a defined role for them. School should conduct regular meeting with parents, students and community members to exchange information on importance of girls' education	By the end of the implementation period, local government should be promoting positive social norms in the community. They should continue working for girls' education and ending early marriage even after the project life. They should incorporate some of the components of PIN into local plan

Activities: What activities are aimed at this change?	The project will engage male and female community leaders as Change Champions to foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and girls' life plans. The Change Champions will deliver gender transformative workshops for M-OOS girls' families, which will also contribute to the transformation of social norms surrounding married adolescent girls, their mobility, their potential, and their value.	Under school level intervention, project will support the schools in incorporating GESI plans in SIP, formation of school support committees and other committees. Trainings to PTAs/SMCs, gender transformative workshop to school adolescent, adolescent 2 days intensive teachers training to create GESI sensitive classroom. Workshop on reflecting on teaching methodologies based on the assessment	Under this, the project will establish and strengthen partnership with the local government to bring positive change. This will be done by approval of the respective municipality to be a part of this work. Local level project advisory committees will be formed to ensure that the government stakeholders feel ownership of the project. Gender transformative workshop will be given to change champions
Stakeholders: Who are the relevant stakeholders?	Community networks such as Parents Mothers' Groups, GBV Watch Groups, and Female Community Health Volunteers Change champions/religious leaders CLC management committee LPAC members	School Management Committees School Support Committee Focal Teachers Teachers Head teachers Parents Teachers Association	Elected representatives (mayor, deputy-mayor) at ward level Women and Children Unit, Social Development Officer at Palika-level, EDCU and District Coordination Committee (district level Change champions /elected leaders
Factors: what factors are hindering or helping achieve changes? Think of people, systems, social norms etc.	Early marriage is still prevalent in many part of Nepal including Bara and Rautahat. Internalized notion of people that girls should be married at a young age is deep rooted. Therefore, a lot of awareness program and effort is needed to change in attitude and behaviour. A disproportionately high share of household chores, early marriage (perception that it will be difficult to find a groom for highly educated girls as husbands need to be more educated than wives and to get your daughter married to a highly educated man, they need	Lack of ownership of school authorities and school committees to take full responsibility for creating enabling school environment for M-OOS girls Schools have not yet formed SMC which is a mandate by the government. Therefore, other committees that will be formed during the time of intervention might not last long. Hence, attaining sustainability for this particular indicator seems bleak.	Elected representatives and most government members were occupied doing administrative duties mandated by the government. Therefore, less time might be spared by them on this project.

	to provide higher dowry. Thus, parents prefer to get their daughters married early), untouchability and isolation during menstruation, teasing and abuse on the way to, from and in school and lack of proper sanitation facilities are major factors that contribute negatively to girls' retention and transition in school.		

6.1 Defining project's intervention on sustainability

The sustainability indicator in the baseline is low, which is quite natural because sustainability will only be measured during the endline. The baseline data on sustainability was collected to gather a baseline value for the endline. Described below is a summary of the project's intervention on sustainability and how it will be measured during the endline.

Sustainability on Community level: PIN designed activities for community members to ensure their involvement during the implementation phase in order to continue their involvement even after the project ends. The project will create awareness among these community members on the issue of early marriage and increase the support of parents towards girls' life plans. Moreover, these trained community members will promote family planning and monitor GBV. To measure this, FDM conducted Household surveys, KIIs, and FGDs with M-OOS adolescent girls, and their parents' in-laws /husbands. The tool will help measure how much household support is being provided by the husband by sharing chores.

Sustainability on School level: Enrolling into formal education is one of the transition pathways for girls. Therefore, PIN designed an intervention for creating an enabling environment for girls in schools. This will be done through establishing committees like SMC, PTA, and Gender focal points among others, who will have a defined role to ensure gender sensitivity. In addition, schools will also conduct a gender gap assessment and make a report to identify the issues. Schools will be trained on making SIP and ensuring GESI is incorporated in the SIP. To measure that a sustainable change is happening at the school level the external evaluator will use barefoot assessment to observe classroom activities of teachers, will observe the overall infrastructure of school (well-managed latrines, sanitary pad disposal, and complaint boxes among others) and conduct scorecard assessment with the headteachers. Furthermore, The external evaluator will ensure that these activities are effective by checking the quality and effectiveness of generated resources through KIIs with HT, SMC and PTA members, spot-checking the infrastructure present in the school, its maintenance and looking at how this infrastructure is supporting the students along with conducting FGDs and KIIs with students, parents, teachers and school management.

Sustainability on System-level: The project designed this indicator ensuring that it works in -line with the government personnel. Government officials will be engaged in discussions and creating awareness surrounding child marriage. They will be asked for public declarations against child marriage and in support of alternative pathways and roles for girls that do not involve marriage before the age of 20. At the system level, external evaluators will verify the effectiveness of government by conducting KIIs with members of the regional education to understand the benefits of a partnership with PIN by conducting KIIs with Resource Persons of Bara and Rautahat district. To understand their knowledge on the reduction of early marriage and how they will incorporate PIN's component on their work plan; eventually, KIIs with the government officials will also be conducted. As mentioned by the external evaluator in the previous section, during baseline data collection, the project activities supporting sustainability were not rolled out. Thus the sustainability score for baseline is very low (2 out of 10). However, with events planned in the coming quarters, the project expects the sustainability score to increase significantly in the next evaluation point.

6.2 Project Response

As stated in the table, project has planned to conduct all the activities that support the sustainability indicators at community, schools and system level. The community and system level activities has started to address the issues identified. And school level interventions are yet for implementation to meet the ends as per the indicators. Given this is the first baseline and the intervention has just started, the above rating seems fine for the projects at baseline, as project aims to improves the score for endline through the conduction of planned activities. However, given that the project has just started (and school intervention has not even started yet), the lower scoring in sustainability part should not question the intervention design and plans at this stage of the project.

7. Key Intermediate outcome findings

7.1 Married out of school (M-OOS) adolescent girls' improved attendance

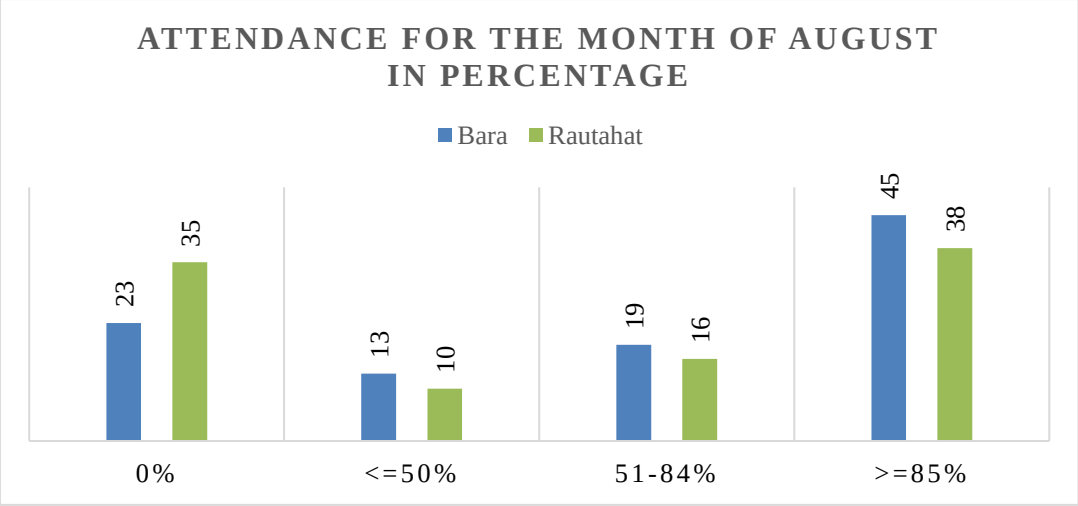
Intermediate Outcome Indicator 1.1: Attendance

PIN recognizes that barriers like burden of household chores, lack of decision-making authority are a few reasons for M-OOS girls' absenteeism in CLC at regular intervals. Missing classes is likely to affect the girls' understanding of the lessons which is certain to have impact their learning. Activities planned under IO I, will help ensure that girls maintain a steady attendance throughout the period of nine months and barriers at household level do not affect the attendance as well as learning and eventually transition of the girls.

Table 79: Attendance

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Who collected the data?	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
Married out of school (M-OOS) adolescent girls' improved attendance	% of M-OOS adolescent girls who have attended 85% or more literacy and numeracy sessions	Attendance Sheet Data from CLCs	PIN	62.88%	80%	Y
Major qualitative findings: Even though the attendance for the August seemed high, CLC facilitator complained irregularity to be the biggest problem in CLC. M-OOS girls shared that classes start at around 12 in the noon, the time when most of them have to wash clothes and do the dishes. Moreover, girls who had recently dropped out of school said that the course was too easy for them and spending three hours in CLC was not worth it. Social mobilizer further added that even though some of the parents agreed to send their daughter-in-law to CLC initially, later they did not allow thinking that it is a waste of time and young married girls should not stay out of home for such a long time.						

The overall attendance of the M-OOS girls for the month of August is 62.07%. The attendance of only August was generated to get a general understanding of the regularity of enrolled M-OOS girls in CLC during its initial phase. It should also be noted that during this time, not all girls who were enrolled in CLC had started to attend the class. It has been agreed with PIN and GEC that the full attendance information will be collected during the next evaluation point.



For August, when the girls had just started classes in CLC, 38% of M-OOS girls in Rautahat, and 45% of M-OOS girls in Bara had 85 % or more than 85% attendance. Upon exploring the trend of absenteeism qualitatively, the CLC facilitator complained that after the first month, attendance had seen a gradual decrease due to the irregularity of students in the CLCs. During the observation itself, FDM researchers found many students missing in the CLCs. Moreover, 35% of M-OOS girls from Rautahat and 23% of M-OOS girls from Bara had not even attended a single class despite registering their names. The reason for this was the household chores at home. M-OOS girls shared that the time they lost (for performing household chores) attending the CLCs had to be compensated by going back home and performing the pending household chores. At times, when there were guests at home or the workload was high, the mothers-in-law would order their daughters-in-law not to attend the CLC. In addition to this, it was mentioned by social mobilizer that parents/ in-laws of girls initially agreed on sending their daughters to CLC but later restricted them because of household chores and social norms. For some of the girls (mostly aged 10 -14) who had recently dropped out from school, since the course taught in the CLC was very simple and something that they already knew, they were not regular to the CLC and came only at times.

Regular attendance is imperative for better learning and performance. The fact that many of the girl's motivation to join CLC is to become literate or to take part in training after the end of the CLC, suggests that girls' greater interest lies in learning a skill rather than enrolling in formal schooling or attaining a high score in learning. From the project's perspective, it is challenging to ensure 80% attendance for the M-OOS given their different motivation to join CLC and the context in which they live. M-OOS girls are expected to perform household chores, their mobility is affected by social norms, and they have a greater responsibility of taking care of the family than self-improvement. Because of this very reason, the chance of M-OOS girls attaining 80% attendance and enrolling in formal education altogether seems difficult; therefore, a revision in the target is suggested for the project.

7.2 M-OOS adolescent girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skills to develop and pursue life plan

Intermediate Outcome Indicator 2.1: Household Decision-Making

Household decision-making index captured information on M-OOS girl's decision-making capacity. Tools were designed based on questions from the Indi kit (PIN's database of indicators). To measure this indicator, firstly, the responses to each of the questions under HDM were converted into two categories; a) Respondent fully or partially decided; b. Others decide on the respondent. Point 1 was provided for those respondents who fully or partially participated in the decision making and 0 to those who were not involved in the decision making at all. Total points per respondent were calculated and divided by a number of responses the respondent gave to get an individual score, and the average of the scores was then calculated.

The closer the value of the index was to 1, the more women were involved in household decision-making, and the closer the value of the index is to 0, the fewer women are involved. The score was then divided into three categories:

- at least 0.8-good HDM capacity
- 0.3-0.8-moderate HDM capacity
- Less than 0.3-poor HDM capacity

Data on Household decision making showed that, in matters such as handling the finances, saving money earned, making smaller purchases, going to school, or visiting other family members, the husband or mother-in-law mostly made all these decisions.

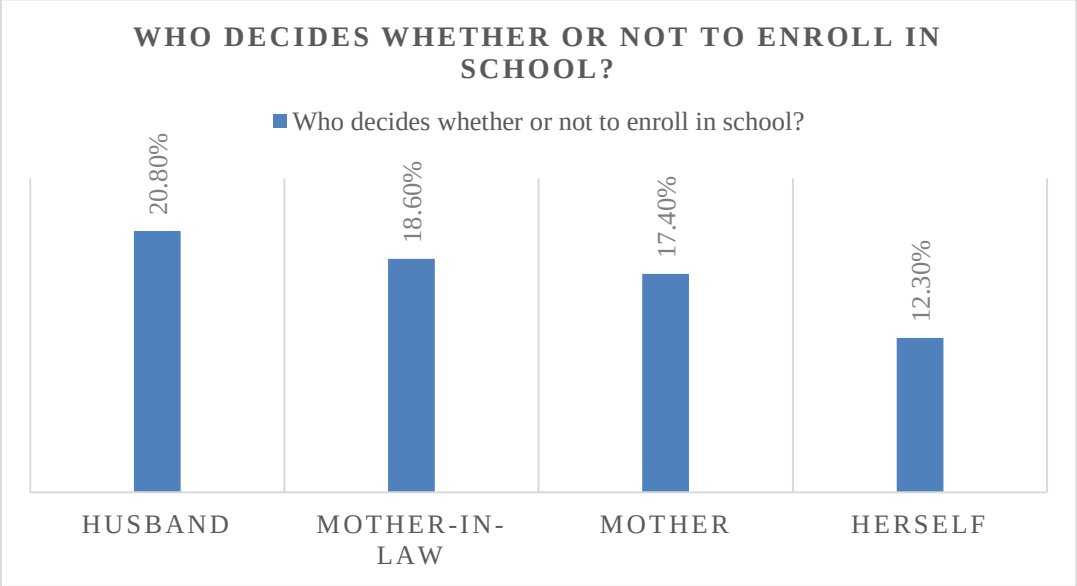
Table 80: Household Decision Making

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Data collected	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
M-OOS adolescent girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skills to develop and pursue life plans	Household Decision-Making Index Score	Girls survey Questionnaire household decision making index questions	FDM	0.44	N/A	Y
Major qualitative findings: M-OOS girls mentioned that they did not have the decision-making power at home. Even the smallest of decisions, such as which vegetable to cook, also required permission from the mother-in-law.						

Decision making rested mostly on men's hand, particularly the father-in-law or the husband of the M-OOS girl. However, decisions that involved household chores were decided by the mother-in-law.

Older women were more likely to have better decision-making autonomy. It was also reiterated that decision making should be done by elder members in the family regardless of their gender. M-OOS girls thought that older members made a sensible decision.

For both the cohorts across the age group (10-14), majority - 56.4% treatment, and 61.1% comparison- of the M-OOS girls fell under 'Poor HDM capacity' category while for the age group (15-19) 34.5% from treatment and 37.4% from comparison fell under 'Moderate HDM capacity' category. M-OOS girls reporting 'Good HDM capacity' is low across different age groups in both the cohorts. When asked, "Who decides whether or not you will enroll in school?"- 20.8% of girls said that the husband decides whether or not girls should go to school, followed by mother-n-law 18.6% and mother 17.4%. Only 12.3% of the girls said that they decide it.



Although most of the girls said that they have moderate decision-making capacity, the qualitative finding contradicted this information. Qualitative findings suggested that the girls did not have final decision-making power at all. The trend is common across many districts in Terai, where men hold most of the decision- making power, and women have very little say in such decisions. Decision making rested mostly on men's hand, particularly the father-in-law or the husband of the M-OOS girls. M-OOS girls have very limited to nil participation in decision making. In addition, although some M-OOS girls might have the option of giving their opinion in such households, their opinion might not really affect the final decision.

For instance, M-OOS girls' parents in Rautahat shared that women should not make a decision, but listen to men make the final decisions for her as it is the right thing to do. Similarly, parents in Bara shared the same thought. They believed that it was against the traditional custom for an elder member in the household to take opinions from younger members. In most of the cases, it was always the male members in the family or mother-in-law who made decisions at

home. The same was verified by one of the M-OOS girls in Bara, who said that despite her will to participate in CLC, her mother-in-law initially was apprehensive towards it. However, after much convincing from social mobilizer, she agreed to send her to CLC. Girls said that even for life's biggest decision like marriage, parents did not take their opinion. Girls in Rautahat also mentioned that they seek permission from their mother –in-law regarding which vegetable to cook and at what time they should start to cook.

In addition to this, decisions regarding joining CLC was taken by the girls themselves or their parents/in-laws, the project head said that almost all cases required approval from their in-laws. In some of the Dalit families, the girls were ready to join the CLC, but since their in-laws did not allow, they had to drop the idea. Reflecting on this fact that decision making freedom in M-OOS girls was almost nil. Although the parents later did state that they asked the daughters -in- law for their opinion, when validated with the project staff, they flatly refused and said that communication between father in law and daughter in law was limited. In that context, there was no way the opinion of M-OOS girls was taken into account while making decisions.

Moreover, data suggesting poor decision making (having no say at all) itself is proof that girls could not even make joint decisions. Qualitative findings indicated that the practice of making collective decisions was minimal. The fact that daughters -in- law never spoke directly to the male member of the family and conveyed their opinion only through the mothers in law show that two-way communication between the daughters-in-law and other members of the family was non-existent. In this case, it was not possible for joint decision making.

Gender impartiality renders girls increased decision-making autonomy in terms of handling finances, better health outcomes, among others. Qualitative findings showed that age and family structure were strongly associated with decision making autonomy of women. Older women were more likely to have better decision-making autonomy. When asked girls why mother-in-law could decide while she did not have any say, M-OOS girls reported that older adults make sensible decisions; therefore, their opinion is valued.

Table 81: Household Decision Making Capacity (in percentage)

	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14	15-19	10-14	15-19
Good HDM capacity	17.9%	22.7%	5.6%	8.4%
Moderate HDM capacity	25.6%	42.9%	33.3%	54.2
Poor HDM Capacity	56.4%	34.5%	61.1%	37.4%
Total	100%	100%	100.0%	100.0%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

To get a more nuanced picture of the decision-making capacity of the marginalized girls, there was no stark difference between Muslim and Non-Muslim girls in the treatment group in terms of decision making. 39.4% of the Muslim girls and 38.1% of the Non-Muslim girls had poor

household decision-making capacity. This suggests that the decision -making capacity of girls is the same irrespective of their age group or ethnicity.

Table 82: Household decision making capacity of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Good HDM capacity	18.2%	25.2%	4.4%	10.7%
Moderate HDM capacity	42.4%	36.6%	32.3%	66.9%
Poor HDM Capacity	39.4%	38.1%	63.3%	22.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Household decision-making capacity of girls was cross-tabbed with two significant barriers identified during the evaluation. There is a significant relationship between household chores and decision-making capacity. However, data suggests a surprising trend; girls with good decision-making capacity had to perform more household chores than girls with less decision-making capacity. There is no qualitative finding to support/ deny the findings as this only came up after the qualitative data collection had been completed.

In terms of poor households, data showed a direct relationship between the decision-making capacities of girls with girls belonging to needy families. A higher percentage of girls who fell under poor decision-making capacity was from a poor household. Although this was not explicitly explored in FGDs and KIIS, it is likely that in poor households due to lack of enough disposable income, the girls are compelled to support the family by performing household chores or looking after younger ones, which would give time to their parents to work outside. This compulsion gave them little freedom to exercise their decision-making skills in matters like going to schools, continuing CLC classes, taking training, among others.

Table 83: Household Decision Making Capacity with barriers (in percentage)

	Household chores		Poor household	
	T	C	T	C
Household decision making				
Good HDM Capacity	81.6%	60.6%	26.4%	36.4%
Moderate HDM Capacity	61.4%	66.2%	46.8%	45.5%
Poor HDM Capacity	45.8%	35.1%	34.8%	20.1%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Reflection Intermediate Outcome Indicator 2.1

It is clear that girls' voice in the household decision making is almost non-existent. Discriminatory social norms across societies, and gendered power imbalances within households and communities, impact girl's participation at all levels of decision making. Moreover, attitudes towards girl's participation perpetuate myths that girls cannot or should not take on roles or participate in decision making. This deep-rooted social norm can only be

tackled through intensive training to household members of the M-OOS girls on discriminatory social norms and attitudes. Therefore, it is suggested for PIN to work closely with the household members for a more extended period of time. Only a few months of intervention might not be effective for behavioral improvement.

In addition to this, the target set by PIN to reach 0.40 in the next evaluation point is already met in the baseline itself. Even though the target is met, the qualitative finding suggested that the decision-making capacity of girls were weak. This might be because the quantitative tool could not accurately capture the decision-making capacity of the M-OOS girls. Moreover, since the qualitative tool provided valuable information than the quantitative tool, FDM suggests only use a qualitative tool for the next evaluation point and proposes PIN to revise the indicator.

Intermediate Outcome Indicator 2.2: Life Skills Index

The life skill index had three major domains, attitude, knowledge, and practice. These three domains were based on the project's intervention, which included financial literacy, family planning, and self-efficacy.

Quantitative girls' survey, as well as FGDs, were conducted with M-OOS girls to gather information. The sample size for life was the same sample used for the overall survey. 400 M-OOS girls from both treatment and comparison cohorts administered the life skill questions. For the qualitative sample size, a total of 800 M-OOS girls were interviewed who administered questions surrounding different IOs, including life skill. No separate interviews were conducted with any of the respondents solely for collection life skill related questions. For the analysis, the responses were firstly computed and recorded to calculate a total percentage score. The scores were converted to binary with 0 for poor and 1 for good. Combining the scores, a final percentage score was calculated. Using the total percentages of GSE, FL, and FP, an average score was calculated, which was again converted into a percentage. The average of this score was reported as a life skill index. In terms of tool development, except for self-efficacy, everything was developed from scratch. EE referred to the previous similar surveys like Sisters for sisters, Stem, DHS (Demographic and health survey), Indi kit to develop a single tool. Pre-testing was done to validate the tool before it was finalized.

Table 84: Life skill

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Who collected the data?	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
M-OOS adolescent girls have acquired cognitive and non-cognitive skills to develop and pursue life plans	Life Skills Index Score (%)	Qualitative: M-OOS girls Quantitative: Girls survey (Life skill questions on financial literacy, family	FDM	40.7 %	70%	Y

		planning and General self-efficacy questions				

Major qualitative findings:

Financial Literacy: Girls knowledge on saving and credit was minimum. Among the girls who had the knowledge about financial literacy, there were not many who actually practice it. M-OOS girls mentioned that they know that they should save money but they did not know was how to access them because these kinds of work were only done by the male members of the family.

As men were the bread winners of the family, women had no idea about financial matters at home. Moreover, due to restriction to go outside the household, girls mentioned that only men go to banks or cooperatives. However, parents mentioned that girls lacked confidence to do official work such as going to the bank.

Family Planning: Even though it appears that practice for family planning is decent enough, qualitative findings suggested that girls did not have any idea on contraception or how to access them. When asked M-OOS girls what they thought about family planning, girls who were already mothers said that it is the men who decides everything, women just have to be submissive.

General Self Efficacy: M-OOS girls lacked confidence this was validated by M-OOS girls themselves when they mentioned that they feel scared to go to banks. Moreover, when asked what they did to solve conflict, many of them said that they would ask their husband to help them.

The overall life skill score showed that M-OOS girls across all age group in both the cohorts scored less than 70%. None of the girls fell in the range of having more than 70% knowledge. This indicated that knowledge, attitude, and practice of M-OOS girls across all three domains financial literacy, family planning and general self-efficacy were less than 70%.

Table 85: Overall life skills index (in percentage)

	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14	15-19	10-14	15-19
More than 70 %	0%	0%	0%	0%
50-70%	2.6%	5.6%	0%	3.1%
Less than 70%	97.4%	94.4%	100%	96.9%
Total	100%	100%	100.0%	100.0%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Moreover, disaggregation between Muslim and Non-Muslim ethnic group also showed that life skill index was less than 50% for majority of the girls irrespective of their ethnicity.

Table 86: Overall life skill index of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
More than 70 %	0%	0%	0%	0%
50-70%	2.5%	7.4%	1.3%	4.1%
Less than 50%	97.5%	92.6%	98.7%	95.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

As mentioned above the Life skill indicator has three domains, financial literacy family planning and general self-efficacy. Discussed below are these domains of life skill:

Financial Literacy:

The survey tried to assess adolescents' financial literacy through a series of questions on financial planning and specific questions about banking, saving, and borrowing. Being financially literate enables one to make informed decision regarding their money matters which reduces the prospect of being misled. 100% M-OOS girls across different age groups from both treatment and comparison group showed less than 50% knowledge as well as less than 50% practice and attitude on financial literacy. Knowledge, attitude and practice less than 50% implied that girls lacked knowledge due to which their practice was limited resulting in lack of opinion in the matter.

Table 87: Financial Literacy across different age groups (in percentage)

Treatment						
Financial Literacy	**Knowledge 10-14**	**Attitude 10-14**	**Practice 10-14**	**Knowledge 10-14**	**Attitude 15-19**	**Practice 15-19**
Less than 50%	100%	76.9%	100	100	83.5%	100%
50-70%	0%	19.2%	0%	0%	15.5%	0%
More than 70%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.9%	0%
Comparison						
	Knowledge 10-14	**Attitude 10-14**	**Practice 10-14**	**Knowledge 10-14**	**Attitude 15-19**	**Practice 15-19**
Less than 50%	100%	55.6%	100%	100%	70.9%	100%
50-70%	0%	44.4%	0%	0%	29.1%	0%
More than 70%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

The disaggregation between Muslim and Non-Muslim did not show any stark difference in knowledge attitude and practice of financial literacy. Majority of the girls irrespective of their ethnicity had limited knowledge, attitude and practice on financially literacy.

Table 88: Financial literacy of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Muslim girls						
	Treatment			**Comparison**		
Financial Literacy	**Knowledge**	**Attitude**	**Practice**	**Knowledge**	**Attitude**	**Practice**
Less than 50%	100%	84.3%	100%	100%	56.3%	100%
50-70%	0%	14.1%	0%	0%	43.7%	0%
More than 70%	0%	1.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non- Muslim girls						
	Treatment			**Comparison**		

Financial Literacy	Knowledge	Attitude	Practice	Knowledge	Attitude	Practice
Less than 50%	100	80.2%	100	100	79.3%	100
50-70%	0	18.3%	0	0	20.7%	0
More than 70%	0	1.5%	0	0	0	0

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

When knowledge attitude and practice were explored through a qualitative lens, M-OOS girls stated that they had the knowledge regarding saving, borrowing and taking loans, and information about the financial institution in their nearby location, but, what they did not know was how to access them because these kinds of work was only done by the male members of the family. Although quantitative data showed that knowledge and practice towards financial literacy were the same, but qualitative data suggested that knowledge was better than practice. The reason behind this was because girls did not know what to do and how to do it; the only thing that kept them from going to banks was lack of confidence, which stemmed from lack of education and awareness. When asked why they do not go to the bank or a cooperative, many girls complained of having to read documents and sign papers which they did not feel comfortable doing. They further mentioned that they did not have the capacity to handle a large amount of money. In addition to this, parents of M-OOS girls verified this saying that money matter could not be handled by anyone else but the household head. The meagre amount of money earned by family selling vegetables in the market was saved either by parents, husbands, or in a piggy bank at home. Therefore, it can be inferred that despite the knowledge showed a lack of autonomy in handling finances and a lack of confidence of the M-OOS girls.

Family Planning:

The family planning domain of life skills also showed a similar trend as financial literacy. Quantitative data showed that knowledge of all 100% of M-OOS girls from treatment as well as comparison groups across both the age groups was below 50%. None of the M-OOS girls fell in the category of 'having 70% or more' knowledge. This showed that M-OOS girls' level of knowledge on family planning was less by 20%. However, in the treatment group percentage as high as 44.9% of the M-OOS girls from the age group (10-14) fell under the category of demonstrating a positive attitude towards family planning whereas only 24.5% of the girls between the age group (15-19) demonstrated a positive attitude towards family planning. Similarly, for the comparison group, this might be because M-OOS girls between the ages group 10-14 are young and eager to learn methods to protect themselves from early pregnancy. However, for girls between the age of (15-19), since most of them are already mothers or are in the process of becoming mothers, therefore, they might not be interested in gathering knowledge or developing a positive attitude on family planning. Moreover, the practice of girls was low across both the age groups, and this could be because of a lack of awareness of family planning altogether.

Table 89: Family planning across different age groups (in percentage)

	Treatment					
Family planning and contraception	**Knowledge 10-14**	**Attitude 10-14**	**Practice 10-14**	**Knowledge 15-19**	**Attitude 15-19**	**Practice 15-19**
Less than 50%	100%	21.8%	80%	100%	38.5%	77.5%
50-70%	0%	33.3%	0%	0%	37.0%	0%
More than 70%	0%	44.9%	20%	0%	24.5%	22.5%
	Comparison					
	Knowledge 10-14	**Attitude 10-14**	**Practice 10-14**	**Knowledge 15-19**	**Attitude 15-19**	**Practice 15-19**
Less than 50%	100%	33.3%	100%	100%	36.4%	94.1%
50-70%	0%	55.6%	0%	0%	52.1%	0%
More than 70%	0%	11.1%	0%	0%	11.5%	5.9%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Moreover, the difference between Muslim and Non-Muslim groups in terms of family planning did not show any stark difference. Knowledge attitude and practice level of both Muslim and Non-Muslim girls fell under the category of having less than 50% of knowledge, attitude and practice.

Table 90: Family planning of Muslim M-OOS girls (in percentage)

Muslim						
	Treatment			**Comparison**		
Family planning and contraception	**Knowledge**	**Attitude**	**Practice**	**Knowledge**	**Attitude**	**Practice**
Less than 50%	100%	26.3%	72.7%	100%	37.3%	95.3%
50-70%	0%	35.9%	0%	0%	52.5%	0%
More than 70%	0%	37.9%	27.3%	0%	10.1%	4.7%
Non-Muslim						
	Knowledge	**Attitude**	**Practice**	**Knowledge**	**Attitude**	**Practice**
Less than 50%	100%	44.1%	78.6%	100%	35.5%	93.8%
50-70%	0%	36.6%	0%	0%	52.1%	0%
More than 70%	0%	19.3%	21.4%	0%	12.4%	6.2%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Qualitative findings also suggested that girls did not have any idea about contraception or how to access them. When asked M-OOS girls what they thought about family planning, girls who were already mothers said that it was the men who decided everything, while women were actively subservient to their husbands. Furthermore, girls between the age group (15-19) who were mothers mentioned that it is due to the restriction that they do not go to the health post to avail the resources needed.

In FGDs conducted with the M-OOS girls in Bara district who did not have children, CLC facilitators mentioned that the knowledge they gathered about contraception was from a one-

day trip to the health post from CLC. Before that, these girls had no clue about it. The CLC facilitator of Rautahat also shared a similar view. Therefore, it can be inferred that girls (who do not have children), knowledge of family planning might be limited due to a lack of awareness. For girls (who are mothers) limited practice despite having knowledge of family planning could be because restriction to go outside the house to avail the recourses, lack of confidence to speak up, or could be because they do not know from whom to seek information. Data depicted attitude towards family planning to be fairly positive. This could mean that M-OOS girls, even those with limited knowledge, have a positive attitude towards the use of contraception. But due to various impediments, they cannot access it or use it.

General Self Efficacy:

The self-efficacy tool was designed to gauge M-OOS girls' self-belief that they can successfully navigate and make good decisions. Data depicted that for both the groups, treatment, and comparison, the majority of the M-OOS girls from both the age group fell under the category of having '50-70'% and 'more than 70%' self-efficacy. This meant that the majority of the girls already had the ability and the confidence to solve life problems and to tackle them.

Table 91: General Self-Efficacy classification across different age groups (in percentage)

	Treatment		Comparison	
GSE mean percentage	10-14	15-19	10-14	15-19
Less than 50%	3.8%	9.3%	11.1%	16%
50-70%	55.1%	43.8%	55.6%	41.1%
More than 70%	41.0%	46.9%	33.3%	42.9%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Moreover, the disaggregated data between Muslim and Non- Muslim girls also showed similar trend. The self-efficacy for both of the ethnicity groups is between 50-70%. However, data also depicted that Non- Muslim girls had higher self-efficacy than Muslim girls.

Table 92: General self -efficacy score of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

	Treatment		Comparison	
GSE mean percentage	Muslim	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Less than 50%	7.6%	8.9%	13.3%	17.4%
50-70%	49.5%	42.6%	58.9%	30.6%
More than 70%	42.9%	48.5%	27.8%	52.1%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

When explored self-efficacy through a qualitative lens, it was observed that girls lacked confidence. When girls were asked what they would do in a situation of conflict, majority of

them said they would rely on their husbands for solving conflicts. One of the M-OOS girls in Rautahat said that when she had an argument with a friend at the CLC, her husband, himself came to the CLC to solve the misunderstanding. The fact that a girl's dependent on their husbands to settle a basic argument with friend points to the fact that girls lack confidence. Moreover, data suggested that Muslim girls lacked confidence than Non-Muslim girls. However, it was also observed that in a Muslim from some communities where there were no people belonging to other ethnic group were forthcoming and confident in their interaction. The social mobilizer of the area explained that most of the girls who lived only with Muslim members tend to be confident because Muslim religion permits marriage within the community/family, which meant that most of the girls, even after marriage, did not have to move to different villages. This gave them more confidence as compared to a context where they would have to move to a new village with new people around them. Nevertheless, self-efficacy was not found to be associated with any particular group. For instance, while FDM found Muslim girls from one of the CLCs to be very forthcoming while Muslim girls from another CLC did not speak at all with FDM researchers. Thus, a specific trend could not be discerned in terms of self-efficacy.

One of the issues with using the GEC as a tool to measure the efficacy was that some of the statements were very complicated for the girls to understand. As a result, most of the M-OOS girls replied positively without comprehending the statements correctly. This has been a problem across many of the GEC funded projects that FDM has evaluated in the past, including STEM I, STEM II, SFS I, and SFS II. Even though the scores for self-efficacy appeared high, it was verified during qualitative data collection that M-OOS girls lacked confidence and were shy even to speak their views.

To see the relationship between life skills and the two major barriers, the index was cross-tabulated with the barrier. Findings suggest that financial literacy and family planning and self-efficacy were not significant. This meant that household chores and being from a poor family did not have any impact on the knowledge, attitude, and practice of girls in terms of financial literacy, family planning, and self-efficacy.

Table 93: General Self-Efficacy classification (in percentage)

	Household barrier		Poor household	
	T	C	T	C
Life skills Index score				
More than 70%	0%	0%	0%	0%
50-705	20%	75.0%	40.0%	83.3%
Less than 50%	51%	53.1%	37.6%	64.4%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Reflection Intermediate Outcome Indicator 2.2: Life Skills

Overall, findings suggested that girls' knowledge attitude and practice on financial literacy and family planning both were weak. This was identified to be due to a lack of awareness among

girls and their household members. To mitigate this challenge, PIN should have a separate intervention for M-OOS girls, which focuses solely on financial literacy and family planning. At present, FDM could not clearly identify the intervention implemented by the project for improving their financial literary skill and family planning knowledge and practice. It is suggested for the project to be clear on the intervention and plan in such a way that it becomes effective to bring improvement. Apart from financial literacy and family planning, the self-efficacy tool was also a part of the life skill index.

The self-efficacy tool was difficult for the M-OOS girls to comprehend, resulting in biased answers. FDM suggests using an alternate quantitative tool at the midline to measure the confidence level and efficacy of the girls. A situational assessment tool, whereby the girls are given hypothetical challenging situations and are told to react (their confidence will be graded on the basis of their reaction), could be a better and simpler tool to measure self-efficacy and confidence. Self-efficacy is a separate theme under life skill. The other two themes (family planning and financial literacy) under life skill have clearly defined activities. Still, it seemed like self-efficacy was just a tool kept to address the assumption that an increase in family planning and financial literacy would increase girls' confidence level.

Moreover, in terms of analysis and aggregation to make an index, aggregated scores of FL, FP, and GSE did not give a specific picture of each of these themes (FL, FP, and GSE). Therefore, it is suggested to revise the life skill indicator and divide it into three different categories so that it can be measured separately rather than as a whole. In addition to this, there were few questions under each domain (FL, FP, and GSE) that were not pertinent to the context of Terai. Some of the options for these questions also were redundant. Therefore, for the next evaluation, the tool and the respective options will require modification.

7.3 Summary of subgroup analysis for household decision making and life skill

For household decision making and life skill index, four subgroups i.e., M-OOS girls aged 10-14; 15-19, and girls belonging to the Muslim community, girls belonging to a non-Muslim community were considered as subgroups. The reason for considering age as a subgroup for this particular IO was to explore if girls belonging to older age had more decision-making power, had better knowledge attitude and practice on FL, FP, and GSE than girls of younger age group. However, data did not show any stark difference between these two age groups.
In addition to this, Muslim and non-Muslim girls were taken to be subgroups to see the difference in the decision-making status, knowledge, attitude, and practice on FL, FP, and GSE between the highly marginalized group and not marginalized group. Data suggested that ethnicity did not play any role in the decision.

7.4 Project Response

All these baseline findings further reiterate the finding from formative research conducted by PIN in early 2019, that concludes the position of young married girls and young girls in general, in a rigid socio-cultural and patriarchal society in these districts. Across all indicators of life skills (decision making, family planning, financial skills and self-efficacy), the status of girls is controlled by their male members or mother in law. The life skill intervention that project has designed are still relevant to bring desired positive changes in the girls. It is evident how the scores on knowledge level indicators are relatively higher compared to attitude and practice level indicators. And there is a difference among Muslim and non-Muslim girls, and higher and lower caste girls. Therefore, project will review its intervention and design to focus more on bringing attitudinal and practice level changes through real life situation-based exposure and learning particularly for Muslim girls, and lower caste girls and will adapt the program to address the intersectional need of the girls.

7.5 Schools have created enabling and supportive environments for M-OOS girls' learning

Intermediate Outcome Indicator 3.1: Gender-sensitive teacher tool

Table 94: Gender sensitive teacher tool

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Who collected the data?	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
Schools have created enabling and supportive environments for M-OOS girls' learning	Average score in the "gender-sensitive teacher tool"	Gender sensitive teacher tool Barefoot analysis (Classroom observation) KIIs with teachers FGD and KIIs with students and In-school girls	FDM	44%	NA	Y
Qualitative finding Teachers were not aware about gender responsive mechanism in the classroom. Students were reluctant to ask questions to teachers due to their intimidating nature Head teacher from both the district suggested the need for teacher's training. Head teacher mentioned that due to limited fund in the school, the infrastructures are not well maintained in the school. In-school girls mentioned that die to lack of proper toilets in school they do not like to come to school.						

The gender sensitive teacher tool index was measured through school observation to ensure enabling environment for M-OOS girls in the classroom. The observation was made based on the following criteria:

- Does the teacher give equal attention to both boys and girls?
- Does teacher overpower students in the classroom?
- Do boys overpower girls in the classroom (bullying, teasing, making noise, disrupting)?
- When the teacher walks around the classroom, does she or he walk near and stop to talk to the girls and boys equally?
- Is the language and tone used by the teacher offensive (towards girls, boys, other ethnicities, students with disability, poor performing students, shy students, etc.)?

Most of the schools lacked gender sensitivity in the classroom. The overall score for this indicator was 2.2 out of a total score of 5 (44%) which is already greater than the target set for the next evaluation. Although, the target is met, gender sensitivity was not much of a priority of the teachers in the classroom and there are a lot of room for improvement.

FGDs conducted with in-school students in Bara mentioned that, interaction with teachers in the classroom was limited due to the intimidating nature of some of the teachers. Similarly, one group of in-school student from Rautahat said that teachers do not easily repeat the things taught even when students do not understand. When asked the reason for less interaction of teachers with the students, it was mentioned that teachers followed the traditional 'book-reading' approach. This meant that teachers read every sentence of the book without explaining the content, which contributed to the poor performance of the students.

A teacher from Bara rightly pointed towards the need for training. Head teachers were asked if it was possible to make government school 'child friendly' or 'gender friendly', both the head teachers of Suwarna and Devtal agreed that it was possible to make government schools gender sensitive. However, the Suwarna head teacher said that making 'child friendly' or 'gender friendly' doesn't mean not scolding or giving excess freedom to one specific group but making teachers understand that all groups, children, female and male should be treated equally – sometimes they do need to be punished, sometimes scolded and sometimes spoken to lovingly.

> *The attitude of teachers makes it difficult for us to ask questions. One time when we did not understand the meaning of a word, our Nepali teacher did not clarify it and asked the meaning of the same word. He got angry when most of us could not answer it.*
>
> *- Shre Nera Mavi- Rautahat*

To create an enabling environment in schools, a total of six schools were observed in Bara and Rautahat district. FDM's observation showed that the state of infrastructure was deplorable in all the schools with a score of only 1.4 out 5 (28%). In two schools of Bara and all three schools of Rautahat, there were no boundary walls. As a result, people from the community kept walking into the school grounds. It was observed that five to six students sat on the same bench without having space to move even a bit. The state of toilets too was a major problem- with

99% (5 out of 6) schools had dirty, unmanaged toilets with no running water. Schools lacking the basic amenity like sanitary pad disposal mechanism was another concerning matter.

When asked in-school girls about the school infrastructure situation, they complained that they have to miss classes in between because most girls go home when they want to go to the toilet. Girls also shared that after going home, they feel lazy to walk back to school again, resulting in absenteeism for the rest of the classes. It was further added that during menstruation, most of the girls do not attend school as they cannot change their pads. All school principals interacted with said their schools do not have enough funds to invest in infrastructure. Therefore, the schools did not have well-managed latrines, or sanitary pad disposal mechanism. Although latrines were unmanaged, schools had initiated to make separate latrines for boys and girls, which was commendable.

Reflection Intermediate Outcome Indicator 3.1: Gender-sensitive teacher tool

This indicator is crucial to capture gender sensitivity in the classroom. However, classroom observation as a quantitative method does not give an accurate picture of the overall classroom situation. Therefore, FDM suggests to use a qualitative approach to explore the behaviour of the teacher through in-school students and gain a clearer picture of the school situation.

Key Intermediate Outcome 3.1 Attitude Change Index for in-school adolescents

PIN aims to improve the knowledge, attitude, and behaviour of in-school adolescent to create supportive environment for M-OOS girls' learning after their transition to formal schooling. Since, attitude and perception in Bara and Rautahat are shaped largely by the gender biased cultural norm, focus on this IO will go a long way in achieving the outcomes mentioned in the log frame.

Table 95: Gender sensitive teacher tool

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Who collected the data?	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
Schools have created enabling and supportive environments for M-OOS girls' learning	Attitude change index score (%)	In school boys and girls survey. FGD with in-school girls and boys	Quantitative PIN Qualitative FDM	85.61%	75%	Y
Qualitative finding: **Knowledge:** Even though boys have more knowledge than girls, the practice in the community is different. For instance, girls despite having knowledge on menstruation, they consider themselves polluted because it is internalized in the community, and the practice of untouchability and restriction during the time of menstruation makes them feel like they are impure. **Attitude:**						

It was mentioned by in-school boys that women are better at cooking than men due to which they have to be in the kitchen. Moreover, in-school boys opined that when girls drop out of school, they do not have anything to do therefore they do the household chores.

Restriction mobility girls consider themselves as weak than men in the community.

Behaviour:

In-school adolescent students have the willingness to achieve their dreams, however, the conservative environment in which they live act as a major impediment. However, they shared a willingness to support their sisters and other family members to attain their life goals.

Survey was conducted among a total of 925 in-school adolescents in potential schools (three from Bara and four from Rautahat) where the M-OOS girls are likely to transition in the future. The attitude change index was divided into three themes Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviour which was calculated separately. The index was calculated by changing the scores to binary. 0 was given to all negative answers, and 1 was given to the positive answers. The total sum was then calculated to generate an index for each of the themes.

Table 96: Level of Knowledge (in percentage)

Level	Overall Percentage	In-school boys	In-school girls
Poor Knowledge (0-2)	33%	26.41%	38%
Good Knowledge (2-4)	67%	73.5%	61.80%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

For Knowledge, 67% of the students belonged to "Good Knowledge" category, while 33% of the students belonged to "Poor Knowledge" category. The sex wise disaggregation shows that the knowledge of boys is better than the knowledge of girls. This meant that in-school boys had good knowledge regarding menstruation, gender-based violence, and correct age for getting married, and safe drinking water. High percentage of students having a positive knowledge showed that their knowledge level is fairly good.

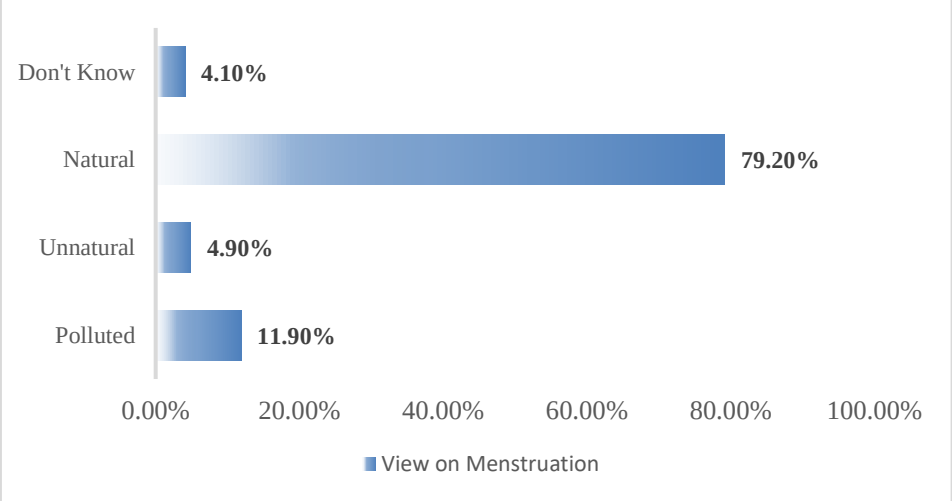


Figure 1: Knowledge on menstruation

One of the questions in the tool required students to give their view on menstruation when asked in-school adolescent students their perspective on the same, overall 79.2% thought it to be a natural phenomenon, while, 11.9% thought it was being polluted and 4.1% of the students did not even have an opinion about it. Qualitative findings also supported the very finding where the students mentioned that the notion of untouchability during periods should be abolished. It was also shared that the traditional mindset of people in the community makes it seem like a barrier when, in reality is a natural process. However, among the total 11.9% of students who deemed menstruation as polluted, 37% were boys, while 62% of them were girls. This states that girls considered themselves as polluted. While exploring this through a qualitative lens, girls mentioned that the notion of menstruation is internalized in the community; the restriction during the time of menstruation makes them feel like they are impure. Social mobilizer further added that many organization advocates about menstruation being a normal phenomenon, but the ground reality is different, only girls who face it know the intensity. Therefore, it can be inferred just because the knowledge does not necessarily account to practice. Girls having lower knowledge than boys, could be because the reality is different than perception.

Even though students portrayed good knowledge of gender issues, their attitude toward the same seemed weak. 62% of the students fell under the "Poor Attitude' category. This meant that attitude towards issues such as women should not be leaders, women's' responsibility to work at home, and men to earn money, girl's fault when abused, among others, were positive. Among the total 62% of students who had a poor attitude, 30.66% were boys, and 31.96% were girls. This suggests that there is not much of a difference between the attitude of boys and girls in regards to attitude on gender equality.

Table 97: Level of Attitude
(in percentage)

Level	Overall Percentage	In-school boys	In-school girls
Poor Attitude (0-5)	62%	30.66%	31.96%
Good Attitude (5-12)	37%	13%	24.2%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Qualitative findings supported this finding. It was mentioned by in-school boys that women are better at cooking than men due to which they have to be in the kitchen. Moreover, in-school boys opined that when girls drop out of school, they do not have anything to do; therefore, they do household chores. However, girls had a contradictory view, and they said that it is due to their parents' restriction and lack of trust that parents do not send them out.

In addition to this, the majority (59%) of the students agreed to the statement that women should not be a leader while 39% disagreed with this statement. Among those who agreed that women should not be leaders, 48.44% were male, while 51.55% were female. FGDs conducted with in-school girls shared that women generally get married at an early age. After marriage,

their chance of mobility and freedom becomes limited; therefore, becoming a leader is not an option for them. They further mentioned that boys have more exposure than girls; therefore, they should be the ones going out and taking leadership roles. It can, therefore, be inferred that due to restriction mobility, girls consider themselves weak than men in the community. When asked about their aspiration as a part of measuring the gender-based attitude, aspiration of these young school-going girls was to complete the 10th standard. Girls mentioned that if they studied till the 10th standard, it would be a benchmark for the next generation to study even further. When asked the reason for this, girls said that higher education corresponded to higher dowry due to which parents marry them off at a young age. In contrast, adolescent boys shared that they would go to the city to complete higher education to go abroad.

> *"We have learnt about gender equality and know about it. But some things are difficult to change considering that our community is mostly patriarchal".*
>
> *-Head teacher, Suwarna*

Boys were asked about their perception of gender equality; they said that gender equality is an important issue, but given the context of the village, they opined that it was not possible to implement it in their village. They said that gender inequality starts from the school itself. When asked how the boys said that girls were frequently absent in their class because they had to perform household chores. Many of them even dropped out before completing their SLC because they were unable to bear the costs (school uniform and coaching class cost). Had it been boys, parents would have encouraged their son to study even in dire constraints such as poverty. They further explained that gender equality was difficult to attain because of the mind-set of the parents themselves. They gave examples of how parents preferred to send their sons to private schools, while continuing even basic education was not an option for the daughters. When inequality started from the homes itself, they questioned how it was possible to reduce it in the community or even nationally. Therefore, it can be conducted that the attitude of both boys and girls is shaped by the practice in society. Due to the lack of mobility, restriction, and societal norms, women's attitude towards gender equality is bleak.

The behaviour category had questions on support and encouragement to girls to reach life goals, not marry early, active participation, among others. 43% of the in-school adolescent fell in the 'Poor Behaviour' category, while 56% of them fell into the 'Good Behaviour' category. A positive behaviour towards encouraging and supporting others to achieve life skills could mean that students want others to attain their life plans. Among the total 56% of students having good behaviour, 24.40% were boys, while 32.07% were girls.

Table 98: Level of Behaviour (in percentage)

Level	Overall Percentage	In-school boys	In-school girls
Poor Behaviour (0-4)	43%	19.33%	24.19%
Good Behaviour (4-9)	56%	24.40%	32.07%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

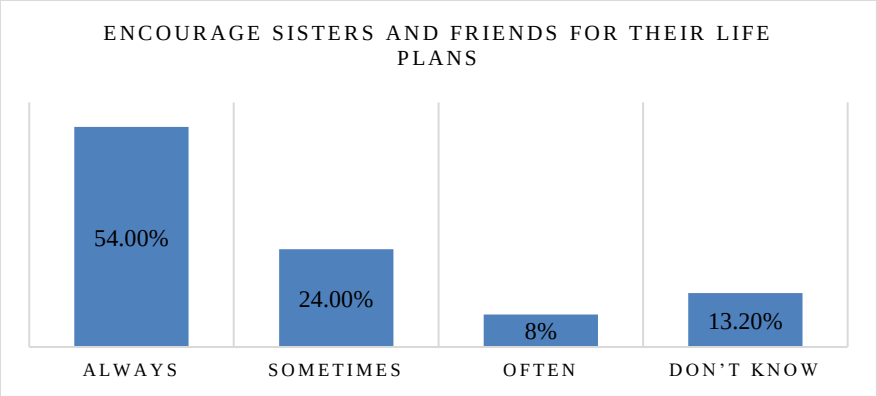


Figure 2: Encourage sisters and friends for their life plans

When girls and boys were asked if they helped their friends or sisters to attain their life plan, the majority of the students 54% said that they always supported while 24% of them said they only supported sometimes. Out of those who said always, 55.8% were boys, while 44.2% were girls. Qualitative data further suggested that in-school adolescent students have the willingness to achieve their dreams; however, the conservative environment in which they live acts as a major impediment. FGD with one of the in-school girl in Bara district mentioned that she wanted to become a teacher, but since her marriage was arranged to take place in the next year, she said she would not be able to fulfil her dreams instead will support her four-year-old sister to pursue a career in teaching. She said, "I have a sister who is four years old when she grows up, I will make her a teacher." In addition to this, in-school boys were also asked about their perception of marriage. The boys said that for boys, the right age to marry is over the age of 20 and below the age of 25. They accepted that post marriage; it was difficult for both girls and boys to study. The boys explained the reason for girls being married early in the village. They said that parents would have to pay a higher dowry if the girls were educated to a higher grade.

Moreover, parents also feared that their daughters would elope if they reached a higher age, hence marrying them off at an early age. When asked if this practice was correct, the boys said that parents thought was not wholly unfounded. There had been cases in the village where girls had eloped and some families having forced to pay a higher dowry because their daughters were educated. While some of the boys said that girls should marry after 20, most of the boys stuck to the belief that it was appropriate for girls to marry after passing grade 10.

Reflection Key Intermediate Outcome 3.1 Attitude Change Index for in-school adolescents

In this context, PIN's initiatives to increase awareness of in-school adolescent through the gender-transformative workshop is vital as this will give them the opportunity to learn and help to change their perception on gender issues, and norms. Although students portrayed good knowledge of gender issues, their attitude toward the same seemed weak. This could be because of the deep-rooted in the social norms which are still practiced in society. Hence, to create a better learning school environment for students and the progress of the overall community altogether, PIN should increase the number of gender-transformative training to these adolescents in -school boys and girls. Moreover, girls M-OOS girls have mentioned that they feel hesitant to enrol back to school because of the fear of being bullied or teased, it is crucial that the project plan its activities surrounding this particular issue as well.

In addition to this, the other things that need to be modified for the next evaluation are the questions and their options under each of the three topics (Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviour) because some of the questions do not align with the indicator. For example, questions such as 'which water is safe to drink?' 'I use substances like alcohol, drugs or cigarettes,' 'it is okay to go abroad for work at the age of 16', among others. Moreover, the set target should be revised for the next evaluation point because the target set has been met in the baseline itself.

7.6 Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realization of M-OOS girls' life plans

Intermediate Outcome Indicator 4.1: Communities foster positive social norms

PIN by the end of the project aims to foster positive social norms among parents and community members to encourage delayed marriage and allow M-OOS girls pursue her life plans. The baseline situation of parents and communities showed a positive result.

Table 99: Communities and authorities foster positive social norms

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Who collected the data?	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realization of M-OOS girls' life plans	% of M-OOS adolescent girls' families with changed attitude	Household survey FGDs with M-OOS girls and their family members KII with government officials and project team member	FDM	2.35%	+10%	Y

Qualitative finding:

Parents married their daughters off at a young age due to societal pressure.

The fear of paying high dowry and the threat of daughters eloping which would cause an embarrassment to the family were the reasons for early marriage as stated by social mobilizer.

Parents of the girls from Bara shared that they would not support their daughter in-law if it required long travel outside the community.

Data depicted that throughout all the age groups of both the groups, majority of the parents had positive attitude towards not performing early marriage and supporting their daughter/in-law pursuing life plans. Only a small portion of the population in both treatment and comparison group across two different age groups had a neutral or negative attitude.

Table 100: Attitude change of parents (in percentage)

Category	Treatment		Comparison	
	10-14	15-19	10-14	15-19
Negative attitude	5.1%	2.5%	11.1%	5.0%
Neutral	2.6%	3.7%	11.1%	4.5%
Positive attitude	92.3%	93.8%	77.8%	90.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

Disaggregation on the basis of Muslim and Non-Muslim girls also showed similar findings. 92.4% of the Muslim parents and 94.6% of the Non-Muslim parents showed positive attitude towards delayed marriage and support in life plans. Although data showed that parents were encouraging towards delay in early marriage and supporting towards life plans, qualitative data contradicted this finding.

Table 101: Attitude change of parents of M-OOS Muslim girls (in percentage)

Category	Treatment		Comparison	
	Muslim	Non-Muslin	Muslim	Non-Muslim
Negative attitude	3.5%	2.5%	5.1%	5.4%
Neutral	4.0%	3.0%	6.3%	3.7%
Positive attitude	92.4%	94.6%	88.6%	90.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source M-OOS girls' survey | n = 800

In terms of delayed marriage, the qualitative finding suggested that people were aware of the legal age of marriage. However, parents still married their daughters off at a young age due to societal pressure. When asked parents if this practice was correct, they thought that early marriage was not completely unfounded. There had been cases in the village where girls had eloped, and some families were forced to pay a higher dowry because their daughters were educated. Moreover, the fear of paying high dowry and the threat of daughters eloping, which would cause embarrassment to the family and hurt their social image, were the reasons for early

marriage, as stated by social mobilizer. When asked about the reasons for marrying early, the project staff said that higher education for girls meant that they would have to pay a higher dowry. Moreover, the project staff also said that there were 'trust issues' with older girls. Thus, marrying them early saved them from any such situation. Moreover, marrying their daughters early meant that the parents could get rid of their responsibility.

"While child marriage still exists, we notice that girls as young as 10 years old are getting married."

-Project head

In addition to this, Municipal Education Officer in Bara mentioned that the project's events organized in coordination with PIN are helping to create awareness among people. However, when the belief of early marriage is so deep-rooted, only a couple of events designed to change attitude and belief will be difficult to attain. More effort needs to be given from the project's side as well as the government's side to change this practice. She further added that the government's policy to gift cycle to those girls who only marry after completing grade eight has been successful in achieving reduced early marriage. The project should come up with such a strong program for reducing child marriage.

In terms of supporting girls in their life plan, qualitative findings suggested that parents (or in-laws) would allow their daughters or daughters-in-law to pursue the life plans that fell within the social norm. This was verified by qualitative findings, where parents of the girls from Bara shared that they would not support their daughter-in-law if it required long travel outside the community. A similar thought was shared by parents in Rautahat. They said that they would only let her take the training and ultimately work if the work could be done within the household compound. When asked M-OOS girls what they would choose as their life plans, all of them said that they would become a tailor as it does not require them to step outside the house. The aspiration of M-OOS girls is limited due to restrictions and boundaries in society. It was also shared by the CLC facilitator that parents never support M-OOS girls by giving funds to open shops or buy machines as they are poor, and they think girls cannot handle finances. In FGDs conducted with parents, they said that they expected their daughters in law to be starting a business or working within the village only with support from the project with no personal cost whatsoever.

Reflection Intermediate Outcome Indicator 4.1: Communities foster positive social norms

The target of attitude change of parents for the evaluation is 10% more than the baseline score. The baseline index was 2.35%, while qualitative data showed that parents had indeed in recent years realized to some extent the negative impact of early child marriage, there still is a long way to bring about an attitude change in terms of early marriage. Any life plan that went against social norms and customs or was not in line with the traditions of the community was immediately rejected for by the in-laws. Therefore, for the project to bring about positive change to a greater extent, there should be more intervention around changing behaviour rather than just through change champions. The involvement of the government for a change in the

attitude of parents is crucial in this regard. The project should explore avenues to collaborate with the local government to bring about an attitude change in parents. Since the local governments have been recently formed and are in the process of forming plans and policies for their areas, this amplifies the project's scope to collaborate with local government.

7.7 Summary of subgroup analysis for attitude change of parents

Among all the characteristics mentioned in table 25, analysis for only four major subgroups, i.e. M-OOS girls aged 10-14;15-19, Muslim and Non-Muslim girls was conducted. The primary reason for this was to explore if parents of girls belonging to different age groups, and ethnicity had varying opinion on early marriage and support to life skill.

7.8 M-OOS adolescent girls' families who use the cash grants to support their life plans

Information was not collected for this indicator as it was not relevant during the baseline.

Table 102: Communities and authorities foster positive social norm

IO	IO indicator	Sampling and measuring technique used	Who collected the data?	Baseline level	Target for next evaluation point	Will IO indicator be used for next evaluation point? (Y/N)
Communities and authorities foster positive social norms that encourage delayed marriage and realization of M-OOS girls' life plans	% of M-OOS adolescent girls' families who use the cash grants to support their life plans	Household survey FGDs with M-OOS girls and their family members	FDM	0	+10%	Y

8. Conclusion

Overall, M-OOS girls are disadvantaged at multiple levels due to a complex set of barriers. To begin with, their position in their family and the community is devalued due to deep-rooted social norms that limit them from different life opportunities. In addition to this, MOOS girls do not have decision-making authority even in the menial household matter and rely on their husbands or in-laws. Lack of decision-making authority hampered the decision-making ability, which affected girls' self-esteem and self-confidence in a negative way. This brings to one of the important pathways that the project has envisioned – re-enrolment of M-OOS girls. FDM's finding strongly showed that given their household chores, their own sense of 'embarrassment,' and restriction by in-laws, most of the M-OOS girls would be unable to re-join school. The most viable option for M-OOS girls, therefore, will be vocational training, given that such training is held within the household. Restricted mobility, as well as decision-making authority, means that most of the M-OOS girls will be unable to go to town and work. The above-mentioned issues stem from social norms and lack of awareness of parents. Therefore, the project has a lot of space to work on these two factors, which are the contributing factors to various key barriers identified in the report.

The detailed conclusion of the report is discussed below:

8.1 Outcome finding

As most of the M-OOS girls were drop -outs and some (mostly Muslims) had not attended formal schools at all, due to their classes in Madarsa, the learning scores of majorities of these girls were poor. In EGRA, girls performed relatively better in listening comprehension, however, most of the girls had difficulty in reading passages and identifying letters. Reasons for this was poor comprehension and analytical skills (which is a problem not just for M-OOS girls but across all students studying in public schools) also contributed to poor EGRA scores. The reason for this was also identified to be lack of practice and confidence to read long sentences. Muslim girls scored lower in EGRA than Non- Muslim girls because exposure to Nepali language was new to these girls. On the other hand, the trend was opposite when it came to EGMA. Unlike EGRA, girls scored better in EGMA. When the reason for this was explored, it was found that since girls would use Mathematical calculations in their everyday life (like addition, subtraction), it was relatively easier for them to solve the EGMA problems.

In terms of transition, M-OOS girls across all age groups, the probable transition option is enrolling into some form of training (mostly tailoring). Majority of the girls especially from age group 15-19 dismissed the idea of enrolling into formal school. This was because of household duties. Only a handful of M-OOS girls from the age group 10-14 who were yet to be married but were engaged said that they would re-join schools. Head teachers of all the schools visited also welcomed the idea of dropped out girls enrolling into schools but it can be seen that girls are more interested in training than education. For M-OOS girls, enrolling in trainings became the most viable option as they said that they would feel embarrassed to re-

join schools after having dropped out. For many who had children, going to school was not feasible. Hence, the only option was getting engaged in training.

The sustainability of the project focused on community, school and system level. The community level indicator focused on changing people's attitude on child marriage. However, baseline finding suggested that despite people's knowledge on the legal age of marriage their practice was different due to deep rooted cultural norms. This suggests that project's intervention to create awareness by organizing mass talk programs to create awareness will only have little impact on changing people's attitude. PIN can therefore, conduct a door to door awareness program or design a new intervention altogether that will precisely impact on attitude change.

The school level sustainability indicator to create gender sensitive school and creating supporting committees may not be effective as the project has not yet started its school level intervention. The total project's duration for its intervention is just 9 months, not starting the intervention yet might mean that the project might not get enough time to meet its targeted intervention. The fact that the project has not yet started its school level intervention yet to create gender sensitivity inside school points to a higher degree of urgency to start interventions for gender sensitivity at school to achieve target. The baseline finding suggested that the government members are already pre-occupied with administrative duties especially since the introduction of federal structure and have hence very little time to focus on the project. This should be taken into account by the project as it has high chances of affecting the project's sustainability.

8.2 Intermediate outcomes

The project had four IOs to meet the overall outcome. One of the first such IOs was attendance (in the CLCs). The project's rationale behind keeping attendance as one of the IOs is that, better attendance is expected to result in better learning, as more the girls attend classes, the more likely they are to do better. However, absenteeism in the CLCs was observed by FDM's evaluation team as a problem. Since the M-OOS girls have the responsibility of performing household chores and looking after their babies, it was very difficult for them to make it to the CLC every day. Therefore, the project should think of ways to work with household members to support M-OOS girls in their household duties.

In terms of the second IO, which is related to girls' decision making, it was found that, girls had very little decision-making freedom. From matters related to handling the finances to making smaller purchases, going to school, and visiting other family members, all decisions were taken by the husband or the in-laws. The M-OOS girls had to take the permission of their mother-in-law even while making a decision regarding what vegetable to cook.

FDM's evaluation showed that decision regarding household matters was often taken by mother-in-law. In contrast, other decisions regarding household finances were often taken by father-in-law or the husband. Hence, the findings suggest that girls hold a weak position in the household; therefore, awareness program to household members is imperative to change in the

attitude of parents. Their poor decision-making skills also affected the second indicator within IO2. In terms of financial decision making, it was found that girls did not go to banks, save or borrow as they had limited knowledge about how to perform the formalities, and it was their husbands who often took up these responsibilities. Although girls stated that they had knowledge regarding saving, borrowing and taking loans, and information about the financial institution in their nearby location, they did not know how to access them. Similarly, in regards to family planning as well, although quantitative data suggested that M-OOS girls had some idea about contraceptives, qualitative findings suggested that the decisions regarding family planning were almost always taken by the husband. In addition, for self-efficacy, although quantitative data showed a positive trend, qualitative data revealed that girls did not really have the self-confidence to make major decisions. Therefore, the project should implement a new activity that will solely work on improving girls' confidence and self-esteem.

In regards to the third IO, FDM found a need for major improvements. The evaluation found that most of the teachers were not aware of the gender-responsive mechanism in the classroom. The students said that they did not really feel comfortable asking questions to teachers as they felt intimidated. The primary reason for this was, the lack of training for teachers, which was highlighted as a need in both the districts. Not just teachers, but even the school infrastructure was not gender -friendly in both the districts. The girls' attendance was often affected due to the poor state of toilets in the school. Moreover, in terms of attitude, the gendered norms were deeply integrated into the school students. Girls themselves held that the belief that they were 'polluted' during menstruation while boys said that girls were expected to be better cooks than boys, and hence, their place in the kitchen was 'rightful.' In this light, there is a great need for the project to work to remove the gendered norms and bring about a change in the attitude of the people. Although it is a long-term task, the project can take initial steps to improve it. Furthermore, the project also needs to work with schools to make them realize the importance of gender-responsive schools and infrastructures. In this context, PIN's initiatives to increase awareness of in-school adolescent through the gender-transformative workshop is vital as this will allow them to learn and help to change their perception on gender issues, and norms.

In the final indicator, FDM found plenty of gaps for the project to work on. While parents are aware about the legal age for marriage, they still married their children at a younger age due to reasons ranging from cultural norms to safety concerns. Although parents claimed that they would marry their daughter after the age of 20, which is the legal age of marriage, other stakeholders claimed that parents often married their daughters before the age of 20 as marrying them younger meant that they would not have to pay a high dowry. Marrying them early also meant that there would not be a risk of them eloping with others. The project thus has space to bring change in the attitude of the parents through awareness activities, active engagement with parents and others, as required.

Given the baseline value, most of the project interventions were appropriate. However, some of the interventions or, in some instances, some targets do require modification. It should be understood that the barriers which are a result of deeply rooted social norm might not be easily removed during the project implementation duration. For instance, in terms of IO2, it might

not be possible for the project to drastically develop cognitive skills to help them pursue their life plans. However, the project should consider itself an achievement if it facilitates the transition of M-OOS girls into training or business by successfully convincing the in-laws that such transition will be helpful not only for the M-OOS girls but for the entire family. In regards to transition, the project should not set very high transition targets, as most of the M-OOS girls themselves are not looking to set big future plans. Similarly, while the CLC is expected to help many girls become literate, and for others, it is expected to reinforce the learning that they had obtained in school, the girls might not experience a very big improvement in the learning skills throughout the duration of the project.

Moreover, since most of the girls are only looking to become literate or participate in training which they expect to be held after the CLCs end, improving their learning skills is not a priority for them. This is one of the reasons; some of the M-OOS girls are not regular to the CLCs. Most importantly, since the majority of the CLC girls are not looking to re-enroll, the project should consider this fact in mind while designing the curriculum for the CLCs.

The project can, however, actively engage with parents and schools to bring an attitude change. In other words, its engagement with in-school girls or at school level can be expected to yield more tangible results as compared to its engagement with M-OOS girls. To begin with, the project's engagement with parents in the form of dialogues and awareness activities to help them realize the importance of delayed marriage is very relevant and is also of urgent requirement. Since 'lack of trust' is one of the reasons why parents marry off their daughters at an early age, the project can work on this front. Similarly, in schools, the project should not just help train the teachers but also help set up the gender-friendly infrastructure. This way, the girls will feel comfortable attending school, and they will not see the learning environment as a hindrance to their education.

8.3 Key characteristics sub-group and barriers

The project's direct beneficiaries in the sample reflect project's understanding of them in terms of their marginalization, characteristic sub-group and barriers to learning and transition because the intervention targeting them were appropriate. The project has planned same intervention for sub-group 10-14 and 15-19 who were either dropped out or never been to school. During the evaluation three major barriers to girls learning and transition which where household chores, poverty and restriction in mobility. Though household chores and poverty were identified as a strong barrier both quantitatively and qualitatively, restriction in mobility only came strongly through qualitative findings. These identified barriers directly affected girls learning and transition irrespective of their age or dropped out grade. Therefore, it can be concluded that girls face the same barrier irrespective of their age, ethnicity or school education because of the traditional environment they live in.

8. 4 Theory of Change

The project, in its TOC, also mentioned a few barriers. Although some barriers in the TOC were appropriate for the project, few of them did not act as a barrier at all. The barriers identified by PIN in the TOC became relevant for the project because these barriers turned out to be the consequences of key barriers (household chores, restriction in mobility, and poor household) identified by EE during the evaluation. The barrier which was not envisioned by the project but was the attitude of parents towards learning. Since a negative attitude is difficult to capture, it was underreported in the report. The other barriers mentioned in the TOC are described below:

One of the first barriers identified by PIN was access to family planning and health services. FDM's evaluation showed that this barrier was relevant because data depicted that girls, despite knowledge, could not put it into practice due restriction to avail such resources. Nepali language competency was identified as other barriers by the project, which was also verified by FDM's evaluation. The project's intervention to teach Nepali in CLC as it is the language of instruction in the school is relevant for overcoming the language barrier.

Early marriage, pregnancy, and childbirth were another barrier identified by the project in the TOC. The trend of marrying early is still prevalent in society. M-OOS girls reported that parents marry off their daughter at a young age as a way out for less dowry. The project, through its intervention, aims to reduce child marriage by raising awareness through change champions and government officials. However, FDM thinks such deep-rooted practice will require more effort from the government's side as well as from the side of the change champions.

The project had identified vulnerability to or experience of GBV as one of the barriers, qualitative findings suggested that girls are susceptible to violence given the traditional mind-set of men in the community. Even though the project identified this as a barrier, there is no distinctive intervention planned by the project to mitigate the issue.

There were some other barriers defined in the TOC which FDM's evaluation showed to be non-relevant. Social isolation and lack of peer support network did not come up as a barrier during qualitative or quantitative data collection—besides, limited access to literacy, numeracy, or transitional programs as barriers for M-OOS girls. However, FDM findings suggested that limited access to literacy numeracy or transitional program was caused by household chores and restriction in mobility, which has already identified as one of the key barriers to girls' learning. FDM, therefore, thinks this barrier is irrelevant for the project, and PIN should consider removing them. In terms of gender approach and integration, the baseline finding showed that the nature of the project intervention was 'Gender-responsive'. This is mainly because the project is aimed not only at M-OOS girls but in- school boys and husbands of M-OOS girls. The intervention focused on increasing awareness of boys in terms of gender equality.

8.5 Risks

In terms of risk with the project's approach to gender and social inclusion, the situation that girls live in with deeply rooted traditional beliefs, it is difficult for girls to take a stand for themselves. Girls in both Bara and Rauahat live in an environment that is susceptible to violence due to patriarchal mind set of the male members. This kind of risks may not be openly seen or talked about. Therefore, project should keep in mind the risk that these girls are in given the context they live in. For this, an awareness program on gender-based violence is highly recommended by FDM.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Monitoring, evaluation and learning of the project

- For learning and numeracy, PIN set a target of one-grade level up. FDM at present could not set a target for the next evaluation point of learning and numeracy because the set target by PIN could not be measured. Therefore, FDM recommends PIN to define a 'proficient level' score for each subtask of learning (both EGRA and EGMA) so that it can be accurately measured and inferred. At this moment, it is difficult to measure how much 1-grade level up is.

- In terms of household decision making an index, quantitative data was over-reported due to which the target set by PIN to reach 0.40 in the next evaluation point was already met in the baseline itself. However, findings from the qualitative approach generated more realistic and valuable information, which showed that decision making was almost non-existent for the M-OOS girls. Therefore, to avoid self-reported bias, for the next evaluation point a qualitative approach will be used. To measure the indicator, the findings generated from the qualitative approach will be quantified to create a composite index. All the positive information will be recorded as one, and the negative will be recorded 0. The analysis will be based on the total of these values to fit in the categories of 'good, moderate, and poor decision making.

- For measuring the life skill index, at present, it is an amalgamation of knowledge, attitude, and practice of FL, FP, and GSE. This particular index generated by aggregating scores of FL, FP, and GSE did not give a clear picture of each of these themes (FL, FP, and GSE). Therefore, it is suggested to revise the life skill indicator and divide it into three different categories so that it can be measured separately rather than as a whole. In addition to this, there were few questions under each domain (FL, FP, and GSE) that were not pertinent to the context of Terai. Also, some of the options for these questions were redundant. Therefore, for the next evaluation, the tool and the respective options will require modification.

- To measure indicator 'creating enabling and supportive environment for M-OOS girls learning,' PIN is working with the school teachers. To measure this indicator, FDM used barefoot assessment- which is an observation tool. This tool captured students' and teacher's interaction in class, teaching method, inclusiveness, and participation in the classroom.

However, this tool did not give an accurate picture to understand the overall classroom situation and the behaviour of the teacher towards students. Therefore, FDM suggests using a qualitative approach i.e., conducting FGDs with in-school students instead of for the next evaluation. A composite index will be created to generate an index by quantifying the qualitative information. At present, the barefoot assessment tool used, already met the set target of the next evaluation during the baseline itself. Therefore, it is recommended that PIN changes its target for the next evaluation point

- For the next evaluation, FDM should qualitatively explore evidence on whether girls' mobility- not to leave household unaccompanied- is strictly enforced and how it varies between caste/ethnic groups. Furthermore, FDM also should explore more on the kinds of social norms that prevail in the community that is barriers for the M-OOS girls in achieving their life plans.

9.2 Design

Learning

- The CLC curriculum needs to be slightly revised in light of the need of the M-OOS girls attending it. Motivation for joining the CLC classes was becoming able to understand formal documents (such as that of banks) or develop the ability to read Nepali better; the latter especially for Muslim girls. While it is difficult to ascertain clearly at this point what exactly needs to comprise the curriculum as it may require consultation with experts, the project is suggested to focus on helping the girls read official Nepali terms which are often used in official documents. In CLCs which comprise of Muslim girls who have only studied in Madrasa, the curriculum should focus on developing basic Nepali skills as they have never studied it before. Moreover, the variation in the participations also should be taken into consideration while re-designing the curriculum. Since most of the girls who have dropped out have said that the CLCs are ‘hardly useful’ for them and their intention is simply to join trainings after the completion of the CLC, the project should consider the scope of including some level of ‘intermediate level’ content for the drop-outs so that they can derive some benefit from the CLCs.

- For most of the M-OOS girls, re-joining school is not an option due to their context; it is suggested that the duration of the CLCs are extended so that the girls have an opportunity to learn more. This will be beneficial, especially for the Muslim girls, one of the sub-groups of the project, who have only started learning Nepali through the CLCs. As mentioned in the previous point, the curriculum can be re-designed slightly to incorporate lessons on matters like ‘understanding official terms,’ etc.

- Although it might not exactly be within the scope of work of the project, the project should aim to explore avenues to collaborate with Madrasas to ensure that they incorporate subjects like Nepali and Maths into their curriculum. Since many of the Madrasas still do not have Nepali and Maths classes, which the Muslim girls seem very keen to learn, the project should aim to collaborate with such institutions to ensure that girls get the essential learning they require.

Transition

- Based on the study, there needs to be a revision in some of the pathways identified for transition. To begin with, most of the girls' interest was in initiating business. In fact, it was this intention that had motivated them to join the CLCs. The project should thus focus on increasing the opportunities for girls to improve their entrepreneurial skills. However, an opportunity should be provided to develop a diverse range of entrepreneurial skills. This is important because, as of now, most of the girls stated 'tailoring' as their preferred business. This is understandable as the M-OOS girls have only seen women initiate tailoring business in their villages and are unaware of other opportunities. Thus, the project should open up the horizons of the M-OOS girls by giving them ideas to initiate various of businesses.

- The project should also consider the fact that in-laws are willing to support their daughter-in-law to initiate a business within their household and not in the cities. There can be a two-fold approach to solve this challenge. One, the project needs to focus extensively on convincing in-laws to allow their daughter in law to go at least to the village centre (small Bazaar) to run their business. A second approach could be exploring areas of entrepreneurship (apart from tailoring), which can be run from the household. This could be candle making, handicraft making, etc. With the second approach, the project should ensure 'market linkage' for the girls in some way. An absence of market linkage would mean that the products that the M-OOS girls make in their homes might go unsold or be completely useless.

- The project should understand that not all the M-OOS girls might choose one of the envisioned transition pathways. Some M-OOS girls might simply choose to stay at home. This should not be categorized as 'negative transition' as the girls would have already met their objective of joining the CLC – to develop/improve the ability to read official documents, read road signs and better their learning skills overall.

Life Skill

- FDM's study showed that the CLC facilitators were not confident to deliver trainings on life skills. Since all the facilitators had come from within the village and from a similar background as the participating CLC girls, it is not very logical to expect them to be capable of delivering 'life skills trainings' after being trained briefly by the project. To solve this, the project should provide a more thorough training to facilitators so that they themselves have the capacity and feel confident to deliver the session on life skills.

- Based on the analysis of barriers and characteristics, some of the interventions need scaling up. Project activity focuses on creating awareness among parents of M-OOS girls to support them in their life plans. However, only few days of training will not be sufficient to change deep-rooted norms and practice. Therefore, an intensive training on awareness of family planning, gender-based violence, gender equality is required for parents and the husbands of the M-OOS girls.

- FDM's study showed that to develop the self-efficacy of the M-OOS girls, a dedicated intervention needs to exist. It is difficult to calculate the self-efficacy simply as an 'aggregate' to KAP about family planning and financial literacy. Self-efficacy involves other aspects, in addition to KAP about family planning and financial literacy. To meet indicator envisioned for self-efficacy, the project needs to design activities which aims to increase the confidence, communication skills and problem handling ability. In regards to the latter point, it is especially important for girls to be made aware about handling issues related to domestic violence as well.

- It is clear that girls' say in household decision making is almost non-existent. Discriminatory social norms across societies and gendered power imbalances within households and communities, impact girl's participation at all levels of decision making. Moreover, attitudes towards girl's participation perpetuate myths that girls cannot or should not take on roles or participate in decision making. This deep-rooted social norm can only be tackled through intensive training to household members of the M-OOS girls on discriminatory social norms and attitude. Therefore, it is suggested for PIN to work closely with the household members for a longer period of time. Only a few months of intervention might not be effective for behavioural improvement.

Attitude change index of parents

- The target of attitude change of parents for the evaluation is 10% more than the baseline score. The baseline index was 2.35%, while qualitative data showed that parents had indeed, in recent years, realized to some extent, the negative impact of early child marriage. Nevertheless, there still is a long way to bring attitude change in terms of early marriage. Any life plan that went against social norms and customs or was not in line with the traditions of the community was immediately rejected for by the in-laws. Therefore, for the project to bring positive change to a greater extent, there should be more intervention around changing behaviour rather than just through change champions. The involvement of the government for a change in attitude of parents is crucial in this regard. The project should explore avenues to collaborate with the local government to bring about an attitude change in parents. Since the local governments have been recently formed and are in the process of developing plans and policies for their areas, this amplifies the project's scope to collaborate with local government.

- Findings suggested that parents are aware regarding the legal age of marriage; the trend of marrying early is still prevalent in society. The project, through its intervention, aims to reduce child marriage by raising awareness through change champions and government officials. However, such deep-rooted practice will require more effort from the government's side as well as from the side of the change champions. Hence, the project needs to collaborate with local governments, and change champions should take an active role in creating awareness in the community regarding early marriage.

Attitude change index of in-school girls

- The total project's duration for its intervention is just nine months, not starting the intervention yet might mean that the project might not get enough time to meet its target. The fact that the project has not yet started its school-level intervention yet to create gender sensitivity inside school points to a higher degree of urgency to start interventions for gender sensitivity at school to achieve the target. The baseline finding suggested that the government members are already pre-occupied with administrative duties, especially since the introduction of the federal structure and have hence very little time to focus on the project. This should be taken into account by the project as it has a high chance of affecting the project's sustainability.

- In this context, PIN's initiatives to increase awareness of in-school adolescent through gender transformative workshop is vital as this will give them the opportunity to learn and help to change their perception on gender issues, and norms. Although students portrayed good knowledge on gender issues, their attitude for the same seemed weak. This could be because of the deep -rooted in the social norms which is still practiced in the society. Hence, to create a better learning school environment for students and for the progress of the overall community altogether PIN should engage increase the number of gender transformative trainings to these adolescents in -school boys and girls. Moreover, girls M-OOS girls have mentioned that they feel hesitant to enrol back to school because of the fear of being bullied or teased, it is crucial that the project plan activities surrounding this particular issue as well.

9.3 Evaluation Question

- In terms of analysis and aggregation to make an index, aggregated scores of FL, FP, and GSE did not give a specific picture of each of these themes (FL, FP and GSE). Therefore, it is suggested to revise the life skill indicator and divide it into three different categories so that it can be measured separately rather than as a whole.

- The GSE tool was difficult for the M-OOS girls to comprehend resulting in biased answers. FDM suggests using an alternate quantitative tool at endline to measure the confidence level and efficacy of the girls. A situational assessment tool, whereby the girls are given hypothetical challenging situations and are told to react (their confidence will be graded on the basis of their reaction), could be a better and simpler tool to measure self-efficacy and confidence.

- PIN developed the tool and collected data from in-school students to measure attitude change index of in-school girls and boys. Some of the questions in the tool will need modification because some questions do not align with the indicator and activities of the project. For example, questions such as 'which water is safe to drink?' 'I use substances like alcohol, drugs or cigarettes', 'it is okay to go abroad for work at the age of 16' among others do not align with the project's activity. Therefore, it is recommended to modify these questions. Moreover, the tool is in a Likert scale format, some questions have four options and some have five options. Therefore, it is recommended to rework on the questions as well as the options to make it consistent so that it can be easily measured. Moreover, it is also recommended to change the

target for this particular indicator because the target to meet 75% in the next evaluation point has already been met in the baseline itself.

10. Annexes

Annex 3: Cohort approach evaluation

The learning outcomes of each cohort was evaluated at baseline using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) tests. The same evaluation method will be used for the endline too. These tests are standard tools for measuring the learning outcomes for GEC-LNGB. The transition and other key intermediate outcomes will be evaluated through the Girls Survey and Household Survey. The M-OOS adolescent girls' family members may have much information related to their transition, which is then triangulated by conducting interviews with M-OOS adolescent girls and service providers as well. The learning outcomes will be measured within a month while the transition outcomes will be measured after some gap (2-3 months) of completion of the interventions. This time will allow the girls to actually go into transition as per their life plans by utilizing the cash grants provided to their families.

In case of cohort 1's transition data, the data collection will be done after some time and coincide with the baseline quant data collection of Cohort 2. Through the project's robust internal MEAL system, the monthly attendance of the girls will be tracked. The data of attendance of individual girls will be therefore provided to External Evaluator by the project themselves, who will then evaluate the attendance related intermediate outcome. In addition, the project will also provide data to the external evaluator regarding the intermediate outcome relating to school interventions with in-school adolescent boys and girls. Based on the data provide by project, the evaluator will then calculate the attitude change index.

PIN LNGB project will have 4 cohorts in total, and the evaluation undertakes a quasi-experimental approach, with stepped wedge randomized trial that involves sequential crossover of groups from control to intervention conditions. Following this approach, there are 5 evaluation points in total. As per the GEC evaluation requirement, the external evaluators will evaluate the maximum of 4 evaluations points for projects with duration of five years. Hence, the 5^{th} evaluation with the last cohort of girls will be carried out by the project itself. The evaluation for all the cohorts will be the same as the baseline throughout the period of 5 years.

Annex 4: Beneficiaries table

Table 103: Characteristic subgroups and barriers of sample for portfolio level aggregation and analysis

Characteristic/Barrier	Proportion of baseline sample (%) Treatment group	Proportion of baseline sample (%) Comparison group
Single orphans	N/A	N/A
Double orphans	N/A	N/A
Living without both parents	.8%	.8%
Living in female headed household	59.5%	46%
Married	57%	80.5%
Married but waiting for Gauna	41%	19.3%
Mother under 18	23.5%	27.25%
Mother under 16	3.75%	2.75%
Difficult to afford for girl to go to school	33.5%	34.8%
Household doesn't own land for themselves	8.8%	8.3%
Material of the roof (hay)	10.5%	7%
Household unable to meet basic needs	29.3%	29.5%
Gone to sleep hungry for many days in past year	8%	7.5%
Language different from mother tongue	100%	100%
Girl doesn’t speak LoI	N/A	N/A
HoH has no education	79.5%	77%
Primary caregiver has no education	N/A	N/A
Didn’t get support to stay in education and do well (%)	N/A	N/A
Sufficient time to study: High chore burden (Permormed HH chores the whole day %)	N/A	N/A
M-OOS girls aged 10-14	19.5%	4.5%
M-OOS girls aged 15-19	80.5%	95.5%
M-OOS Muslim girls	49.5%	39.5%
Never been to school	51.5%	47.5%
Dropped out	48.3%	51.8%

Source: Girls and HH survey: N = 800

Annex 5: Beneficiaries table (Project mapping data)

The project estimated their data on the direct and indirect beneficiaries' numbers by looking into the broader statistics available at the time of proposal submission. The most relevant data were used to make estimations, such as total adolescent population, adolescent fertility rate, rate of early marriage, school enrolment rate, number of girls never been to school and those dropped out of school from sources like National Population and Housing Census 2011, National Demographic and Health Survey 2011 (the 2016 report was not available then), Nepal Living Standard Survey 2011, etc. The estimations were made for the entire duration of the project at first and the cohort-based calculations were simply done by dividing the total targets by the number of cohorts. During inception phase, the project agreed with the Fund Manager that these targets will be revised after the baseline is completed.

As indicated in the table below, more than 50% of the girls currently enrolled in the project have never been to school and the rest are school drop-outs (average drop-out grade is 5). Existing evidence points out that the grade at which the girls dropped out may not necessarily correspond to their level of functional literacy. For example- the EGRA Study 2014 shows that for in-school students, 19% of students in grade three and 37% of students in grade two were not able to read a single word from the short passage. Moreover, Province 2 ranks the lowest in educational indicators of all regions in Nepal. In addition, the marginalization analysis carried out during project's inception phase has highlighted how the girls are further marginalized due to their marital state, cultural barriers, disability status, traditional gender roles and unfriendly school environment. In such a context, the project believes that all the direct beneficiaries (N=1709) meet the project's definition of educational marginalization. The project has used both secondary sources (eg-EGRA study, NDHS 2016, Equity Index 2014, CBS 2011, etc) and primary sources (eg formative research, pre-baseline, stakeholder consultation etc.) to verify.

The project uses its own definition of "functional" literacy and grades the level of this literacy/numeracy in four grades, based on the project context analysis, beneficiaries' key socio-demographic profile, socio-cultural and gender analysis. As such, these grades do not have direct linkages to the grades used in the formal education system. Although majority of the girls currently enrolled have either never been to school or are early drop-outs (primary level), there is some proportion (14%) of girls who are late school drop-outs, the average dropped out grade being grade 5. From the review of literature and project's own primary research, the project believes that the girls who are late drop-outs still fall under the educational marginalization category. And as explained in previous paragraph, the unique socio-cultural context of the project districts further marginalizes these girls. Hence, considering the fact that the grade at which the girls dropped out may not necessarily correspond to their level of functional literacy, the girls who had even dropped out at secondary level were selected as beneficiaries for Cohort 1. Also, for the project, Cohort 1 is a pilot and the learning from this cohort will be used to further adapt the definition and eligibility in forthcoming cohorts.

The project feels somewhat confident with regards to the data on the age of beneficiaries because the age verification was done at several stages (pre-baseline, enrolment at CLCs) and with several relevant sources. Considering the specific risk associated with age and the sensitive context where not all girls have birth certificates or any formal ID for that matter, the project had also included this risk in its risk register and consulted with FM on how to approach the matter. And to mitigate the risk, the project used several strategies, such as the use of proxy indicators to validate the age of the girl during pre-baseline, instructing the enumerators, social mobilizers and field staff not to use the word "child/early marriage" to avoid the risk of backlash as well as possible "hiding" of the girls during identification. In addition, the girl's ID/birth certificate was collected during enrolment in the community learning centres, along with the signed consent form

Table 104: Direct beneficiaries by age

Age (adapt as required)	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Aged 10	0.2%	Project's CLC enrolment data
Aged 11	0.3%	
Aged 12	1.3%	
Aged 13	1.9%	
Aged 14	2.6%	
Aged 15	3.7%	
Aged 16	10.5%	
Aged 17	16.7%	
Aged 18	33.5%	
Aged 19	29.3%	

N= 1709

Table 105: Target groups - by out of school status

Status	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Never been to formal school	53%	Project's CLC enrolment data
Been to formal school, but dropped out	47%	

N= 1709

Table 106: Direct beneficiaries by drop out grade

Level of schooling before dropping out (adapt wording as required)	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Never been to school	53%	Project's CLC enrolment data
Grade 1	1%	
Grade 2	7%	
Grade 3	6%	
Grade 4	8%	
Grade 5	11%	
Grade 6	3%	
Grade 7	2%	
Grade 8	5%	
Grade 9	2%	
Grade 10	2%	

N= 1709

Table 107: Other selection criteria

Selection criteria	Proportion of cohort 1 direct beneficiaries (%)	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Married-living with in-laws	93%	Project's CLC enrolment data
Separated	0.35%	
Widowed	0.41%	
Married-waiting for "Gauna" ceremony (living in natal family)	6%	

N= 1709

Table 108: Other beneficiaries

Beneficiary type	Total project number for cohort 1	Total number by the end of the project.	Comments	Data source – Project monitoring data, data from sample used in external evaluation or assumption?
Learning beneficiaries (boys) – as above, but specifically counting boys who will get the same exposure and therefore be expected to also achieve learning gains, if applicable.	N/A	NA	NA	NA
Broader student beneficiaries (boys) – boys who will benefit from the interventions in a less direct way, and therefore may benefit from aspects such as attitudinal change, etc. but not necessarily achieve improvements in learning outcomes.	800	4000	These targets in the logical framework will be revisited after baseline report is finalized	Monthly and quarterly reported data from downstream partner, target set in the overall project workplan and logical framework
Broader student beneficiaries (girls) – girls who will benefit from the interventions in a less direct way, and therefore may benefit from aspects such as attitudinal change, etc. but not necessarily achieve improvements in learning outcomes.	800	4000	These targets in the logical framework will be revisited after baseline report is finalized	Monthly and quarterly reported data from downstream partner, target set in the overall project workplan and logical framework
Teacher / tutors beneficiaries – number of teachers/tutors who benefit from training or related interventions. If possible /applicable, please disaggregate by gender and type of training, with the comments box used to describe the type of training provided.	Total= 308	1534	Training of female facilitators on literacy and numeracy=114 Training of female community mentors for life skills=114	Monthly and quarterly reported data from downstream partner, target set in the overall project workplan and logical framework

			Training of trainers for gender transformative workshops in schools=80 These targets in the logical framework will be revisited after baseline report is finalized. There is a discussion to adjust the targets considering the field -based experience.	
Broader community beneficiaries (adults) – adults who benefit from broader interventions, such as community messaging /dialogues, community advocacy, economic empowerment interventions, etc.	5240	17700	These targets in the logical framework will be revisited after baseline report is finalized	Monthly and quarterly reported data from downstream partner, target set in the overall project workplan and logical framework

Annex 6: MEL framework

MEL framework attached as separate document

Annex 9: Learning test and pilot and calibration

FDM designed and administered five different versions of the EGRA and EGMA tool. While doing so, it ensured the tools were accurately based on national curriculum which would be delivered to the children through the learning interventions of the project. The tool once designed were reviewed by the fund manager for ensuring consistency with LNGB guideline. Aarambha project team reviewed the tool to ensure that they aligned with the curriculum to be delivered to the marginalized girls. After review and incorporations of the changes deemed necessary, the tools were signed off for piloting. These tools were translated into Nepali, the official language of instruction in the project districts in bridge classes and the other potential pathways

Pilot testing

For LNGB, the learning test was administered with the girls who had never been to school and those who had dropped out of school. Piloting of these tools were administrated in Parsa district in Province 2. Parsa district was selected for piloting because of its similarities to the intervention districts of Aarambha project. Additionally, Parsa was also a feasible location considering its proximity to Kathmandu. Students of grade 1-5 were randomly selected to take the tests from Sharada higher secondary school of Birgunj metropolitan city of Parsa district. 18 students from each class (1-5) were administered different versions of EGRA and EGMA making a total sample of 90 students.

Mathematics sub-task analysis

Based on the LNGB guideline, the analysis for piloting of learning tools included three analysis:

a. Expected versus actual difficulty,

b. Test targeting and

c. Test difficulty standardization.

Firstly, the mean score of each subtask with grade-wise disaggregation for all five version were calculated and presented separately. Then, in order to draw a conclusive result and provide basis for selection of a particular version of a sub-task for each evaluation, an average percentage was calculated. Secondly, each sub-task of the learning tool were grouped into four categories of scores where girls scoring 0 was categorized as score category 1, girls being able to answer 20 percent of the questions correctly were grouped as score category 2, girls answering correctly to 20-50 percent of questions were categorized as score category 3, and girls who could answer more than 50 percent of the questions correctly were categorized as 4. Percentage of each group was calculated, and their distribution was examined to determine the percentage of girls who fall into the lower (scoring 0) and higher (scoring 4) category of scores. Lastly, careful analysis of percentage distribution of girls falling into the categories of lowest to highest scores was done and standardization of the sub-task was done based on the scores obtained by girls which were closest in terms of difficulty.

During the sub-task analysis, floor or ceiling effects for the sub-task were examined. The difficulty level for all five versions of the learning tool were the same as advised in the Learning guidance. However, the sub-task in each version increased in the difficulty level. In terms of analysis, the result of each version of the learning tool was analyzed separately.

Reading sub- task analysis

As required by the GEC guideline, scores were changed into percentage to analyze the subtask performance of five versions of the learning tests across five grades. For all the versions of the EGRA test, sub-task 1 consisted of listening comprehension passage with a total score of 5. Sub- task 2 consists of identifying letters per minute with a total score of 50. Sub-task 3 consists of letter sound identification with the total score of 40, and lastly, sub-task 5 consists of reading comprehension with a total score of 5.

Basis for selection of particular version for each sub-task

Based on the analysis of the mean scores obtained by students in each sub-task, three versions among the five was chosen based on the mean score. The table below presents the selection of versions for baseline, midline and endline for both EGRA and EGMA tests. Random technique was applied for choosing baseline, midline, and endline.

Table 109: Mean score of different subtasks

Sub-task	Baseline	Midline	End line

	Version (mean score)	Version (mean score)	Version (mean score)
EGMA			
I	1 (36.67)	2 (32.94)	4 (35)
II	3 (56.25)	4 (60.56)	5 (49.41)
III	5 (21.76)	1 (20.56)	2 (18.82)
IV	2 (18.38)	3 (18.59)	4 (18.61)
V	1 (33.33)	2 (30.59)	4 (28.33)
VI	4 (46.30)	3 (44.79)	2 (42.16)
EGRA			
I	2 (33.33)	1 (32.94)	5 (30.53)
II	5 (34.42)	2 (36.87)	1 (34.24)
III	2 (23)	5 (23.47)	3 (26.84)
IV	4 (29.06)	2 (28.13)	1 (28.12)
V	3 (44.21)	4 (27.06)	5 (24.21)

Annex 11: External evaluator declaration

Name of project: Aarambha Project

Name of External evaluator and contact information: Foundation for Development Management (FDM), Level II JDA complex, Bagdurbar, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-01-4263944
Email: info@fdm.com.np

Names of all members of the evaluation team:
Dr. Shailendra Sigdel- Team Leader
Ashika Sharma- Project Coordinator
Rabina Dhakal- Project Coordinator (Quantitative)
Chandra KC. - Statistician

Foundation for Development Management (FDM) certify that the independent evaluation has been conducted in line with the Terms of Reference and other requirements received.
Specifically:

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

Shailendra Sigdel
Foundation for Development Management
Level II, JDA Complex, Kathmandu
25, November, 2019

Annex 12: Project management response

What is the project's response to the key findings in the report? Make sure to refer to main conclusions

The evaluation findings have supported the project's initial theory of change, in particular, the linkages between the barriers of learning at individual, family and community level. This is further supported by project's own learning from the field. For instance, the assumptions involving M-OOS girls' families and their support is working, as the project is being able to gain much support from them through the engagements of Change Champions and CLC management committee. Additionally, to focus more on household level engagement. However, other assumptions concerning school interventions are yet to be tested. There are also other assumptions concerning IO2 and IO3 which are yet to be tested. Similarly, the assumption concerning Change Champions may not hold, as per the project's experience. Most Change Champions need capacity development and additional support from the project.

All in all, the baseline evaluation does show that the results support the assumptions made by the project, except for barriers concerning social isolation and peer-networks. The recommendation of External Evaluator is to remove them from ToC. However, project feels that it may be too early to remove them yet as the actual field work of the project is yet to explore more on these matters when the project runs in full fledge.

What is the project's response to the conclusions and recommendations in the report?

On learning: The project is working on the development of "bridge course" for the smooth language transition of these girls. Baseline findings have been disseminated with partners, to ensure that reading and comprehension is focused in CLCs, as recommended by the report. Regarding curriculum re-design, this will be further discussed with FM for Cohort 2.

On Transition: The project had already anticipated various possible life plans of girls, as per various sub-groups. And as the baseline findings rightly pointed out, the motivation of older girls (15-19 years) is more inclined towards employment rather than school re-enrolment. The local market assessment is already in plan to explore possible opportunities (not only tailoring) available for the M-OOS girls as part of Output 2. The life plan sessions are planned to be joint sessions, engaging both girls and families, so as to create supportive family environment for the implementation and sustainability of life plans.

On Life Skills: All these baseline findings further reiterate the finding from formative research conducted by PIN in early 2019, that concludes the position of young married girls and young girls in general, in a rigid socio-cultural and patriarchal society in these districts. Across all indicators of life skills (decision making, family planning, financial skills and self-efficacy), the status of girls is controlled by their male members or mother in law. The life skill intervention that project has designed are still relevant to bring desired positive changes in the girls. It is evident how the scores on knowledge level indicators are relatively higher compared to attitude and practice level indicators. And there is a difference among Muslim and non-Muslim girls, and higher and lower caste girls. Therefore, project will review its intervention and design to focus more on bringing attitudinal and practice level changes through real life

situation-based exposure and learning particularly for Muslim girls, and lower caste girls and will adapt the program to address the intersectional need of the girls.
On Evaluation Questions: PIN agrees to the findings regarding the tools for assessing some of the evaluation questions, as this has also been the experience of project. Hence, to make the evaluation more robust, PIN is working with FM and FDM to revisit the logical framework, evaluation tools, methods, etc.

Does the external evaluator's conclusion of the projects' approach to addressing gender inequalities across activities correspond to the projects' ambitions and objectives?
Yes. As the report rightly points out, the deep-rooted social norms have contributed to gender inequalities and it may not be within the scope of the project to bring about drastic positive change in a short span of time (approx. a year long intervention). However, the project has emphasized on community sensitization by engaging Change Champions in Output 4, families and wider communities for learning support in Output 1. Through Output 3, the gender transformative programs will be conducted in schools to create enabling environment for learning.

What is the project's response to any GESI risks identified by the evaluator?
The report finds the project to be "gender-responsive". Considering the socio-cultural context of the project areas, the report also highlights the vulnerability and risk of girls to different kinds of violence. Besides, the majority of girls are Muslims, and there is an identified risk of the girls from such minority communities to face different barriers to learning and also safeguarding concerns. The project, through its own field experiences and safeguarding monitoring has identified and anticipated various kinds of risks, updated it regularly in the risk registers, consulted with FM regarding possible support and has allocated resources for support (for referral) in the future. The project also constantly updates its service mapping registers to map support available in the area. Furthermore, the project has been involving in capacity building of staff, directly working with beneficiaries, to enable them to identify risks of beneficiaries and within the process.

What changes to the logframe will be proposed to DFID and the fund manager?

Based on the findings from baseline report and project's own experience, there have been changes in the eligibility criteria of primary beneficiaries. Similarly, there have been revisions in the targets to make them realistic and revisions in some of the intermediate-level indicators. Additionally, PIN is consulting with FDM, FM and HQ to ensure the data collection tools and methods are more robust, especially those concerning attitude and behaviour. All these programmatic changes and adaptation are discussed during RAM with FM and DFID, also considering the risks that these changes may bring. Updated logical framework has been a part of RAM deliverable.

What are the project's reflections on the ambition of the project?

As previously discussed with FM regarding the project's definition of "functional literacy and numeracy", PIN will propose the learning ambition of the project, based on the baseline findings. The external evaluator has analysed the EGRA/EGMA based on this definition of functional literacy and numeracy shared by the project. This calculation includes categorizing learning into 4 different levels (0 to 3). Currently, the team is in discussion regarding whether to set a common learning ambition or different learning ambition for girls based on sub-groups.