Project Evaluation Report

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Notes:

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







GEARRing Up for Success: GEC-T Endline Report

PEAS

Date	19 August 2021
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Cover sheet

Project:	GEARRing Up for Success After School
Authors:	Bethany Sikes, Dr Kalifa Damani, and Matthew Thomas
External Evaluator:	Jigsaw Consult and RDM
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List of abbreviations and

acronyms

BoG	Board of Governors
СР	Child protection
CPD	Continuing professional development
DEO	District Education Officer
DES	Directorate of Education Standards
DiD	Difference in difference
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EE	External evaluator
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Centre
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Officer
FGD	Focus group discussion
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FM	Fund Manager
GBP	British pounds
GEARR	Girls' Enrolment, Attendance, Retention and Results
GEC	Girls' Education Challenge
GEC-T	Girls' Education Challenge-Transition
GEI	Gender Equity Index
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GoU	Government of Uganda
GRP	Gender responsive pedagogy
НН	Household
НоН	Head of household
HT	Head teacher
1&1	Inspect and Improve programmes
IO	Intermediate outcome
INSET	In-service training
IRR	Inter-rater reliability
MDE	Minimal detectable effect
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
OOS	Out of school
PEAS	Promoting Equality in African Schools
PLE	Primary leaving examinations
PPI	Progress out of Poverty Index
PPP	Public private partnership
PTA	Parent teacher association

RDM	Research and Development Management Ltd.
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist Church
SEGMA	Secondary grade mathematics assessment
SEGRA	Secondary grade reading assessment
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SMT	Senior man teacher
SS	Secondary school
SWT	Senior woman teacher
TVET	Technical and vocational training and education
UACE	Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education examinations
UCE	Uganda Certificate of Education
UGX	Ugandan shillings
UNEB	Uganda National Exam Board
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States dollars
USE	Universal secondary education
YTD	Year to date

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Executive Summary

This report details the findings of the endline evaluation for Promoting Equality in African Schools' (PEAS) FCDO-funded Girls' Education Challenge Transition (GEC-T) Fund programme, Girls' Enrolment, Attendance, Retention and Results (GEARR), known as GEARRing Up for Success After School. This was a four-year programme, running from 2017 to 2021, investing in girls' education in Uganda at the secondary school level. PEAS runs a network of 28 low-cost private secondary schools in the East, West and Central regions of the country. The final year of implementing the GEARR programme was impacted by nationwide school closure due to Covid-19, which saw all of PEAS schools closed from March 2020, with a phased return of students beginning in October 2020. PEAS adapted its programmatic activities to continue supporting learning out of school through educational radio programmes, SMS messages to distribute educational and safeguarding information, telephone calls from teachers to maintain contact with students, as well as the distribution of government-produced learning packs.

The endline is the final evaluation point in a multi-year external evaluation and covers the period of the final year of implementation of the project, following a baseline evaluation in 2017 and a midline evaluation in 2019 (see Table 1 below). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the purpose, questions and design of the endline evaluation were adapted from the quasi-experimental approach with a counterfactual component utilised at baseline and midline. Contribution analysis was selected in conversation with PEAS and the FM, as an appropriate analytical approach given the timing and global context of the endline evaluation. As such, the endline evaluation fulfils two purposes: to understand the impact of the original, and Covid-19 response, GEC-T activities on the project participants; and to understand how the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys have changed throughout the course of the project, both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As part of the contribution analysis approach of the evaluation, the validity of the Theory of Change is considered. This consideration is focused on the project activities and their impacts and effectiveness at addressing the barriers to learning and transition faced by marginalised girls. Overall, the project's Theory of Change is found to be valid, appropriate and based on sound logic despite significant changes in the operating context and assumptions underpinning the Theory of Change.

Evaluation Point	Methodological approach	Beneficiaries
Baseline	The baseline study utilised a mixed methods approach, including student and household surveys, learning assessments, interviews and focus group discussions with students, teachers and key stakeholders. The tools were administered during Term 3 of the 2017 school year by a	Direct beneficiaries: 7,398 Indirect beneficiaries:

Table 1: Evaluation points

	local evaluation team. A total of 877 learning cohort girls, 1,185 transition cohort girls and 318 households were surveyed. 872 learning cohort girls completed the learning assessment.	7,568
Midline	The midline evaluation adopted a quasi-experimental approach. Data was collected from treatment and comparison schools to identify the average intervention effect with a difference-in-difference (DiD) estimation. Quantitative student surveys, household surveys and learning assessments facilitated this. Qualitative evidence was also collected through key informant interviews, lesson observations and focus group discussions with students, teachers, and caregivers. The tools were administered during Term 3 of the 2019 school year by a local evaluation team. A total of 871 learning cohort students sat two learning assessments, surveys were conducted with 874 learning cohort students, 996 transition cohort girls and 295 households.	Direct beneficiaries: 7,398 Indirect beneficiaries: 15,651
Endline	The endline evaluation adopted a contribution analysis analytical framework. The challenges related to Covid-19 impacted the design of the approach and the development of the tools. Quantitative student surveys and caregiver surveys were conducted and qualitative interviews with students, headteachers, teachers, District Education Officers and project staff were all carried out remotely due to school closure and social distancing measures in Uganda. These tools were administered in Term 1 of 2021 by the evaluation team. A total of 483 students and 103 caregivers were surveyed and 40 interviews completed.	Direct beneficiaries: 13,475 ¹ Indirect beneficiaries: 214,675 ²

The findings in this report are presented using the following structure: impact of GEC-T project activities, barriers to learning and transition, and sustainability. This structure is repeated throughout the report. A summary of the key findings, under each heading, follows. For a full list of detailed findings, please refer to Chapter 3 and Annex 10. The recommendations are also presented in summary form. For a full list of detailed recommendations please refer to Chapter 5.

¹ The approach for defining direct beneficiaries has changed over the course of the project in line with updates to Fund Manager guidance. Previously, only girls enrolled at baseline were categorised as direct beneficiaries, with any additional girls enrolling in future years counting as indirect beneficiaries. At Endline, PEAS is categorising all girls enrolled in school over the course of the project as direct beneficiaries as they have all directly benefited from GECT interventions. Numbers related to beneficiaries reached at endline are therefore not comparable to those in the baseline and midline reports.

² Indirect beneficiaries at Endline include: 12,484 boys enrolled in PEAS schools over the course of the GECT project; 639 teachers (173 female; 466 male); 201,552 non-PEAS students (100,357 female; 101,195 male) estimated to have been reached through PEAS radio programmes during school closure (estimate calculated as 50% of secondary school non-PEAS students in districts covered by radio stations broadcasting PEAS radio shows).

Impact of GEC-T project activities

Findings and lessons learned

Reflections from baseline and midline

As already articulated, there were key differences in the evaluation design and context between baseline/midline and endline. One of the most significant differences being the pivot away from learning assessments to gauge literacy and numeracy improvement. Using the learning assessments, baseline and midline data demonstrated improvements in student learning, however analysis demonstrated that there was no significant distinction between treatment and comparison schools, both showing the same level of improvement. In relation to curriculum attainment, 2020 UCE results were also not available at the point of Endline. However, girls' UCE results in English and maths showed a widening gap from baseline to midline, with treatment schools outperforming control schools. A further key significant difference is the lack of cohort tracking at Endline in relation to transition pathways taken by students. However, data collected at baseline and midline amongst treatment and control groups, demonstrated that outcome level targets had been met and already exceeded the endline target, suggesting the project had been effective in relation to supporting girls to take a range of transition pathways appropriate to the individual student and context. The baseline and midline evaluations found that the PEAS programme was gender sensitive as analysed against the GESI minimum standards. There was growing qualitative evidence that girls were becoming more confident and that girls identified the livelihood skills they were learning in school as useful. Teaching quality targets were met, with increased average learning walk scores³, and girls feeling the quality of the teaching at their school was of a high standard with qualitative evidence of teachers demonstrating pedagogical practices. The PEAS programme was also found to succeed in making students aware of non-traditional learning opportunities.

PEAS was able to reach many students through project activities.

Key informant interviews, alongside survey data analysis, suggest that the multi-pronged approach to the project's Covid-19 response was appropriate to reach as many students as possible through different activities. The median student was able to access three of the four activities, with only 4.6% of students accessing no activities at all, and there was a positive impression of the helpfulness of the Covid-19 response for supporting the continued learning of students during school closures. However, there were significant challenges such as the timing of the radio programmes clashing with domestic responsibilities, the reach of the radio

³PEAS regional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) teams conducted learning walks in every PEAS school. The process involves the CPD specialist moving around the school to conduct a series of randomised classroom observations and rating observed practice along a standard scale that assess how well observed teaching practice meets the PEAS' 'Great Teacher Rubric' standards, which all PEAS school leaders and teachers have been trained on. Scores are assigned on a scale from 0-3, where 0 is the worst possible score (i.e. expected standard not evidenced at all) and 3 is the best possible score (i.e. exceptional practice against standard observed). The school then receives an overall average score based on their scores across all the standards observed.

broadcasts, the lack of subject diversity in the learning packs, caregivers not sharing SMS messages with students and refusing, in some cases, to let girls talk to teachers on the phone.

Project activities appeared to be related to students' skill development.

There is a significant relationship between the number of PEAS activities that a student participates in and the number of skills that they develop, meaning that for every extra PEAS activity that a student participates in there is an increase in skill. Among students surveyed, the most commonly reported skills that students said they developed were communication skills, study skills, decision-making skills, teamwork skills, and organisational skills. Students reported using the life skills they had developed at school during the school closures. Among the most commonly reported uses for skills were keeping themselves safe and healthy, making decisions about their future, studying well by themselves and adapting to learning from home.

Project activities appeared to be related to improvements in student learning.

Analysis of the project monitoring, survey and interview data all suggest that the project activities had a positive effect on students' learning. While it was not possible to assess improvements in literacy and numeracy through learning assessments at endline, the UCE results point to a positive trend of learning gains, including when treatment and control schools are compared. Due to school closure, 2020 UCE exams were not conducted until early 2021 and, whilst results had been released at the time of finalising this report, it had not yet been possible to obtain district datasets to compare PEAS results with those of control schools. The difference between UCE results in PEAS treatment schools and the comparison schools at midline was over 4 times the target: the mean 2019 UCE score for female students in PEAS treatment schools was 3.28, compared to 3,71 for female students at comparison schools. A In 2020, UCE results have further improved for girls in PEAS treatment schools. Results show that, despite operating in deprived rural areas, PEAS students – both girls and boys - have continued to outperform national level results each year from 2017 to 2020.

There is also ample evidence to suggest that girls are gaining contextually relevant life skills through project activities. There is a strong positive perception of the value of PEAS activities targeting the development of life skills and livelihood skills. There is also evidence that the project activities are having a positive impact on the environment for learning as well as teaching and learning, such as teacher training and safeguarding policies.

Whilst this echoes findings from the baseline and midline, where there were improvements in student learning, the baseline/midline indicated that learning improvements were not exclusive to treatment schools. Difference-in-difference (DiD) analysis demonstrated no significant distinction between treatment and comparison students, as both showed the same level of improvement in literacy and numeracy skills. While the overall assessment scores increased in both treatment and control cohorts, the difference-in-difference measure did not show an improvement in literacy and numeracy outcomes. Notably, a key difference between baseline/midline and the endline study was the use of learning assessments to

⁴ Whilst the target at midline was 0.1 points above the comparison mean, the resulting gap was 0.43. (lower scores indicate higher achievement).

gauge literacy and numeracy skills. This has not been used at the endline and therefore direct comparisons should only be cautiously made.

Finally, project activities appear to be related to positive transition outcomes.

Evidence from the surveyed students also demonstrates that the project activities are contributing to marginalised girls' awareness of positive post-school transition pathways and are leading to some of the expected outcomes related to transition. There is, however, insufficient evidence to conclude that more girls are successfully transitioning to A-level or other positive post-school pathways. This is due to constraints on the evaluation methodology imposed by Covid-19, such as no cohort-tracking, which meant it was not possible to gather evidence of girls' transition pathways at Endline. However, data collected at baseline and midline amongst treatment and control groups, suggested the project had been effective in relation to supporting girls to take a range of transition pathways. Survey evidence shows that continuing to A-level schooling is a popular pathway that students aspire to after finishing lower secondary school. However, boys were more likely to aspire to study A-Levels than girls, suggesting there is still a gender gap in students' aspirations.

Recommendations

It is recommended that PEAS develop an approach to ensure that teacher training can continue in the event of school closures; that PEAS produced learning packs be considered as a potential method for addressing learning loss and remedial learning for out of school students; that schools monitor attendance and progress and implement clear remedial strategies for girls identified as falling behind; that the learning and conclusions from the endline evaluation are communicated to the schools; and that PEAS and the FM seek opportunities to share the learning of this evaluation with the wider sector, particularly lessons from the Covid-19 response activities.

Barriers to learning and transition

Findings and lessons learned

The barriers to girls' learning and transition have not changed significantly over the life of the project.

Previously, baseline and midline analysis of barriers to girls' learning and transition confirmed issues of poverty, sickness and menstruation, marriage and pregnancy, and unsafe and long journeys to school. Both the Endline survey and interview data suggest that the barriers to learning and transition have not changed significantly over the life of the project. Inequitable gender attitudes are embedded in the cultural norms and practices of the communities that students and teachers come from. Among some interviewees there was a perception that the learning gap between girls and boys was reducing prior to the schools' closures, although with the recognition that significant work remains in order to close the gap. However, there is recognition that the school closures have widened the gap again.

Insufficient money and family support were the main barriers during the school closures.

Survey evidence revealed that during the school closures, 61.4% of students considered a lack of money challenging and 12.2% reported having insufficient family support to stay in school. Correlation analysis suggests that poorer students were likely to face significantly more barriers to their learning than wealthier students were likely to face.

However, the original project activities were making progress toward positive change.

The evidence from the interviews and surveys suggest that the original project activities prior to the school closures were making progress towards the expected changes outlined in the Theory of Change. Therefore, the project activities are contributing to the changing barriers to learning and transition for girls and boys, and there remains a need for continued efforts to tackle the barriers, especially after the school closures.

Recommendations

It is recommended that PEAS conduct regular alumni surveys to track transition and better understand alumni transition pathways. This should be paired with a leavers' survey on aspirations with students before they leave a PEAS school. It is also recommended that the use of SMS messages to communicate with caregivers and students at home continues even after schools re-open since it was effective during school closures. Further recommendations include PEAS' continued support of diverse educational pathways; that A-Level Centres continue to be opened in areas that do not have access to upper secondary education, with additional research conducted on how to overcome the issue of low enrolment; and that when S5 students return to school they are provided additional learning support, recognising the longer length of time out of school and lower engagement with Covid-19 response activities than their counterparts in S4 and S6.

Sustainability

Findings and lessons learned

Project activities and observed impacts can be sustained after the project's end through the PEAS standard operating model.

Evidence from interviews suggest that the main way in which the project activities and observed impacts will be sustained after the end of the project is through the PEAS standard operating model for its school, as the GEARR activities are part of the core activities of PEAS schools. The activities most commonly cited by interviewees as the most valuable activity benefiting students in PEAS schools was the livelihoods and life skills training provided to students in PEAS schools, followed by extracurricular activities.

This finding builds on and adds nuance to baseline and midline findings. Then, the Sustainability Scorecard used to score key sustainability indicators on community, school and system-level sustainability as "latent", "emerging", "becoming established" or "established". Sustainability was scored as "emerging" at baseline, and at midline the programme received an overall "becoming established" score with "emerging" levels of community and systemlevel sustainability and "becoming established" at the school level.

There is scope for Covid-19 activities to be incorporated into PEAS' standard operating model.

There is some scope for elements of the Covid-19 response to be incorporated into the core operating model of PEAS. Slightly more interviewees said it would be beneficial to maintain the radio programmes than not. There is a high level of support for the learning packs to continue in some form, particularly among students, as well as a high level of interest for the SMS messages to continue.

PEAS is sharing learning on its model with district governments.

The interviewees also noted that PEAS is already engaged in sharing learning with district government through a close relationship with district inspectors and district education officers. The main way in which PEAS is leveraging its project impact with the government is through the Inspect and Improve (I&I) programme.

Recommendations

It is recommended that PEAS continues to seek opportunities to work in partnership with the government to scale elements of the PEAS approach to running schools. PEAS should ensure that lessons from the GEC-T evaluation relating to gender sensitive approaches are incorporated. It is also recommended that PEAS prioritise teacher retention, exploring the possibility of financial incentives or increasing teacher salary to match government schools. However, it is recognised that actions to address teacher retention may impact upon efforts to reach full financial sustainability by 2026, and that PEAS has to consider all aspects of project sustainability. Finally, it is recommended that PEAS continue to focus on teacher training and support, including gender responsive pedagogy. This should be further embedded into the induction and continued professional development of teachers, to further encourage changes in attitude, behaviour, and classroom practice.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of endline evaluation

This report details the findings of the endline evaluation for Promoting Equality in African Schools' (PEAS) FCDO-funded (previously DFID) Girls' Education Challenge Transition (GEC-T) Fund programme, Girls' Enrolment, Attendance, Retention and Results (GEARR), known as GEARRing Up for Success After School. This was a four-year programme, running from 2017 until March 2021, investing in girls' education in Uganda at the secondary school level. The endline evaluation is the final evaluation point in a multi-year external evaluation and covers the period of the final year of implementation of the project, following a baseline evaluation in 2017 and a midline evaluation in 2019. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as explained in detail below, the purpose, questions, and design of the endline evaluation were adapted. As such, the quasi-experimental approach with the counterfactual scenario comparing learning and transition outcomes of girls in treatment and control groups is not possible. Through consultation with PEAS and the Fund Manager (FM), two overarching purposes of the endline evaluation were identified:

- 1. To understand the impact of the original and Covid-19 response GEC-T activities on the project participants.
- 2. To understand how the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys have changed throughout the course of the project, both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The overarching purpose of the endline evaluation is to gather data that leads to useful learning for the project, the FM and UK government. As such, the primary focus of the evaluation was transition, barriers, and sustainability. Learning was not a primary focus of the evaluation, although conditions for learning are examined, due to constraints on data collection.

The report is structured into five chapters. In Chapter 1, the context of the evaluation and background to the GEARR project are outlined. Chapter 2 details the evaluation approach and methodology, including the main methodological changes made due to Covid-19. Key findings are presented in Chapter 3, built around a contribution analysis framework that outlines the existing evidence as it pertains to the Theory of Change and establishes the contribution. Findings are presented in the following sections: impact of GEC-T project activities, barriers to learning and transition, and sustainability. Chapter 4 presents conclusions in each of the three sections highlighted above, as well as determining the validity of the Theory of Change and commenting on the project's approach to gender and social inclusion. Recommendations are presented in Chapter 5, covering the three focus areas of impact, barriers and sustainability. Additional information and evaluation tools are included in the annexes.

1.2 Background to project

Promoting Equality in African Schools (PEAS) is an education charity based in the UK, operating in Uganda and Zambia to improve access to quality education for marginalised young people. In Uganda, PEAS runs 28 low-cost private secondary schools in the East, West, and Central regions of the country, serving largely rural, disadvantaged communities where young people have limited access to secondary education.

Between 2012 and 2017, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO, formerly DFID) provided £355 million worldwide through the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) Fund, to 37 projects across 18 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to improve girls' education. PEAS' GEC-funded Girls' Enrolment, Attendance, Retention and Results (GEARR) project was implemented in Uganda from 2013 to 2017, targeting marginalised girls in PEAS secondary schools. To achieve these outcomes, the project invested in multiple areas including gender-sensitive infrastructure, school management systems and gender-responsive teacher training. The project made particular progress in improving school-based gender-sensitive environments.

In 2016, the GEC-Transition (GEC-T) window was launched with additional FCDO funding to support GEC project participants to further improve their learning and continue their education. Through this window, PEAS' GEARRing up for Success After School project worked with girls in PEAS schools to improve their learning, while also improving their transition into further education (A-Level and higher education) and other meaningful postschool pathways. The GEARR project implementation ended on 31 March 2021.

GEARRing up for Success After School aimed to achieve the following three key objectives:

- 1. Improve marginalised girls' learning outcomes through helping them to develop functional literacy and numeracy skills, curriculum knowledge, and contextually relevant economic and life skills.
- 2. Enable marginalised girls to make successful transitions through lower secondary and into a post-school pathway of their choosing, whether that is upper secondary (A-Level), technical and vocational training (TVET), formal or self-employment, or active citizenship.
- 3. Develop a sustainable model for delivering the project activities after the end of the grant.

Over the four-year programme period, PEAS aimed to reach approximately 17,000 girls in 28 co-educational schools, across 21 districts and 7 regions in Uganda. The programme invested in girls' education through a range of activities at the school, community and system level to improve access to quality education and enhance girls' transition pathways through and out of secondary school.

Project target participants

PEAS' primary target group is girls enrolled in lower and upper secondary (grades Senior 1 – Senior 6) at PEAS schools throughout Uganda. PEAS currently operates 28 low-cost

secondary schools spread across 21 districts in the West, East, North and Central regions of the country. Schools are intentionally placed in poor, predominantly rural communities that did not previously have a secondary school. As such, girls are from communities that are typically poorly served by both government and private services, and as a result come from families that are statistically poorer and have lower prior attainment than average.

Although the typical age range for girls in secondary education in Uganda is around 13-18 years old, owing to many PEAS girls missing years of schooling due to poverty and/or personal barriers, the age range of girls in PEAS secondary schools is wider and typically between 13-22 years of age.

PEAS considers all girls enrolled in PEAS schools to be primary project participants. All girls who regularly attend school will have the same exposure to project interventions. However, girls who are enrolled in PEAS schools for longer during the period of project implementation (e.g. starting Senior 1 during 2017, as opposed to starting Senior 1 in 2020) will have greater exposure over the life of the project.

The project also reaches boys as secondary project participants. As PEAS is a co-educational organisation, all boys enrolled in PEAS schools over the life cycle of the project will also benefit from interventions intended to improve the quality of education in their schools. At present, boys represent 47% of total school enrolment in PEAS schools.

In terms of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), PEAS' target group includes students with mild to moderate impairments. In order to progress to secondary school, students in Uganda need to pass their Primary Leaving Examinations. Due to the additional challenges faced by children with Special Educational Needs, very few successfully complete primary school in Uganda. This factor severely limits the numbers of SEN students able to enrol in PEAS secondary schools.

Original project design

Prior to school closures due to Covid-19, the project implemented a range of activities through the GEC-T project to address barriers to education and contribute to intended outcomes. At the system level, the project engages in government advocacy for affordable education. At the school level, there are a range of activities, including:

- Delivering Gender Responsive Pedagogy teacher training.
- Embedding Child Protection (CP) policy and reporting framework and conducting CP training for PEAS and school staff.
- Delivering Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers.
- Embedding girls' clubs in all schools.
- Designing and embedding a livelihoods programme with specific literacy and numeracy components.
- Embedding the life skills curriculum in all PEAS schools.
- Providing contextually relevant learning materials.
- Delivering annual school improvement and school leadership development programming.

- Designing and delivering A-Level specific school leadership development for A-Level school leaders.
- Strengthening Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Boards of Governors (BoGs) to effectively supervise service delivery.
- Improving and expanding A-Level provision in PEAS schools.
- Providing safe accommodation for girls.
- Improving guidance on post-school pathways.
- Facilitating access to higher education scholarships.

At the community level, the project delivers targeted information and marketing to promote girls' education. This is particularly through working closely with the PTAs and Boards of Governors.

Response to school closures due to Covid-19

The global Covid-19 pandemic has gripped the world since early 2020, profoundly disrupting education and forcing many within the education sector to reconsider normal modes of working as they adapt to new global and local realities. As such, Covid-19 has had a significant impact on PEAS. In March 2020 schools in Uganda were closed by the Government of Uganda as part of Covid-19 measures, re-opening only for Senior 4 and Senior 6 classes (exam candidate year groups) in October 2021. PEAS schools have therefore been closed for the majority of the final year of implementation for the GEARRing Up For Success After School programme. School closures were followed by a nationwide lockdown, nightly curfew, travel restrictions and the introduction of health measures such as social distancing, use of facemasks in public spaces and handwashing. These measures affected the internal operations of the PEAS team, with the PEAS Uganda team working remotely, limiting travel to schools, and designing content to support remote learning for PEAS students.

PEAS has implemented a Covid-19 response, with four main activities: radio programmes, learning packs, telephone trees and SMS messages. PEAS partnered with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) to develop radio scripts for radio lessons broadcast nationwide. A total of 88 scripts were developed and aired on five radio stations in four regions of Uganda. The radio lessons were also used to share safeguarding and child protection messages, including guidance on Covid-19 prevention. PEAS also collaborated with the government through the printing and distribution of MoES developed learning content packs to PEAS learners to support their self-study at home. The learning packs were aligned to the national curriculum which is used in all PEAS schools. Through the telephone trees, PEAS aimed for teachers to frequently contact their students at home to provide guidance on self-study as well as safeguarding and child protection support. SMS messages were also used to contact caregivers and students (through their caregivers) to share information on learning materials available, school reopening, and safeguarding and child protection guidance. Another element of the PEAS response was to support school staff to sustain themselves and their families by continuing to pay 80% of their salaries during the school closures.

1.3 Research questions

The original evaluation questions for the multi-year external evaluation were deemed to be no longer appropriate for the context of the endline evaluation. As such, the research questions were revised in collaboration with PEAS and the FM. The research questions are structured as primary questions (four) with additional sub-questions, which delve into specific focus areas of the evaluation. This is demonstrated in the table below. All questions have been designed with the DAC evaluation criteria in mind: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The relevant evaluation components are listed for each question.

It is important to note that the research questions are informed by the Theory of Change (see section 1.5) and seek to probe and explore the assumptions and links between the levels of the Theory of Change. The research questions explore the impact of the project and the validity of the Theory of Change. The activities implemented as part of the project's Covid-19 response do not have a separate Theory of Change, rather they are treated as an adaptation to the Theory of Change as a result of the changing operating context. As such, the research questions seek to explore how the original Theory of Change was maintained in light of the Covid-19 school closures.

RQ #	Question	DAC criteria	Data sources	Outcomes⁵
RQ 1	What impact have the GEC-T activities had on the project participants?	Impact Effectiveness	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	Outcome 1 Outcome 2 IO 3 IO 4
RQ 1.1	Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?	Impact Effectiveness	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	Outcome 1 IO 4
RQ 1.2	Which project activities have facilitated the successful transition of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?	Impact Effectiveness	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	Outcome 2
RQ 1.3	Which project activities have facilitated the development of life skills (confidence, self- esteem, livelihoods skills) for	Impact Effectiveness	Student survey Caregiver survey Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	IO 3 IO 4

Table 2: Research questions

⁵ Logframe: Outcome 1 (learning), Outcome 2 (transition), Outcome 3 (sustainability), IO 1 (attendance), IO 2 (retention), IO 3 (life skills) and IO 4 (teaching quality)

	marginalised girls, and how			
	effective were they?			
RQ 2	How have the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys changed throughout the course of the project?	Impact	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs DEO KIIs	Outcome 1 Outcome 2
RQ 2.1	How have project activities responded to and accommodated the changing barriers to learning and transition across the life of the project?	Relevance	Project staff KIIs	Outcome 3
RQ 3	Was the project well-designed to meet its objectives?	Efficiency Relevant	Student KIIs Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs Project staff KIIs DEO KIIs Project staff KIIs Monitoring data	Outcome 3
RQ 3.1	Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently?	Efficiency	Project staff KIIs Monitoring data	N/A
RQ 3.2	How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures, and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?	Relevance	Student KIIs head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs Project staff KIIs DEO KIIs	Outcome 3
RQ 4	How may project activities and observed impacts be sustained after the end of the project?	Sustainability Coherence	Student survey Caregiver survey Head teacher KIIs Teacher KIIs DEO KIIs Project staff KIIs Project sustainability plan	Outcome 3
RQ 4.1	Can these project activities and impacts be leveraged by the government and other actors?	Sustainability Coherence	DEO KIIs Project staff KIIs Project sustainability plan	Outcome 3

Given the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the final year of project implementation, the endline evaluation examined the project activities implemented through

PEAS' Covid-19 response. However, it is important to note that the evaluation is not able to draw concrete conclusions about the impact of these activities on learning, transition and sustainability, or the resilience of PEAS' schools or project participants. This is beyond the scope of the evaluation and the evidence available. The evaluation collected and considered evidence of the maintenance of conditions for learning during the school closures through the project's Covid-19 response activities. This included examination of the design of Covid-19 response, the participation of students in Covid-19 response activities, and the overall effectiveness of the response in terms of maintaining conditions for learning and the feedback of students and school-level staff.

1.4 Context of intervention

The endline evaluation has taken into consideration the dual contexts in which the last year of implementation of the GEARR project has taken place: the wider education landscape and efforts to advance girls' education in Uganda, and the school closures and nationwide restrictions due to Covid-19. As such, findings related to project activities will accommodate the project response to school closures and commentary will be woven throughout the report rather than in a separate chapter solely focused on the response.

Firstly, it is important to recognise that community demographics contribute to the broader context of the intervention. PEAS has an organisational policy of establishing schools in poor, marginalised communities that lack access to secondary schools. As such, the GEARRing Up for Success After School project targets girls and communities that live in poverty, have lower than average educational attainment, and have traditionally been underserved by government and private education services. For example, in 2019 PEAS conducted a demographic analysis of their incoming S1 cohort in 19 schools based on the Poverty Probability Index. This analysis estimated that 30% of households in the PEAS network live below the international poverty Ine of \$1.90 a day and 62.8% live below \$3.10 a day, both thresholds outlined in the Poverty Probability Index. Furthermore, an estimated 10.6% of PEAS students live below the national poverty line. The report also found that 79% of schools in the network had seen an increase in poverty rates in their student population since 2016.

Alongside the low-income context in which the project is operating, there is also the context of cultural attitudes towards girls' education. Across Uganda, poverty, poor education services and social factors have an impact on women and girls' participation in school. Gendered roles and expectations continue to limit girls' access to education, particularly at secondary and tertiary levels. Though there has been some progress towards gender parity at the primary level, gaps in literacy and secondary school completion remain high. Barriers that particularly hinder girls' education are: early pregnancy as a cause and consequence of school drop-out,⁶ long distances to school in rural regions, menstruation and lack of gender-sensitive sanitation and hygiene facilities at school, and gender bias and stereotyping in teaching practices. Overall, this set of inequalities limits girls' enrolment, attendance, and completion in secondary school, and limits their transition into successful post-school pathways, such as

⁶ UNICEF, 2015, Situation Analysis or Children in Uganda

upper secondary, higher education and productive employment. Girls' learning outcomes are generally poorer than boys, with boys tending to outperform girls in UCE results.

Secondly, the GEARR project exists within a wider education system in Uganda and alongside efforts to advance girls' education from other actors. A detailed summary of the educational context in Uganda, including educational marginalisation and girls' education, is included in Annex 7. A significant factor in the context of girls' education in Uganda is the efforts of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), which provides oversight of the government's national education initiative, including public private partnerships (PPP). From 2007-2018 the government ran a nationwide Universal Secondary Education (USE) policy, with the intention of increasing access to secondary education for poor, vulnerable families in rural and perirural areas, by subsidizing tuition fees. In 2010, PEAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government to roll out the USE programme under a PPP arrangement in 20 schools. Another government initiative affecting the context of the project was the introduction of a new curriculum in January 2020 for students joining Senior 1.

Alongside government interventions targeting education, and specifically girls' education, are the efforts of a myriad of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), both national and international. A consolidated list of historic and on-going girls' education interventions in Uganda is not available, however there are some examples from within the GEC-T window operating in different communities to PEAS.

Thirdly, the final year of the GEARR project was impacted by the school closures due to Covid-19. A detailed analysis of the educational interventions underway during the school closures by other actors is outlined in section 3.1. In summary, the government provided educational material in radio programmes, TV lessons, learning packs and segments in newspapers, as well as efforts by other NGOs and schools.

1.5 Project Theory of Change

The project's Theory of Change focuses on the three key GEC-T outcome areas - learning, transition and sustainability - as summarised below:

- Learning: Improvements in girls' literacy and numeracy learning assessment scores and O-Level (lower secondary UCE) results.
- **Transition**: Improvements in girls' transition from lower secondary into a successful post-school pathway (defined as upper secondary, TVET, tertiary education, economic activity and/or active citizenship). A successful transition into active citizenship is defined as graduation from S4 and entering into a household or community-based role, where the girl actively chooses and prioritises this pathway for herself, such as choosing to get married and have children. This is measured by asking girls to list in order of priority her preferences for herself at the time of the survey: education, employment, caring for family or starting a family. Girls who are out of school or employment but prioritise caring for family or starting a family are considered to be in active citizenship. Questions about choice and happiness are also asked to triangulate the girls' preferences.

• **Sustainability**: Improved community support for PEAS schools and commitment to gender equity, improved school financial sustainability and ability to continue project activities and improved government commitment to financing gender-sensitive secondary schools and scaling project activities.

The full set of project activities are designed to lead to six key output areas:

- 1. More girls feel well supported by their families, communities and schools to thrive in and complete secondary school.
- 2. More girls leave school with functional literacy and numeracy and contextually relevant life skills.
- 3. More school leaders are equipped to support girls' transition to A-Level and drive relevant knowledge and skills development.
- 4. More girls successfully transition to A-Level or alternative learning pathways.
- 5. More girls leave school with an achievable plan for their future.
- 6. PEAS schools are prepared to carry on project activities without grant financing.

These output areas are designed to contribute to the intermediate outcomes of the project, including improved attendance rates, retention and completion rates, life skills development among girls, and improved teaching quality. The project aims to address the following barriers, identified by PEAS as significant limiting factors for girls' learning and transition across all regions of Uganda that PEAS operates in:

- Environment for learning:
 - There is a lack of community support for girls' education.
 - Schools are not promoting gender equality.
 - Schools do not feel safe for girls to attend or learn.
- Teaching and learning:
 - There is a lack of essential literacy and numeracy skills.
 - Curriculum is irrelevant to the local economic context or future lives of girls.
 - Teachers lack the capacity to deliver a relevant curriculum.
- Leadership and management:
 - School leadership lacks the capability to drive school improvement to support girls to complete O-Level, transition to A-Level and acquire relevant knowledge and skills development.
- Conditions for learning:
 - There is a lack of accessible A-Level provision.
 - The cost of education is prohibitive.
 - There is a lack of advice on post-school pathways.
 - There is a lack of access to affordable higher education.

Project barriers were identified through the learning from the GEC-1 phase. PEAS continues to work on reducing a similar set of barriers to the GEC-1 programme, in particular around safety, community support and teaching and learning practices. In addition, the GEARRing Up For Success After School project will also continue to focus on barriers to girls' transition through enhanced access to A-Level and the introduction of a livelihoods component.

The implementation of project activities and achievement of expected outputs and outcomes relies on the following set of assumptions at the system level, school level and project level:

- System-level assumptions:
 - Uganda avoids serious political instability.
 - Low-cost private schools maintain current levels of public support.
 - Government standards and curriculum requirements for A-Level do not change significantly.
 - Higher education bursaries remain available, whereby girls continue to be able to apply for bursaries to college/university following secondary completion.
- School-level assumptions:
 - Greater opportunity to access affordable A-Level provision leads to increased attendance, retention and completion rates among girls.
 - Girls' demand for A-Level remains high in project participants' communities.
 - School leader turnover does not rise significantly.
- Project-level assumptions regarding costs:
 - Construction costs do not rise at a considerably higher rate than current trends.
 - The value of GBP against UGX does not significantly worsen.

At midline, the Theory of Change was found to be appropriate and based on sound logic, despite the loss of the PPP agreement between PEAS and the Government of Uganda.

When schools were closed due to Covid-19, PEAS developed a response plan which guided implementation of the overall PEAS approach in Uganda. A new or revised project specific Theory of Change was not developed. As such, the endline evaluation explores how the original Theory of Change was maintained in light of the Covid-19 school closures.

Although there was no change to the Theory of Change, the operating context of the project was impacted by Covid-19. While this meant that new activities were introduced, the assumptions and links to the original Theory of Change were maintained.

Chapter 2: Evaluation approach and methodology

This section presents a summary of the methodological approach employed for the endline evaluation.

2.1 Overview of evaluation design

Due to school closures, international and national travel restrictions, and health and safety concerns relating to conducting in-person research due to Covid-19, an entirely remote approach to data collection was adopted for the endline evaluation. The question of how to conduct research effectively and meaningfully in the context of a global pandemic continues to be debated across the sector. This includes the design of effective and relevant tools and instruments that elicit the required insights while also ensuring that the process is enriching for the participants. In developing the methodology for this endline evaluation, the research team were able to draw on their experience conducting remote research in the context of the Covid-19 crisis over the past year, which itself has been informed by a review of the literature and discussions on remote research within the sector.⁷

The approach for the endline evaluation followed a mixed method design, incorporating available project data, quantitative surveys with students and caregivers, and key informant interviews (KII) with students, teachers, head teachers, district inspectors and project staff. The sample sizes for each method are summarised in the table below:

Primary data collection method	Sample size
Student survey	483
Caregiver survey	103
Student key informant interviews	11
Teacher key informant interviews	11
Head teacher key informant interviews	8

Table 3: Data collection sample sizes

https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/resources/on-demandwebinars/covid-19-and-virtual-fieldwork

⁷ e.g. NVivo (2020) 'Covid-19 and Virtual Fieldwork' Webinar. Available from:

Ravitch, S (2020) The Best Laid Plans... Qualitative research design during Covid-19, 2020. Available from: <u>https://www.methodspace.com/the-best-laid-plans-qualitative-research-design-during-covid-19/</u>

District Inspector key informant interviews	3
Project staff key informant interviews	7

The primary targets of data collection were PEAS students, including girls and boys. Marginalised girls are the project's primary target participants, and are from poor, predominantly rural communities and from families that are statistically poorer and have lower prior educational attainment than average. Boys are included in the student sample as secondary project participants, as PEAS schools are co-educational. Boys therefore benefit from all project activities intended to improve the quality of education in PEAS schools. Boys come from the same background as the target girls, meaning that they are mostly from poorer rural communities with limited educational provision. Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are not a specific target project participant group for the project. However, some students with mild to moderate SEN are enrolled in PEAS schools and therefore benefit from the project activities. Students with SEN were not purposively targeted for quantitative data collection but were for qualitative data collection. In line with the evaluation purpose to understand transition and barriers among project participants, the evaluation focused on project participants in S4, S5 and S6. The juxtaposition of students in lower and upper secondary allowed for differences in barriers to transition to be explored in part, and is the only successful transition pathway available for data collection at endline (as it is not possible to track students who have successfully transitioned into TVET, higher education, employment or active citizenship). The learning cohort students engaged at baseline and midline were in S4 at the time of data collection, meaning that they have experienced four years of project activities.

Baseline Grade (2017)	Y2 Grade (2018)	Midline Grade (2019)	Endline Grade (2020)
S1	S2	S3	S4
S2	S3	S4	S5, TVET or Work
S3	S4	S5, TVET or Work	S6, TVET or Work
S4	S5, TVET or Work	S6, TVET or Work	University, TVET or Work

Table 4: Expected grade progression 2017-2020

The endline evaluation also engaged with caregivers, who are not direct project participants, to gain a different perspective on the impact of project activities on students. Head teachers and teachers also participated in the endline evaluation as both have received project inputs (such as teacher training and SIP development support) and are implementing project activities (such as gender responsive pedagogical approaches and the livelihoods programme).

The endline data collection followed a sequenced approach to ensure the collection of the richest and most informative data possible. Quantitative data was collected from students and caregivers in November 2020, and then a preliminary analysis of the survey data informed the design of the qualitative data collection tools. Qualitative data collection was conducted in January 2021 to triangulate the quantitative findings and to provide additional rich insights. Project data also informed the design of the data collection tools, in particular the project staff KII template.

Due to the constraints imposed by Covid-19, the endline evaluation has limited comparability with the baseline and midline evaluations, as there are significant methodological differences. The previous evaluation points followed a quasi-experimental approach with a counterfactual scenario, which was not possible to implement at endline. The main methodological differences from baseline and midline affecting the comparability of findings are:

- Endline data collection activities were only conducted in PEAS schools, so no comparison schools are included at endline.
- There was no cohort tracking at endline, so the student and caregiver samples are different to those sampled at baseline and midline.
- Boys were included in the student survey sample.
- All 28 PEAS schools were targeted by data collection activities, compared to the 12 included at baseline and midline. The removal of the cohort tracking element of the evaluation meant that the treatment cohort could be expanded to all PEAS schools for the full variety of PEAS schools and educational experiences to be included.
- All endline data was collected remotely and no school visits were conducted.

Contribution analysis

Originally, the multi-year external evaluation utilised a quasi-experimental methodological framework, and the baseline and midline evaluations followed this approach. As this approach was no longer feasible for the endline evaluation, an alternative methodological framework was used. Contribution analysis was selected in conversation with PEAS and the FM, as an appropriate analytical approach given the context of the endline evaluation. The following definition of contribution analysis was used:

"Contribution analysis is a methodology used to identify the contribution a development intervention has made to a change or set of changes. The aim is to produce a credible, evidence-based narrative of contribution that a reasonable person would be likely to agree with, rather than to produce conclusive proof."⁸

Contribution analysis is an appropriate alternative theoretical framework for the endline evaluation for the following reasons:

• There are external factors that influence the changes experienced by project participants, and there are other development interventions being implemented in

⁸ Intrac, 2017. <u>https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Contribution-analysis.pdf</u>

Uganda. This approach recognises that it is difficult to prove attribution for these reasons and assumes that there are usually multiple contributory factors to change.

- Contribution analysis is designed to be used alongside theories of change that explicitly set out how change is supposed to happen, as the project has done. Contribution analysis assesses changes at the different levels of the theory of change in order to compare reality with the theory.
- As it is not possible to track a cohort and use a control group, contribution analysis is appropriate as it seeks to reduce uncertainty about change and to help explain how and why changes occurred.
- There has been a significant enough period of implementation of the pre-Covid-19 activities for change to occur.

Contribution analysis follows six steps of implementation, which are outlined below and applied to the endline evaluation process.

	Table	5:	Six	steps	to	contribution	analy	/sis
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Contribution analysis steps	Endline evaluation process
1. Set out the question(s) to be addressed	Completed in inception phase in consultation with project and FM, and outlined in inception report
2. Develop a theory of change	Developed by project at baseline Determine how the theory of change was maintained and changed for the Covid-19 response
3. Gather existing evidence	Research on context (national policy, other interventions etc.) Analysis of project monitoring data Primary data collection: Phase 1
4. Assemble and assess the contribution narrative	Analysis of project monitoring data and Phase 1 data.
5. Seek out additional evidence	Primary data collection – Phase 2
6. Revise and strengthen the contribution narrative	Analysis of Phase 2 data Draft endline evaluation report First project feedback round on draft report Second project feedback round on draft report FM feedback round on the draft report

Step three of the contribution analysis approach was further strengthened by a sequenced, mixed-methods data collection approach. This involved exploratory cross-sectional survey data collection, which helped to describe the evaluation context. The survey data then informed the development of semi-structured interviews, which were used to explain some of the survey findings, as well as to explore topics and the views of informant groups that the survey did not cover. After data collection, a contribution analysis analytic framework was employed. Within this framework, the results of statistical survey data analysis, qualitative

analysis of the interview data, as well as project monitoring data and other relevant literature were used to help establish the contribution of PEAS' interventions.

2.2 Data collection

All data for the endline was collected remotely. Both surveys and key informant interviews with the students, teachers, head teachers and district inspectors were conducted over the phone, by Research Development and Management Ltd (RDM), an in-country research team of Ugandan enumerators.

The process of data collection and the samples collected are outlined for each phase below.

Phase 1: Quantitative data collection

Phase 1 of data collection was undertaken in November 2020 by RDM. The purpose of Phase 1 of the data collection was to implement the student and caregiver surveys over the phone and digitally record responses into Kobo Collect. As such, both survey tools were designed to be 15-20 minutes long, as an optimum length of time to engage participants over the phone. The tools are included in Annex 3 and the datasets in Annex 4.

Student survey

The student survey targeted students in S4, S5 and S6. There was one survey protocol, with additional questions for upper secondary students based on skip logic. The student survey focused on the following areas:

- **Barriers**: What and who supports them financially? What facilities do students have at home? Time spent doing chores.
- Learning: What learning are they doing (as in, what PEAS learning activities are they participating in and what skills are they developing)? Exploration of learning conditions confidence, self-esteem, support etc.
- Aspirations and ambitions: What do they want to do next year and why? Who makes decisions? How confident do they feel that they will get there? What is in place for that to happen?
- **Exploration of participation in specific activities:** Livelihood's training, mock UCE exams, radio programmes, SMS and telephone trees, student learning packs.
- **Transition to upper secondary:** Advice received on pursuing A-levels. Challenges to pursuing A-levels.

At the time of data collection, schools had reopened for S4 and S6 students whereas S5 students remained at home. Enumerators contacted S4 and S6 students through PEAS schools, using teachers' phones, and S5 students were contacted at home through their caregivers' phones. Based on an analysis of the available eligible students, the target sample size for the student survey was 450, with following breakdown by gender and year group:

	S4	S5	S6	Total
Students across Uganda	Girls: 126993 Boys: 139490 Total: 266483	Girls: 27871 Boys: 39972 Total: 67843	Girls: 26849 Boys: 40762 Total: 67611	Girls: 181713 Boys: 220224 Total: 401937
Eligible students in PEAS schools	Girls: 1304 Boys: 1440 Total: 2700	Girls: 73 Boys: 115 Total: 188	Girls: 61 Boys: 96 Total: 157	Girls: 1,438 Boys: 1,651 Total: 3,089
Proposed sample	Girls: 75 Boys: 75 Total: 150	Girls: 73 Boys: 77 Total: 150	Girls: 61 Boys: 89 Total: 150	Girls: 209 Boys: 241 Total: 450

Table 6: Student survey proposed sample

The sampling strategy for the student survey was based on the PEAS contact list of students. The following approach was followed:

- 1. Survey all available girls in S5 and S6
- 2. Top up the S5 and S6 samples with boys until the sample size of 150 per year group is reached, or all available boys have been contacted
- 3. Top up any shortfall in the S5 and S6 cohorts with S4 girls and boys
- 4. Survey S4 students by contacting every third girl and every third boy on the PEAS contact list until the sample is met

Enumerators attempted to contact a participant twice, at different times of the day, before discounting them from the sample and moving onto the next student. All individuals who could not be reached were recorded to ensure that no duplicate contacts were conducted.

Please note that the student survey sample is indicative of the PEAS student population as it was beyond the scope of the evaluation and data collection timeframe to develop a representative sampling framework. The sample was skewed toward male students: 55.9% of the sample were male and 44.1% were female. Whilst this does not exactly reflect the demographic distribution of PEAS schools (where 46.6% of the eligible students were female) or of schools across Uganda (where 45.2% of students are female), it is close. The boys and men in the sample ranged in age between 16 and 25 years, and the girls ranged between 15 and 24 years. Few students (36, 7.5%) had a PPI score below 30, which indicates a high likelihood of poverty. The majority of students had a PPI score of above 50 (280, 58%) , with 34.6% of students (167) having a PPI score of between 30 and 49. Notably, as we did not collect survey data on disability, we are unable to do statistical analysis along those lines. However, the views of disabled students, and specifically those who are visually impaired, are accounted for by the qualitative interviews (Student KIIs). Further details on the sample can be read in the table below.

Table 7: Final student sample

	Average Age ⁹	S4	S5	S6	Total Students
Female	18.3	85 (39.9%)	61 (28.6%)	67 (31.5%)	213
Male	19.11	74 (27.4%)	98 (36.3%)	98 (36.3%)	270
	18.75	159 (32.9%)	159 (32.9%)	165 (34.2%)	483

Caregiver survey

A survey was conducted with caregivers to explore in more detail the barriers students face to learning and transition, as well as the conditions for learning that is being maintained during school closures. The target sample for the caregiver survey was 100, as an indicative sample of caregivers. Caregivers were sampled from students who participated in the student survey as sampled from the PEAS contact lists. Multiple factors influenced which of each student's caregivers was surveyed. These include:

- 1. Which parent was available upon calling. There were a number of cases where mothers were surveyed because the student was not living with her father. This may have been because the parents were separated, or the father was working away from home.
- 2. A preference for female caregivers to talk about girls. Most caregiver contacts were female, but male caregivers who were contacts often preferred if enumerators spoke to female relatives about their daughters.
- 3. The child lived with or was supported by a relative. It is a common practice in Ugandan families for girls to stay with a relative (such as an aunt, uncle, cousin or older sibling). These relatives commonly help support parents. In those scenarios, the parent commonly referred the enumerators to the relative that the student was living with.

Ultimately, there were slightly more female caregivers (51.5%) in the sample than male caregivers (48.5%). The women in the sample ranged in age between 20 and 64 years, and the men ranged between 35 and 72 years. Mothers made up 43.7% of the sample and fathers made up 44.7%. Amongst the remaining caregivers were sisters (4.9%) and other female relatives (1.9%). Brothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles and other male relatives each made up 1% of the sample. Most of the caregivers (89.3%) were the main financial supporter in their home and had attained either primary level education (39.8%) or lower secondary (O-level) education (29.1%). The majority of caregivers were either farmers, fishermen or pastoralists (42.7%), small business owners (25.2%) or had a formal profession (such as in the government or as a teacher) (10.7%). Further details on the sample can be read in the table below.

Table 8: Final caregiver sample

⁹ 'Average age' is based on a total of 481 students, due to the presence of incomplete data.

	Average Age	S4 child	S5 child	S6 child	Level of Education	Total
Female	41.92	14(26.4%)	23(43.4%)	16(30.2%)	No formal: 8 (15.1%) Primary: 21 (39.6%) Lower Sec: 16 (30.2%) Upper Sec: 3 (5.7%) Diploma: 2 (3.8%) Bachelors: 3 (5.7%)	53
Male	48.36	15(30%)	22(44%)	13(26%)	No formal: 2 (4%) Primary: 20 (40%) Lower Sec: 14 (28%) Upper Sec: 6 (12%) Diploma: 7 (14%) Bachelors: 1 (2%)	50
Total	45.05	29(28.2%)	45(43.7%)	29(28.2%)		103

Phase 2: Qualitative data collection

The design of the qualitative data collection tools was primarily led by the need to address questions arising from the initial analysis of the student survey. Through the sequenced approach to data collection, the qualitative tools moved away from simply triangulating the quantitative findings, instead focusing on what the qualitative data could give that the quantitative data could not and to explore the trends in the quantitative data. As such a purposive sampling criteria was developed which was based on distinguishing between the schools in districts that PEAS broadcast the radio programmes and those schools in districts without the radio broadcast. Teacher and head teacher sampling was based on the student sample for comparability. Therefore, there was triangulation within the qualitative data samples. More detailed information about the qualitative sampling is in the 'Phase 2 qualitative data sampling criteria' in Annex 3.

The interviews with students, teachers, head teachers and district inspectors were conducted over the phone by RDM and were therefore designed to be 20 minutes in length. The project

level KIIs were conducted by the UK-based Jigsaw research team online and were 45-60 minutes in length.

The tools are included in Annex 3 and the datasets in Annex 4.

Student KIIs

KIIs were conducted with female students who had also participated in the student survey. The participants were recruited from S4, S5 and S6 and were split between schools that were and were not in districts with the PEAS radio programmes broadcast. Those in districts with the broadcast were also sampled between those students who listened to the PEAS radio programmes and those who did not. Questions were asked based on skip logic tied to the sampling criteria.

The student KII template covered the following areas:

- PEAS radio programmes
 - For listeners: experiences listening, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and challenges faced
 - For non-listeners: reasons for not listening
- Learning packs: experiences using it, perceived helpfulness for continued learning, and challenges faced
- SMS messages: experiences receiving SMS, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and safeguarding, challenges faced, and reasons for not receiving
- Telephone trees: experiences talking on the phone, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and safeguarding, challenges faced, and reasons for not talking
- Other educational resources accessed during the school closures, produced by PEAS and by other parties
- Aspirations after finishing secondary school

The topics that explored PEAS radio programmes, learning packs, SMS messages, telephone trees and other educational resources all helped clarify how supported girls felt in their learning, as well as the sustainability of PEAS' programme during school closures. These were key output areas outlined in the theory of change. They also explored barriers to learning relating to the Environment for learning and Teaching and learning. The exploration of students' aspirations after finishing secondary school primarily helped to explain the barriers and successes related to key output areas on transition. A total of 11 student KIIs were conducted. Of these, six students were in S4, two in S5 and three in S6, and seven attended schools that were in districts with the PEAS radio programmes broadcast and four were in districts that did not have the radio programmes. Three of the students interviewed listened to the radio programmes. Two students with visual impairments were also included for SEN representation, and neither of these students listened to the radio programmes.

Teacher Klls

Teachers were interviewed at schools attended by the student KII participants. Questions were asked based on skip logic tied to the sampling criteria.
The teacher KII template covered the following areas:

- Teacher training: what training received and how it has been useful
- Learning gap: why this gap persists and what should be done about it
- Aspirations to study at A-Level: differences between the aspirations of girls and boys, challenges faced and reasons for it
- PEAS radio programmes: helpfulness for continued learning, suggested improvements, reasons for students not tuning in
- Learning packs: experiences using it, perceived helpfulness for continued learning, and challenges faced
- SMS messages: experiences receiving SMS, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and safeguarding, challenges faced, and reasons for not receiving
- Telephone trees: experiences talking on the phone, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and safeguarding, challenges faced, and reasons for not talking
- Other educational resources accessed during the school closures, produced by PEAS and by other parties
- Support for teachers during the school closures
- Valuable activities in the PEAS model

These topics helped clarify how supported girls felt in their learning and how equipped school leaders were to help girls transition and develop educationally. Associated barriers were also explored. A total of 11 teachers were interviewed, of which six were female and five were male. Two senior women teachers (SWTs) were included in the sample, and seven interviewees taught English and four taught Maths.

Head teacher KIIs

Head teachers were interviewed at schools attended by the student KII participants. Questions were asked based on skip logic tied to the sampling criteria.

The head teacher KII template covered the following areas:

- Teacher training: what training received and how it has been useful
- Schools inspections and audits: recommendations received and actions taken
- School Improvement Plans (SIPs): support received and actions taken
- Learning gap: why this gap persists and what should be done about it
- Aspirations to study at A-Level: differences between the aspirations of girls and boys, challenges faced and reasons for it
- PEAS radio programmes: helpfulness for continued learning, suggested improvements, reasons for students not tuning in
- Learning packs: experiences using it, perceived helpfulness for continued learning, and challenges faced
- SMS messages: experiences receiving SMS, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and safeguarding, challenges faced, and reasons for not receiving
- Telephone trees: experiences talking on the phone, perceived helpfulness for continued learning and safeguarding, challenges faced, and reasons for not talking

- Other educational resources accessed during the school closures, produced by PEAS and by other parties
- Support for head teachers and teachers during the school closures
- Valuable activities in the PEAS model

As with the teacher KIIs, the topics covered in interviews with head teachers also helped clarify how supported girls felt in their learning and how equipped school leaders were to help girls transition and develop educationally. However, there was a stronger focus on outcomes related to sustainability, as well as barriers related to leadership and management. A total of eight head teachers were interviewed, of which two were female and six were male.

District Inspector KIIs

KIIs were conducted with three district inspectors who work in districts that have a PEAS school. The district inspector template covered the following areas:

- Engagement with PEAS
- Changes to barriers to learning faced by marginalised girls
- Changes to barriers to student retention faced by marginalised girls
- Changes to barriers to transition after school faced by marginalised girls
- Aspirations to study at A-Level: differences between the aspirations of girls and boys, challenges faced and reasons for it
- Other interventions taking place to explain changes observed
- Educational resources provided by government during school closures
- Valuable activities in the PEAS model and viability of the model
- Sector learning from PEAS and engagement with government schools

The district inspectors interviewed all have a high degree of engagement with their local PEAS schools. Two of the interviewees were based in the Eastern region and one in the Western region, and two interviewees were male and one was female. The topics covered in these interviews focused on key outcomes related to sustainability and support available for girls' learning, as well as on barriers related to learning, transition and leadership and management, as outlined in the theory of change.

Project level KIIs

Interviews were conducted with seven project staff. The staff were purposely sampled to provide insight on areas not covered in the surveys and other qualitative data, as well as to address questions arising from the data collection. The interviews were tailored to the specific role and responsibilities of each interviewee. The following areas were covered in the interviews:

- Changes to roles during the school closures
- Learning gap: why this gap persists and what should be done about it
- Aspirations to study at A-Level: differences between the aspirations of girls and boys, challenges faced and reasons for it

- How schools continued to support students by maintaining conditions for learning during the school closures
- Meeting outcomes and outputs
- Changes to safeguarding and child protection practices
- School inspections and audits: changes to scores and actions taken
- School improvement plans
- Sustainability of project impacts and activities
- Sustainability plans: collaboration with government, financial sustainability
- Valuable activities in the PEAS model
- Lessons learned over life of the project and the school closures
- Changes or improvements to make to project design and implementation

The topics covered in these interviews predominantly focused on the sustainability aspects of the theory of change.

Project staff with the following roles were interviewed:

- School Support Officer (2) (Uganda office)
- Head of School Network (Uganda office)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Specialist (Uganda office)
- Head of Quality Assurance (Uganda office)
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Data Specialist (Uganda office)
- Chief Technical Officer (Global office)

2.3 Data analysis

Quantitative data analysis

The quantitative data analysed in this report was collected through surveys of 483 students, across S4, S5 and S6 classes at PEAS schools, and 103 of their caregivers. The survey included established measures, such as the Poverty Probability Index (PPI)¹⁰, as well as questions designed specifically for the project endline. These questions were predominantly closed-ended. All survey respondents gave their consent to participate. During the data cleaning process, responses were checked for outliers, to surface potential irregularities in responses. There were no entries that appeared to be 'corrupted', or contained missing data, to the extent that listwise deletion–or the deletion of a respondent's entire entry– appeared necessary. Keeping all respondents' entries in the dataset, whilst omitting outliers as appropriate, ensured that the maximum number of responses could be included in each statistical analysis.

Once the data had been checked for outliers and inconsistencies, some variables were recoded, as well as new variables created. Specifically, some ranked variables (including and beyond Likert scaled variables), were reverse coded to enable more intuitive analysis. Further, new variables were created to produce a score that summed responses from a set of

¹⁰ <u>https://www.povertyindex.org/</u>

questions. An example of this is the summation of all the PEAS activities that a student participated in to create a new variable that expressed the total number of activities they participated in. A new variable was also created to reflect the calculation of respondents' PPI score. A more detailed list of variables that were re-coded, and created, can be found in Annex 4.

After data cleaning, the survey data were explored through statistical analysis in R, SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The analysis can be roughly grouped into two categories: descriptive and inferential. Descriptive analysis was conducted on most of the questions in the survey to explore the frequencies with which each response was given. These frequencies were further disaggregated along gender and class group lines (where applicable) to explore the relationships between a response (such as 'Yes' or 'No') and either gender or class. The statistical significance (*p*) of the relationships explored in these disaggregated frequency tables–otherwise known as crosstabs-were tested using chi-square tests (an inferential test). The chi-square test statistic (X²), alongside the *p*-value, therefore revealed whether the frequency of responses in the genders that were considered (male and female) or class (S4, S5 and S6) were the result of more than just chance. Other descriptives were also explored, as appropriate, to explain trends in the data. Most commonly, these included using measures of central tendency (namely the median and mean) to find participants' generalised response to Likert-scale questions, such as those with response options ranging from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly Agree', or simply to find the average (such as with 'Age').

The second category of analysis, inferential analysis, were predominantly conducted when there was need to explore the relationship between one, or multiple 'predictor' variables (such as, for example, different types of PEAS Covid-activities) and an outcome variable (such as, for example, learning progress). At least one of the variables explored in these analyses tended to be continuous or ranked (such that a response can be ordered from high to low: e.g., 1st, 2nd, 3rd) as opposed to categorical (such that a response cannot be ordered: e.g., Male and Female). Various types of regression and correlation analysis were primarily employed, with the choice of which type of regression or correlation to conduct dependent on the types of data (e.g., categorical, ranked, or continuous), combinations of types of data in the analysis and the statistical assumptions that needed to be met to allow for rigorous analysis.

A number of statistics are reported as part of the regression result. These include the F-test statistic (*F*), and an associated significance (*p*) value. These two statistics describe whether or not the model that was explored (all of the 'predictor' variables in an equation) meaningfully contribute to an outcome variable. An R-squared statistic (R^2) is also reported; this explains the percent of variance in the outcome variable that is explained by the model. Finally, beta values (β), alongside corresponding *p*-values, are reported to explain the degree to which an outcome variable changes for every point change in a single predictor variable. Therefore, whilst the F-test and R-squared statistic refer to the model as a whole, the beta value provides detail on individual predictor variables within a model. Notably, across all of the statistical tests conducted, *p*-values of 0.05 or less are considered as statistically significant, those between 0.05 and 0.07 are considered as marginally significant and those above 0.07 are not considered as significant.

Qualitative data analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted on the detailed notes of the interviews, using a deductive and inductive qualitative coding approach in MaxQDA. An initial coding framework was developed around the evaluation questions, with further codes added inductively as themes arose during the analysis process. Document variables were created based on the sampling criteria. The qualitative coding framework is included in Annex 4. Prior to analysis, the detailed notes of each interview were cleaned and prepared for analysis in MaxQDA. Once the coding process was completed, analysis of the coded segments was conducted to identify areas of convergence and divergence within the data.

Project data analysis

Project data was provided by PEAS. All the data went through an initial scan for relevance and utility. Data was considered relevant if it contained data relating to the evaluation questions, or useful background questions. The data provided was clean and appropriate for analysis. Basic descriptive statistical analysis of the monitoring data was undertaken in Microsoft Excel, with trends and changes over the life of the project identified. Qualitative data was based on the documents' contents and did not go through a formal coding process. The findings from the project data analysis fed into the tool design for both Phase 1 and Phase 2. The full list of sources of project data analysed for the endline is included in Annex 4.

Combining findings

After the monitoring data and primary data analysis was complete and findings identified, the findings were combined in a process of triangulation. Convergent findings and trends were identified, and points of divergence identified and explored.

2.4 Research ethics

The endline evaluation prioritised research ethics and child protection in its methodological approach. The full ethical framework guiding the research is included in the Inception Report (Annex 2), including the child protection and safeguarding reporting procedure, research ethics framework, risk assessment framework and code of conduct.

In summary, the following actions were taken to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in the research:

• The enumerator team had previously received detailed training on child protection and safeguarding in GEC-T evaluations, including how to recognise signs of abuse and understand reporting procedures. Before data collection the enumerator team received a short refresher training on safeguarding and how to report incidents and enumerators were required to sign the Code of Conduct prior to data collection to ensure appropriate behaviour throughout the data collection.

- The enumerators were trained to conduct the data collection in a child-friendly manner, how to obtain informed consent, and how to respond to child protection disclosures. The enumerators were trained in how to encourage and calm the students such that they feel able to respond to the survey freely.
- Data collection was conducted in a child-friendly manner with students. This includes adequate time dedicated to rapport building. Before administering the survey and interviews, the enumerators explained the objectives of the study and how participants' information will be used. Participants were asked if they would like to participate, and it was made clear that participants could choose to end the survey or interview without giving a reason.
- While names were collected to track students, enumerators made clear to participants that their name would not be reported and their individual answers will not be disclosed to anyone inside or outside the school, unless the child is identified as being at risk of harm. No individual's names will be used in the endline report, and all datasets shared with the project and FM are anonymised.
- Existing PEAS and FM policies and procedures were adhered to regarding child protection, confidentiality, sensitive issues and referrals. The referral process for child protection concerns followed the PEAS procedure.

2.5 Challenges and limitations of the approach

While the endline methodology was appropriate and feasible to meet the evaluation purpose and the necessary ethical considerations, it is important to note the constraints and limitations of the approach.

Firstly, the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated that endline data collection was conducted remotely, which has a number of associated challenges and limitations:

- Remote data collection made recruiting participants more challenging and timeconsuming than when done face-to-face during school visits.
- Remote data collection relies on the participants having access to technology to allow them to participate, as such there were challenges recruiting participants over the phone if they are using phones that do not belong to them. Enumerators reported difficulty with scheduling calls with participants, due to the availability of the caregivers or the contact person whose phones were being used.
- Remote data collection does not lend itself to certain qualitative data collection approaches and as such the evaluation was unable to include focus group discussions as planned, instead relying on semi-structured KIIs. This had the potential to limit the depth of insight through the qualitative interactions, however broad coverage through KIIs and thorough probing within interviews mitigated some of the potential loss.
- Remote data collection was also disrupted by poor connectivity. Enumerators reported that calls often dropped due to poor network and surveys and interviews had to be completed over a number of calls. Enumerators also liaised with schools to

identify spots where call reception was stable and had students use the phone from that spot.

- Enumerators also reported that there were issues with the audibility of respondents talking on the phone, as it was not possible to control how respondents were holding the handset. As such, enumerators reported issues hearing some of the respondents, understanding their answers and difficulty taking notes. The enumerators encouraged schools to brief students on how to hold phones or set up handsfree, and in some cases replacement phones were used.
- Due to ethical considerations, remote data collection reduces the time available for each survey, meaning that the survey design is shorter and less in-depth. As such, less data was collected than at previous evaluation points. However, enumerators reported that some of the qualitative tools were too long and that interviewees sometimes rushed answers, complained that there were too many questions and were tired or uninterested. This may have affected the quality of the data collected.
- Enumerators also had increased difficulty in establishing a personal connection and rapport with each participant over the phone. Because of the difficulty in building rapport with participants, particularly interviewees, and the limitations of data collection over the phone, the depth and richness of qualitative data collected is limited, particularly with students.
- Due to remote data collection, the enumerator team was reliant on the support of schools to facilitate data collection. Enumerators reported that some head teachers were uncooperative at the start of data collection and PEAS were required to provide formal letters to authorise data collection.
- Enumerators reported challenges in finding the necessary participants for the qualitative data collection as outlined in the sampling criteria, in particular visually impaired students. As the enumerators could not visit schools to recruit students, they were reliant on the support of head teachers and teachers to identify the students and facilitate contact with them. Additional schools had to be added to the qualitative sampling and additional interviews conducted in order to meet the sampling criteria.

Secondly, the revised approach introduced contribution analysis as the overarching analytical framework. This approach was agreed in conversation with PEAS and the FM and deemed appropriate for the broader context of the endline evaluation. Contribution analysis is a rigorous approach however in an ideal scenario it would be done in an iterative manner. This means that evidence should be repeatedly collected and analysed, and narratives gradually refined. Unfortunately, given the timeframe and budget restrictions of the endline evaluation, the iterative component of the approach, aside from the sequencing of data collection, was not implemented, in part limiting its strength. Budgeting constraints also meant that the contribution analysis was unable to thoroughly address all aspects of the theory and change–specifically those aspects related to girls' literacy and numeracy outcomes. Whilst this key outcome was not ignored in the evaluation, constraints in collecting more learning data limited the depth of analysis that could be done.

Thirdly, whilst the contribution analysis incorporated a great deal of evidence from, and analysis of, primary data (surveys and interviews), there was less incorporation of data from

secondary sources. In-depth searches for and analysis of other projects' interventions, policy documents, academic and grey literature were limited due to time and budget constraints.

Fourthly, the changing context of Covid-19 restrictions affected the endline evaluation. For example, due to travel restrictions for Jigsaw and the RDM enumerator team, it was not possible for a face-to-face training course for the enumerators to take place. An online refresher training was conducted but was not as in-depth or detailed as originally planned. Most significantly, the endline data collection had to adapt to the changing nature of school closures, with schools reopening for S4 and S6 candidate classes during the initially planned timeline for Phase 1 data collection. Phase 1 data collection was delayed to allow S4 and S6 students to return to school and adapt to the environment, and the sampling strategies updated to accommodate both in and out of school students. The data collection had to work around the school day for S4 and S6 students to minimise further disruption to their learning, as such the data collection had to take place out of the school day. It was also more difficult to have support from school and project staff for data collection as they managed the transition back to school while maintaining activities for out of school students.

Fifthly, in January 2021 there were presidential elections in Uganda and the national communications regulator ordered telecoms operators to suspend internet access prior to the election.¹¹ For a number of days there was an internet blackout in Uganda, and when the internet was restored the network coverage was weak and intermittent for up to two weeks after. This interrupted Phase 2 data collection, which was scheduled to begin the week of the presidential elections. The enumerators were unable to download the tools to begin data collection or to contact participants until the network was restored. Following the restoration of the network, both in-country and external data collection activities were significantly impacted by the poor connectivity, with calls dropping multiple times during an interview and participants having to reschedule interviews. This affected the data collection timeline, which was delayed by three weeks, and the quality of the data collected (in particular the project staff interviews with Uganda-based staff).

Sixthly, some caution should be taken in interpreting the results of some of the statistical analyses due to the small sample sizes. Smaller effects, especially in disaggregated data, may have remained undetected because there were insufficient sample sizes in which to do so. As such, there is the chance that no statistical relationships were reported between variables, when indeed a small, though less detectable relationship, might have existed. Conversely, there is the risk that with small and less representative samples, that the statistically significant results that are found might be due to chance or have a higher degree of associated error than might be the case with larger, more representative sample sizes. Notably as well, more interviews, for example with a wider range of students with disabilities, may have added further depth to the qualitative insights. However, budget constraints meant that there was a limit on the number of key informant interviews that could be conducted; the decision was therefore made to focus on the small group of informants that would potentially give the most contextual insight.

¹¹ <u>https://www.reuters.com/article/us-uganda-election-internet/uganda-orders-internet-blackout-until-further-notice-mtn-idUSKBN29I2I0?il=0</u>

Seventhly, the accuracy of students' and caregivers' recollections might have been affected by how recently they were engaged in a particular activity. For example, students who are currently in lower secondary school, and are engaging in certain activities (such as receiving advice on pursuing A-levels) may still remember engaging in those activities, whereas some students in upper secondary might have forgotten. These biases in recollection may skew the participation rates, across class groups, that might be observed in the data.

Finally, a significant limitation of the endline evaluation is that it is not comparable with the baseline and midline evaluations due to the constraints on data collection. Also, the sample of the endline evaluation has been adapted and is not representative of the PEAS populations. The samples at endline are indicative and sampling had to be based on who was available and willing to participate in the research.

Chapter 3: Key findings

This chapter presents three contribution narratives detailing the key findings of the endline evaluation:

- Section 3.1 impact of GEC-T project activities
- Section 3.2 barriers to learning and transition
- Section 3.3 sustainability.

The sections present findings drawing from the quantitative student and caregiver surveys, qualitative interviews and project data. As per the contribution analysis theoretical framework of the endline evaluation, this chapter serves two purposes: firstly, to present the existing evidence as it pertains to the assumptions and links in the original Theory of Change, and secondly to establish the contribution of GEC-T activities to achieving the project objectives.

A more detailed analysis can be found in Annex 10.

3.1 Contribution narrative: impact of GEC-T project activities

This section outlines the observed impacts of the project activities on learning and transition and assesses the contribution of the project to these changes. Firstly, the contribution narrative is framed in the relevant assumptions, activities and intended outcomes presented in the Theory of Change. Secondly, the main findings relating to the project impacts on learning and transition are outlined. Thirdly, the appropriateness of the project design and activities is assessed. Lastly, other interventions and contextual factors that may have contributed to the observed changes are outlined, before a conclusion is made regarding the contribution narrative.

The intended contribution of the project to impacts of learning and transition for girls is examined. The Theory of Change (see Annex 8) outlined a number of intended outcomes as a result of its activities and efforts to address the barriers to learning and transition, including:

- More girls leave school with functional literacy and numeracy and contextually relevant life skills
- More school leaders are equipped to support girls' transition to A-level and drive relevant knowledge and skills development
- More girls successfully transition to A-level
- More girls leave school with an achievable plan for their future

The project sought to achieve these outcomes by implementing a range of activities, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Deliver gender responsive pedagogy teacher training and regular CPD sessions for all teachers, including training for senior women teachers and subject specific training for English and maths teachers
- Embed a child protection policy and reporting framework, and conduct child protection training for PEAS and school staff
- Embed a Girls' Clubs in all schools
- Design and embed a livelihoods programme with specific literacy and numeracy components
- Embed a life skills curriculum in all PEAS schools
- Provide contextually relevant learning materials
- Improve and expand A-level provision in PEAS schools
- Improve guidance on post-school options

The main findings related to the impact of project activities on learning and transition are summarised below.

The most commonly reported activities in which students surveyed participated were receiving advice on post-school options (86.5%), the livelihood programme (75.2%) and literacy classes (74.3%). In terms of skills, the most commonly reported skills that students reported gaining from PEAS activities were communication skills (94.2%), study skills (92.5%), decision making skills (90.9%), team work skills (88.2%) and organisational skills (88%).

Figure 1: Participation in GEARR activities over the past three years, according to 'Yes' responses by student survey participants (disaggregated by gender)



Total number of respondents: 483

There is a significant relationship between the number of PEAS activities in which a student participates ($\beta = 0.568$, p < 0.001) and the number of skills that they develop, suggesting a positive impact of project activities on students' learning. This was found to hold true even when students' level of poverty ($\beta = 0.134$, p < 0.001) was controlled for (F(2, 465) = 127.6 p < .001, $R^2 = 0.35$)¹². Wealthier students were significantly more likely to develop skills through participation in PEAS activities. Interestingly though, or perhaps as a consequence of necessity, whilst increased wealth was associated with the development of most skills, poorer students were much more likely to develop problem-solving skills ($\beta = -.021$, z = -1.94, p = .053).

The PEAS activity most significantly associated with girls' development of writing and reading skills was engagement with senior women teachers. Engaging with senior women teachers increased the log odds of developing reading and writing skills (as opposed to not developing them) by 264% (β =2.644, z= 5.342, p=.000). Engaging in literacy classes were also significantly related to the development of reading and writing skills amongst girls (β =1.664, z=3.624, p=.000).

Students reported in the student survey that they used the skills gained through PEAS activities to support themselves during the school closures, particularly to keep safe and healthy (91.7%), make decisions about their future (90.9%), study well by themselves (89.9%) and adapt to learning from home (89.4%). One noteworthy difference along gender lines was that girls and women (93%) were more likely to use the skills they had developed to study well by themselves (X^2 (1, 483) = 4.024, p = 0.045), compared to 87.4% of boys and men.

The UCE exam results also point to learning gains, with the percentage of students scoring Division 1-4 increasing from 93% in 2017 to 95% in 2019, although the average score of Division 3 is maintained. The 2019 scores are the most recent available, as the postponed 2020 exams were taken at the start of 2021 and the results were not published at the time of writing.

Furthermore, the median students in S4 and S6 strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability to succeed at school. Some 97.5% of those students, in aggregate, either strongly agreed or agreed that they were confident in that regard. The median student in both groups also felt more confident in their ability to succeed at school now than they did before the Covid-19 pandemic.

There is evidence to suggest that the teacher training and CPD sessions are changing teachers' pedagogical approaches by instructing teachers in how to deliver gender-responsive and learner-centred lessons. One teacher, for example, commented that 'they taught me gender pedagogy, how to mix students, making them comfortable, how to deal with low achievers by talking to them privately, encouraging them while marking them, giving them extra work'.

¹² An ordinal logistic regression was also conducted as a robustness check since the outcome variable violated the assumption of normality. The ordinal logistic regression yielded similar results to the OLS regression reported in text: the same variables were highly significant and in the same direction. The OLS analysis is reported in the text to keep to the same format as most other regression results.

Learning walk data show that PEAS schools slightly improved in terms of pedagogical approach, with an average score of 2.1 out of 3¹³ in 2019 compared with 1.9 in 2017. This is reflected in school audit scores: there was a slight positive change in the average audit scores between 2017 (2.5) and 2019 (2.8)¹⁴. In 2018, there were six schools that scored 4 (full marks) compared to none in 2017 and three in 2019 (note that four schools were not audited in 2019). Inspection data paints a very similar picture: there was minimal change in average score from 2017 to 2019, although there is a small increase in schools in the 'good' rating (from 17 to 23) and decrease in 'fair' rating (from 11 to 5), as well as one school that was rated 'very good' by 2019. Progress may be hampered by the fact that child protection or fraud issues seriously impact audit and inspection scores. For example, a school cannot be rated 'good' at inspection if there are any child protection and wellbeing issues and can be rated no higher than 'fair' if there is evidence of the use of corporal punishment.

Student survey responses indicate that students are aware and think positively of the benefits of continued education, whether at A-level (71.1%) or higher education (88.9%). A significant difference in the reasons why boys and girls want to pursue A-levels is that boys and men (85%) are more likely than girls and women (67.9%) to do A-levels because they want to be able to study at higher education (X^2 (1, 113) = 4.632, p = 0.031). This points to a gender gap in aspirations for higher education as a transition pathway.

Overall, there was a positive impression of the helpfulness of the Covid-19 response activities for continued learning during the school closures. Most caregivers of students in S4 and S6 either agreed or strongly agreed (44.8% or 31%, respectively) that their child's school had provided enough support and resources for them to continue learning at home while the school was closed. Furthermore, each activity had a majority of survey respondents reporting that they found it helpful for studying or staying safe (as applicable). Findings on each Covid-19 response activity is explored below.

Radio programmes

According to the student survey, 50.7% of all students tuned into PEAS radio programmes during the Covid-19 school closures, with the median student who tuned in listening on a weekly basis. Caregivers, speaking on the same topic, generally stated that their children tuned into the programmes (56.3%), with 63.8% of caregivers stating that their children tuned in weekly. Caregivers also noted that other members of the household participated in the family games and activities with their children 'sometimes' (41.4%), 'never' (29.3%) and 'rarely' (19%). Only 10.3% of caregivers stated that other members of the household either 'always' or 'often' participated.

Whether a student reported listening to the broadcast or not, as well as their frequency of listening when they did listen, were roughly the same regardless of students' gender. 50.4% of boys and men listened and 51.2% of girls and women. Students interviewed also reported

¹³ Based on the PEAS' 'Great Teacher Rubric', in which 0 is the worst possible score (i.e. expected standard not evidenced at all) and 3 is the best possible score (i.e. exceptional practice against standard observed).

¹⁴ Out of a maximum of 4.

enjoying a range of activities as part of the radio programmes, with one referencing an activity in the Entrepreneurship lesson to make charcoal and do baking, another enjoyed writing down questions and the teachers' response, and one enjoyed participating in the radio programmes. Two students reported that members of their household participated in the radio programmes too. According to students surveyed, the median student also listened to the programmes with members of their household 'sometimes'.

Learning packs

PEAS also printed and distributed learning packs designed by NCDC through its school network. Some 80.3% of students surveyed reported receiving a student learning pack from their school, with the median student using them weekly. Moreover, 54.4% of caregivers reported that their child received a learning back and 80.4% also noted that other members of the household, or friends in the community, used the learning packs. The median student strongly agreed that the educational information provided in the learning packs was helpful for their learning. Caregivers had similar views, with 55.4% strongly agreeing. Overall, there was a strong trend in the qualitative data that the learning packs were helpful, particularly among students. Nine students reported that they found the learning packs helpful. This was supported by teachers, with nine teachers reporting that the learning packs were helpful for students to continue learning.

SMS messages

PEAS distributed information to students and caregivers through SMS that included both child protection and safeguarding information and details on school closures and reopening. Most students (71%), and caregivers (62.1%), reported that they had received an SMS message, with girls being slightly, though not significantly, more likely to have received one (73.2%) than boys were (69.3%). Similarly, receipt of SMSs was fairly uniform across class groups. The median student indicated that they read PEAS SMS messages on a monthly basis, with only 16.3% of students reading them less than monthly. Amongst the students who read the SMS messages, they generally found the information in them to be helpful for keeping themselves healthy, safe (such as concerning who they could talk to and what they can do if they felt under threat) and in motivating them to stay focused on their educational goals.

Overall, there was a positive impression among interviewees that the content of the SMS messages was helpful. Students were asked if other members of their household found the content of the SMS helpful, and six students agreed that other members of their household found the content helpful. The themes that emerged regarding the helpfulness of the SMS messages were that it helped students to study, helped to keep students safe, students were encouraged, and parents were encouraged to support students.

Telephone trees

The vast majority of students (81.4%), and caregivers (69.9%), have spoken to a teacher from their school on the phone during the Covid-19 school closure period, with similar percentages of students having done so whether female (81.2%) or male (81.5%). However,

whilst both male and female students had spoken to their teacher on the phone at least once, there was a clear difference in the frequency with which those who did speak, did so (X^2 (2, 393) = 6.904, p = 0.032). The median boy and girl each spoke to their teachers monthly. However, boys spoke to their teachers more often on mean average. Only 17.7% of boys spoke to their teachers less than monthly, compared with 28.9% of girls. Teachers were asked how many times they had spoken to students on the phone, and answers ranged from twice, to once a week, to 'too many to count'. Students were also asked how many times they had spoken to a teacher, and the most common answer was once, which is less than the median student surveyed.

Regardless of how often students spoke to teachers though, they strongly agreed that the information their teacher provided them over the phone helped them to take measures to protect themselves against Covid-19. The median student also strongly agreed that their teacher spoke to them about their wellbeing and helped them to understand how to look after themselves. Teacher and student interviewees, who had used the telephone trees, were asked whether they found the last conversation they had useful or not. No interviewee said that they did not find the telephone call helpful. Eight teachers and nine students said that they found the conversation helpful. Interviewees were asked to describe how the telephone trees were helpful. The following themes emerged related to students' safety and well-being: providing non-academic support, giving students' hope, passing on information, and safeguarding.

The evidence therefore suggests that the project activities had a positive effect on students' learning. While it was not possible to assess improvements in literacy and numeracy through learning assessments, the UCE results point to a positive trend of learning gains and there is ample evidence to suggest that girls are gaining contextually relevant life skills through project activities. There is a strong positive perception of the value of PEAS activities targeting the development of life skills and livelihood skills, and while gains in life skills cannot be quantified, there are self-reported gains from students and school staff, with life skills training cited as one of the most valuable activities are positively impacting on the environment for learning as well as teaching and learning, such as teacher training and safeguarding policies. There are self-reported changes from school staff to their practice, although there is evidence that there remains room for improvement based on learning walk, school audit and inspection scores.

Regarding the impact of project activities on transition, there is insufficient evidence to show whether the transition rates have improved without tracking a cohort as they transition out of school and into upper secondary, TVET and tertiary education, or economic activity. At midline, the treatment transition cohort was found to have a 57% successful transition rate of in-school progress, alternative learning programmes or gainful employment. While this could not be tracked at endline, there is evidence to suggest that project activities are contributing to the post-school aspiration of students. Furthermore, enrolment data shows that there is an increasing trend of enrolment in upper school since 2017, demonstrating progression in transition to upper school.

As the Covid-19 response activities were introduced due to a significant change in the operating context of the project, it cannot be evaluated against the Theory of Change's definition of learning. The purpose of the response activities, as outlined in the MTRP, was 'anchored in keeping students safe during school closures and engaged in education, with particular focus on girls and other vulnerable groups'. The evidence suggests that the response activities contributed towards the maintenance of conditions for learning and keeping students safe during the school closures. It is important to note that the benefits were not experienced by all students and students were also accessing resources from the government and through informal support systems. The extent of engagement with these external sources of support is highlighted below and examined in detail in Annex 10. However, it is evident that the project activities have contributed to maintaining conditions for learning during the school closures.

In regard to the changes to students' learning and post-school transition, it is difficult to attribute change solely to the projects' activities. It is important to remember that the GEARR project takes place within an educational ecosystem of many interventions. Interviewees helped to build a picture of the context in which PEAS operates that may have contributed to the changes in girls' transition prior to the school closures. Interviewees were asked what could have contributed to the change in learning gap between girls and boys and the improvements in post-school transition, outside of the PEAS project. Interviewees spoke of engagement with local government and local leaders, as well as identifying and number of other interventions impacting on girls' education in their area, which are listed in Annex 10. It is important to note that these interventions may be having an indirect impact on PEAS schools and the communities PEAS engages with and some may work directly with individual PEAS schools, but their contribution to changes in girls' education is not quantified in this evaluation. The purpose of identifying these other interventions is to contextualise the GEARR project within the broader ecosystem of girls' education interventions, and it is recognised that the primary intervention that PEAS students are exposed to is the daily engagement with project activities and teachers at PEAS schools.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that the project activities are leading to some of the expected outcomes related to learning and transition. Due to the constraints on data collection for the endline, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the project activities are contributing to the improvement of girls' functional literacy and numeracy skills or that more girls are successfully transitioning to A-level or other positive post-school pathways. However, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the project activities are contributing to marginalised girls' learning valuable and contextually relevant life skills and building their awareness of positive post-school transition pathways. Project activities are also improving the quality of the environment for learning as well as teaching and learning, although there remains significant progress to be made at the school and community level. The adaptation of project activities during the school closures ensured that for many students the conditions for learning were maintained, however there is insufficient evidence to judge learning gains and the contribution of PEAS project activities compared to other educational resources available.

3.2 Contribution narrative: barriers to learning and transition

This section outlines the observed changes to barriers to learning and transition and assesses the contribution of the project to these changes. Firstly, the contribution narrative is framed in the relevant assumptions, activities and intended outcomes presented in the Theory of Change. Secondly, the main findings relating to the existing barriers to learning and transition are outlined. Thirdly, the appropriateness of the project design and activities is assessed, before a conclusion is made regarding the contribution narrative.

The Theory of Change outlined a number of barriers to learning and transition that the project aimed to overcome through project activities. These are grouped under four headings: environment for learning, teaching and learning, leadership and management, and conditions for learning (see Annex 8 for the full Theory of Change). The project operated on the assumption that project activities would reduce these barriers, which would lead to improved learning and transition rates for marginalised girls.

The project operated on this theory by implementing a range of activities prior to the school closures, including but not limited to, the following:

- Community sensitisation to promote girls' education to address the lack of community support for girls' education
- Delivering gender responsive pedagogy teacher training to tackle the barrier of schools not promoting gender equality, as well as regular Continuous Professional Development (CPD) sessions
- Embedding child protection policies and reporting framework, and conducting training for all PEAS staff, to address the barrier that girls do not feel safe at school
- Establishing A-level Centres to address the barrier of lack of accessible A-Level progression
- Providing guidance on post-school pathways to students to address the barrier of lack of advice on post-school pathways.

Barriers to learning

There are many barriers to girls' learning that existed prior to the school closures and persisted or worsened during the closures, meaning that the barriers to learning and transition remain significant.

Inequitable gender attitudes towards girls' education are a significant factor in the existence and persistence of the learning gap between girls and boys. Project staff and teachers frequently mentioned at interview that girls' education is hampered by greater expectations to do domestic work, parents' prioritisation of boys' education, and expectations for girls to marry early. One head teacher summarised the issue: Indeed, the learning exists and persists especially due to the reason that here in the rural areas many people are biased about girl's education. For instance, you may find that if a boy and girl come from the same home, most times boys are given time to go and read their books whereas girls are made to continue with the domestic work at home. (Head teacher)

Further barriers appear to exist due to inequitable gender attitudes inside the classroom. One project staff interviewee commented that 'with some of the new [to PEAS] teachers, you might hear those teachers say things like "Speak like a man" to male students, or that sciences are not meant for girls to do'. Furthermore, several new PEAS teachers expressed views that 'boys tend to persevere more during hardships compared to the girls who easily give up or look for other easier options' (teacher), that girls 'lack self-control' (head teacher), and that girls are more distracted because they care about their looks, make-up and 'showing off' (two teachers).

That said, there was also evidence of positive attitudes towards girls from some staff members. Three head teachers noted that girls have been scoring higher marks than boys in their schools, and one maths teacher spoke of his active encouragement of girls in his lessons: 'I usually tell the girls not to think that math is for boys. I let them know that what a boy can do they can also do.' There is therefore some evidence that work is being done to reduce the barrier of gender inequitable attitudes by some teachers.

Girls also appear to internalise and therefore perpetuate gender inequity themselves. Two head teachers and four teachers cited the example of girls believing that sciences are for boys and arts are for girls: 'girls do not just practice Math since they just have the mentality that they cannot pass it, they feel like Math is for men'. One teacher also indicated that girls are often afraid to ask questions in class due to fear of criticism from their male peers. Two project staff and one teacher attribute this attitude to the fact that girls internalise the language and expectations they are exposed to in their communities before they come to a PEAS school.

While the caregiver survey indicated that 99% of caregivers think that girls should attend school whilst menstruating (99%), the majority of teachers and head teachers interviewed identified menstruation as a significant barrier to learning and a contributing factor to the learning gap. In particular, they reported that girls do not attend school if they do not have sanitary pads, their concentration is affected, and girls stay home due to poor sanitary facilities at school.

The median student thought that the most significant challenge they were facing is much worse than it was before the Covid-19 school closures, with 48.9% of students stating this. Only 3.5% of students thought that the challenge was either better, or much better, than before the pandemic. There is also recognition from district inspectors that the school closures have widened the learning gap. Referring to all district schools (not just PEAS schools), both district inspectors spoke extensively about the detrimental effects of schools' closures in general:

We have found no school for the candidate classes who has had all the students returning to school, in some schools only 50% returned to school, some had 80% returned back to

school. The cases of early pregnancies in the area have increased. Early marriages in the area have increased. There is a rise of defilement cases in the district.

Barriers created or compounded by Covid-19 were investigated in the student survey, and are discussed below:

• Students overwhelmingly reported financial constraints as the main barrier to their learning during the pandemic (61.4%), with the second most commonly reported barrier being school closures at 20.1%. This finding is echoed in the caregiver's survey (78.6%). Boys were significantly more likely than girls to report inadequate money as a challenge (X^2 (1, 482) = 10.501, p < 0.01), with 67.8% of boys stating this, compared with only 53.3% of girls. Furthermore, poorer students were found to be more likely to face significantly more barriers to their learning than wealthier students (r(475) = -.263, p = .000).

Figure 2: Top five barriers to learning, according to 'Yes' responses by student survey participants (disaggregated by gender)



Total number of respondents: 482

• Quantitative data suggests that girls were more likely to report that they had inadequate support from their teachers during the school closures (X^2 (1, 482) = 4.77, p < 0.05). Qualitative data indicates that the main reason for this was gendered inequities at home, in particular that girls had more restricted access to phones with

which to access support from teachers. As one head teacher commented, 'Girls are more controlled by their parents more than the boys. Other than the girls, most boys have personal phones, so it was easier to talk to the boys than the girls'. Furthermore, four interviewees explained that families were particularly reluctant to allow girls to speak with male teachers on the phone.

• Five project staff interviewees, four head teachers and five teachers identified domestic responsibilities as a significant barrier to continued learning, especially for girls. One teacher commented that '[Girls] end up losing time for reading their books and they cannot even read at night when they are tired, so boys for them they have enough time to read their books'. That said, interviewees reported that boys also face chore-related barriers, and also feel cultural pressure to help provide for their families though income-generating activities. Both of these findings are supported by survey data showing that about one quarter of students (118, 24.4%) typically spent five or more hours doing chores on a normal day.

Barriers to transition

Enrolment data paints a partial picture of transition, with a decreasing trend of Term 1 enrolment between 2017 (14,363) and 2020 (13,414). The notably smaller populations of S5 and S6 students (2% and 1% of the total students enrolled respectively) suggests that the barriers to transition to A-level study remain significant.

Despite A-level study being a popular post school pathway to which students aspire (71.1% of S4 students), boys and men were much more likely (81.1%) to want to do their A-levels than girls and women were (62.4%). One of the primary reasons attributed to this difference in the qualitative data is the contrasting cultural expectations of girls and boys and their futures: girls know that they are expected to marry and start a family, whereas boys know they are expected to support their family. Student survey responses indicated that the most common mode of decision-making about students' transition is joint decision-making between students and their caregivers (59%), indicating the extent to which some families' inequitable gender attitudes may affect girls' onward transitions.

Thirteen interviewees (six project staff, three head teachers and four teachers) identified that the affordability of A-level fees is the main barrier to girls transitioning from lower secondary to A-level. The cost of A-levels is more likely to affect girls, as when high costs force families to choose between their children, they are more likely to invest in boys' education first. Twelve interviewees indicated that this is due to the notion that educated boys will be better able to support the family, and fears that girls will get married or pregnant and waste the money spent on fees. According to project staff interviewees, parents tend to see TVET as a more cost-effective and low-risk investment for girls considering the risk of marriage or pregnancy interrupting study and that girls will be able to start earning quicker if they attend TVET than A-level.

Contribution of the project to reducing barriers to learning and transition

The contribution of the project to the reduction of barriers to learning and transition for girls is examined below. This is followed by a discussion of the appropriateness of the project design and implications for the future.

The evidence of the changing barriers to learning and transition presents a mixed picture, with some progress made and significant barriers remaining, and particularly worsened during the school closures. Five project staff and two district inspectors reported that the learning gap was reducing in PEAS schools, with the caveat that there was still significant work to be done to close the gap. They also commented that school closures had done much to widen the learning gap again. Indeed, there is evidence that the learning gap between girls and boys persists for this reason: when S5 students who were asked whether they agreed that they were progressing in their learning while at home, there was a significant difference between boys and girls. (x2 (4,159)=12.548, p=.014). 76.5% of boys either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, compared to 67.2% of girls. This is strongly attributed to gender inequitable attitudes in the qualitative data, and was identified by five project staff interviewees, seven head teachers and nine teachers. This is captured in the quote at the top of the 'Barriers to learning' section.

While there is insufficient evidence to quantify the improvements in literacy and numeracy without learning assessments, there were self-reported observed improvements to the learning gap, with some five project staff and two district inspectors reporting that the learning gap was reducing. Furthermore, it is logical to suggest that girls' development of writing and reading skills through engagement with senior women teachers (see Chapter 3.1) will have had a positive impact on the learning gap.

Despite the provision of CPD relating to gender-responsive teaching, there is also evidence that some school staff continue to demonstrate inequitable gender attitudes, which alter the learning environment for girls at school: one head teacher commented that 'boys have self-control while relating with girls, they remain focused to their studies compared to girls who lose concentration in their studies and end up failing at school'. A further three teachers felt that girls do not have the same work ethic as boys, stating that 'girls generally have a lazy attitude towards education compared to boys'. That said, there is also evidence of positive gender equity being practised in PEAS schools: one teacher commented that 'I usually tell the girls not to think that math is for boys. I let them know that what a boy can do they can also do'. The learning walks, inspection and audit scores show that there is still progress to be made here, although there is also evidence that teachers' pedagogical practices are changing: teacher interviewees referred to making their teaching more learner-centred and gender-responsive.

A strong theme to emerge from the data was that interviewees want PEAS to continue supporting girls' education and that there is a high level of agreement that the actions PEAS are currently implementing are helping to reduce the learning gap. The most commonly identified aspects of PEAS' approach to continue implementing to address the gender gap

were the ongoing sensitisation of parents on issues related to girls' education (one project staff, four head teachers and five teachers) and the counselling and guidance sessions teachers have with girls (four head teachers and two teachers). Other aspects to continue were: recruiting female teachers for maths and science subjects (two interviewees), promoting boarding (two interviewees), and running girls club (two interviewees).

However, a number of suggestions were made by project staff, head teachers and teachers regarding how PEAS can further address the learning gap. Only one suggestion was made for PEAS to 'stop', which was a head teacher who wanted less oversight from the PEAS country office to allow for greater autonomy at the school level. A number of additional suggestions were made for PEAS to start implementing to address the learning gap. The most commonly identified were to invite motivational speakers to inspire students (five head teachers, two teachers), the introduction of awards and bursaries for highly performing students to incentivise and motivate learners (one project staff, two head teachers and two teachers), provide girls with reusable sanitary towels to reduce girls missing school when they are menstruating (two head teachers, two teachers). Other suggestions were: Offer bursaries to students who cannot afford school fees (three interviewees), expand infrastructural improvements to schools (three interviewees), provide girls with learning materials including sanitary towels, books and pens (two interviewees), and enrich the curriculum with additional soft and life skills training (two interviewees).

There is insufficient evidence to quantify the changes in transition rates, but the student survey results indicate that the project is contributing to the reduction of barriers to studying A-level by establishing A-level centres and providing guidance on post-school pathways: 86.5% of respondents said that this activity had increased their aspirations to study at A-Level. Aspirations to study A-level are high among S4 students, with 71.1% of S4 students surveyed saying that they wanted to study A-Level (quant), although interview data suggests that the aforementioned barriers of lack of money and community attitudes remain significant challenges to students realising their aspirations to study at upper secondary school.

The appropriateness of the project design to address barriers to transition was not explored in detail in the primary data collection. However, in general the design of the project is judged to be appropriate for the barriers to transition experienced by marginalised girls and boys. In particular, the emphasis on community sensitisation towards attitudes towards girls' education and transition, as well as developing girls' life skills for life beyond school. In the qualitative data, there were a small number of suggestions related to strengthening these areas, as they are seen as particularly valuable in addressing the barriers to transition. District inspectors identified that PEAS are helping to address the barriers to retention in the following ways: PEAS has helped by sensitising learners on how to overcome barriers, building more schools to reduce walking distance, location of PEAS schools bringing education near to underprivileged communities and enabled access, more A-Level Centres built, and students are safer in boarding schools so chances of finishing school at home.

Ultimately, the Theory of Change and project activities appear to appropriately address the barriers to learning and transition identified. While it has not been possible to quantify changes in many barriers due to constraints on data collection, the evidence suggests that the

original project activities prior to the school closures were making progress towards the expected changes outlined in the Theory of Change. Therefore, the project activities are contributing to the changing barriers to learning and transition for girls and boys, and there remains a need for continued efforts to tackle the barriers, especially after the school closures.

It is important to recognise that changes in barriers to learning and transition are also influenced by other interventions targeting girls' education. As such, it is not possible to attribute change solely to the project activities, although there is a clear contribution. For a detailed examination of other interventions which have contributed to changes in girls' education in Uganda, see Annex 10.

3.3 Contribution narrative: sustainability

In the Theory of Change, the project outlined that the activities, outputs and intermediate outcomes will lead to the following sustainability outcomes:

- Improved community support for PEAS schools and commitment to gender equity
- Improved school financial sustainability and ability to continue project activities
- Improved government commitment to financing gender-sensitive secondary schools and scaling project activities.

According to the linkages outlined in the Theory of Change, the sustainability outcome is built upon overcoming barriers in the environment for learning, teaching and learning, leadership and management, and conditions for learning. To achieve the expected sustainability outcomes, the most relevant barriers targeted by project activities relate to the environment for learning, specifically: lack of community support for girls' education, schools are not promoting gender equality, and schools do not feel safe for girls to attend or learn.

The project has undertaken community sensitisation activities to address community attitudes towards girls' education through its schools, aimed at challenging cultural norms around the value of girls' education, creating a supportive learning environment at home, and addressing attitudes towards corporal punishment. These activities are examined below.

Two of the three project staff interviewees identified advances in engaging caregivers and communities in conversations about child protection as a particularly successful outcome of the project, however one interviewee also commented that changing community attitudes towards gender equity is challenging for the project to achieve. Due to the constraints of the endline evaluation, it is not possible to identify changes in attitudes towards girls' education at the community level and therefore there is insufficient evidence to determine the contribution of the project to this area.

To promote gender equality at school, the project focused on training teachers in gender responsive pedagogical approaches. There is evidence of changed teaching practices as a result of this training, as identified by teachers: "*Before I joined PEAS school I was in single*

schools for both my studies and as a teacher and I did not know how to deal with both genders, they taught me gender pedagogy, how to mix students, making them comfortable".

In terms of project activities that address students, gender equality is promoted through a variety of activities, as highlighted by one head teacher:

[T]he livelihood programmes, life skills classes, literacy and reading classes, girls club, career guidance, child protection policy and health, all help to motivate students and engage in extra activities that are beyond classroom lessons. These are more pronounced in PEAS schools and make a big difference in the life of a child.

Life skills training (including Girls' Clubs and the livelihoods programme) was cited as one of the most valuable activities implemented by PEAS by many interviewees: three project staff, seven head teachers and six teachers. Quantitative data show that girls were much more likely to participate than boys in Girls' Clubs (X2 (1, 483) = 149.664, p = 0.000; Female (70.4%), Male (15.6%)), indicating that this was a valuable way of involving girls in new activities.

Therefore, there is evidence that the project is targeting gender equality at the school level and is making significant and identifiable progress in this regard. As such, the actions undertaken have led to the expected outcome and contribute to the sustainability of the project. However, it is important to note that there is still progress to be made here, particularly around the gendered attitudes and biases of teachers, as a number of problematic comments were made in the qualitative data, including perceptions that girls are more distracted than boys and less interested in studying when at home, in particular because they care about their looks, make-up and 'showing off' (two teachers) and that girls have more needs than boys which is difficult to manage (one head teacher, one teacher).

To address the barrier that schools do not feel safe for girls to attend or learn, the project has implemented rigorous safeguarding and child protection policies. Audits and inspection scores are capped at a low ranking if there is any evidence of safeguarding or child protection breaches. Furthermore, the Safeguarding and Child Protection specialist noted that there is commitment to safeguarding across the whole PEAS team, so everyone is involved, rather than just one person pushing it forward. A key focus has also been on promoting positive behaviour management practices in place of corporal punishment. There are self-reported changes in teachers' practices in this regard. One teacher interviewee commented, 'Before I had joined PEAS, I thought that caning was the only way of disciplining a child (...) I have learned that you can talk to a child and they know whether what they did was good or bad and it has worked for me.'

Furthermore, PEAS has promoted boarding schools as safe environments, making infrastructural improvements and expanding boarding capacity to reduce the barrier of girls making long and unsafe journeys to school. The use of senior women teachers and the emphasis on counselling and guidance for girls is also contributing to a safe learning environment for girls. Therefore, there is evidence that the project is targeting safety at school and is making identifiable progress in this regard, although there remains progress to be made in consistent implementation of these practices. Some members of staff appeared to conflate child protection with good classroom practice when interviewed, indicating a need for further awareness-raising in this respect.

As the Covid-19 response activities were introduced due to a significant change in the operating context of the project, they cannot be definitively evaluated against the Theory of Change's definition of sustainability. Evidence suggests, however, that the response activities (see Figure 3 below) contributed towards the maintenance of conditions for learning and keeping students safe during the school closures, and that some elements of the Covid-19 response activities may contribute to the project's sustainability. For example, there was the highest level of support for the provision of learning packs to continue, with ten students stating this at interview. There was also strong support for the continued use of SMS messages, with seven students saying that they would find it helpful. As one student explained, 'I prefer the continuity of the messages even after school return because they advise us how to avoid Covid-19 and encourage us to read'



Figure 3: Number of Covid-19 activities that students had access to

Overall, the evidence suggests that the PEAS approach is successfully working towards sustainability as outlined in the Theory of Change. While there is insufficient evidence to identify changes in community attitudes and a recognition that cultural change is a slow process, there is some evidence that the environment for learning is improving and will lead to sustainable gains in girls' education.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This chapter summarises the key findings related to the impact of project activities, barriers to learning and transition, and sustainability. The chapter outlines concluding remarks on the contribution analysis with specific mention of the validity of the project Theory of Change, and finally, a commentary on the project's approach to gender and social inclusion (GESI)..

4.1 Impact of GEC-T project activities

The evidence suggests that the project activities had a positive impact on students' learning. While it was not possible to assess improvements in literacy and numeracy through learning assessments, the UCE results point to a positive trend of learning gains and there is ample evidence to suggest that girls are gaining contextually relevant life skills through project activities. There is a strong positive perception of the value of PEAS activities targeting the development of life skills and livelihood skills, and while gains in life skills cannot be quantified, there are self-reported gains from students and school staff. There is also evidence that the project activities are having a positive impact on the environment for learning as well as teaching and learning, such as teacher training and safeguarding policies. School staff are reporting changes to their own practice, although there is evidence that there remains room for improvement as demonstrated by learning walk and school audit data, and inspection scores.

4.2 Barriers to learning and transition

Marginalised girls continue to face barriers to learning and transition, and many of these barriers worsened during the school closures. However, there is evidence that some progress is being made towards reducing these barriers. For example, there is evidence that the learning gap between girls and boys persists and that gender inequitable attitudes are a significant factor in the existence and persistence of this gap. While there is insufficient evidence to quantify the improvements in literacy and numeracy without learning assessments, there were self-reported observed improvements to the learning gap and to the changing community attitudes prior to the school closures. There is also evidence that some school staff have inequitable gender attitudes, which affects the school learning environment for girls. The learning walks, inspection and audit scores show that there is still progress to be made here, as well as evidence that teachers' pedagogical practices are changing. There is insufficient evidence to quantify the changes in transition rates, but the project is contributing to the reduction of barriers to studying A-level by establishing A-level centres and providing guidance on post-school pathways. Aspirations to study A-level is high among S4 students, however the barriers of lack of money and community attitudes remain significant challenges to students realising their aspirations to study at upper secondary school. In summary, there are many barriers to girls' learning and transition that existed prior to the school closures, and that have persisted or worsened during the closures, meaning that the barriers to learning and transition remain significant.

4.3 Sustainability

Sustainability is a core element of the GEARR programme and the PEAS project. The main way in which the project activities and observed impacts will be sustained after the end of the project is through the PEAS standard operating model for its school, as the GEARR activities are part of the core activities of PEAS schools. Therefore, activities such as teacher training, life skills curriculum and livelihoods programmes, and community sensitisation will continue to be implemented. The sustainability of project activities and observed impacts will be supported by financial sustainability, which PEAS aims to reach in full by 2026 with no reliance on external funding. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to comment on the feasibility of this approach. The project has outlined in detail its plans to ensure the sustainability of the GEARR project and the long-term future of PEAS schools. In the 2020 Sustainability Plan, PEAS outlined a number of actions to be undertaken to ensure project activities and impacts can be sustained. These include the re-launch of the new Continuous Professional Development programme to improve the implementation of gender responsive pedagogical practices in PEAS schools, as well as the Inspect and Improve programme in partnership with the government. The Sustainability Plan is supported by the findings of the evaluation as appropriate activities for sustainability.

4.4 Contribution analysis

Validity of the Theory of Change

This section comments on the validity of the Theory of Change as part of the contribution narrative. It is important to note that the limitations of the endline evaluation due to Covid-19 constraints on data collection means that the validity of the Theory of Change cannot be assessed in regard to the learning and transition outcomes, and the intermediate outcomes and outputs are not individually evaluated. The focus of the endline evaluation was the project activities and their impacts and effectiveness at addressing the barriers to learning and transition faced by marginalised girls, as well as the overall sustainability of the project. As such, the validity of the Theory of Change is based on this focus.

Overall, the project Theory of Change is found to be valid, appropriate and based on sound logic, given the limitations raised by adaptations to Covid-19, not only on programming, but also on the evaluation of the project (see section 2.5). This remains the case despite significant changes in the operating context and assumptions underpinning the Theory of Change. Beyond the GEARR project, the Theory of Change requires some revision to reflect these changes, including the loss of the PPP agreement between PEAS and the Government of Uganda in 2019, and the context of school closures and nationwide restrictions due to Covid-19.

Regarding the impact of project activities on the learning and transition of marginalised girls, the Theory of Change is also seen to be valid based on the evidence collected at endline. The appropriateness of project activities is evident as they address the barriers to transition, and learning identified in the Theory of Change and there is evidence of their impact. Overall, the

project activities are appropriate for addressing the barriers to learning and transition faced by marginalised girls and boys at the school and community level. This focus was maintained in the design of the Covid-19 response activities, taking into consideration the constraints on project activities during the school closures. As outlined in section 3.1., evidence from endline data collection suggests that project activities are leading to some of the expected outcomes related to learning and transition. In particular these are the development of life skills and students' aspirations for post-school transition.

Regarding the barriers to learning and transition targeted by project activities, the evidence suggests that those identified in the Theory of Change are appropriate and relevant. Evidence collected at endline reveals that there are barriers to learning and transition facing marginalised girls in the following areas: environment for learning, teaching and learning, leadership and management, and conditions for learning. The project activities to address these barriers are found to be appropriate and targeted at these barriers, particularly those addressing inequitable attitudes to girls' education at the community and school level. As outlined in section 3.2, evidence at endline suggests that the project activities are contributing towards the changing barriers to learning and transition for girls, although there remains significant work to be done to fully overcome these barriers.

Regarding the sustainability of the GEARR project, the endline evidence suggests that the PEAS approach is successfully working towards sustainability as outlined in the Theory of Change. While there is insufficient evidence to identify changes in community attitudes and a recognition that cultural change is a slow process, there is some evidence that the environment for learning is improving and will lead to sustainable gains in girls' education.

Contribution narrative summary

In conclusion, the endline evaluation has established a credible, evidence-based narrative that the project is contributing to positive outcomes for marginalised girls.

Firstly, the evidence suggests that the project activities are leading to some of the expected outcomes related to learning and transition. Due to the constraints on data collection for the endline, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the project activities are contributing to the improvement of girls' functional literacy and numeracy skills or that more girls are successfully transitioning to A-level or other positive post-school pathways. However, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the project activities are contributing to marginalised girls' learning valuable and contextually relevant life skills and building their awareness of positive post-school transition pathways. Project activities are also improving the quality of the environment for learning as well as the quality of teaching and learning, although there remains significant progress to be made at the school and community level. The adaptation of project activities during the school closures ensured that for many students the conditions for learning were maintained, however there is insufficient evidence to judge learning gains and the contribution of PEAS project activities compared to other educational resources available.

The Covid-19 response activities were introduced in response to a significant change in the operating context of the project. As a result, it cannot be evaluated against the Theory of

Change's definition of learning. The purpose of the response activities, as outlined in the MTRP, was "anchored in keeping students safe during school closures and engaged in education, with particular focus on girls and other vulnerable groups". The evidence suggests that the response activities contributed towards the maintenance of conditions for learning and keeping students safe during the school closures. It is important to note that the benefits were not experienced by all students, and that some students were also accessing resources from the government and through informal support systems. However, it is evident that the project activities have contributed to maintaining conditions for learning during the school closure.

Secondly, there is evidence that the project activities are contributing to the changing barriers to learning and transition for girls and boys, and there remains a need for continued effort in tackling these barriers, especially after the school closures. While it has not been possible to quantify changes in many barriers due to constraints on data collection, the evidence suggests that the original project activities, prior to the school closures, were making progress towards the expected changes outlined in the Theory of Change. It is important to recognise that changes in barriers to learning and transition are also influenced by other interventions targeting girls' education, such as those listed in Annex 10 Table 16. As such, it is not possible to attribute change solely to the project activities, although there is a clear contribution.

Thirdly, the evidence suggests that the PEAS approach is successfully working towards sustainability as outlined in the Theory of Change. While there is insufficient evidence to identify changes in community attitudes, and a recognition that cultural change is a slow process, there is some evidence that the environment for learning is improving and will lead to sustainable gains in girls' education.

4.5 GESI

This section presents the barriers and characteristics of primary data samples and provides a commentary on the project's approach to gender and social inclusion (GESI), drawing primarily from analysis at midline. The GEC was designed to provide girls with an opportunity to transform their lives through access to quality education, acknowledging that gender inequality can be a driver for the challenges faced by millions of school-aged girls. In addition, the GEC has a clear objective of understanding and addressing various forms of educational marginalisation faced by girls, leading to project activities being socially inclusive. Social inclusion within the GEC is recognised as the provision of opportunities to ensure all members of an intended target group are included in an activity irrespective of their ethnicity, language, disability, religion, sexual orientation, etc. It is important to note that the primary quantitative data collection did not include much data on the barriers and characteristics of educationally marginalised groups. This was due to the need to keep the data collection tools under 20 minutes long and the priority of the FM and project for data on project activities and their impact. As such, the barriers and characteristics of the students surveyed at endline cannot be compared to the midline and baseline results, and the majority of the GESI commentary is drawn from the midline evaluation where GESI was thoroughly examined.

The student survey collected data on the following barriers and characteristics: head of household gender and education, marriage, children, PPI score, chore burden. These findings are presented below:

- The main financial supporters in students' homes were fathers (276, 57.1%). Mothers were the second most common heads of households (140, 29%). Male heads of households made up 66% (319) of the sample whilst 33.5% (162) of the students said that women were the heads of their households.
- Heads of households had most commonly attained primary level education (139, 28.8%), lower secondary education (132, 27.3%), a diploma or other form of higher education (65, 13.5%) or had received no formal education (66, 13.7%).
- The vast majority of students were not married (482, 99.8%) and did not have children (479, 99.2%). This means that only one student in the survey sample is married and four have children.
- The mean average PPI score was 51.65, with a minimum score of 16 and a maximum score of 78. The majority of students had a PPI score of above 50 (280, 58%). For students with a PPI score of over 50, they have less than an 8.1% chance of living under the international poverty line of \$1.25/day and a 36.1% chance of living under the \$3.10/day poverty line.
- Some 7.5% (36) of participants had a PPI score of below 30. This indicates a high likelihood of poverty, particularly a high likelihood (at least 54.5% chance) of living under the \$1.90/day international poverty line.¹⁵
- About one quarter of students (118, 24.4%) typically spent five or more hours doing chores on a normal day.

In summary, the student survey sample at endline reflects that of previous evaluation points and demonstrates that the PEAS student population faces a number of barriers including caregiver education, poverty and chore burden.

In the qualitative data, two visually impaired students were interviewed, and their experiences are summarised in Annex 10.

Across Uganda, poverty, poor education services and social factors have an impact on girls' participation in school. Though there has been some progress towards gender parity at the primary level, gaps in literacy and secondary school completion remain high. GEARRing Up for Success After School is designed to specifically promote gender equality in schools by improving girls' learning, attendance, completion and transition. While project outcomes are girl-focused, GEC-T activities are designed to be inclusive of both girls and boys, to promote positive attitudes towards girls' education and supportive environments for all. The 2020 enrolment for term 1 PEAS had an almost 50-50 split between girls (6,704) and boys (6,578).¹⁶ This supports the finding at baseline and midline that the majority of PEAS schools have equal numbers of boys and girls enrolled, or more girls than boys enrolled. In addition, PEAS establish schools in locations where young people are underserved by secondary education, and PEAS' enrolment policy ensures at least equal enrolment of boys and girls.

¹⁵ Uganda PPI 2012_Scorecard and Look-up Tables.

¹⁶ Note that 132 entries in the dataset were not gender disaggregated.

PEAS staff note that low fees and flexible fee payment options support more students from the poorest backgrounds to attend PEAS schools than comparison schools and a significantly lower primary leaving examination (PLE) cut-off point than comparison schools allows students with lower primary school prior attainment to access secondary education through PEAS, who otherwise may not have been able to enrol in secondary school.

While community and system level interventions are an element of programme design, the school is the primary and established mechanism through which PEAS is able to affect change through gender-responsive initiatives and the development of a supportive, gender-inclusive environment for girls. School-level interventions focus on embedding Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) teacher training, child protection training and reporting, girls' clubs, life skills and literacy classes and livelihoods projects, and reaching out to communities through the school and PTA structures to affect change on community attitudes towards girls' education. PEAS staff note that, since baseline, there have been infrastructure expansions across the network of A-Level centres that include a focus on boarding for girls and accessible buildings and compounds to support those with physical disabilities.

At midline, the PEAS GEC-T project is assessed as being GESI sensitive with 'transformative' gender-associated activities and 'accommodating' social inclusion activities. Transformative activities refer to ones that engage with and transform gender and social inequalities in the long term to achieve sustainable change, gender equality and reverse social exclusion. Accommodating activities acknowledge but work around gender, disability or other social differences and inequalities to achieve project objectives. This assessment was based on the six GESI criteria outlined by the FM: culture and capacity, analysis, data, indicators, 'do no harm', and accountability. The detailed analysis of the project approach against these criteria can be found in the midline report.

While the project does not include specific interventions targeting barriers for learners with SEND, PEAS has taken steps to gain a better understanding of students with SEND in PEAS schools since the baseline. These include: (i) asking the Washington Group¹⁷ questions to all new students that enrol in PEAS schools; (ii) conducting a SEND audit and analysis across their network to try to understand the level and nature of need that already exist in PEAS schools and what further need is present in the school communities; (iii) conducting a desk research review of global best practice on SEND provision in low resource settings. These, together with their in-house knowledge, experience and expertise, directly informed the development of their Inclusion Strategy and Post School Guidance and Counselling design in a contextually relevant manner.

GESI considerations were an important aspect of the project's Covid-19 response while girls were out of school. Messaging through the radio programmes, telephone trees and SMS messages emphasised the need for caregivers to be sensitive to the needs of girls at home and provided safeguarding information for girls and caregivers. Through these messages PEAS advocated for equity for girls, by encouraging caregivers to provide equal opportunities for learning to both girls and boys at home, distribute the domestic chores equally, and

¹⁷ <u>http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/washington-group-question-sets/short-set-of-disability-questions/</u>

prioritise education for girls over the financial gains of early marriage during the school closures.

To conclude, the endline evaluation confirms the midline assessment of the GEARR programme as gender sensitive when analysed against the GESI minimum standards. While project outcomes are girl-focused, GEARR activities are designed to be inclusive of both girls and boys, to promote positive attitudes towards girls' education and supportive environments for all.

Chapter 5: Recommendations

5.1 Impact

It is recommended that the learning and conclusions from the endline evaluation, and future research studies and evaluations that collect data schools, are communicated to the schools. This will help foster buy-in and cooperation with school leadership, which at times was reticent.

It is recommended that PEAS develop an approach to ensure that teacher training, especially on gender responsive pedagogy, can continue in the event of school closures in the future. The evidence gathered at all evaluation points demonstrates that teachers have a key role to play in creating a gender equitable learning environment for girls, and that the gender responsive pedagogy and regular CPD training are having a positive impact on teacher practices. During the school closures these training sessions were paused, and there is a potential for progress to have been lost as a result. As such, an approach to ensure teacher training can continue in the event of future school closures will ensure that momentum is maintained. Furthermore, training during the school closures will better equip teachers to provide tailored support to girls, who are likely to face different barriers to learning at home than boys.

It is recommended that PEAS produced learning packs be considered as a potential method for addressing learning loss and remedial learning for out of school students or during the school holidays when schools are reopened. Feedback from students suggests that the packs were a positive and effective learning tool and they would value access to something similar in the future.

It is recommended that schools monitor attendance and progress and implement clear remedial strategies for girls identified as falling behind. This was a recommendation at baseline and treatment students reported attending and benefiting from additional literacy classes, however it is recommended that PEAS review the quality of these classes.

5.2 Barriers

It is recommended that PEAS conduct regular alumni surveys to track transition and gain greater insight into the post-school transition pathways taken by PEAS alumni. It is recommended that this is paired with a leavers' survey on aspirations and transition plans with students before they leave a PEAS school, so that aspirations and outcomes can be compared.

It is recommended that the use of SMS messages to communicate with caregivers and students at home continues even after schools re-open. This has been an effective method of sharing information about schools as well as safeguarding and child protection and can be used as a tool for community sensitisation regarding girls' education. However, further consideration should be given to the appropriate language of the messages, keep contact lists

updated as much as possible and take into account that some students may not receive the messages if they are away from their caregivers, and how to ensure caregivers share the messages widely.

It is recommended that PEAS continues to support diverse further educational pathways. This recommendation seeks to ensure transition opportunities that are most appropriate for each individual, including TVET (and related apprenticeships), training colleges and nonformal education.

It is recommended that A-Level Centres continue to be opened in areas that do not have access to upper secondary education, with additional research conducted on how to overcome the issue of low enrolment.

It is recommended that when S5 students return to school they are provided additional learning support, recognising the longer length of time out of school and lower engagement with Covid-19 response activities than their counterparts in S4 and S6.

5.3 Sustainability

It is recommended that PEAS continue to seek opportunities to work in partnership with the government to scale elements of the PEAS approach to running schools. Regarding the ongoing Inspect and Improve partnership, it is recommended that the PEAS ensure that lessons from the GEC-T evaluation relating to gender sensitive approaches are incorporated.

It is recommended that PEAS prioritise teacher retention, exploring the possibility of financial incentives or increasing teacher salary to match government schools. The high level of teacher turnover is unsustainable and undermines progress made towards improved teaching quality at the classroom level as well as the value for money of activities aimed at teachers. It is recognised that actions to address teacher retention may impact upon efforts to reach full financial sustainability by 2026, and that PEAS has to consider all aspects of project sustainability.

It is recommended that PEAS continue to focus on teacher training and support, including gender responsive pedagogy. This should be further embedded into the induction and continued professional development of teachers, to maximise the sustainability of changes in attitude, behaviour and classroom practice. Teachers are key drivers to project success and sustainability, and the recruitment and retention of quality teachers will be important to improve outcomes. This is particularly pertinent for marginalised girls whose on-going participation in school will benefit from having quality teachers as role models.

5.4 Other

In addition to the above, it is recommended that PEAS and the FM seek opportunities to share the learning of this evaluation with the wider sector, particularly:

• Lessons from the Covid-19 response activities, which have demonstrated a resilient and adaptive use of technology appropriate to the context.

• Effectiveness of messaging to increase participation, adding to the body of evidence supporting the World Bank's "Smart Buys" on this topic.

These could be disseminated through an academic article, informational video or conference presentation.

Annexes

Annex 1: Intervention roll-out dates

Below is the timeline of roll-out of the interventions. is accurate as of 01 March 2020. It is important to note that activities and end dates may well be significantly affected by Covid-19 and related school closures.

Intervention	Description	Start Date	End Date
Community information and marketing to promote girls' A- level education	This intervention includes a series of targeted outreach activities to encourage girls' enrolment in PEAS A- level centres. Activities include: holding community open days at existing and new PEAS A-Level centres; conducting outreach in feeder schools; and delivering radio messages encouraging girls' enrolment.	Nov 2017	End of project
Gender Responsive Pedagogy teacher training	Gender Responsive Pedagogy training is delivered through termly in-service training (INSET) sessions for teachers.	July 2017	March 2019
Child Protection Policy	This intervention includes embedding PEAS' Child Protection (CP) policy and reporting framework in all schools, and ensuring compliance through activities such as regular refresher training for teachers, developing a simplified version of the CP policy for students to use to hold schools to account, etc.	Oct 2018	End of project
Girls' clubs	Extra-curricular Girls' Clubs are expanding to all PEAS schools. To ensure that they are running effectively, example activities include designing a peer-to-peer support programme for girls, organising inter-school Girls' Club competitions, and delivering specific CPD for SWTs who run the clubs.	April 2017	End of project
Alumni engagement	PEAS alumni events are organised to encourage former students to come	April 2017	March 2020

Table 9: Intervention roll-out dates
	back to school to inspire, support and/or mentor current students.		
Training of teachers in the 'Great Teacher Rubric'	This intervention includes the design and delivery of teacher training in the Great Teacher Rubric for PEAS teachers.	Jan 2018	End of project
Livelihoods programme	This intervention includes the design, pilot and roll-out of a livelihood's curriculum supplement programme across all PEAS schools.	Oct 2017	Feb 2019
Life skills curriculum	Continued support is provided for teaching the PEAS life skills curriculum in all schools. This includes providing refresher teacher training, conducting lesson observations and providing feedback, refreshing curriculum materials, etc.	Nov 2016	End of project
Learning materials	This intervention includes conducting a needs assessment of textbooks and lab equipment across all schools and procuring needed learning materials to ensure all schools have a sufficient supply of contextually relevant texts and science supplies.	April 2017	June 2017
School improvement and leadership development programming	This includes a range of annual activities, which intend to help school leaders improve their schools and develop as professionals, including (i) conducting annual school inspections and making recommendations on how schools could improve, (ii) helping school leaders develop annual 'School Improvement Plans' and track their implementation, and (iii) delivering the school leadership development programme involving targeted training and mentoring for all PEAS school leaders.	Jan 2018	End of project

A-level specific school leadership training	This includes the development of a standard approach and school guidelines for delivering A-level education and embedding this approach in existing schools teaching A-level and rolling it out to new A-level centres to help schools be successful.	Jan 2020	End of project
Strengthen Parent Teacher Associations and Boards of Governors	This includes the delivery of on-going training to PTA and BoG members to support them in holding schools to account, including conducting orientations for all new members and regular refresher training, for example.	June 2018	End of project
Expansion and improvement of A- level provision in PEAS schools	This includes a range of expansion and improvement initiatives to PEAS' A-level offering, including: (i) building new facilities (e.g. classrooms, labs, boarding houses, sanitary blocks) to enable schools to add A-level sections, (ii) providing A-level textbooks and teaching materials, and (iii) introducing mock exams for A-level students.	Jul 2017	End of project
Guidance on post- school pathways	This includes the delivery of a series of activities that focus on helping students to define and pursue their desired post- school pathway, including: (i) designing and deliver training for SWTs and Senior Men Teachers (SMTs) to deliver post- school guidance (e.g. early discussion of subject choices in relation to vocations) through in-class instruction and extra- curricular clubs; (ii) facilitating inspiring alumni to come back to school and speak with Girls' Club; and (iii) linking students with information about further education course and scholarships.	Apr 2018	End of project

Annex 2: EE Inception Report

Attached as a separate document.

Annex 3: Data collection tools

Clean copies of the data collection tools used for endline (Attached as separate documents):

- Student survey protocol
- Caregiver survey protocol
- Student KII template
- Teacher KII template
- Head teacher KII template
- District Inspector KII template
- Project staff KII template
- Qualitative data sampling criteria

Annex 4: Datasets

Clean and anonymised datasets attached as separate documents

- Student and caregiver survey datasets
- Student KII dataset
- Teacher KII dataset
- Head teacher KII dataset
- DEO KII dataset
- Qualitative coding framework
- List of project data sources analysed

Annex 5: EE Declaration

Name of Project: PEAS GEARRing Up For Success After School GECT

Name of External Evaluators: Bethany Sikes, Kalifa Damani, Matt Thomas and Preeti Dhillon

Contact Information for External Evaluator: b.sikes@jigsawconsult.com, k.damani@jigsawconsult, m.thomas@jigsawconsult.com

Names of all members of the evaluation team: Bethany Sikes, Kalifa Damani, Matt Thomas, Preeti Dhillon, Sam Ejibua

Jigsaw Consult certifies 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 (BS)
- All data analysis was conducted independently and provides a fair and consistent representation of progress (BS)
- Data quality assurance and verification mechanisms agreed in the terms of reference with the project have been soundly followed (BS)
- The recipient has not fundamentally altered or misrepresented the nature of the analysis originally provided by PEAS (BS)
- All child protection protocols and guidance have been followed (BS)

• Data has been anonymised, treated confidentially and stored safely, in line with the GEC data protection and ethics protocols (BS)

Bethany Sikes, Kalifa Damani and Matt Thomas

Jigsaw Consult

01 July 2021

Annex 6: Project management

response

PEAS welcomes the findings and recommendations outlined in the GECT Endline Study. The report and accompanying data provides evidence of the wide ranging positive impact GECT activities have had on marginalised girls and the wider school population, whilst also outlining insights and recommendations that PEAS will use to further strengthen PEAS' approach.

As detailed above, the study was conducted in challenging circumstances: schools closed in March 2020 due to the pandemic, prompting a need to completely redesign the evaluation approach at Endline. PEAS is grateful for the flexibility demonstrated by Jigsaw, and the support from the Fund Manager, in revising the Endline plans. PEAS also recognise the important part played by the local enumerator company, RDM, who collected key evaluation data through phone surveys.

Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to follow the same cohort from baseline and midline to endline, limiting the extent to which meaningful comparisons could be made between the datasets at the different evaluation points. Nonetheless, insightful findings have been raised at Endline in relation to the effects of the project, and these have already proved useful. Due to the challenges preventing measurement of certain components at Endline, PEAS is also continuing to draw on learnings stemming from the Midline study.

Notably, as the pandemic has unfortunately worsened in Uganda, schools fully closed again in June 2021. PEAS has been able to draw on learnings from the Endline to influence the remote response plans during this period. Additionally, PEAS is currently developing the global strategy for 2022 – 2026. This strategy is including a significant focus on girls' education. Evidence from the GECT midline and Endline reports have been critical in influencing the direction and content of the strategy.

The following are reflections on key findings outlined in the evaluation (the structure follows that of the Endline report):

Reflections on Impact of GEC-T project activities

Findings and lessons learned

Project impact on student learning

PEAS is pleased to note that Endline data all points towards activities having had a positive effect on students' learning. The Endline highlights that girls have learnt contextually relevant life skills through project activities. There is also evidence that the project activities are having a positive impact on the environment for learning as well as teaching and learning, such as teacher training and safeguarding policies.

It was not possible to conduct learning assessments at Endline due to the pandemic. As outlined in PEAS Project Management Response at Midline, PEAS holds severe reservations regarding the validity and effectiveness of the approach to testing in numeracy and literacy (the first and second learning outcome) at baseline and midline. Reasons for reservations are detailed in the Midline Project Management response, one of the main being an inappropriate time provided for the tests.

The third learning outcome focused on overall UCE exam results. Due to school closure, 2020 UCE exams were not conducted until early 2021 and, whilst results had been released at the time of finalising this report, it had not yet been possible to obtain district datasets to compare PEAS results with control schools. As noted in the Endline report, the UCE results point to a positive trend of learning gains. The difference between UCE results in PEAS treatment schools and the comparison schools at midline was over 4 times the target: the mean 2019 UCE score for female students in PEAS treatment schools was 3.28, compared to 3,71 for female students at comparison schools (lower scores indicate higher achievement). Whilst the target at midline was 0.1 points above the comparison mean, the resulting gap was 0.43. In 2020, UCE results have further improved for girls in PEAS treatment schools. However, at the time of publishing the midline, 2020 results for comparison schools were not yet available to the study. Analysis of 2019 exam results at the subject level also provided interesting findings: 11% more girls in treatment schools passed English than girls in the comparison schools. Critically, this gap considerably widened when compared to the results in 2018.

At the point of publishing the Endline report, 2020 UCE results have been released and are available to PEAS in relation to PEAS schools as well as summary national results. Results show that, despite operating in deprived rural areas, PEAS students – both girls and boys - have continued to outperform national level results each year from 2017 to 2020. Once 2020 UCE results become available for comparison schools and at district level, PEAS intends to conduct further analysis including of PEAS GECT treatment school results compared to the comparison schools to establish whether this positive trend continued to Endline.

High quality, inclusive teaching will remain a priority at PEAS. PEAS will further strengthen delivery of the 'PEAS Top 10' using our school-based teacher training model. The provision of foundational and life skills will be a key focus area. Example interventions will include: Rolling out our Top 10 Toolkit to enable teachers to support all students according to their needs, investing in open-source and offline technology for individualised learning; Providing incentives for teachers and students including awards for girls' and boys' performance in key subject area and performance-related bonuses for teachers and leaders (especially related to girls' performance in STEM subjects); Review of PEAS' supplementary curricula including Life Skills, Livelihoods and co-curricular programmes to ensure full integration, coherence and coverage of topics/skills relevant to girls.

Project impact on transition outcomes

Evidence from the surveyed students indicated that activities are contributing to positive transition outcomes. Due to the school closures, and revised Endline design, it was not possible to follow-up with the transition cohort in order to say that more girls are successfully transitioning to A-level or other positive post-school pathways at the end of the project period. In the absence of conclusive results at Endline in this area, it is important to also note the promising trends identified at Midline. Outcome level transition targets were met at Midline and findings at that stage suggested the project had been effective in relation to supporting girls to take a range of transition pathways appropriate to the individual student and context. PEAS will continue to support further educational pathways that are most appropriate for each individual, including TVET (and related apprenticeships), training colleges and non-formal education.

PEAS is committed to supporting students to develop the foundational and transferable skills necessary to prepare them to succeed after leaving school. Rural youth are less likely than those in urban schools to have networks and contacts to support successful transition. PEAS plans for continuing to improve positive transition rates amongst students have been outlined in the Education Approach as part of PEAS 2022 – 2026 Strategy. In line with learnings outlined in the GECT Midline and Endline evaluations, activities will include: Providing high quality careers guidance and counselling to students to help inform them about post-school pathways; Ensuring students are exposed to role models within their communities and wider networks; and supporting students to take on work experience opportunities by connecting them to local businesses and partners.

Project impact on Safeguarding and Child Protection

As recognised in the Endline report, safeguarding and child protection practices have been a priority focus for PEAS for a number of years, with the introduction of rigorous and up-to-date policies and reporting processes. The study confirms that the project is making identifiable progress in that regard. Safeguarding policies and the role of Senior Women Teachers, were noted in the report as approaches evidenced to be positively impacting on the environment for learning. The report describes the high priority placed by PEAS on child protection and wellbeing in the COVID response. PEAS' own phone surveys with students confirmed that the vast majority received information from PEAS at the start and throughout the pandemic so far in terms of approaches to protect themselves against COVID.

The Midline report provided additional confirmation of positive effects of safeguarding activities, with the vast majority of students confirming they felt safe in PEAS schools. Notably, PEAS schools were found to have significantly better safeguarding provision and outcomes than the comparison schools.

PEAS also acknowledges that improvements can continue to be made. The qualitative data set suggests that at least one teacher appears to conflate child protection with good classroom practice. This is apparently the exception rather than the norm; nonetheless it indicates a need for further awareness-raising in this respect. PEAS has noted this finding and will be reviewing the Child Protection and Safeguarding training content accordingly.

The Girls' Approach contained within PEAS 2022 – 2026 Strategy highlights girls' safety and wellbeing as the highest priority. In the next strategic period, PEAS will continue to deliver its strong child protection policies and practices in PEAS schools. In the next period there will be a greater focus on girls' safety on the journey to school and, post-Covid, we will prioritise

student mental health and wellbeing. Approaches to be conducted may include: Running a pilot to enlist teachers or members of the community to supervise groups of girls on their journey home from school; Testing, adapting and rolling-out PEAS' new psychosocial programme.

Effective Students with Special Educational Needs

As part of the midline study, the Washington Group questions were asked to surveyed students. Results showed 0.3% of the sample to have moderate to severe disability. This is higher than the national proportion of students graduating primary school that have special educational needs. At Endline it was not possible to determine current proportion of students that have special educational needs. The midline evaluation assessed the project as "accommodating" regarding the support provided to students with special educational needs. Due to the limitations of the revised design, the evaluator were not able to provide an update to this assessment at Endline.

As part of the Endline study, qualitative data was collected through interviewing two students with visual impairments. It is encouraging to note that the students reported their teachers taking specific actions to support their additional needs, and that they successfully participated in activities such as girls' clubs. In line with the PEAS' vision, "a world where all children receive an education that unlocks their full potential", PEAS will continue to promote inclusion across its school network; meaning that all students, regardless of their ability or needs, are provided with a quality education that unlocks their full potential.

There are existing practices across the network which promote inclusive education in PEAS schools. PEAS aims to further build on these existing practices in order to ensure that inclusive environments are being fostered in all PEAS schools for learners with SEN. Physical accessibility, is a key concern for an inclusive school, as physical barriers within the school environment can prevent learners from being able to access or fully participate in school life. All PEAS schools have some physical accessibility adaptations in place, with the provision of ramps, adequate lighting in classrooms and widened toilet cubicles. Additionally, a focus on providing quality teaching and learning is an integral part of the PEAS programme. The PEAS education team provides ongoing CPD and training to teachers to support good pedagogical practices in the classroom. Evidence demonstrates that good quality teaching is a critical factor for supporting the inclusion of all students in the classroom. Through the strategy, PEAS is working with teachers to further understand the linkages between good classroom practices and supporting learners with diverse needs.

Overall reach and effectiveness of activities in relation to school closure

PEAS is very encouraged to see that the skills students have learnt in school equipped them well for coping with school closure. As outlined in the study, students developed a range of skills and found the life skills particularly useful during the pandemic. This suggests that PEAS are successfully increasing resilience amongst students and is also promising in terms of young people being well equipped for next steps in life when they leave school. PEAS will continue to prioritise life skills development for students.

The Endline confirms the multi-pronged approach taken as part of the project's Covid-19 response was appropriate to reach as many students as possible through different activities; 95% of students were found to have accessed at least one of the COVID response approaches (telephone tree; text messages; radio broadcasts; study packs). Consequently, with the

renewed school closures in June 2021, PEAS has resumed a multi-pronged response to reach students.

There are some challenges that it is not feasible to fully address during the pandemic; this was noted in the Endline study. For example, timings of some radio broadcasts; people unable to travel significant distances to pick up/deliver study packs in limited cases; students regularly moving during the school closures making it hard for teachers to make continued phone contact. It is important to note that this is a key reason for PEAS taking a multi-pronged approach, ie those challenges were expected and the covid response plan designed accordingly. There is no one silver bullet that will effectively reach all students. Students are individuals living in differing contexts and facing differing practical challenges. It has been positive to see that the combination of activities has worked well.

Combining low tech and no tech solutions to reach students for remote learning

Provision of study packs: Study packs were found to be particularly effective during school closure, both in reach and impact. 80.3% of students reported receiving study packs. Study packs were found to have a strong relationship to students' self-reported learning and students generally reported finding them very useful. This aligns with PEAS' internal MEL findings. For all these reasons, PEAS is prioritising the provision of study packs for the current period of school closure, particularly to S5 students during the current months.

The Endline noted some concerns regarding the content of the packs. The content is developed by the government and then printed by PEAS. PEAS will continue to align with government content for the packs, whilst also considering the provision of additional complementary study materials if the school closures are further prolonged. PEAS also recognises that a minority of the students did not receive the packs. PEAS has updated the teacher telephone tree guidance to emphasise the need to alert students when packs are available for pick up, explaining the importance of the study packs to the caregivers, and also encouraging caregivers and students to alert other caregivers and students.

It was also positive to note that other family members and friends in the community have been making use of the packs, therefore meaning the reach is being extended beyond just PEAS students. This is a welcome step that was not necessarily expected. PEAS is keen to learn more about the extent to which non-PEAS children are making use of the packs, and how. This will therefore be explored further through the MEL exercises during the current school closure period.

Broadcast of PEAS Radio shows: Over half of students reported to have tuned into PEAS radio programmes, broadcast in partnership with the government. This is in line with PEAS internal MEL findings. It is positive to note that the median student strongly agreed that the programmes were helpful and that feedback confirmed the programmes helped students to revise and retain knowledge. On the basis of these findings, PEAS is resuming radio programmes in the renewed period of school closures. Due to concerns over the effects of the further disruptions on student well-being, as of July 2021, radio programmes are currently focused on supporting pyscho-social wellbeing amongst students. If school closure continues beyond August, PEAS will consider resuming academic content for radio programmes.

PEAS notes the challenges cited by some students in tuning into the radio broadcasts. Those cited in the Endline are ones PEAS is aware of through internal monitoring. The main challenge cited was broadcasts clashing with domestic responsibilities. Radio stations often have limited slots available for broadcasts of the programmes. Domestic responsibilities are often highest

during the day. Radio programmes are presented live by PEAS teachers. There are curfews during the pandemic meaning it is not possible to broadcast these shows in the evening as teachers as they need to travel home. In an aim to further increase the proportion of students, particularly girls, listening to shows, PEAS will ensure teachers have a clear schedule of radio programmes in advance so that they can alert students and caregivers in advance through phone calls and encourage them to work around the schedule wherever possible.

Provision of text messages to students and caregivers: The majority of students confirmed receipt of text messages and reported to have found them helpful for keeping themselves healthy, safe, and motivated to remain focused on their educational goals. On the basis of findings in the Endline, and PEAS own internal MEL findings, SMS delivery is continuing during the renewed school closure. PEAS is also considering how the use of SMS messages can potentially be used during 'business as usual' as an effective way of communicating with Caregivers.

In response to Endline findings related to challenges faced by some students in receiving SMS messages, PEAS is making several adjustments to the approach. A PEAS ID will be used in future. 'PEAS' will appear on the phone rather than a random phone number as the originator of the message; this will ensure the text messages are not mistaken for SPAM which is a common issue in Uganda. SMS messages will be translated into local languages, of which there are many in Uganda. This will ensure that those Caregivers who are not literate in English language can access the messages.

Implementation of Teacher-Student Telephone Tree: PEAS is pleased to note that the vast majority of students were being reached through phone calls from their teachers. Students generally reported to have found the phone calls useful and the following themes emerged related to students' learning and engagement with educational activities: encouraging students to study, supporting students' learning, and telling parents to encourage students to study. Based on the findings, PEAS teachers will start calling all students regularly again now that schools have resumed closure.

PEAS notes the finding that girls appeared to be given less access to Caregivers' phones than boys, and that boys spoke to their teachers more often on average than girls. In response to this finding, PEAS has updated the Telephone Tree Guidance for teachers to ensure it is highlighted as a key point for teachers to discuss with caregivers, the importance of providing the opportunity for girls to talk to their teacher on the phone.

Response to related recommendations

Continuation of teacher training during school closures in future: PEAS will continue to prioritise the ongoing professional development of teachers, including in gender responsive pedagogy. Schools have once again closed and PEAS is currently developing a plan for conducting teacher training. Phone surveys are currently being conducted with teachers to consult on professional development needs. Due to COVID restrictions, it is not currently possible to bring together teachers for in-person training; however, innovative ideas for remote approaches are being explored.

Continued use of study packs as schools re-open: PEAS has noted the strong results highlighted in the evaluation in relation to learning packs. These echo the findings from PEAS internal monitoring and evaluation activities. As schools are currently closed, study packs are

again being distributed due to the strong evidence of their effectiveness. PEAS is considering how study packs in some form can continue to be used to support students once schools reopen and stabilise.

Schools to monitor attendance and progress and implement remedial strategies for girls identified as falling behind. PEAS schools will continue to monitor attendance and progress of girls, and to support those falling behind. Girls are a key focus of PEAS 2022-2026 strategy, with key actions planned to further strengthen schools' abilities to aid girls' access and learning. For example, internal learning assessments will be increasingly standardised and conducted regularly, aiding teachers to quickly identify those falling behind. PEAS school information management system, School Tool+ will be strengthened and rolled out, providing up to date information about students, including highlighting students at risk of dropping out or falling behind.

Communication of Endline learnings to schools: PEAS aims to increasingly equip schools in the network to use and understand data, and this principle features strongly in the upcoming 2022-2026 strategy. Learnings from this Endline and future studies will be communicated to School Leaders in an accessible and appropriate format.

Barriers to learning and transition Findings and lessons learned

Project impact on tackling barriers faced by girls in relation to learning and transition

The evidence from the interviews and surveys suggest that the original project activities prior to the school closures were making progress towards the expected changes outlined in the Theory of Change. Therefore, the project activities are contributing to the changing barriers to learning and transition for girls and boys. On the basis of these findings, PEAS is keen to continue to provide the holistic package of activities included in the project. PEAS will continue to review and refine the model on the basis of changing context (notably COVID and school closure) and evidence (notably GECT Evaluation findings).

Despite the above, the Endline study also notes that a range of challenges remain in relation to girls' learning and transition. Progress was being made in breaking down barriers prior to COVID. However, it is likely that the gap between girls and boys, is likely to have widened again due to the extended period of school closure. It is likely that girls will have had a greater amount of domestic responsibilities to tend to during school closure and that their access to distance learning may be hindered to a greater extent than boys. This is consistent with PEAS' student phone survey, which found that only 41% of girls with radio access had listened to PEAS radio, compared to 49% of boys. PEAS is focused on closing this gap through targeted interventions to increase reach of activities to girls during school closure, encourage as many girls as possible to return to school when they re-open, and to provide catch-up classes.

As recognised in the Endline, barriers to girls' education do continue to exist, including some persisting inequitable gender attitudes embedded in cultural norms and practices of the communities that students and teachers come from. The Endline findings show that 99% of caregivers say they think girls' education is equally as important as boys; nonetheless, some

gender inequitable attitudes at community level remain a challenge. There is, for example, a clear cultural expectation that girls will get married and have children at the end of lower secondary, and this appears a deterrent for parents to invest in their further education. PEAS has also found that community attitudes are the key enabler or barrier to the implementation of PEAS' re-entry policy for young mothers.

PEAS knows that to achieve our goals for gender equity, we need to better engage boys and the community as allies and advocates for girls' empowerment. Example interventions that PEAS is considering conducting include:

- Conducting a school-level governance review, to add a gender lens to all Board of Governor and PTA activity and enlist their support in engaging the community in equitable gender attitudes.
- Developing a radio communications strategy to shift perceptions about girls and cement PEAS' reputation as a centre of excellence for future women leaders. This could involve broadcasting debates or talk shows involving boys and girls on issues of gender equality and overcoming challenges and inviting caregivers/members of the community to participate.

The Endline also notes that, whilst findings suggest PEAS activities are contributing to post school aspirations of students, some gaps persist between the aspirations of girls and boys. PEAS wants girls to have high aspirations and an understanding of their choices. It is also important to ensure that girls are adequately supported to make these choices. The Endline found that girls often do not have aspirational role models at home, and the study stressed the importance of girls seeing positive role models at school. PEAS will provide more support and training to maximise the impact of the structures which already exist in our schools including girls' clubs, Senior Women Teachers, student councils and alumni networks. Example interventions include: looking into the use of technology to expose girls to relatable role models; Piloting a programme to fund PEAS girls' alumni schools through teacher training college, in return for two future years of employment teaching in the PEAS network; mapping and sign-posting services and programmes beyond the PEAS' school so that girls have access to more opportunities, education, and resources.

Response to related recommendations

Conduct regular alumni surveys and school leavers' surveys: PEAS will continue to conduct alumni surveys and school leavers' surveys to learn about steps students are taking after school and to gain further insight into their aspirations. Costs associated with tracing past cohorts of students are high. PEAS will look for potential opportunities for research partnerships for longitudinal tracking of students, whilst also exploring possibilities for smaller scale internal studies. PEAS will also be considering approaches for maintaining the engagement of alumni, one benefit of which would be to gain an understanding about their subsequent life path. School leavers surveys are done on an annual basis at PEAS schools and will be re-launched as soon as possible post the pandemic.

Continue to use SMS messages to communicate with caregivers ad students after schools reopen; further consider language of messages; keep contact lists updated; ensure caregivers share messages: PEAS has found SMS useful to sharing information about a range of topics, including safeguarding, ways to protect people against COVID, encouragement for reenrolment of girls, and some academic content. PEAS own consultations with parents, teachers, and students also confirms an existing demand for continued messaging. In the current period of school closure, PEAS is making use of SMS and Endline recommendations are being acted on. PEAS is sending messages in a range of local languages to ensure as many caregivers as possible understand the content. The contact list for students was reviewed in its entirety and updated at the start of the first period of full school closure, and again at the start of the second period of full school closure. Guidance to teachers conducting phone calls with students and caregivers has been updated to include reminders to alert the students and caregivers to look out for SMS messages from PEAS. Finally, PEAS is using a new ID system for sending messages that will ensure messages can immediately be identified on the phone as being from PEAS as opposed to from a random number or SPAM. Phone surveys will be conducted with caregivers and students to monitor the effects of these changes to the implementation approach.

Continue to support diverse further development pathways: PEAS will continue to provide guidance and support to students to ensure they are aware of the various opportunities available to them when they leave school. Whilst PEAS is keen to ensure those that want to continue in school to pursue A levels are able to do so, TVET, training courses, apprenticeships and other options are explored with students. PEAS aims to ensure that students transition to the path that is right for them.

Continue to open A Level Centres in areas that do not have access to upper secondary education and conduct additional research into ways to boost enrolment. In line with PEAS' mission to expand access to quality education for children in Africa, PEAS will continue to explore opportunities for furthering provision of upper secondary education in rural areas of Uganda. As per the enrolment figures listed in the Endline study, enrolment in PEAS A level centres has increased by at least 8% each year since 2017 and by 66% over the course of the project. PEAS aims to continue this progress, though is also realistically expecting a temporary dip in enrolment due to the damaging effects of the pandemic.

Provide additional learning support to S5s in particular when they return to school due to the prolonged amount of time they have been out of school. Whilst pertinent at the point that the Endline research was conducted, this recommendation has possibly been superseded by continued changes in the COVID related context. At the time of data collection, S5s remained out of school, whilst S4s and S6s were in school. From September 2020 onwards, schools were open for select year groups in turn. Schools then closed again entirely in June 2021. At the time of closing, for the 2020 academic year, S5s will have had a similar amount of in-school education as all year groups other than S2. S2 had only returned to school for a couple of weeks since March 2020, when full school closure resumed in June 2021. PEAS is continually reviewing the situation and providing support to students as appropriate according to the need and context. When schools once again re-open there will be a significant focus on supporting all students that have fallen behind to catch up.

Sustainability

Findings and lessons learned

Encouraging sustainability through supporting systemic change

PEAS is committed to helping the wider education system deliver inclusive, high quality secondary education. As part of this mission PEAS is working with the Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports and other partners to ensure lessons learnt are shared and acted on,

aiding the transformation of secondary education. PEAS is combining first-hand experience of running secondary schools with a systems mindset. At Midline, all District Education Officers (DEOs) interviewed articulated that they and other school leaders see PEAS as having a role in benchmarking and setting the example of best practice in terms of safeguarding policies and approaches to learning. Findings from the GECT evaluations will be used to inform, not only PEAS programming, but other schools and governments.

During the 2022 – 2026 strategic period, PEAS will continue to bridge the gap between policy and practice; providing insight into how to overcome implementation issues and help government strengthen policy and regulation. PEAS is working nationally and globally to galvanise funders and thought leaders behind the importance of a quality secondary education, especially for girls. As part of this work, evidence and experience will be shared with key stakeholders and relevant groups will be convened to share PEAS' evidence and experience, particularly findings stemming from GECT evaluations.

Response to related recommendations

Continue to work in partnership with the government to scale elements of the PEAS approach to running schools, particularly in terms of gender sensitive approaches. As noted in the report, in line with the aim to achieve systemic change, PEAS is implementing a project called 'Inspect and Improve', in partnership with the Uganda government. The initiative has already started to generate useful resources and learnings in relation to the school inspection process. The project has led to examples of important changes, such as partner schools now consistently reporting gender disaggregated enrolment figures, with district level MoES monitoring tools also adjusted accordingly.

In Dec 2020/Jan 2021, External Evaluator, NFER, led an independent evaluation of the Inspect and Improve pilot project that was implemented in ten schools. The evaluation found there to be convincing evidence that I&I was successful in improving the quality of leadership and management in all ten participating schools. Emerging evidence also suggested that improvements to school management have led to improvements in student and teacher attendance, teaching practices, and student safety and well-being.

On the basis of the success of the pilot, PEAS and DES are working together to scale up the initiative. The number of partner schools has increased to 50 from 10 at GECT Midline stage, and is projected to grow to 200 within the next strategic period of 2022 - 2026. The possibility is being explored of extending to schools in refugee camps; GECT evaluation findings from both PEAS and other GECT projects will provide helpful learnings to incorporate into programme design with these particularly vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Prioritise teacher retention, exploring the possibility of financial incentives. PEAS is aware of the issue of teacher retention and its potential implications on the programme. Government schools pay higher salaries and have regular recruitment drives, for which PEAS teachers are seen as attractive as have a reputation of being high-performing. PEAS is unable to predict government plans in terms of recruitment. Achieving school financial sustainability is a key objective for PEAS. As acknowledged in the Endline findings, the provision of teacher incentives/higher teacher salaries could potentially compromise progress towards this objective. It is therefore necessary to take a balanced and well considered approach in relation to this recommendation.

Despite the challenges noted above, increasing retention of teachers – particularly high performing female teachers – will be a priority focus area for PEAS in the 2022 – 2026 strategic period. PEAS will consider approaches for rewarding teachers for high performance. Whilst we aim to limit teacher attrition as much as possible and will work with School Leaders to do so, we also acknowledge this to be out of PEAS' control to some extent and will also therefore implement mitigation strategies. Such strategies include a thorough induction process for all new teachers; and ongoing support and supervision mechanism to monitor teacher performance and provide regular feedback for professional development.

Continued focus on teacher training, including in gender responsive pedagogy. As described in PEAS' Education Approach in the 2022 – 2025 Strategy, PEAS continue to view teachers as critical to providing a high-quality education and will invest in supporting and empowering them by providing training and coaching. Based on evidence including the GECT evaluations, PEAS has planned a range of key components to effectively support teachers in the upcoming strategic period. These include:

- A focus on improving classroom practice to increase the quality of PEAS' education. This includes embedding a shared understanding of 'great teaching' and the Top 10 in all teachers' classroom practice across the PEAS network, following by continued comprehensive CPD that addresses teachers' development needs and will have greatest impact on student learning, particularly girls'.
- Supporting teachers' continuous skill development, including in critical skills, such as digital skills and the life skills needed for them to thrive (e.g. psychosocial & wellbeing skills)
- Standardisation of the PEAS approach for teachers where there is potential for efficiency and quality gains. This includes introducing common assessments, standardised lesson plan and scheme of work templates and using technology in training.

Annex 7: Educational context in Uganda

This annex provides information on the educational context in Uganda.

Ugandan education system

The education system in Uganda is structured as seven years of primary education, followed by six years of secondary education. Secondary education is split into four years of lower secondary (S1 to S4), and two years of upper secondary (S5 to S6). At the end of primary education (P7), pupils sit Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in four subjects: English, Maths, Science and Social Studies. In secondary education, students sit Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations in eight or more subjects at the end of lower secondary (S4) and the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education examinations (UACE) in three or more subjects at the end of upper secondary (S6). Currently, all 28 PEAS schools provide lower secondary tuition and nine schools also provide upper secondary. In January 2007 the Ugandan government introduced the nationwide Universal Secondary Education (USE) policy, with the intention of increasing access to secondary education for poor, vulnerable families in rural and peri-rural areas, by subsidising tuition fees. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) reported that by 2014, at least 66 percent of 1.4 million secondary school students were enrolled in the USE programme in 1,633 USE schools.¹⁸ In 2017, the initiative was reported to have increased secondary enrolment by 136 percent and to have had a particular impact on the proportion of girls participating in secondary education.¹⁹

Under USE, the government had a public private partnership (PPP) arrangement in place, which entitled selected students at partner private schools to receive USE funding which subsidised the cost per beneficiary. In 2010, PEAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government to roll out the USE programme under the PPP arrangement. Through this agreement, PEAS received a termly capitation grant of 47,000 Uganda Shillings (UGX) per student, which partially covers school operating costs. Of PEAS' 28 schools, 20 were part of this arrangement. Non-USE PEAS students used to pay slightly higher tuition fees, both USE and non-USE students pay boarding fees (where applicable), lunch fees and other costs (such as uniform, learning materials, etc). Across the PEAS school network, tuition fees are set as low as possible and are benchmarked against local schools to ensure fees are affordable in relation to existing provision in each community. In 2017 an evaluation of PEAS schools for most categories of students.²⁰

In January 2018, the MoES announced that the USE PPP was to be gradually phased out beginning with students enrolling in Senior 1 and Senior 5 (the first years of O-level and A-level respectively) during 2018 in participating private schools.²¹ While the government will continue to provide subsidies for students enrolled in Senior 2 upwards who joined their schools before the phase out was announced, this means that – by 2021 – there will be no USE grants provided to students in private schools in Uganda. It is not currently known what, if any, policy may replace the USE PPP to govern the relationship between the MoES and the large private secondary education sector in Uganda. At present, PEAS is operating under the assumption that there is no PPP to replace the USE subsidy and has adapted school fees to meet the cost per beneficiary.

In January 2020, a new curriculum was launched for those joining Senior 1, with the intention of moving away from such a teacher-centred approach to learning. Changes were made with a view to refocus the curriculum towards particular subjects such as science and technology, to streamline the number of subjects and to promote creativity and participation among learners.

¹⁸ EPRC, 2017, 'Endline Evaluation of the PEAS Network under the Uganda Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programme'

¹⁹ http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002317/231727e.pdf

²⁰ EPRC, 2017, 'Endline Evaluation of the PEAS Network under the Uganda Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programme'

²¹ See 'Press Statement from Ministry of Education', New Vision, 31st January 2018, <u>https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1470117/press-statement-ministry-education</u>

Educational marginalisation

PEAS has an organisational policy of establishing schools in poor, marginalised communities that lack access to secondary schools. The GEARRing Up For Success After School project is therefore designed, as a result of this existing policy, to target girls and communities that live in poverty and have lower than average educational attainment, and have traditionally been underserved by government and private education services.

Schools selected by PEAS to expand to A-Level as part of the GEARRing Up For Success After School project, have been chosen on the basis of current accessibility and provision. In each sub-region, at least one PEAS A-Level centre is being established in order to provide A-Level to a cluster of other, non-A-Level PEAS schools. Areas with no current access to any A-Level centres have also been prioritised. Therefore, this element of the programme is also designed to target girls with traditionally poor access to upper secondary and particularly low levels of transition to upper secondary.

Though all PEAS schools are designed on the same model, and implement similar policies and management structures, the context of each school differs due to regional and rural/urban differences. East Uganda is a dry, arid region, with higher levels of poverty than the Central and West regions, and slower rates of annual poverty reduction.²² The Eastern region also has the highest proportion of working children aged 5-13, while the Central region has the highest proportion of working children aged 14-17.²³ The West region is more mountainous, with a tropical climate and fertile land. Though the region has generally higher levels of income, a number of communities and schools in the West region are hard to reach due to the topography of the land. In 2017, persons in paid employment in the Western region received the lowest median monthly earnings (UGX 110,000) while those in Kampala earned the highest (UGX 300,000).²⁴ Schools in the Central region are nuch higher than those in rural and underserved areas, with a Gross Enrolment Rate of over 50% in 2017.²⁵

Also, PEAS promotes inclusion across its school network and accommodates students with mild to moderate impairments. As PEAS is not a specialised disability organisation, PEAS schools lack the human, financial and physical resources to be able to cater for students with severe needs. Research conducted by PEAS across the school network found that 0.8% of students have moderate to severe disability. All PEAS schools have some physical accessibility adaptations in place, with the provision of ramps, adequate lighting in classrooms and widened toilet cubicles.

²² "Poverty has fallen in all regions, but gains have been slower in the poorer Northern and Eastern regions. The annual percent reduction in poverty has been almost twice as high in the Central and Western regions than in the Northern and Eastern regions." World Bank, 2013, Uganda Poverty Assessment: <u>http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/381951474255092375/pdf/Uganda-Poverty-Assessment-Report-2016.pdf</u>

²³ Uganda National Household Survey (2016/2017)

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ The World Bank (2018) 'Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project, Project Information Document'. Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2017) 'Education: a Means for Popular Transformation'.

Girls' education in Uganda

Across Uganda, poverty, poor education services and social factors have an impact on women and girls' participation in school. Gendered roles and expectations continue to limit girls' access to education, particularly at secondary and tertiary levels. Though there has been some progress towards gender parity at the primary level, gaps in literacy and secondary school completion remain high. The baseline and midline data highlighted that, expectations for girls to work in the household, and later marry, remain pervasive. Households generally prioritise their sons' education, as parents often perceive girls' education to be an unnecessary investment, as girls are expected to raise a family and contribute to the household of their husband.²⁶ Early pregnancy is a major barrier to girls' continued education and is both a cause and consequence of school drop-out.²⁷

In addition, long distances to school in rural regions are more likely to be a barrier for girls than boys due to safety concerns. Menstruation and lack of gender-sensitive sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools limit girls' ability to attend school. Gender bias and stereotyping also remains prevalent within schools in Uganda, with the lack of gender-responsive teaching and learning imposing additional challenges for girls to remain in school and succeed.

Overall, this set of inequalities limits girls' enrolment, attendance and completion in secondary school, and limits their transition into successful post-school pathways, such as upper secondary, higher education and productive employment. Girls' learning outcomes are generally poorer than boys, with boys tending to outperform girls in overall UCE results. The GEARRing Up For Success After School project is designed to address these barriers and inequalities.

Annex 8: PEAS MEL framework

(Attached as a separate document)

Annex 9: Findings by Research Question

The main conclusions for each of the research questions is presented in this section. The findings are presented for each individual research question, covering the impact of project activities, the barriers faced by marginalised girls, project design and sustainability.

²⁶ UNICEF, 2015, Situation Analysis or Children in Uganda: https://www.unicef.org/uganda/UNICEF_SitAn_7_2015_(Full_report).pdf

²⁷ UNICEF, 2015, Situation Analysis or Children in Uganda

RQ 1.1: Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?

The evidence from the endline data collection reveals that there are a number of project activities that have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls. The most commonly reported activities that students surveyed reported participating in were receiving advice on post-school options (86.5%), the livelihoods programme (75.2%) and literacy classes (74.3%). In terms of writing and reading skills, the project activities associated with the development of these skills, for girls, was engagement with senior women teachers and literacy classes.²⁸ For boys, the most important activities for the development of writing and reading skills were life skills classes, sports days and literacy classes.

There is also evidence that there is a significant relationship between the number of PEAS activities that a student participates in and the number of skills that they develop, meaning that for every extra PEAS activity that a student participates in there is an increase in skill. Notably wealthier students were significantly more likely to develop skills through participation in PEAS activities.

In the qualitative data, the life skills classes and livelihoods programme were highlighted as activities that are particularly effective at developing contextually appropriate life skills. Also identified as effective activities for facilitating learning are activities targeting the environment for learning at school and the quality of teaching, such teacher training, child protection and safeguarding policies, and school audits and inspections.

Due to the constraints on endline data collection it was not possible to assess improvements in literacy and numeracy through learning assessments or examine which project activities were most effective at facilitating literacy and numeracy learning.

RQ 1.2: Which project activities have facilitated the successful transition of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?

The activities that have facilitated students' aspirations to study at A-Level are the provision of advice on post-school options (86.5%), as well as the expansion of the provision of A-Level centres. Regarding the impact of project activities on transition, there is insufficient evidence to show whether the transition rates have improved without tracking a cohort as they transition out of school and into upper secondary, TVET and tertiary education, or economic activity. There is minimal evidence of impacts of activities on transition as enrolment data does not point to significant gains in upper school enrolment.

There is evidence to suggest that project activities are contributing towards the post-school aspirations of students. Evidence shows that continuing to A-level schooling is a popular pathway that students aspire to after finishing lower secondary school, with 71.1% of S4 students surveyed saying that they wanted to study A-Level. The most common reasons that

²⁸ Whilst students' learning progress was not extensively measured in the survey, students were asked one question to get a basic understanding of whether they thought they had progressed in their learning during the pandemic: " 'To what extent do you agree with this statement: I progressed in my learning while at home during the school closures'/'To what extent do you agree with this statement: I am progressing in my learning while at home' "

S4 students gave for wanting to study at A-Level were that the qualification was needed to be able to study at higher education institutions (77%) and that it was a personal ambition (62.8%). Upon finishing upper secondary school, students generally aspired to continue to higher education (88.9%). Notably, caregivers also expressed the most interest in their children continuing to higher education after upper secondary school (89.2%). However, boys were more likely to aspire to study A-Level than girls, suggesting there is still a gender gap in students' aspirations.

RQ 1.3: Which project activities have facilitated the development of life skills (confidence, self-esteem, livelihoods skills) for marginalised girls, and how effective were they?

The primary project activities targeting the development of girls' life skills are the life skills curriculum, livelihoods programme and senior women teachers. While the endline evaluation cannot quantify the changes in life skills from students, there are self-reported improvements from school staff and students. Among interviewees there is a very positive association with life skills teaching, with specific reference to the following activities: Girls Clubs, life skills lessons, the livelihoods programme and entrepreneurial clubs. Indeed, life skills training was cited as one of the most valuable activities implemented by PEAS by 16 interviewees.

Among students surveyed, the most commonly reported skills that students said that they developed were communication skills (94.2%), study skills (92.5%), decision-making skills (90.9%), teamwork skills (88.2%), and organisational skills (88%). Girls were significantly more likely to report that they developed health skills compared to boys. Students reported using the life skills they had developed at school during the school closures. Among the most commonly reported uses for skills were keeping themselves safe and healthy (91.7%), making decisions about their future (90.9%), studying well by themselves (89.9%) and adapting to learning from home (89.4%).

The survey also revealed project activities are facilitating the development of girls' confidence and self-esteem. Some 97.5% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability to succeed at school. However, there was a drop in this level of confidence after the school closures. Also, the median student strongly agreed that they deserve self-respect and have worth, at least as much as others do.

RQ 2: How have the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys changed throughout the course of the project?

The endline evaluation reveals that many of the barriers to learning and transition faced by marginalised girls and boys at the outset of the GEARR project persist and should continue to be tackled by PEAS. For example, inequitable gender attitudes towards girls' education is identified as a significant factor in the existence and persistence of learning gap between girls and boys, and operates at three levels: in the community and in students homes; at the school and perpetuated by some teachers; and by girls themselves who have internalised the attitudes they have been exposed to. These were also identified as a mediating factor in the support girls received during the school closures. Inequitable gender attitudes were also identified as a barrier for girls to transition into studying A-Levels. One of the primary reasons contributing to this difference is the contrasting cultural expectations of girls and boys and their futures. For example, girls know that they are expected to marry and start a family,

whereas boys know they are expected to support their family. Other persisting barriers affecting marginalised girls are: menstruation, lack of money, and girls' responsibility to complete domestic chores as well as studying.

Among some interviewees there was a perception that the learning gap between girls and boys was reducing prior to the school closures, although with the recognition that significant work remains to close the gap. However, there is recognition that the school closures have widened the gap again. Another changing barrier is that there is greater access to A-Level through the establishment of nine A-Level centres.

RQ 2.1: How have project activities responded to and accommodated the changing barriers to learning and transition across the life of the project?

The barriers to learning and transition have not changed significantly over the life of the project as the inequitable gender attitudes are embedded in the cultural norms and practices of the communities that students and teachers come from. As such, the project activities targeting community attitudes and teachers' pedagogical approaches have continued to be relevant. Project activities targeting the community have been adapted over the course of the project to incorporate learning on effective practices and improve the efficacy of the messaging.

A significant change to the barriers to learning and transition in the final year of project implementation was the closure of PEAS schools due to Covid-19. This meant that students could not access school or project activities targeting the barriers to learning and transition. The project accommodated this change by implementing a Covid-19 response, with educational radio programmes and distributing government produced learning packs, as well as SMS messages and telephone calls with teachers and students to maintain conditions for learning during the school closures.

RQ 3.1: Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently?

Without a full Value for Money assessment and being able to track outcomes, intermediate outcomes and the outputs in the logframe for the endline, it is not possible to fully assess whether the project delivered outputs and outcomes efficiently. However, evidence at midline shows that many intermediate outcomes and outputs were on track to be met at endline, before the school closures.

As the GEARR project activities are incorporated into the core operating model of PEAS schools and will sustain beyond the life of the project, the outputs can be considered efficient. Alongside this, the project undertook a process of streamlining its in-country operations to reduce costs and maximise efficiency in its goal to reach full financial sustainability by 2025.

RQ 3.2: How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures, and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?

During the school closures the project supported students by maintaining conditions for learning and sharing information to keep students safe. The main project activities were radio programmes with educational content, distribution of government produced learning packs, sending SMS messages with safeguarding information and details regarding school closures, and teachers calling students to provide educational and safeguarding support. There were also a range of school-level initiatives during the school closures and students accessed other educational resources produced by the government and other schools.

Overall, the multi-pronged approach to the project's Covid-19 response was appropriate to reach as many students as possible through different activities. The median student was able to access three activities, with only 4.6% of students accessing no activities at all. The effectiveness of individual Covid-19 response activities was mixed, depending on the access each student had to each activity. There was a positive impression of the helpfulness of the Covid-19 response for supporting the continued learning of students during school closures. Each activity had a majority of survey respondents reporting that they found it helpful. However, there were significant challenges such as the timing of the radio programmes clashing with domestic responsibilities, the reach of the radio broadcasts, the lack of subject diversity in the learning packs, caregivers not sharing SMS messages with students and refusing, in some cases, to let girls talk to teachers on the phone. A significant finding that emerged from the endline evaluation is that out of school S5 students benefited from the project activities less than their counterparts in S4 and S6, and reported facing greater challenges during the school closures.

There is a mixed perception of the sustainability of the Covid-19 activities. Slightly more interviewees said it would be beneficial to maintain the radio programmes than not. There is a high level of support for the learning packs to continue in some form, particularly among students, as well as a high level of interest for the SMS messages to continue. There was disagreement among students about whether they would find it helpful for the telephone trees to continue, with slightly more saying it would not be helpful. As such, there is some scope for elements of the Covid-19 response to be incorporated into the core operating model of PEAS.

RQ 4: How may project activities and observed impacts be sustained after the end of the project?

The main way in which the project activities and observed impacts will be sustained after the end of the project is through the PEAS standard operating model for its school, as the GEARR activities are part of the core activities of PEAS schools. Therefore, activities such as teacher training, life skills curriculum and livelihoods programmes, and community sensitisation will continue to be implemented. The sustainability of project activities and observed impacts will be supported by financial sustainability, which PEAS aims to reach in full by 2026 with no reliance on external funding.

Perception among interviewees of the most valuable activities within the PEAS approach is an indicator of positive impacts that are worth sustaining. Interviewees were asked what they thought are the most valuable activities happening in PEAS schools that benefit students. The activity most commonly cited by interviewees was the livelihoods and life skills training provided to students in PEAS schools, followed by extracurricular activities. Other commonly mentioned activities were teacher training, including CPD sessions, safeguarding and child protection policies and practices, guidance and counselling, girls clubs, and the learner centred approach to teaching.

In the 2020 Sustainability Plan, PEAS outlined a number of actions to be undertaken to ensure project activities and impacts can be sustained. These include the re-launch of the new Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme based around a new set of Top 10 best practices for teachers (originally launched in 2020 but interrupted by the school closures) to improve the implementation of gender responsive pedagogical practices in PEAS schools.

RQ 4.1: Can these project activities and impacts be leveraged by the government and other actors?

The endline evaluation revealed that PEAS is already engaged in sharing learning with district government through a close relationship with district inspectors and district education officers. The main way in which PEAS is leveraging its project impact with the government is through the Inspect and Improve (I&I) programme. The I&I programme adapts components of the PEAS support and supervision model, including working with local government representatives to inspect schools and support schools to respond to inspections findings. In 2019, I&I was piloted in ten government schools in the Eastern region and in 2021 this pilot is being expanded to an additional 40 schools across all regions to understand the programmes impact at scale. The long-term ambition of the Inspect and Improve partnership is to help the government in helping schools improve through cost-effective approaches and embedding PEAS good practice into government schools.

Annex 10: Detailed findings

The following narrative has been pulled down from the body of the report into the annex. The numbering has been left as it was within the body of the report. All content below falls under Annex 10.

10.1 Impact of GEC-T project activities

10.1.1 Introduction

This section presents detailed findings related to the impact of original project activities on learning and transition as well as the impact of the Covid-19 responses, in four sub-sections;

- Section 3.1.2 impact of project activities on learning
- Section 3.1.3 impact of project activities on transition
- Section 3.1.4 impact of response to Covid-19 school closures

Findings in this section relate to the following research questions.

• RQ 1: What impact have the GEC-T activities had on the project participants?

- RQ 1.1: Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?
- RQ 1.2: Which project activities have facilitated the successful transition of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?
- RQ 1.3: Which project activities have facilitated the development of life skills (confidence, self-esteem, livelihoods skills) for marginalised girls, and how effective were they?
- RQ 3: Was the project well-designed to meet its objectives?
- RQ 3.1 Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently?
- RQ 3.2: How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures

It is important to note that there are limitations on the conclusions that can be drawn related to the original project activities due to the school closures. Data collection focused on the activities during the school closures as students may have struggled to recall activities before this point and drawn causal links between their participation and outcomes. Furthermore, the learning outcome was not a priority for the endline evaluation data collection, largely because learning assessments were not possible during the school closures. As such, there are minimal findings related to the learning outcome, although there is examination of project activities aimed at improving the conditions or environment for learning. Similarly, there is minimal evidence that can be utilised to speak to the impact of project activities on transition without cohort tracking.

10.1.2 Impact of project activities on learning

This section examines the impact of project activities on learning, including literacy, numeracy, life skills and teaching quality. Under teaching quality, project activities targeting the conditions for learning at the school level are examined, including teachers' pedagogical approaches, school inspections, audits and safeguarding and child protection policies. The section begins by outlining students' participation in PEAS activities prior to the school closures due to Covid-19.

PEAS activities

Overall, findings related to participation in PEAS activities vary according to school, gender and class group. Students were asked whether they had participated in a range of GEARR activities at any point over the past three years. Most students reported participating in at least one activity, with the median student having participated in six. The school within which students appeared to participate in the most activities, on median average, Forest PEAS School.

Figure 4: Median number of GEARR activities students participated in by school



As outlined in detail below, engagement in music and drama days, sports days, Girls' Clubs and with senior women teachers varied significantly by gender, whilst students in S4 were much more likely to have participated in music and drama days, Girls' Clubs, the livelihoods programme, life skills classes and literacy classes than those in S5 and S6, but were found to be noticeably less likely to have participated in mock exams.

Generally speaking, the most commonly reported activities related to receiving advice on post-school options (86.5%), the livelihood programme (75.2%) and literacy classes (74.3%). The least commonly reported activity was participation in A-level launch days (9.1%). However, trends in activity participation varied according to the gender and the class group to which a student belonged.

Notably, there was significant variation in boys' and girls' participation in music and drama days (X^2 (1, 483) = 17.036, p = 0.000). Girls were significantly more likely to participate in them (66.2%) compared with boys (47.4%). The opposite was true for participation in sports days (X^2 (1, 483) = 10.248, p = 0.001), with boys and men being much more likely to participate in them (73%) than girls and women (59.2%). Amongst the other activities in which girls were much more likely to participate than boys were Girls' Clubs (X^2 (1, 483) = 149.664, p = 0.000; Female (70.4%), Male (15.6%)) and engagement with senior women teachers (X^2 (1, 483) = 57.910, p = 0.000; Female (84.5%), Male (51.5%)).

There were also noteworthy differences in responses based on the class that a student belonged to. Students in S4 (69.2%) were the most likely to participate in music and drama days when compared with students in S5 (41.5%) and S6 (56.4%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 24.718, p = 0.000). They were also the most likely to participate in Girls' Clubs (56.6%), when compared with students in S5 (30.8) and S6 (32.1%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 28.164, p = 0.000).

Students in S4 (88.7% and 93.7%) were also much more likely than those in S5 (68.6% and 74.2%) and S6 (68.5% and 76.4%) to participate in the livelihoods programme (X^2 (2, 483) = 23.218, p = 0.000) and life skills classes respectively (X^2 (2, 483) = 24.069, p = 0.000). They were also marginally more likely to have engaged with senior women teachers than students in S5 and S6 (X^2 (2, 483) = 5.426, p = 0.066). Students in S4 (11.3%) were, however, noticeably less likely to have participated in mock exams than students in S5 (86.2%) and S6 (77%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 218.906, p = 0.000).

Finally, students in S6 (63.6%) were the least likely to participate in literacy classes (X^2 (2, 483) = 27.931, p = 0.000). Students in S4 (88.7%) again participated in them the most, with students in S5 following (71.1%). Students in S6 (57%) were also much less likely than those in S4 (72.3%) and S5 (71.7%) to participate in sports days (X^2 (2, 483) = 11.111, p = 0.004).

Literacy and numeracy

Prior to the school closures, there was evidence that improvements in learning were taking place. At midline, completed a year before schools were closed due to Covid-19, learning assessments demonstrated increased average aggregate literacy and numeracy scores. As learning assessments could not be conducted at the endline, it is not possible to track further improvements in literacy and numeracy. Evidence of some gains in learning are from the UCE exam results. In Uganda, all students sit the UCE exam at the end of lower secondary (S4) and an aggregate score is awarded by adding together a students' score for their eight best subjects. Based on this result, each student is awarded a Division (1-4, 7 or 9), with Division 1-4 a pass, and Division 7 and 9 a fail. The most recent UCE exam results available for consideration at the endline are from 2019, as the postponed 2020 exams were taken at the start of 2021 and the results were not published at the time of writing. These were considered at midline, exploring the different averages between comparison and treatment schools. At midline, the treatment schools (12 PEAS schools) performed better than the control schools (8 comparison schools) in 2019, with a higher pass rate and lower fail rate. For the endline evaluation, the UCE scores for the 28 schools in the PEAS network were compared against district data (21 districts) from 2017-2019. The table below presents the comparison of district and PEAS schools UCE results for each year:

2017		2018		2019	
District	PEAS	District	PEAS	District	PEAS
data	schools	data	schools	data	schools

Table 10: Comparison of district and PEAS school UCE results 2017-2019

Total students	105,493	2,685	97,849	2,612	111,667	2,639
Division 1- 4 (pass)	91%	93%	89%	90%	93%	95%
Division 7 and 9 (fail)	7%	5%	10%	9%	6%	4%
Div 1	13%	4%	11%	4%	10%	4%
Div 2	18%	19%	18%	19%	19%	23%
Div 3	22%	30%	22%	27%	23%	32%
Div 4	39%	40%	38%	41%	40%	35%
Div 7	7% ²⁹	0.1%	0.2%	0%	0.2%	0.1%
Div 9		5%	10%	9%	6%	3%
Div-X (absent)	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Average division ³⁰	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1

Every year from 2017-2019, PEAS schools had a slightly higher percentage of students passing with a Division 1-4 score, and a lower percentage of students failing with a Division 7 or 9 score. The percentage of PEAS students passing the UCE with Division 1-4 grades has increased from 93% in 2017 and 2018 to 95% in 2019, which suggests learning gains. The percentage of students scoring the highest division has remained steady at 4% in PEAS schools from 2017, which is lower than the district percentages, although it is important to remember that PEAS schools serve marginalised communities and have a greater number of educational disadvantages to overcome. Another point to consider is that PEAS have a lower primary leaving examination score threshold to enrol in PEAS schools than government schools, so the average student entering PEAS schools is lower performing. In line with the

²⁹ District data provided for 2017 did not split out Div 7 and Div 9

 $^{^{30}}$ To calculate the average division, the following formula is used: (# Div 1 * 1 + # Div 2 * 2 + # Div 3 *

^{3 + #} Div 4 * 4 + Fails * 5)/Total takers

district data, the largest proportion of PEAS students scored a Division 4, the lowest pass mark, in 2017 (40%), 2018 (40%) and 2019 (35%). However, in 2019, a slightly lower percentage of students scored a Division 4 (35%) and a higher percentage scored a Division 3 (32%), compared to 2017 (30%) and 2018 (27%), which suggests some learning gains. Another indicator of learning is the average division across the districts and PEAS schools, both of which remain in the Division 3 range for 2017-2019. The district average divisions range have minimal change, with an average of 3.0 in 2017 and 3.1 in 2018 and 2019. For PEAS schools, the average divisions range from 3.2 in 2017 to 3.3 in 2018 and slightly dropping to 3.1 in 2019. Again, it is important to note that the target population of PEAS schools are educationally disadvantaged, and, as such, the close comparability of district average division and those of PEAS schools shows that PEAS schools are performing well.

A comparison of PEAS students' UCE results disaggregated by gender also shows some changes in girls' education.

Table 11: Comparison of gender disaggregated UCE exam results PEAS students, 2017-2019

	2017		2018		2019	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Total students	1300	1382	1258	1354	1280	1359
Division 1- 4 (pass)	93%	92%	91%	88%	96%	94%
Division 7 and 9 (fail)	5%	6%	8%	11%	2%	5%
Div 1	5%	3%	5%	2%	6%	2%
Div 2	23%	15%	24%	14%	28%	19%
Div 3	33%	28%	28%	26%	34%	31%
Div 4	33%	48%	34%	47%	28%	42%
Div 7	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Div 9	4%	6%	8%	11%	2%	5%
Div-X (absent)	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Average division ³¹	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.5	2.9	3.2

The comparison of UCE results for male and female reveals that boys scored higher UCE results than girls between 2017 and 2019. Boys scored, on average, a higher division than girls in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and a slightly higher percentage of boys scored a Division 1-4

 $^{^{31}}$ To calculate the average division, the following formula is used: (# Div 1 * 1 + # Div 2 * 2 + # Div 3 * 3 + # Div 4 * 4 + Fails * 5)/Total takers

than girls. While the percentage of students passing with a Division 1 grade is low across the board, a slightly higher percentage of boys scored Division 1 than girls in all three years. The most notable difference in boys and girls' UCE results is apparent when looking at Division 4 results, with a higher percentage of girls passing with the lowest passing Division than boys. The difference ranges from 13% to 15% higher for girls than boys. Girls have also had a higher percentage of failing grades, Division 7 and Division 9, than boys in all three years. However, it is important to note that between 2017-2019, the majority of girls scored a Division 1-4 passing grade, and this percentage has increased from 92% in 2017, to 94% in 2019. This suggests that gains in girls' learning are being made and sustained.

While this data pre-dates the school closures and the learning landscape will look different when exams resume, there is evidence that the project activities were supporting students' learning and bringing about some improvements in terms of exam scores.

Life skills

Findings related to the development of students' life skills are presented in four themes: the most commonly developed life skills through participation in PEAS activities; how the life skills gained through project activities supported students during the school closures; how the activities have developed students' confidence and self-esteem; and lastly the perceived value of project activities targeting students' life skills.

The most commonly developed life skills

Overall, the findings related to the development of life skills showed that participation in more PEAS activities was associated with increased skills, although varied significantly by wealth. As is outlined in detail below, there were gendered differences in the association between PEAS activities and the development of writing and reading skills, whilst female participants were significantly more likely to develop health skills than male participants. Also of note was the finding that students in S4 were more likely to report developing skills in a range of areas than those in S5 and S6.

The activities that students participated in at their school, over the past three years, helped them to develop various skills. Students developed at least one skill, with the median student developing 14 skills.

Figure 5: Median number of skills developed by students by school



Amongst the most commonly reported skills that students said they developed were communication skills (94.2%), study skills (92.5%), decision making skills (90.9%), team-work skills (88.2%) and organisational skills (88%). The least commonly developed skills were technical skills (61.3%), leadership skills (72.5%) and financial skills (78.3%). When caregivers were asked what skills their children had developed, they commonly said they had developed communication skills (97.1%), team work skills (92.2%), practical skills such as agriculture and craft making (91.3%) and writing and reading skills (89.3%). The skills least commonly noted by caregivers were technical skills (61.2%), business skills (68%) and leadership skills (73.8%).



Figure 6: Life skills developed by students, according to 'Yes' responses by student survey participants

Total number of respondents: 483

There was also a significant relationship between the number of PEAS activities (β = 0.568, p<0.001) that a student participated in and the number of skills that they developed, even when students' level of poverty (β = 0.134, p<0.001) was controlled for (F(2, 465) = 127.6 p < .001, R^2 = 0.35)³². Participation in more PEAS activities was associated with having increased skills. Notably as well, wealthier students were significantly more likely to develop skills through participation in PEAS activities. Interestingly, and perhaps as a consequence of necessity, whilst increased wealth was associated with the development of most skills, poorer students were much more likely to develop problem-solving skills (β =-.021, z= -1.94, p=.053).

Further, the PEAS activity that was the most significantly associated with girls' development of writing and reading skills was engagement with senior women teachers. Engaging with senior women teachers increased the log odds of developing reading and writing skills (as opposed to not developing them) by 264% (β =2.644, z= 5.342, p=.000). Engaging in literacy classes were also significantly related to the development of reading and writing skills amongst girls (β =1.664, z=3.624, p=.000). With respect to boys, the most important PEAS activities for developing writing and reading skills were life skills classes (β =1.646, z=4.446, p=.000), sports days (β =1.438, z=3.98, p=.000) and literacy classes (β =1.216, z=3.414,

³² An ordinal logistic regression was also conducted as a robustness check, since the outcome variable violated the assumption of normality. The ordinal logistic regression yielded similar results to the OLS regression reported in text: the same variables were highly significant and in the same direction. The OLS analysis is reported in the text to keep to the same format as most other regression results.

p=.000). Students' PPI scores were controlled for in all models referred to in this paragraph and poverty had no relationship with writing and reading skills development.

According to the student survey responses, most of the skills were similarly developed by both boys and girls. However, there was one skill that appeared to be more commonly developed based on gender. Girls and women (94.4%) were significantly more likely to develop health skills (X^2 (1, 483) = 22.464, p = 0.000) when compared to boys and men (79.3%).

When students were disaggregated by class, certain skills were also revealed to be more commonly developed by certain class groups. Generally speaking, students in S4 were the most likely to report skill development. Students in S4 (94.3%) reported significantly higher development of problem-solving skills when compared with students in S5 (83.6%) and S6 (81.8%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 12.606, p = 0.002). Students in S4 (91.8%) were also the most likely to report developing business and entrepreneurial skills, compared with only 75.5% of students in S5 and 81.2% of students in S6 (X^2 (2, 483) = 15.390, p = 0.000). S4 (96.9% and 98.1%) students also most commonly reported developing team-work skills (X^2 (2, 483) = 20.630, p = 0.000) and communication skills (X^2 (2, 483) = 8.324, p = 0.016), when compared to students in S5 (80.5% and 90.6%) and S6 (87.3% and 93.9%) respectively.

Skills to help study and learn better also appeared to be most commonly developed, through participation in PEAS activities, by students in S4 (96.9%) when compared with students in S5 (91.8%) and S6 (89.1%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 7.256, p = 0.027). Writing and reading skills were also most commonly developed by S4 students (92.5%) rather than by S5 (86.2) and S6 (81.8%) students, (X^2 (2, 483) = 8.038, p = 0.018). Results were similar for the development of leadership skills, where 84.3% of S4 students noted this development, compared with only 67.3% of S5 students and 66.1% of S6 students, (X^2 (2, 483) = 16.638, p = 0.000).

Financial skills were, again, most commonly reported developed, as a result of PEAS activities, by S4 students (84.9%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 6.156, p = 0.046). This contrasts with 74.8% of S5 students and 75.2% of S6 students developing that skill. Whilst we are uncertain about the reasons why S4 students seem to have more commonly reported developing those skills, one reason might be because they more recently participated in related classes. Though of marginal significance, it is worth noting that students in S5 (83.6%) were less likely to develop organisational skills than students in S6 (92.1%), (X^2 (2, 483) = 5.503, p = 0.064). 88.1% of students in S4 developed this skill.

The use of life skills gained during the school closures

These skills were of great use and importance to students, particularly during the school closures. Students surveyed noted that they used the skills that they had developed to help them in various activities during the school closures, with the median student saying that they used the skills in 10 different ways

Figure 7: Median number of ways the skills developed by students were used



Amongst the most commonly reported uses for skills were keeping themselves safe and healthy (91.7%), making decisions about their future (90.9%), studying well by themselves (89.9%) and adapting to learning from home (89.4%). The least common uses of the skills that had been developed were for students working on someone's business (47.8%), students setting up their own businesses (51.1%), resolving conflict at home or in their community (62.5%) and helping people in the community (64.2%). Between 78% and 87% of students reported using the skills they had developed for various other purposes.



Figure 8: Life skills used by students, according to 'Yes' responses by student survey participants

Speaking on the same topic, caregivers most commonly said that their children used the skills to adapt to learning from home (94.2%), for studying well by themselves (94.2%), to keep themselves safe and healthy (92.2%) and to make decisions about their future (90.3%). They also expressed that the skills were least commonly used for setting up their own business (39.8%), working on someone else's business (57.3%), helping people in the community (70.9%) and resolving conflicts at home and in the community (71.8%).

There were also clear differences, based on the student survey, in how students used the skills they had developed, along wealth, gender and class lines. Whilst wealthier students were not significantly more likely to use the skills that they had developed in more ways than poorer students did, there were key differences in what wealthier and poorer students tended to use skills for. Poorer students were significantly more likely to use the skills that they had developed for resolving conflict at home, or in their community (β =-0.018, *z*= -2.5, *p*=.012) and in helping people in the community, such as by volunteering or cooking (β =-0.021, *z*= -2.78, *p*=.006). Alternatively, wealthier students were more likely to use their skills for (β =0.021, *z*= 1.9, *p*=.057). The one noteworthy difference along gender lines was that girls and women (93%) were more likely to use the skills they had developed to study well by themselves (X^2 (1, 483) = 4.024, *p* = 0.045). Only 87.4% of boys and men reported to have used their skills for that purpose.

There were also a few differences along class group lines. Students in S5 (70.4%) were the most likely to use their developed skills for resolving conflict at home or in their community $(X^2 (2, 483) = 7.530, p = 0.023)$. This can be contrasted with only 55.8% of students in S6

doing the same, and 61.6% of students in S4. Students in S5 were also the most likely to use their skills for making decisions about their future (94.3%), compared with 86.7% of students in S6 and 91.8% of students in S4, (X² (2, 483) = 6.007, p = 0.050). Finally, students in S4 (73%) were the most likely to use their skills to help people in the community, when compared to S6 (50.3%) and S5 (69.8%) students, (X² (2, 483) = 21.342, p = 0.000). They (57.9%) were also more likely than S6 students (50.9%) and S5 students (44.7%) to use the skills they developed to set up their own business. However, the difference between class groups in that regard was only marginally significant (X² (2, 483) = 5.555, p = 0.062). It remains unclear why these differences exist between the different class groups, particularly as there was no significant relationship between students' age and how they used the skills they had developed.

Development of confidence and self-esteem

Other important life skills targeted by project activities are confidence and self-esteem. These were explored in the student survey and students were generally found to have high confidence and self-esteem. The median student in S4, and S6 strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability to succeed at school. Some 97.5% of those students, in aggregate, either strongly agreed, or agreed that they were confident in that regard. The median student also felt more confident in their ability to succeed at school now than they did before the Covid-19 pandemic. However, there were small, but discernible differences, along class group lines, in this regard (X^2 (2, 324) = 6.655, p = 0.036). More students in S4 (23.9%) felt less confident in their ability to succeed at school than before the Covid-19 pandemic when compared with students in S6 (13.9%). Generally speaking though, regardless of class groups, the trend was toward having more confidence post-Covid-19.

Whilst only S4 and S6 students were asked about their confidence in the previously discussed areas, all students (S4, S5 and S6) were asked about the extent to which they agreed that they were confident in their ability to succeed beyond school. The median student reported strong agreement.

On the topic of self-esteem, the median student strongly agreed that they deserve respect and have worth, at least as much as others do. This was true for both male and female students. However, there were marginal differences in views on self-esteem based on class group (X^2 (6, 483) = 12.337, p = 0.055). Although the median student in all year groups were in strong agreement that they deserve respect and had worth, the mean average student in S6 was the most likely to believe this, S5 was the second most likely and S4 the third. Notably though, only students in S5 (1.3% of them) expressed any disagreement with the statement that they thought they deserved respect and had worth.

The results paint a picture of students generally having high self-esteem and confidence, with only minor differences along gender and class lines. However, this positive picture should be tempered by one final insight. Wealthier students were significantly more likely to have high confidence in their ability to succeed beyond school ($r_s(476) = .205$, p = .000). Therefore, it may be helpful to give additional focus to providing more opportunities so that the poorest students' confidence might be more fully developed.



Figure 9: Average Confidence beyond school and average self-esteem of students by gender and PPI score

Total number of respondents: 483; A score of 5 corresponds with a student strongly agreeing that they are confident or have self-esteem.

Perception of the value of life skills training

The project's activities targeting life skills were also explored in the qualitative data. Overall, there is a very positive association with life skills teaching among the interviewees. Project activities related to developing life skills, such as Girls' Clubs, life skills lessons, the livelihoods programme and entrepreneurial clubs, feature highly in interviewees responses regarding the most valuable activities implemented by PEAS. The overarching rationale for the importance of developing students' life skills is that they will take the skills into their life outside of or after school and be able to support themselves. As at midline, there is a stronger emphasis on students developing livelihood skills linked to income generation (e.g. baking, keeping poultry, making mats) than developing soft life skills, such as confidence and self-esteem. However, this is also mentioned by teachers and head teachers as an important outcome of life skills training. The following quote neatly summarises the value placed on students developing practical skills:

Most of our students come from deep in the villages and their parents don't have a source of income, so they can use what they learn at school to make different items that they can sell while at home. For example when it comes to things like baking, these they learn from school and when they go back home they can go ahead and bake, sell what they have made and use the money for school. So we share with the students what we learn from the
trainings, and they in turn use that knowledge out there In the community. (Head teacher).

Life skills training (including Girls' Clubs and the livelihoods programme) was cited as one of the most valuable activities implemented by PEAS by many interviewees: three project staff, seven head teachers and six teachers. One emerging theme is that life skills training is seen as an effective way to address the learning gap between girls and boys. Life skills training was mentioned by two project staff interviewees, two head teachers and three teachers specifically as a way to address the learning gap. The main reasons given for life skills training helping to close the learning were an increase in girls' confidence and gaining practical skills to earn an income outside of school.

Teaching quality and conditions for learning

The endline evaluation identified six ways in which project activities are targeting the quality of teaching and the improvement of conditions for learning at school. While the causal links between these activities and improvements in literacy and numeracy cannot be evidenced by this evaluation, there is evidence that the project activities are improving the conditions for learning at the school level. Findings are presented in these six themes: teacher training, the 'learner-centred' approach to teaching in PEAS schools, improvements in the pedagogical approach of teachers, audits and school inspections, school improvement plans (SIPs), and safeguarding and child protection policies and practices.

Teacher training

Another element of learning targeted by the project activities was the pedagogical approach employed by teachers, namely through teacher training, particularly on gender responsive pedagogy, and regular continuous professional development (CPD) sessions. Overall, interviewees expressed a positive perception and experience of training provided by PEAS and their schools:

Before I joined PEAS school I was in single schools for both my studies and as a teacher and I did not know how to deal with both genders, they taught me gender pedagogy, how to mix students, making them comfortable, how to deal with low achievers by talking to them privately, encouraging them while marking them, giving them extra work. In general how to use different approaches to teaching. (Teacher)

Head teachers and teachers expressed a wide range of training that they have attended and linked changes in their teaching or management approach with the training that they attended. Six head teachers and four teacher interviewees cited teacher training as either one of the most valuable activities in the PEAS approach or as one of the distinctive features of the PEAS approach that sets it aside from the experience of working at other schools. Among project staff interviewed, there was also a positive impression of training provided to school staff. There was also recognition of the need to have refresher training on teaching approaches and safeguarding and how to provide psycho-social support to returning students when schools reopen. District Inspectors interviewed all had a positive impression of the training provided by PEAS, with all having participated in the training before. In particular, the

regular CPD training model was cited as good practice that could be replicated in other schools.

Learned-centred approach to teaching

A theme that emerged from the qualitative data is that PEAS' 'learner-centred' approach to teaching is one of the distinctive elements of the PEAS approach. This is in contrast to the 'teacher-centred' approach found in other schools. The distinctiveness of the 'learner-centred' approach was identified by three project staff interviewees, four head teachers and five teachers. This was also cited as a key aspect of the PEAS approach that should be replicated in other schools. head teachers and teachers identified a number of aspects of their pedagogical approach that makes it 'learner-centred': face to face seating arrangements that mix up girls and boys to encourage collaboration and communication (five interviewees); giving attention to both 'low achievers' and quick learners (three interviewees); encourage peer learning and group work (three interviewees); 'l do, we do' teaching strategy (three interviewees); and gender-responsive pedagogical approaches (three interviewees). This is captured in a teacher's interview:

I learnt that when I go to class, I should start the lesson with a starter which is written on the board. I also learnt from the training that the teachings have to be learner-centered, that is the learners must be much involved or active involvement of learners, we used to have lessons that were teacher-centered but now I learnt to have learner-centered lessons. I learnt how to take care of individual differences of learners because we have learners who hardly understand anything compared to others, I learnt to take care of them. (Teacher)

Teachers were asked how they have changed their pedagogical approaches and the learnercentred approaches they employ. The most commonly identified was using positive forms of discipline rather than caning students (four teachers).

Before I had joined PEAS, I thought that caning was the only way of disciplining a child. Even when I joined peas, my first year was challenging that a student should not be caned yet that is what I was used to but then we had a certain training where we were taught not to give the students corporal punishment since it does not change the behavior but instead it increases the behavior. So, I have learned that you can talk to a child and they know whether what they did was good or bad and it has worked for me. (Teacher)

Other examples included: using gender-responsive pedagogical techniques, involving the learner, differentiated learning and incorporating group work (each cited by two interviewees). Interviewees were asked which elements of the PEAS pedagogical approach are different from other schools, and the overarching theme that emerged was that the approach is learner centred (four head teachers, three teachers). Key differences cited were mixing up girls and boys with seating arrangements (three teachers, two head teachers); differentiated learning (one teacher, one head teacher); and teachers are supported through lesson observations (two teachers). Two district inspectors also noted that there is better discipline at PEAS schools.

Improvements in the pedagogical approach of teachers

Supporting this evidence that there have been improvements in the pedagogical approach of teachers, is the learning walk tool employed by PEAS. The process involves the CPD specialist moving around the school to conduct a series of randomised classroom observations and rating observed practice along a standard scale that assesses how well observed teaching practice meets the PEAS' Great Teacher Rubric standards, which all PEAS school leaders and teachers have been trained on. Scores are assigned on a scale from 0-3, where 0 is the worst possible score (i.e. expected standard not evidenced at all) and 3 is the best possible score (i.e. exceptional practice against standard observed). The school then receives an overall average score based on their scores across all the standards observed. This is further assigned a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) rating according to this scale: 0-1.50 Red, 1.51-2.50 Amber, and 2.51-3.0 Green. When the average learning walk scores are examined across the PEAS network from 2017-2019, the average scores are in the amber range and there is a slight increase from 2017 and 2018 scores (1.9) to 2019 (2.1). Furthermore, 18 schools have a higher average score in 2019 than in 2017, with the largest improvement at Kiira View school (1.2).

Audits and school inspections

A number of PEAS project activities targeting the improvement of conditions for learning at the school level, including audits and inspections, were examined as part of the endline evaluation. The purpose of the school audits is to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance processes. School inspections, on the other hand, are more concerned with teaching and learning practices from the school management through to the classroom.³³ The inspections cover 8 key areas of school performance, which are split into school/management level factors (leadership and vision, staff management and development, curriculum and timetable, and access and community relations) and classroom/student-level factors (planning, delivery and learning environment, assessment and attainment, and student welfare and development). Combined, these activities are targeting the improvement of conditions for learning at the school level and provide useful insight into the gains made prior to the school closures. First, the school audits produce a score out of 4. There was minimal change in the average audit scores between 2017 (2.5) and 2019 (2.8). In 2018 there were six schools that scored 4 (full marks) compared to none in 2017 and three in 2019 (note that four schools were not audited in 2019). The most improved school between 2017 and 2019 was Ngora (2.46 to 4) and the school with the most reduced score was Apeulai (3.6 to 1.5).

The reason for the minimal change in audit scores was explored in the interviews with head teachers and project staff. Generally, the qualitative data shows a positive impression of the role audits play in improving school performance and processes. One project interviewee outlined that audit scores are not improving at a fast rate as some individual school leaders

³³ Each section is scored from 0-3 on the basis of whether practices at the school meet PEAS' standards - the scores are added together to provide an overall score and a ranking for the school as poor, fair, good or very good. Note that the rating for good or very good were adjusted in 2018.

are failing to align with PEAS values and processes, which they attributed to an initial failure to take on support, lack of consistency, and induction and orientation of school leaders, especially with turnover of school leaders. Another interviewee explained that even if a school is on the right trajectory to score 'Green' overall, if the school is flagged for either fraud or child protection issues, they are automatically scored 'Red'. The main fraud incident is the non-declaration of fees paid directly in cash.

The way audit scores the school is quite interesting, even if the school is on the right trajectory, if the school was flagged for fraud or child protection issues, those two issues alone would drop the school to red from green. (Project staff member)

For inspections, there was also minimal change in inspection scores, as shown in this table below:

Rating	2017 (# schools)	2018 (# schools)	2019 (# schools)
Poor	0	0	0
Fair	11	5	4
Good	17	23	23
Very good	0	0	1
Average	14.3	15.0	15.2
Highest scoring school	Akoromit (16.9)	Noble & Frontier (16.7)	Noble (18.5)
Lowest scoring school	Kithoma (11.9)	Kithoma (11.9)	Pioneer (13.2)

Table 12: Comparison of school inspection scores from 2017-2019

There was minimal change in average score from 2017 to 2019, although there is a small increase in schools in the 'good' rating (from 17 to 23) and decrease in 'fair' rating (from 11 to 5), as well as one school that rated "very good" by 2019. By each area there was not significant change. The maximum score possible is 3 and no area averaged higher than 2, which is the upper limit of 'fair'. In 2017, 2018 and 2019 the lowest average score was B1 (planning), although there was an increase from 1.5 to 1.8. The highest average score in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was A4 (access and community relations), with an average of 2.0 in all three year. Lastly, the biggest increases are 0.3 for B1 (planning, 1.5-1.8) and B3 (assessment and attainment, 1.6-1.9).

Overall, the qualitative data reveals that there is a positive impression of the school inspections. As with audits, two project staff emphasised that even if a school is making improvements, they cannot be scored 'good' if there are particular child protection and wellbeing issues. For example, if there are any instances of corporal punishment the school cannot be rated higher than 'fair'. This explains why the inspection scores have not majorly changed over the course of the project despite improvements. One project staff interviewee raised that this is often a point of contention with schools, as school leaders may not be aware of protection issues that students have raised with the inspection team during FGDs.

Head teachers provided a wide range of examples of changes and actions which were taken due to audit and school inspection recommendations, with positive outcomes. The most commonly reported are outlined here. Four interviewees reported receiving inspection recommendations related to teachers' lesson planning. Actions included running a CPD session on how to use lesson plans and the benefits of them, having planning sessions at the start of term for teachers to make teaching aids, and giving teachers lesson planning books. Three head teachers reported that audits of their school recommended that they move from collecting fees in cash in digital payments through mobile money. All three reported that this has had a positive impact on fee collection and money management.

In audit that year 2018, the recommendation was about school pay. Parents used to bring the money in cash yet we were so against this, so were advised to use mobile money instead. We were advised to sensitise and teach parents on how to use mobile money while paying school fees. Although in the beginning it wasn't easy, they are now used to it and are using it. (Head teacher)

Two head teachers mentioned receiving recommendations that teachers should check learners' books so they can be better supported. One head teacher reported implementing on the spot and monthly book checking schedules. Another mentioned cross-checking learners notes before issuing exams. Two head teachers reported they received recommendations related to their procurement processes, and both explained that they have increased the number of quotations they seek from potential suppliers to make better decisions and ensure value for money. Lastly, two head teachers reported they have made changes to their stock management based on recommendations from the audit, and two head teachers reported making improvements to their cycle of financial management, so that it is better managed and streamlined now which has improved the management of school finances and making savings.

Overall, head teachers reported that these actions taken on the basis of school inspection recommendations had a positive impact. Five head teachers reported improved academic performance and four interviewees identified improvements in their staff capacity and teacher performance. Other benefits included improved quality of learning for students, better follow up of activities, and improved health and hygiene.

School improvement plans

School Improvement Plans (SIPs) are another project activity aimed at improving conditions for learning at the school level. The SIPs are built upon the audit and inspection findings.

Project staff emphasised the integrated nature of audits, inspections and school improvement plans (SIPs), with three staff referencing that SIPs draw on the recommendations from audits and inspections. The implementation of the SIP and progress towards the targets are tracked termly by the SSOs and reviewed in the performance appraisals at the end of the year. Two district inspectors interviewed reported working with PEAS schools in their districts on the SIPs, providing guidance and support. One of the interviewees critiqued the SIPs as having too many outcomes for schools to achieve.

Seven head teachers interviewed mentioned that the annual School Leaders conference is where they start working on the SIP and receive training, and two head teachers specifically referenced that the design of the SIP is influenced by the recommendations from the school inspections. Five head teachers explained that the design of the SIP is a collaboration between the school and PEAS to decide the targets and actions. Five head teachers mentioned the three pillars at the heart of the SIPs: access, quality and sustainability. Three head teachers specifically said that they found the support from PEAS to develop the SIP sufficient, and one head teacher reported that the SIP helped her to stay focused and on track:

The conference helped me understand how to develop an improvement plan. The school improvement plan contains what you're supposed to do for the whole year, the objectives, areas of improvement and so on. To me, it helped me to stay focused, I always make reviews, for instance if my objective was to improve planning in teaching, I have to come up with the action part as well on how am going to do it, then I give the time lag. So, it has helped me stay on track and if I have an activity, I make sure that I maybe put a star to show that I have completed that activity. (Head teacher)

Safeguarding and child protection

Safeguarding and child protection practices have been a priority focus for PEAS for a number of years, with the introduction of rigorous and up-to-date policies and reporting processes. As mentioned above, audits and inspection scores are capped at a low ranking if there is any evidence of safeguarding or child protection breaches at the school level, indicating the importance placed on safeguarding and child protection by the organisation. Among project staff interviewed, there is a positive impression of the impact of safeguarding and its implementation. Two interviewees identified that community perception of child protection is improving, and the Safeguarding and Child Protection specialist noted that there is commitment to safeguarding across the whole PEAS team so everyone is involved, rather than just one person pushing it forward. The Safeguarding and Child Protection specialist argued that the policies in place have increased the confidence of children, and that since the re-structure in 2019 schools are visited once a week by SSOs so students know they can trust the SSO as they have an ongoing regular relationship.

I think I am happy with what I see. When you meet students from PEAS schools their confidence is remarkable. We need to work on courtesy now, as they are now assertive! I am very happy with the confidence of the children, especially the girls. [...]The teachers have been able to heal from their own trauma through teaching the students. The host communities where we are working, they appreciate that the PEAS schools protect girls

from known dangers. The community's perception of child protection is improving and the confidence of the children is good. I celebrate the fact that the children feel safe at school, it is something that we should be proud of as a PEAS community. (Project staff)

Among head teachers there is a positive view of safeguarding. Five interviewees identified the PEAS child protection and safeguarding policies and training are one of the most valuable activities implemented by PEAS. Furthermore, two head teachers said that they thought the PEAS approach to child protection and safeguarding should be replicated in other schools and one head teacher mentioned that safeguarding is a particular way that PEAS students benefit differently from students attending other schools. One head teacher highlighted two benefits of the approach that they have seen in their school: improved health, safety and hygiene at the school and cessation of intimate relationships between teachers and students.

Teachers also expressed a generally positive view of the PEAS approach to child protection and safeguarding. Two teachers interviewed identified it as one of the most valuable activities and another identified it as a way that PEAS students benefit over students attending other schools. The benefits to students were reported as protecting girls against dropping out (two teachers) and helping learners to feel secure at school (one teacher). Six teachers mentioned guidance and counselling for students as a key safeguarding activity. In PEAS schools the head teacher, senior woman teacher and senior male teacher are trained as child protection and safeguarding focal points in the school, and students are encouraged to go to them if they have any problems to discuss or incidents to report, and the focal points will provide support and guidance.

However, when teachers were asked what actions they take to safeguard their students, many teachers referenced elements of good teaching practice, such as marking assignments on time and asking girls and boys questions in class, rather than specific actions related to safeguarding. It is important to note that safeguarding actions are part of good teaching practice, such as using alternatives to corporal punishment and making sure students attend class. However, the examples cited by interviewees suggests that some teachers may be conflating safeguarding and child protection with good teaching practice, and the absence of references to important actions related to safeguarding (such as implementation of the Child Protection Policy or how to make incident reports) suggests a need for further sensitisation on this. Other references were made to: making sure students have entertainment (e.g. watching football) over the weekend so they are not idle, ensuring students are smart in their uniforms, and delivering the right content for the class.

That said, teachers did report some actions they take to protect students. Three teachers reported changing their discipline approaches from caning students to positive disciplinary processes. Other examples provided by individual teachers were: inform them of types of abuse and to be open with teachers, ensure students have a balanced diet in their meals, encourage students to report any harassment or challenge and then talk to them and look for a solution or forward it on, and work with nurse to make sure they are healthy.

10.1.3 Impact of project activities on transition

This section outlines the impact of project activities on transition. This includes an examination of in-school progression through enrolment and completion data as well as students' post-school aspirations. While the transition outcome is not based on cohort tracking, the primary and project data related to transition within and beyond secondary school is examined.

Enrolment and completion

Findings related to the enrolment and completion are drawn firstly from project enrolment data, and secondly from an alumni tracking survey.

Enrolment data

There was minimal primary data that could be collected at the endline to explore the impact of original project activities on transitions. However, analysis of project data is able to paint a partial picture. Firstly, enrollment data is available for Term 1 from 2017 to 2020, prior to the school closures. It is important to acknowledge that the comparison of enrolment figures for different classes over the course of the project is not the most accurate method for exploring completion and retention of students, but in the absence of other data sources it provides some limited insight.³⁴

Year	Total school enrolment in T1
2017	14,363
2018	15,434
2019	13,826
2020	13,414

Table 13: Total school enrolment in Term 1 from 2017-2020

Overall, there is a trend of reduced enrolment from 2017 to 2020, and 18 schools have fewer students enrolled in 2020 than in 2017. There was a notable drop from 2018 to 2019, which coincides with the ending of the USE subsidy and the necessary increase in school fees at PEAS schools. Looking specifically at the school population directly before the school closures, PEAS had an almost 50-50 split between girls (6,704) and boys (6,578)³⁵ and 47% of

³⁴ At the time of writing, PEAS is developing its School Tool+ to track completion and retention data for individual students in all of its school.

³⁵ Note that 132 entries in the dataset were not gender disaggregated.

students boarded and 53% were day students. This is significant as boarding is seen as an important method of reducing barriers to learning, such as chore burden at home and travelling long distances to school. The data from 2020 demonstrates that there is a significant drop off in the number of enrolled students after S4³⁶:

Grade	Total	% of total enrolled
S1	3519	26%
S2	3178	24%
S3	3496	26%
S4	2744	20%
S5	281	2%
S6	190	1%
Total enrolled	13,408	

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Table 14: Enrolment I	by grade in	1erm 1, 2020	across the	PEAS network

There are many possible explanations of why this is the case. Most significantly, there are only nine A-level centres in the PEAS network providing S5 and S6 classes, compared to 28 schools enrolling S1-S4 students. Furthermore, as outlined in section 3.2, there are many barriers that students face to enrolling in A-level and there are strong cultural preferences for TVET over A-level, particularly for girls. However, it is important to note that there has been an trend of increasing upper school enrolment in PEAS schools since 2017:

Table 15:	Enrolment in	upper school	in Term 1.	2017-2020
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Year	S5	S6	Total upper school
2017	150	133	283
2018	222	175	397
2019	171	258	429
2020	281	190	471

 36 Note that 132 S5 and S6 students are not included as their grade was not disaggregated

This suggests that PEAS activities are successfully facilitating transition to upper secondary school for some students and are having a positive impact over time.

Alumni survey data

Another source of project data that speaks to the post-school transition of PEAS students is an alumni survey conducted in 2018, which includes alumni that graduated between 2013 and 2017. There were 207 respondents to this survey (57% female and 43% male, average age of 21.3), and the survey covered demographics, marriage and parenthood status, aspirations after finishing school, challenges, further study, employment, income, household expenditure, comparison to peers, and recommendation of PEAS. The majority of the sample graduated in 2016 (43%) and 2017 (44%), meaning that many of the respondents did not receive input from the GEARR project but did benefit from the GEC-1 project activities.

The alumni survey has some relevant findings for the endline. The most popular aspiration among respondents was to enrol in technical/vocational college (60%), followed by enrol in A-level (35%) and start a job (16%). The main challenge respondents reported in achieving their aspiration was financial constraints (93%), followed by distance to institution (46%). Some 52% of respondents went onto further study after finishing A-levels (no variation by gender). The most common highest level of education studied after O-level was TVET (currently studying) (38%, plus 10% completed) and A-level (currently studying) (21%, plus 8% completed). Notably, this is lower than the percentage of respondents who aspired to study A-level. Some 28% of respondents reported that they have ever done work to earn money, with a slightly higher percentage of male respondents (30%) than female (35%). The most common type of work among those respondents who have ever worked is farming (or fishing) (58%) and 58% reported that they were self-employed. Notably, a higher percentage of male respondents reported that they were employed (44%) than female respondents (52%).

Student aspirations

Student's aspirations for after finishing school were explored in the student survey. As outlined in section 3.2, A-level is a popular post-school pathway that students aspire to, with 71.1% of S4 students surveyed saying that they wanted to study A-Level. This suggests that the project activities are influencing students to aspire to transition to upper secondary school. Students in S4 also expanded upon why they wanted to study for their A-levels after finishing lower secondary school. The most common reasons that they gave were that the qualification was needed to be able to study at higher education (77%) and that it was a personal ambition (62.8%). The least common reasons were that they wanted A-levels because their family wanted them to (4.4%) and because they had interests in the subjects (5.3%). There was also one significant difference in the reasons why boys and girls wanted to pursue A-levels. Boys and men (85%) were more likely than girls and women (67.9%) to pursue it because they wanted to be able to study at higher education (X^2 (1, 113) = 4.632, p = 0.031). This points to a gender gap in aspirations for higher education as a transition pathway. The activities that have facilitated students' aspirations to study at A-Level are the

provision of advice on post-school options (86.5%), as well as the expansion of the provision of A-Level centres.

Upon finishing upper secondary school, students generally aspired to continue to higher education (88.9%). Participating in more PEAS activities appears to play a positive role in students' desire to pursue higher education, regardless of whether students were wealthy or poor (β =0.204, z=2.35, p=.018). Notably, caregivers also expressed the most interest in their children continuing to higher education after upper secondary school (89.2%). Whilst there was no significant difference in students' aspirations by gender, there were by class group. Students in S5 (93.1%) were much more likely to express a desire to continue to higher education than their counterparts in S6 (84.8%), (X^2 (1, 324) = 5.557, p = 0.018). They were also more likely to want to start a business (36.5%) than S6 students (25.5%), (X^2 (1, 324) = 4.611, p = 0.032). Other clear differences between upper secondary year groups were in their aspirations toward technical and vocational training (X^2 (1, 324) = 9.685, p = 0.002) and in aspiring to care for their family (X^2 (1, 324) = 9.090, p = 0.003). Students in S5 (26.4%) were much more likely to aspire to technical and vocational training than students in S6 (12.7%). They (15.7%) were also much more likely to aspire to family care than S6 students (5.5%). This suggests that the project is creating a learning environment that fosters students' aspirations and self-belief to pursue successful post-school transition pathways.

These aspirations towards successful transition pathways are supported by the qualitative data when student interviewees were asked what they aspire to do after finishing school. The most commonly identified aspirations were: studying a university course (four), completing a teaching course to qualify as a teacher (three students), and completing a nursing course to qualify to work as a nurse (three students). Other aspirations cited by students were to work in civil engineering (one student), do a business course (one student) and do an IT course (one student). There is one student who mentioned that her parents want her to study at A-Level, but she would rather do a vocational course in teaching. Of the four students who want to attend university, one wants to do law, another a business course, and one a course in education in Kiswahili. One student mentioned that her parents are also wanting her to attend university.

Student interviewees were asked who their biggest supporter was as they worked towards fulfilling their ambition. The most commonly identified "biggest supporter" was girls' fathers (seven students), followed by mothers (two students). One interviewee said "parents", another selected their uncle, and one girl also identified herself as she makes money for her school requirements. The most commonly identified way in which girls' biggest supporter supports them is by paying their school fees (eight students), followed by paying for other school requirements (four students), and by encouraging girls to concentrate on their studies (three students). Other forms of support identified were a PEAS bursary (one student), financial support (one student), and linking up the girl with people who have done the course she aspires to (one student). In general, the main support that students identified their family and friends providing was encouragement. When asked how their teachers support them to reach their aspirations, the most commonly cited support was encouragement of students in their studies (six students), followed by guidance and counselling (three students). Other types of support were advice on subject choice (one student) and career advice (one student). Only one student said that her teachers do not support her to reach her aspirations.

Students' caregivers also shared opinions on what they want their children to do after finishing lower secondary school in the caregiver survey. They most commonly desired their children to study for A-levels (62.1%) or pursue technical and vocational training (34.5%). No caregiver expressed a desire for their children to get married, vacation or travel or volunteer. When asked why they wanted their children to pursue A-levels, caregivers most commonly said that they wanted their children to be able to pursue higher education (88.9%), have better job prospects (38.9%) and that the family wants them to study (33.3%). This suggests that the project is positively impacting community attitudes towards students' transition pathways, with fairly high levels of support for successful transition pathways after school.

10.1.4 Impact of response to Covid-19 school closures

This section focuses on the impact of project activities implemented during the school closures due to Covid-19, including radio programmes, learning packs, SMS messages, telephone trees, and other activities. Other activities examined are support provided by PEAS to schools, safeguarding and child protection policies, and school-level initiatives. For each activity the uptake, perception of helpfulness and challenges faced are examined. Findings are drawn both from the student survey and qualitative data, including interviewees' perception of the effectiveness of the Covid-19 response.

Radio programmes

PEAS broadcast radio programmes with original educational content during the school closures. There were five PEAS schools who were not targeted by the radio programmes as a partnership with a local radio broadcaster was not established: Onwards and Upwards Secondary School, Lamwo Kuc Ki Gen High School, Bwesumbu PEAS High School, Kithoma PEAS High School and Samling Nama PEAS High School. This section is structured into four themes: student uptake of the radio programmes; the usefulness and enjoyment of the radio programmes; challenges to tuning in to radio programmes; and factors hindering radio programme uptake.

Student uptake of the radio programmes

According to the student survey, 50.7% of all students tuned into PEAS radio programmes during the Covid-19 school closures, with the median student who tuned in listening on a weekly basis. Caregivers, speaking on the same topic, generally stated that their children tuned into the programmes (56.3%), with 63.8% of caregivers stating that their children tuned in weekly. Caregivers also noted that other members of the household participated in the family games and activities with their children 'sometimes' (41.4%), 'never' (29.3%) and 'rarely' (19%). Only 10.3% of caregivers stated that other members of the household either 'always' or 'often' participated.

Whether a student reported listening to the broadcast or not, as well as their frequency of listening when they did listen, were roughly the same regardless of students' gender. 50.4%

of boys and men listened and 51.2% of girls and women. There were, however, significant differences in whether students listened or not depending on the class they were in (X^2 (4, 483)= 27.571, p=.000). The majority of students in S4 tuned in (66.7%), about half of the students in S6 (47.3%), but only 38.4% of students in S5 tuned in. The reason for the lower rates of listening among S5s is not clear. It may be because they were out of school longer and lost motivation to listen, or that they were less motivated because they are not in an exam year. Amongst the students who tuned in though, the frequency with which they listened did not vary much by class group.

Usefulness and enjoyment of the radio programmes

Generally speaking, the median student who tuned into radio programmes strongly agreed that they were helpful, with only 5.7% of students either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the broadcasts were helpful. This finding is supported by the qualitative findings. School staff and students were asked to report how the radio programmes had been helpful. The most frequent answer was that the programmes helped the students to revise and retain knowledge from before the school closures. This was the most commonly cited helpful impact by students who listened to the radio programmes (four), as well as by two head teachers and two teachers. Five interviewees (three students, one teacher and one head teacher) also reported that the radio programmes helped students to learn new topics. Other frequent answers were that students were motivated to study (three interviewees), giving the students hope the school would reopen (three interviewees), to keep students safe as Covid-19 and child protection messaging was included (three interviewees), students could participate by calling in (two interviewees), and students could compare the content of the learning pack and radio programme (two interviewees).

Students interviewed reported enjoying a range of activities as part of the radio programmes, with one referencing an activity in the Entrepreneurship lesson to make charcoal and do baking, another enjoyed writing down questions and the teachers' response, and one enjoyed participating in the radio programmes. Two students reported that members of their household participated in the radio programmes too. According to students surveyed, the median student also listened to the programmes with members of their household 'sometimes'.

Challenges to tuning in to radio programmes

Students who tuned in were also asked what challenges they faced in tuning into the radio programmes. The most commonly noted challenges were that the time of the broadcast clashed with their domestic responsibilities (60.5% said this) or with their work (31.3%). Similar views were expressed by caregivers, 59.6% of whom said that the time of the broadcast clashed with domestic responsibilities or their work (14%). Caregivers also reported that the lessons were too hard (10.5%). Whilst the most popular reasons students gave were the same regardless of gender and class group, there was clear divergence in the degree to which students of different genders, and class groups, chose one response or another.



Figure 10: Challenges to tuning into radio, according to 'Yes' responses of student and caregiver surveys

Total number of respondents: 300 (243 students; 57 caregivers)

Boys and men were much more likely to note that they were not interested in the broadcasts (20%) than girls and women (6.5%); X^2 (1, 243) = 9.112, p = 0.003. They (14.1%) were also more likely than girls (4.6%) to say that the programmes were not interesting (X^2 (1, 243) = 6.013, p = 0.014). Further, boys and men (70.4%) were also more likely than girls and women (48.1%) to say that the time of the broadcast clashed with their domestic responsibilities (X^2 (1, 243) = 12.398, p = 0.000) and that the lessons were too hard (X^2 (1, 243) = 7.549, p = 0.006). With respect to class group differences, students in S5 were significantly more likely, than other groups, to report that radio broadcasts clashed with their domestic responsibilities (X^2 (2, 243) = 6.075, p = 0.048). Some 73.8% of S5 students said this compared with only 55.2% of students in S4 and 57.1% of students in S6. Further, students in S5 were the least likely to know what time the broadcasts were on: 24.6% of them said they did not know this, compared with only 10.5% on S4 and 18.2% in S6 (X^2 (2, 243) = 5.832, p = 0.054).

When interviewees were asked what challenges students faced when tuning into the radio programmes, several key themes emerged: domestic chores, access to a radio, reach of the radio broadcasts, content of the radio programmes, student interest, and student engagement in other activities. Indeed, in many cases students faced multiple challenges at the same time, as demonstrated in this quote:

Respondent: I don't have a radio. Secondly, I am quite busy with domestic work, I don't have time for listening to the radio, and sometimes I would be reading my books. Also, I can't afford money for buying dry cells (batteries).

Interviewer: What Support would have made it possible for you to listen to the radio programmes?

Respondent: If the radio was there I would take my time to listen to them. Fixing free time for me to listen to the radio programmes by me and parents would have also helped me. (Student)

Perhaps the strongest theme to emerge is that domestic chores were a significant challenge for the radio. This supports the survey findings, although the emphasis in the qualitative data is that this mostly affected girls but also boys too. This had two consequences. Firstly, the timing of the radio programmes clashed with when students were engaged in domestic work or were in the gardens, as illustrated in this quote:

The production would take place in the morning between 10am and 11am but that was the time parents needed to be with their children in gardens, there was a need to change the time to evening hours like 7pm or 4pm and onwards or afternoon hours when students are free from work to listen. (Teacher)

This was reported by 11 interviewees (six head teachers and five teachers). Also, students did not have enough time to study or tune into the radio programmes due to their chore burden. This was reported by 10 interviewees (three head teachers, four teachers and three students).

Another strong theme to emerge from the data is that access to a radio was a significant challenge. The most common challenge associated with this is that households did not own a radio or have access to one. This was reported by 12 interviewees (five head teachers, four teachers and three students). Other associated challenges were that households did not have access to or could not afford batteries for the radio (one head teacher, two teachers, one student), parents denied students access to the radio (two teachers, one student), and that girls were denied access to the radio when boys were not (two head teachers).

A commonly identified challenge was the reach of the radio broadcasts. Nine interviewees reported that students in their schools did not live in areas that the radio station broadcast reached or that the connection was too poor to listen. This was reported by five head teachers and four teachers. One head teacher reported that when S4 students returned 15 students were aware of the programmes but had been able to listen for this reason. Furthermore, four interviewees reported the challenge of students leaving the district or were not staying with their parents during the holidays or for childcare, and therefore were beyond the reach of broadcasts. One student mentioned that she listened between April and May but stopped when she left home.

Some challenges were raised related to the content of the radio programme. Four interviewees, including three students, reported that students missed the interactive element of teaching and found it hard to ask questions during the radio programmes. Two teachers reported that the teachers on the radio programmes were not perfect, missing key points or not being able to answer questions. One teacher reported that radio programmes were not easy to follow if students joined midway through, so it only benefitted them if they listened from the beginning. One student reported that the lessons were too short. One teacher reported that some students had said that they couldn't understand the programme content and that teachers were too fast.

Four interviewees identified that students lost motivation to listen to the radio programmes the longer that schools were closed. One head teacher argued that the majority of students had lost hope of schools reopening by the time the radio programmes re-started, so had little interest:

The PEAS radio programmes were effective at the beginning because the students were still anxious about school opening but when the schools did not resume soon, the students lost interest in listening to the educational radio programmes. (Head teacher,)

Three interviewees said that students and parents lost hope of returning over time and therefore stopped listening or encouraging students to listen. Some interviewees reported that students were engaged in other activities. For example, one head teacher reported that students engaged in market activities instead of listening, one teacher reported that some boys got jobs, and two interviewees mentioned that some students preferred spending time with their friends rather than attending lessons. Two other commonly mentioned challenges were that parents would not give students time to listen to the radio programmes (two head teachers, two teachers), and that some students were not aware of the radio programmes dispute advertising (two head teachers, one teacher and one student).

Factors hindering radio programme uptake

Amongst students who did not tune in, the most common reason why was that they did not have access to a radio (36.5%) or know what time the broadcasts were on (24.9%). Caregivers whose children did not tune in echoed these sentiments, with 40.6% of them stating that if they did not tune in it was because they did not have access to a radio. They also reported not knowing that there were PEAS radio programmes at all (28.1%). The responses students gave for each reason why they did not tune in only marginally differed between male and female respondents (X^2 (8, 233)= 14.66, p =.066). The biggest difference in response, by gender, was that boys and men were more likely to report that the PEAS radio programmes did not broadcast in their area (15.2% of boys stated this and 5.9% of girls).

There were, however, more discernible differences in response when students' class was considered (X^2 (16, 233) = 40.129, p = 0.001). The most common reason for not tuning into the programmes for S4 and S5 students was the lack of access to a radio, with 37.3% and 44.8% respectively stating this. The most common reason given from students in S6 was not knowing the time that radio broadcasts were on (29.1%), with not having access to a radio as the reason following closely after (26.7%).

Students in S4 were the least likely to say that they did not know what time the broadcasts were on (9.8%), compared with 29.2% of students in S5 and 29.1% of students in S6. Further, students in S6 were the least likely to state that they did not have access to a radio (26.7%), compared with 44.8% of students in S5 and 37.3% of students in S4. Finally, students in S4 were much more likely to state that the PEAS radio programmes did not broadcast in their area (23.5%), compared with only 8.3% of students in S5 and 7% of students in S6.

Head teachers, teachers and students were asked what the main reasons were stopping students who attended in districts where the radio programmes were broadcast from tuning

in. The main reason identified was that students were too busy with domestic work when the radio programmes were on (five interviewees). This was the most commonly identified reason by students who did not listen to the radio programme, with three students citing this as a reason, as well as two teachers. The second most commonly identified reason was that students did not have a radio at home. This was cited by two students who did not listen to the radio programmes as well as one head teacher and one teacher. One student also mentioned that they did have a radio at home but they were not allowed to use it, which was also mentioned by one teacher. Four interviewees also identified a reason that students could not access the radio programmes was that they lived in a district that did not pick up the radio station signals (one head teacher and three teachers). Another commonly identified reason was that students did not have batteries, or could not afford batteries, for the radio; this was a reason for one student, and cited by one head teacher and one teacher. Two students who did not listen to the radio programme also said it was because they didn't know about the radio programmes, which was supported by one head teacher.

Learning packs

PEAS printed and distributed learning packs designed by NCDC through its school network. Some 80.3% of students surveyed reported receiving a student learning pack from their school, with the median student using them weekly. Moreover, 54.4% of caregivers reported that their child received a learning back and 80.4% also noted that other members of the household, or friends in the community, used the learning packs. Notably though, students in S5 (64.2%) were much less likely to report having received a student learning pack than students in S4 (88.7%) and students in S6 (87.9%); (X^2 (2, 483) = 39.307, p = 0.000). Students in S5 were also the least likely to state that other members of their household, or friends in their community, had used student learning packs (76.5%) compared with 91.5% of students in S4 and 82.8% of students in S6; (X^2 (4, 388) = 13.340, p = 0.010).

This section details findings related to learning packs under the following two themes: the usefulness of the learning packs, and the factors which hindered their use.

Usefulness of the learning packs

The median student strongly agreed that the educational information provided in the learning packs was helpful for their learning. Caregivers had similar views, with 55.4% strongly agreeing. However, the median student in S5 marginally differed from those in other class groups in this regard by only agreeing, rather than strongly agreeing, that the information in the learning packs was helpful (X^2 (8, 388) = 14.383, p = 0.072). When asked a further question about the extent to which they agreed that the support from their teachers helped them to use the student learning packs, students generally 'Agreed'.

Overall, there was a strong trend in the qualitative data that the learning packs were helpful, particularly among students. Nine students reported that they found the learning packs helpful. This was supported by teachers, with nine teachers reporting that the learning packs were helpful for students to continue learning. The main reasons that students found the packs helpful was that it helped them to revise what they had learned in school (five

students), helped them to learn new things (three students) especially as it covered questions that they had not covered in school (two students), and that they were able to discuss and share with friends in other schools (two students).

The package consists of all subjects and we did the work at home which we submitted at school when school began and we were able to form discussion groups to discuss the content in the learning pack so it is very important for continuous learning. (Student)

Head teachers and teachers also reported that the learning packs were helpful in the following ways: students would compare the learning pack content with the radio programmes (two head teachers and two teachers), students were able to learn from the pack because it had examples and questions (two teachers), and the learning packs engaged students in learning and helped them to revise (two teachers).

The main way that students reported being supported by their teachers and schools to use the learning packs was that they could talk to teachers on the phone to clarify anything they could not understand. This was mentioned by six students, and was the main way that teachers reported supporting students to use the learning pack. One student mentioned that she had some of her work marked by a teacher, another two that teachers called to encourage them to use the pack, and one student used WhatsApp to interact with teachers.

Factors hindering the use of learning packs

Interviewees reported a number of challenges related to the learning packs, which can be grouped into the following themes: content, distribution, teacher support and student learning. It is important to note, however, one teacher and one student reported that they faced no challenges with the learning packs.

Firstly, challenges related to the content of the learning packs were mentioned by 13 interviewees (one head teacher, five teachers and seven students). Challenges related to the content of the learning pack was the main issue facing students. The most commonly identified issue with the content, particularly by students, was related to the subjects it included. One teacher and five students reported that the learning packs included information (subjects) that was irrelevant to their studies, which meant that they engaged less than they wanted to with the learning packs.

The only challenge was the fact that not all subjects were included in the learning pack, most subjects were left out. (Student)

Two students reported that the learning packs did not have the subjects they studied, and one head teacher and four students argued that the learning packs should have had all the subjects that students learn rather than a few. Another issue related to content, only identified by school staff, was that the content of the pack was insufficient for the length of time students were out of school:

The learners pack had particular and few topics which are not sufficient enough to cover the period, the students have stayed home. It was essential though we need to be changing the learners pack (learners should have been given new packs) because it was dwelling on a few topics and yet the terms or time the children have stayed home is longer than the content in the learners pack. (Teacher)

This was cited as a challenge by five interviewees (one head teacher and four teachers). They reported that students completed the work and should have received new packs. One maths teacher explained that students were completing the maths work in the learning pack in two weeks when it was meant to cover the whole term.

Interviewees, mostly students, also reported that some of the content was too difficult or was presented in a confusing manner. One teacher reported that the content was not easy for a student to understand and that the organisation of the material was confusing. Two students reported that the packs had questions that were too difficult and they could not answer, and two students reported having difficulty understanding the notes as they were too detailed and needed to be summarised into bullet points (one student) and that the notes looked different from what they were used to at school (one student). One visually impaired student reported that they struggled to read the learning pack as the words were too small and dark.

An inductive theme arising from the data related to the subject diversity included in the PEAS activities during the school closures. This was mostly a theme that emerged from students, although it was supported by some teachers. Eight student interviewees raised the issue that the learning packs did not have all the subjects included, and therefore students used it less than they would have liked as it was irrelevant to them. In particular, students raised the issue of not having subjects included that they studied at school, with a particular gap around arts subjects compared to sciences. This was supported by one head teacher and three teachers.

They should favour all subjects, the Arts subjects were not there, if they were there then everyone would benefit. Some of us used to move long distances from home to school only to find some subjects like History and Geography, yet you have other subjects that were missing. (Student)

Secondly, challenges related to distribution were cited by nine interviewees (one project staff, one district inspector, three teachers and four students). One of the district inspectors reported that the distribution model of the government learning packs was not effective and that they were aware that many learners did not receive a learning pack. The challenges related to the distribution of the learning pack varied, including students who were not staying with their parents in the village and could not be reached with the learning pack (three interviewees), and students living far away from the school had challenges accessing the learning packs compared to those living near to the school (two interviewees).

Thirdly, challenges related to teacher support were referenced by six interviewees (three teachers and three students). Namely, the challenge identified by the three students was that they would have benefitted from the support of a teacher:

With the learning pack, no one is there to help you out, you have to do the work alone, if you don't know, you don't know, because we were home under lockdown and there was limited movement. (Student)

Two students reported that they found the work hard to complete alone without being able to consult a teacher, one student reported that the lack of marking meant she did not know if she had completed the work correctly, and another mentioned that it was hard to understand the content without the guidance of a teacher.

Three teachers mentioned challenges around supporting students with the learning pack. Two teachers said that they were expected to help students on all subjects in the packs but they were only comfortable teaching their subject.

The subjects in that pack are not taught by one teacher - there are subjects which you can not teach but you have to explain to the students so I find it hard to teach subjects like geography, biology, maths which are not my subjects. We have tried to solve this problem by sharing the pack with teachers who teach these problems. (Teacher)

Another teacher mentioned that it was not possible to monitor and supervise the work of the students. Lastly, two teachers mentioned challenges related to student learning. One teacher said that some learners did not know how to read properly and therefore found understanding the notes in the learning pack a challenge. Another teacher said that many students did not attempt to complete the pack activities until they returned to school.

SMS messages

PEAS distributed information to students and caregivers through SMS that included both child protection and safeguarding information and details on school closures and reopening. Most students (71%), and caregivers (62.1%), reported that they had received an SMS message, with girls being slightly, though not significantly, more likely to have received one (73.2%) than boys were (69.3%). Similarly, receipt of SMSs was fairly uniform across class groups. The median student indicated that they read PEAS SMS messages on a monthly basis, with only 16.3% of students reading them less than monthly.

Findings regarding the SMS messages are presented in two themes: the perceived usefulness of the SMS messages and how it helped students during the school closures, and the factors hindering access to SMS messages.

Usefulness of the SMS messages

Amongst the students who read the SMS messages, they generally found the information in them to be helpful for keeping themselves healthy, safe (such as concerning who they could talk to and what they can do if they felt under threat) and in motivating them to stay focused on their educational goals. In all three regards, the median student strongly agreed that the SMS messages were useful. Further, there was no significant difference between boys and girls in how strongly they agreed that the SMS messages were helpful for health (X^2 (5, 343) = 4.916, p = 0.426), safety (X^2 (5, 343) = 5.140, p = 0.399) and motivational toward their goals (X^2 (4, 343) = 2.780, p = 0.595). There was also no substantial difference by class group.

When asked whether the SMS messages were helpful for reminding them when PEAS radio broadcasts were on, and whether the messages inspired and motivated them to participate in

educational activities, students were generally less optimistic. In both cases, the median student agreed, rather than strongly agreed, that the messages were helpful in those regards. This was true for both boys and girls. Notably though, there was a significant difference in how helpful students found the SMS messages, for reminding them when radio broadcasts were on, based on their class group (X^2 (10, 343) = 31.648, p = 0.000). Although the median student in each class group agreed that the messages helped remind them about radio broadcasts, students in S4 were the most skewed toward strongly agreeing that the messages were helpful in that way. Although the difference is marginal (X^2 (8, 343) = 14.598, p = 0.067), it is also worth noting that students in S5 were the only group within which the median student agreed, rather than strongly agreed, that the SMS messages motivated them to participate in some educational activities.

Overall, there was a positive impression among interviewees that the content of the SMS messages was helpful. Students were asked if other members of their household found the content of the SMS helpful, and six students agreed that other members of their household found the content helpful. The themes that emerged regarding the helpfulness of the SMS messages were that it helped students to study, helped to keep students safe, students were encouraged, and parents were encouraged to support students.

Firstly, seven interviewees (one head teacher, two teachers and four students) reported that the SMS messages helped students to keep studying. Three students reported that they were encouraged to keep reading their books and studying. One student also reported that the SMS messages gave her confidence to talk to her parents about her education:

The student's messages because I was able to get confidence to talk to my parents about what was supposed to be done in order to achieve my goals. (Student)

One teacher reported that the SMS messages reminded students to study and the syllabus to cover, and another said that students became knowledgeable about different programmes. One head teacher reports that the SMS messages had maths questions and that the content reinforced the topics and messages from the radio, learning packs and teacher calls.

Secondly, 11 interviewees (one head teacher, five teachers and five students) mentioned that the SMS messages were helpful for keeping students safe. One head teacher, three teachers and five students said they found the SMS messages about following the Covid-19 SOPs a helpful reminder.

Since it was a worldwide pandemic, the messages helped us to keep updated with the Covid-19 pandemic. The messages motivated us to remain positive about returning back to school and not to lose hope. The message enabled us and our parents to know the exact time of going back to school. (Student)

One teacher said that the SMS messages were helpful in getting students back to school safe and healthy, with no cases of pregnancy or drop out. One teacher and one student said that the messages were helpful in supporting parents to keep students safe. One teacher also reported that SMS messages helped students to stay safe and feel comforted. Three interviewees (one teacher, two students) reported that the SMS messages were helpful to encourage parents to support their children. Two students reported this, with one student saying that the SMS message encouraged her parents to give her time to read and lessen the housework load. Two interviewees (one head teacher, one student) reported that students were encouraged by the SMS messages, with one student saying that she was encouraged to stay positive towards education and returning to school. One teacher and one student also said that the SMS messages were helpful for knowing when schools were reopening. Four teachers interviewed reported speaking to students on the phone regarding the content of the SMS message. All four of these teachers spoke to students regarding the Covid-19 SOPs, and one also followed up with students about the SMS with the return to school dates.

Factors limiting access to SMS messages

Amongst the 29% of students who had never read a SMS message, the key reason they cited as to why they had not was that their caregiver had never received a message (32.1%) or that they did not have access to a phone (26.4%). Caregivers responding to the same question most commonly noted that they never read an SMS message because they never received a message (51.3%), the SMS was not in a language they could read (10.3%) or the SMS was not sent to their phone (10.3%). Although there was no statistically significant difference in these reasons that students gave based on gender, there was based on class group (X^2 (10, 140) = 21.685, p = 0.017). Students in S5 were the least likely to report that they did not have access to a phone (15.4%), compared with 30% of students in S4 and 35.4% of students in S6. Further, students in S5 were the most likely to not be staying with their caregiver, and so therefore did not receive messages (17.3%), compared with only 2.5% of students in S4 and no student in S6.

A strong theme to emerge among school staff of the challenges related to the SMS messages is that parents mediate the access to students. This was mentioned as a challenge by nine interviewees (one head teacher and eight teachers). Specifically, the most common challenge mentioned related to parents was the distance between parents and students, so that when the message is delivered the owner of the phone (most likely the caregiver) is at work or not with the student and do not share the message with them. This was cited as a challenge by five interviewees.

These students don't own the phones and the caregivers who are the owners of the phones sometimes are far away or don't stay with them in that way someone can not easily access the messages. Secondly, some parents are ignorant about the messages so when they get these messages they don't share them with the students. Some parents are rude - they can not allow the students to access these messages, sometimes they assume that these girls want to use the phones to call boyfriends. (Teacher)

Other challenged related to parents were that parents receive the message but do not share it with the students (three interviewees), the some parents cannot understand the messages in English and therefore disregard them (two interviewees), students do not have access to phones that belong to their parents (two interviewees), some parents delete messages before reading them (one interviewee), parents are hesitant to share the phone with students (one interviewee), and some parents did not receive messages (one interviewee). They were effective to some group of learners and not very effective to another group, giving an example of the SMS messages which were in English yet most of the parents didn't go to school, they were not understanding these messages so they disregarded them , and i don't think that all the parents received the messages because of the next problem. And at times the information was received late. However some groups of learners benefited while others were left out. (Head teacher)

The finding that parents mediate access to messages is supported by the students who reported not receiving any SMS messages during the school closure. Three students reported that their parents would have received the messages and they were not sure if they had received a message, but either way had not had a message shared with them by a parent. One student reported that the main challenge she had accessing the messages was that it came to her mothers' phone, and her mother was often out of the house at work. Another student received one message during the school closures and was unaware that others were sent as she was not shared with them by her parents. Another challenge mentioned by a student who is visually impaired, is that she struggles to read the messages as the phone is too bright for her eyes. Important to note, however, is that five students interviewed reported no challenges in receiving the SMS messages they received from PEAS. Other challenges identified by school staff related to SMS messages were: students do not own phones (two interviewees), phones are off because they don't have power, and it is hard to charge the batteries (one interviewee), network is poor so it can take a long time to deliver a message (one interviewee), some contacts were not reachable or available during the school closures (one interviewee), and sometimes information is received late (one interviewee).

Telephone trees

Throughout the school closures, teachers contacted students on the phone, using a telephone tree system, to check in on their learning and share information to keep students safe and well. Findings related to the telephone trees are presented in four themes: student update of the telephone trees, usefulness of the telephone trees for promoting students' safety and wellbeing, usefulness of the telephone trees for encouraging students' to engage in other educational activities, and the factors that hindered students' use of the telephone trees.

Student uptake of the telephone trees

The vast majority of students (81.4%), and caregivers (69.9%), have spoken to a teacher from their school on the phone during the Covid-19 school closure period, with similar percentages of students having done so whether female (81.2%) or male (81.5%). However, whilst both male and female students had spoken to their teacher on the phone at least once, there was a clear difference in the frequency with which those who did speak, did so (X^2 (2, 393) = 6.904, p = 0.032). The median boy and girl each spoke to their teachers monthly. However, boys spoke to their teachers more often on mean average. Only 17.7% of boys spoke to their teachers less than monthly, compared with 28.9% of girls.

Whilst there was no significant difference in whether girls or boys had ever spoken to a teacher, there were clear differences by class group (X^2 (2, 483) = 15.972, p = 0.000).

Students in S5 were much less likely to have ever spoken to a teacher (71.7%) than students in either S4 (88.7%) or S6 (83.6%). There were also noteworthy differences in the frequency with which students spoke to teachers, depending on the class group they belonged to (X^2 (4, 393) = 14.707, p = 0.005). Students in S5 spoke to their teachers much less frequently, with only 15.8% of them speaking to teachers weekly, compared with 34.8% of students in S4 and 34.1% of students in S6.

Teachers were asked how many times they had spoken to students on the phone, and answers ranged from twice, to once a week, to 'too many to count'. Students were also asked how many times they had spoken to a teacher, and the most common answer was once, which is less than the median student surveyed. Five students reported only speaking to a teacher on the phone once, although two students acknowledged that teachers could have called their parents and spoken to them but that the call was not passed on. Two students reported speaking to a teacher many times, with one over five times and one over ten times.

Usefulness of telephone trees for promoting student safety and wellbeing

Regardless of how often students spoke to teachers though, they strongly agreed that the information their teacher provided them over the phone helped them to take measures to protect themselves against Covid-19. Opinions on the extent to which the information was helpful was similar regardless of gender but there were key differences in opinion based on class group (X^2 (8, 393) = 19.422, p = 0.013). Notably, only 0.7% of students in S4 either strongly disagreed, disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed, in aggregate, that the information from teachers was helpful in this regard. This is compared to 10.5% of students in S5 and 5.8% of students in S6.

The median student also strongly agreed that their teacher spoke to them about their wellbeing and helped them to understand how to look after themselves. Again, this was true regardless of gender, but there were differences based on class group (X^2 (6, 393) = 13.495, p = 0.036). Whilst the median student in S4 and S5 strongly agreed, students in S6 only agreed. Students were also asked about the extent to which they agreed that they were able to discuss their learning with their teacher on the phone, including what they learnt from the PEAD radio programmes and the student learning packs. Students generally agreed, rather than strongly agreed, that discussions with teachers were helpful in that regard. However, it is noteworthy that the median student in S4 strongly agreed that the discussions were helpful in this regard; this is in contrast with students in S5 and S6 only agreeing (X^2 (8, 393) = 31.104, p = 0.000).

Teachers and students interviewees who had used the telephone trees were asked whether they found the last conversation they had useful or not. No interviewee said that they did not find the telephone call helpful. Eight teachers and nine students said that they found the conversation helpful. Interviewees were asked to describe how the telephone trees were helpful. The following themes emerged related to students' safety and well-being: providing non-academic support, giving students' hope, passing on information, and safeguarding. Firstly, nine interviewees (four head teachers, five teachers) reported that the telephone trees were helpful for providing non-academic support to students. For example, one teacher reported that she felt closer to her students and it motivated her as a teacher. Another expressed that the calls made the student feel part of the school. Six interviewees reported that teachers were able to provide guidance and counselling to students over the phone as students shared what they were going through.

Secondly, eight interviewees (six teachers and two students) expressed that the telephone trees were helpful in giving hope to students. Four teachers and one student reported that the telephone trees gave students hope that they would return to school, and two teachers reported that it was good for students to know that their teachers were thinking about them. Three teachers and one student reported that students were happy and excited to speak to a teacher on the phone.

Thirdly, four interviewees reported that the telephone trees were helpful from a safeguarding perspective. One head teacher and two teachers reported that they were able to monitor child protection through the phone calls, with examples of schools intervening when girls were pregnant and in danger of not returning to school, or married or getting married.

The phone calls were helpful because we managed to save some girls from being married off because their parents had changed their mind from the girls schooling to marrying them off during the school closures, we intervened and talked to these parents who later stopped forcing the girls into marriage. We managed to counsel parents that children being at home is not the end of everything and they should continue having hope about students returning to school. (Teacher)

One student reported that the safeguarding messaging around following the Covid-19 SOPs helped them to be safe.

Usefulness of telephone trees for encouraging engagement with educational activities

Students also viewed the telephone trees as helpful as talking to teachers inspired and motivated them to do other educational activities. Generally speaking, the median student agreed that discussions with teachers were helpful in this regard. There was no significant divergence in views along either gender, or class group, lines.

Interviewees were asked to describe how the telephone trees were helpful. The following themes emerged related to students' learning and engagement with educational activities: encouraging students to study, supporting students' learning, and telling parents to encourage students to study. Firstly, 15 interviewees (one head teacher, six teachers, eight students) reported that the telephone trees were helpful for encouraging students to study. The most common response from students was that they were encouraged to keep reading their books and to focus on their studies. This was reported by eight students, as well as two teachers and one head teacher. Three teachers and one project staff interviewee reported that students were encouraged to study the learning packs and listen to the radio programmes because they were expecting that a teacher would call. Two teachers and one

student reported that calls motivated students to study. One teacher also reported that she advised her student to ask her parents to buy books and another said that the calls helped to divert students' attention from bad habits to academics. A student summed up why she found the phone calls helpful:

The phone calls were helpful because they showed that the teachers were responsible even when the learners were at home, the teachers were concerned about the learners wellbeing. The phone calls encouraged and motivated me to continue revising my books at home The phone calls encouraged me to continue having hope about returning to school The phone calls improved the trust and relationship between parents and teachers because they showed that teachers are not only concerned about money or school fees but the future of the learners. (Student)

Secondly, nine interviewees (two head teachers, three teachers and four students) reported that the telephone trees were helpful for supporting students' learning. The main benefit cited here is that students could share what they were finding difficult with the teachers and have their questions answered (two head teachers, two teachers, three students). One student also reported being advised to summarise her notes and do corrections on past papers, and one teacher found the telephone trees helpful to check on students' progress.

Thirdly, six interviewees (two head teachers, one teacher and three students) reported that the telephone trees were helpful for passing on information. Students were informed about and encouraged to listen to the radio programmes through the telephone trees (two head teachers, one student), and told to pick up the learning pack from school (two head teachers, two students). Two students reported that their teacher told them about revision and exams over the phone, which was supported by one teacher. One student reported receiving information about fee payments, which was supported by one teacher. The teacher also reported sharing information about the school reporting date.

Lastly, three teachers reported that the telephone trees were helpful for telling parents to encourage their children to study during the school closures.

Factors hindering use of telephone trees

Students surveyed who had never spoken to a teacher from their school on the phone were most likely unable to do so because they did not have access to a phone (27.8%), their caregivers never received a call from their teachers (15.6%) or their caregivers' phones were not available for them to use when a teacher called (15.6%). Caregivers who commented on this topic overwhelmingly (90.3%) noted that they had never received a call from their children's teachers. Although there was no significant difference in the reasons reported by both boys and girls, it is still perhaps noteworthy that 22.5% of girls reported that their caregivers' phones were not available to them, compared with only 10% of boys.

The most commonly identified challenge by interviewees related to the telephone trees was getting through to the students through the parents. Parents impeding access to students was identified as a challenge of the telephone by four head teachers and one teacher. Examples included that parents were uncomfortable/reluctant to put girls on the phone to a male teacher (four interviewees), that parents were not with the student when the teacher called and did not call back (three interviewees), parents would not allow a teacher talk to girls when they were busy with chores (one interviewee).

It is because when most of the parents receive a call from a male teacher to talk to their daughter, they are not willing to let the male teacher talk to her daughter. So, when the parent just hears the voice of a man, the parent just switches off his phone. (Teacher)

Another challenge identified were that students were not staying with parents during lockdown and schools did not have a contact number to reach them on (four interviewees). Also, four interviewees mentioned that poor network connection meant that some calls would not go through to recipients. Two head teachers reported that PEAS provided insufficient airtime for the amount and length of calls, and three interviewees reported schools were missing contact details of some parents during the school closures.

Since the students are really many and were scattered, the teachers could not handle the overwhelming numbers, only 10 teachers had received airtime so it was not that easy for them to make all those calls. (Head teacher)

Other activities

Aside from the main activities of radio programmes, learning packs, SMS messages and telephone trees, there were a number of additional activities. Findings related to additional activities are presented in four themes: initiatives implemented by individual schools during the school closures, the use of WhatsApp to support students, updated safeguarding and child protection activities, and the ways in which PEAS supported its schools and school staff.

Initiatives implemented by individual schools

Interviewees identified the following support or resources provided by individual PEAS schools:

- Liaised with another head teacher from a leading school in the country to ask for advice, and he suggested creating an online platform for teachers to support students. So, opened a Telegram platform and encouraged students with smartphones to share notes uploaded there with those who did not have phones. Put notes and question papers from other schools on there to share with students.
- Physics and maths teachers opened a WhatsApp group for students to ask questions.
- Science teachers opened an e-learning platform for science students which had online lessons. Students had to pay 20,000 USH to access it.
- Some teachers visited students' homes, if they were completely out of reach or had not come to school at all.
- Where there were many students in one area, the teachers from that area would gather the students together and teach them.
- Marked the books of students who lived nearby.

Four students reported receiving additional support from their PEAS school. These included: sending notes on WhatsApp that could be downloaded and printed, sending Maths questions via text message, and assigning work on WhatsApp. One student reported that their head teacher had a group on Telegram where study materials were posted for students in different classes and resources could be downloaded and printed. However, seven students reported that they did not receive any additional resources or support from their school.

The use of WhatsApp to support students

An inductive theme that emerged from the data was the use of WhatsApp during the school closures. One project staff interviewee mentioned using WhatsApp to connect with teachers and understand what was happening at the school level when it was not possible to visit the School Network. A number of examples were provided by head teachers and teachers of how schools set up their own communication systems using WhatsApp. This was reported by seven school staff (2 head teachers, 5 teachers). The following individual examples of how WhatsApp was used were provided:

- Created a WhatsApp group for S4 students so they could continue learning. They had over 50 students plus their teachers. The teacher would give some work and student would photograph the work done and send it to teachers
- Physics and Maths teachers opened up a WhatsApp groups for students to upload questions
- Students were able to get help through WhatsApp
- Used WhatsApp to help them on topics they needed help in as it was easier than using the phone
- head teacher used WhatsApp group to send notes to students
- There was a school WhatsApp group that some students were active in and these students benefited the most
- Use WhatsApp to contact students and give students counselling and guidance.

Two students also mentioned using WhatsApp to help them continue to learn during the school closures. Students engaged with WhatsApp in the following ways: interacting with teachers on various issues, receiving notes to be downloaded and printed, interacting with friends to get learning materials, contacting teachers on the radio and TV lessons, and receiving homework from teachers.

Updated safeguarding and child protection activities

PEAS adapted its safeguarding and child protection policies for the out of school context. Three project staff interviewees articulated that they were particularly worried about child protection and safeguarding when schools closed, as girls are more at risk out of school. In particular, there were early indications that violence against children was increasing as parents were more stressed and were transferring anger to children when they lost their jobs.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Specialist described the efforts undertaken to adapt the policies and activities: 'Upgrading to be applicable to the times we are living in'. The biggest changes were switching from hands-on implementation to virtual in order to reach students at home, and to include communities in the messaging as well as teachers and students. The policies were updated to include the use of media and telephones. The specialist noted that the more movement that was allowed as restrictions lifted, meant the more robust the safeguarding processes could be. In particular, when schools reopened for S4 and S6 students there were positive impacts on safeguarding, as the students knew they could walk to the school and get help from the staff there, and schools were able to print out some posters and take them to community to spread message of how to stay safe from Covid-19.

The main safeguarding activities during the school closures, as articulated by project staff, were dissemination of safeguarding messages through SMS messages to parents, telephone trees and radio talk shows. The specialist mentioned that parents were included on the PEAS sponsored radio talk-shows to spread community awareness. The safeguarding messaging was built on the model of 'connect, protect, inform and educate':

Connect- building the relationship between PEAS and parents, as well as parents and the children. Protect - asking the children about safeguarding, safety issues, challenges they could be supported with, trying to share with them contacts of people who they could be connected with. Child Protection hotline. Children reported not having sufficient meals - that really came out from their feedback. They were asking PEAS for food. Inform - creating general awareness of the pandemic guidelines by the MoH so people can adhere and understand what they are doing to keep themselves and their colleagues safe. Educate - linked to the learning content through the learning materials. (Project staff)

The messages had to include communities and be culturally appropriate with the right timing and wording. The messaging started with communicating to students to stay safe from Covid-19 and armed forces enforcing Covid-19 measures. The SMS messages encouraged them to wash hands, wear masks, and stay away from congested places. SMS messages aimed at children emphasise listening to parents and following the Covid-19 guidelines, and the messages aimed at parents focused on using positive language when correcting a child, to be encouraging. One critical piece of information that had to be communicated was updated reporting processes as schools were closed. The specialist mentioned that the messaging had to emphasise the toll-free line and anonymous reporting, and to channel students to report to people who would be around them and direct them to people in the community who could support them if the head teachers was not available.

Overall, among project staff there is a positive impression of the impact of the safeguarding messaging during school closures. One interviewee mentioned that the telephone trees helped to identify children at risk and also received self-reported disclosures from parents and children. Another interviewee mentioned that school leaders have demonstrated that they are aware of students who are in danger of dropping out and are mapping out support for them.

School staff reported that the telephone trees were their main avenue for engaging with safeguarding and child protection during the school closures. For example, school staff were able to know if girls were married or planning to get married or if they were pregnant and

parents were not planning to send them back to school. One example a head teacher provided was:

There was one senior three student who was missing from home, so I called the parents and class teachers, they went to the police and they started looking for the girl. The girl had gotten married. When the girl was found she was taken back home. I then wrote a report to the child protection manager of PEAS Uganda about the incidence. (Head teacher)

Alongside this intervention into child protection incidents, the telephone trees were a critical means of communicating safeguarding information related to keeping safe from Covid-19. Seven teachers reported that when they spoke to students on the phone they emphasised the prevention of Covid-19 by following the SOPs: putting on masks, social distancing and reporting symptoms.

PEAS central office support to schools

PEAS central office provided support to the school network to implement the main response activities. There are two main emerging themes among teacher and head teacher interviewees responses regarding the support they received from PEAS during the school closures: airtime and salaries. The provision of airtime was seen as a key form of support from PEAS during the school closures, which allowed teachers to stay in touch with students. This was mentioned by seven head teachers and six teachers. The continuation of salaries was referenced by all head teachers and five teachers. Interviewees provided the information that the salaries were assured between March and December and were reduced to 80% for class teachers and 70% for other teachers. Two teachers noted that they were not happy with the reduction in salary and that they are unsure when it will be returned to 100%. Positive comments made about salaries for PEAS teachers was that they are consistent (two teachers) and that PEAS honours employment contracts with salaries and leave days (one teacher). However, a trend that emerged from the data is that salaries for PEAS teachers and school leaders are considered to be too low, especially compared to those of government schools and the additional responsibilities PEAS teachers take on. This point was made both related to the period of school closures, where there was a reduction in salary, and to salaries preschool closures. This was mentioned by four head teachers and four teachers, with one teacher attributing high staff turnover to this. The two SWT interviewees suggested that they should be paid for the additional work undertaken for the role. Another teacher mentioned that there used to be allowances for additional responsibilities (e.g. head of department or SWT) but that this has been discontinued. It is important to note that PEAS acknowledges that teacher salaries are lower than in other schools as they recruit newly qualified teachers and invest in teacher training, and that is part of the project's strategy to reach full financial sustainability.

Overall, support was seen as sufficient, with the caveat from a number of interviewees that it was sufficient considering the difficult circumstances. Six head teachers reported that the support they received from PEAS was sufficient. Three head teachers reported that it was insufficient, for the following reasons: more airtime needed, more training needed, providing facilitation of transport to deliver packs to students, and teachers should have been

supported to customise resources. Among teachers there was also a positive impression of the support, with eight reporting that it was sufficient.

Effectiveness of the Covid-19 response

Findings relating to the effectiveness of the Covid-19 response activities are presented in three themes: the impact of the response activities on learning progress, caregivers' perception of the Covid-19 response, and the perception of school staff of the effectiveness of the response activities.

Impact of activities on learning progress

The median student was able to access three Covid-19 activities (29.8%). Two Covid-19 activities were accessed by 22.2% of students and one by 8.1% of students. Only 4.6% of students accessed no activities at all. Survey data was used to assess the Covid-19 activity that had the biggest relationship with most effect on students' perception of their learning progress during Covid-19³⁷. Multiple regression analysis was used to predict whether the frequency of listening to educational radio programmes, using learning packs, reading SMS messages and speaking to a teacher on the phone had any effect on learning progress during the pandemic. The results indicated that, collectively, the predictors explained 12.75% of the variance in students' progression in learning, even when levels of poverty ($\beta = 0.084, p > 0.05$) are controlled for (F(5, 465) = 13.58, p < .001). Notably though, listening to the radio was not a significant predictor of progress ($\beta = 0.048$, p>0.1). However, using learning packs ($\beta = 0.189$, p<0.001), reading SMS messages (β = 0.15, p<0.01) and speaking to a teacher (β = 0.119, p<0.05) all were- in diminishing order of contribution to learning. Whilst listening to the radio was not a significant predictor of progress in learning during the pandemic, relative to other Covid-19 learning activities, it was found to have an effect when other activities were excluded from the model (β = 0.163, p<.001; (F(2, 468) = 7.179, p < .001, R² = .026). Poverty was still kept in as a control variable ($\beta = 0.071$, p > 0.1).

There were also notable differences in which learning activities were most important for girls and for boys. When girls alone were considered in the model, the only activities that had a significant effect on learning progress during the pandemic were listening to the radio often ($\beta = 0.14$, p<0.05) and using learning packs ($\beta = 0.247$, p<0.001), with learning packs having the larger effect of the two. Collectively, all activities (with poverty included as a control) explained 15.3% of the variance in learning progress (F(5, 201) = 8.447, p < .001).

When only boys were considered however, the activities that had an effect on learning progress, in order of diminishing effect, were reading SMS messages (β = 0.175, p<0.01), speaking to teachers (β = 0.151, p<0.05) and using learning packs (β = 0.143, p<0.05). Although a greater number of activities had a significant effect on learning progress for boys though, the

³⁷ Whilst students' learning progress was not extensively measured in the survey, students were asked one question to get a basic understanding of whether they thought they had progressed in their learning during the pandemic: 'To what extent do you agree with this statement: I progressed in my learning while at home during the school closures'/'To what extent do you agree with this statement: I am progressing in my learning while at home'

collective variance explained by the model was less for boys than it was for girls ($F(5, 258) = 6.339, p < .001, R^2 = 0.092$). It might therefore be assumed that the PEAS activities were, collectively, of greater benefit to girls, regardless of their level of poverty.

Caregivers' perception of Covid-19 response

Most caregivers of students in S4 and S6 either agreed or strongly agreed (44.8% or 31%, respectively) that their child's school had provided enough support and resources for them to continue learning at home while the school was closed. Some 17.2% of caregivers together disagreed or strongly disagreed with that view. Caregivers of students in S5 had similar opinions, with 20% strongly agreeing, 42.2% agreeing and 28.9% disagreeing that their child's school provided enough support and resources for them to continue learning at home. Overall, 43.7% of caregivers agreed that their child's school provided enough support and resources; 26.2% strongly agreed and 20.4% disagreed. Further, caregivers most commonly noted that their children who are not in a PEAS school had received no resources (40.6%), other people's learning packs or materials from other schools (34.8%) and study packs (18.8%).

Perception of the Covid-19 response effectiveness among school staff

School staff were asked how effective they thought the PEAS activities during the school closures were in helping the student study at home. There was some disagreement among the interviewees, although notably no interviewee said that the PEAS activities were totally ineffective. Some 11 interviewees said that the PEAS activities were effective or helpful for students studying at home, and eight interviewees said that the effectiveness of the PEAS activities was mixed, with some effective and some ineffective elements.

I would rate the effectiveness of the PEAS activities during the school closures below 50%. Monitoring the students over the phone was a challenge because when the teachers would call to follow-up on the content they had covered on the learning pack, the teachers would find when they have not read anything PEAS introduced setting. Questions besides the learning packs to aid the students' reading of the learning packs, this scared many students who thought it was an exam. (Head teacher)

Firstly, three head teachers and five teachers said that the PEAS activities were helpful in helping students to keep learning. Learning packs were held up as particularly important for keeping students studying, as well as the telephone calls to motivate students to study using the packs or the radio programmes as they knew a teacher would check. SMS and telephone trees were also held up as effective means of sharing information about radio programmes and Covid-19 and child protection messaging. The overlapping content between the radio programmes, learning packs and SMS and phone calls was seen as a particular advantage:

The students didn't miss anything at all as the topics that were discussed on radio were the same topics in the packs and still the same messages the teachers were discussing on phone. In other words it was the same material but shared out in different ways. It's only

the students who had travelled for holidays who really missed and these were not many. (Head teacher,)

Secondly, five head teachers and three teachers highlighted the mixed effectiveness of the response in helping students continue learning at home. For example, one head teacher said "some groups of learners benefitted while others were left out". The mixed coverage of the response activities is summed up in this quote, regarding the radio programmes:

Here the students that benefited were really few because when I asked a simple question in class when they had returned, it was only the students who were able to listen to the radio programs that were able to answer. They were only like five of them. So at least it helped the learners to push on from where we had stopped studying and it gave them some courage to continue reading their books. But, for those that did not listen did not carry on with studies simply because they did not have radios or they were engaged in a lot of work at home. (Teacher)

One key sub-theme to emerge from this group was that parents were a key factor in the effectiveness of the activities, with parents mediating teachers' access to students and providing the conditions for learning at home, such as encouraging, and giving support and time to study. This was cited by three interviewees as a factor in effectiveness. The division of interviewees suggests that head teachers were more likely to see the mixed effectiveness of the PEAS Covid-19 response than teachers.

10.1.5. Other interventions that contributed to education

Other interventions and contextual factors that may have contributed to the observed changes are outlined below. In regard to the changes to students' learning and post-school transition, it is difficult to attribute change solely to the projects' activities. It is important to remember that the GEARR project takes place within an educational ecosystem of many interventions. Interviewees helped to build a picture of the context in which PEAS operates that may have contributed to the changes in girls' transition prior to the school closures. Interviewees were asked what could have contributed to the change in learning gap between girls and boys and the improvements in post-school transition, outside of the PEAS project. Interviewees spoke of engagement with local government and local leaders, as well as identifying and number of other interventions impacting on girls' education in their area, which are listed below. It is important to note that these interventions may be having an indirect impact on PEAS schools and the communities PEAS engages with and some may work directly with individual PEAS schools, but their contribution to changes in girls' education is not quantified in this evaluation. The purpose of identifying these other interventions is to contextualise the GEARR project within the broader ecosystem of girls' education interventions, and it is recognised that the primary intervention that PEAS students are exposed to is the daily engagement with project activities and teachers at PEAS schools.

Table 16: Interventions identified as contributing to girls' education, according to interviewees

Intervention	Description of contribution	
Government level interventions		
Ministry of Education campaigns	National sensitisation campaigns for the equal treatment of boys and girls	
District government radio programmes	Radio programmes to speak to girls and the community about girls' education	
District Annual General Meetings	Speaking to parents about the importance of girls' education	
District inspectors	District government efforts to encourage drop outs to go back to school	
NGO intervention		
SIMANENI	NGO that is specifically focused on girls' retention at school	
TEAMS 4 YOU	NGO helping with girls' education and basic personal requirements	
ACTIONAID	NGO doing advocacy on the rights of girls	
BRAC	NGO that identifies and supports A-Level students by paying fees	
Save The Children	Promotes the equal treatment of girls and works in mountainous schools to train teachers and build staff quarters	
FAWE	Supporting girls in post-primary education with sponsorships	
The Invisible Child	Supports students by paying school fees	

UNICEF "go back to school" programme	Programme focused on student retention, and works to sensitise teachers, learners and communities and education
Joy for Children	Advocates for an end to violence against children
Raising Voices	Advocates for an end to violence against children
CAN Foundation	N/A
FAO	Previous engagement has ended
CDC	NGO paying school fees for girls

The other emerging theme for the transition contribution narrative is that girls are motivated to enrol and stay in school if they have female role-models to look up to. This is reflected in the appointment of senior women teachers in PEAS schools. One project staff member specifically raised the importance of girls seeing women in professions and being recognised at the political level, and another project staff interviewee highlighted the importance of senior women teachers to enrol in A-Level:

The change of more girls enrolling, when girls see women involved in professions and getting recognised at the political level that encourages them. Most of the ministers in the science ministries have been women - engineers at the national political levels, women in parliament - that helps the girls in school. The girls see where you are taking them, which looks good, rather than talking in a vacuum. When we say you have more opportunities, see the example at the community and at the national level. It motivates them. (Project staff)

Similarly, the Covid-19 response activities were implemented in the context of other educational interventions targeting out of school children. The survey data reveals that students were accessing additional educational resources not produced by PEAS. Some 61.3% of students said that they had accessed non-PEAS resources, with there being substantial differences in this view by class group (X^2 (2, 483) = 22.716, p = 0.000). Students in S4 (76.1%) were the most likely to report accessing resources which were not from PEAS or their school, with students in S6 following at 56.4% and S5 at 51.6%. There were also significant differences by gender, with girls and women (67.9%) being more likely to access non-PEAS resources than boys and men (56.3%) (X^2 (1, 483) = 6.418, p = 0.011).

These additional educational resources were, according to students, most commonly accessed via the government (36.3%), educational television shows (12.9%) and from other household members (12.2%). Notably, there was significant variation in these responses by class group (X^2 (14, 295) = 29.656, p = 0.009). Students in S5 (19.5%) were the most likely to receive resources from others in the household when compared with students in S4 (9.1%)

and S6 (9.8%). Conversely, students in S5(3.7%) were the least likely to use educational television, when compared to students in S4 (15.7%) and S6 (17.4%). Finally, 26.1% of students in S6 reported receiving resources from the government, compared with 46.3% of students in S4 and 32.9% in S5.

Caregivers also expressed mixed views about whether they had accessed any additional resources for their children, during school closures, that were not from PEAS centrally or PEAS schools. Some 45.6% said that they had accessed such resources; 54.4% said that they had not. The most common source of additional resources were the government (29.8%) and educational television shows (23.4%).

The nature of these resources was explored in the qualitative data, and interviewees provided a wealth of information regarding the educational resources available during the school closures that were not provided by PEAS.³⁸ The main sources of educational resources outside of PEAS were radio programmes, TV lessons and newspapers with learning activities. It appears that this content was produced by or sponsored by the government. Aside from these formal educational activities, there were a range of personal efforts to source information and resources from peers, family members and other schools. Of the students interviewed, only one had not accessed any additional educational resources outside of those provided by her PEAS school. The most commonly reported additional educational resource that students mentioned accessing was TV lessons, which six students interviewed had watched during the school closures. Three of these students tuned into BBC TV and two of these mentioned calling in to engage with the teachers on the programme, one student reported watching Physics, Maths and Chemistry lessons on UBC TV, and two students did not cite a specific station.

The second most common resource, mentioned by four interviewees, was using the learning activities in newspapers. Only one interviewee provided the name of the newspapers she read, The New Vision and Bukedde News. The newspapers had questions relevant for different year groups as well as the answers and were distributed to local council leaders. Radio stations would announce what was in the newspapers, so the students knew to buy them, but also they found out from their family and friends, the local council and from the vendors.

Three students interviewed mentioned listening to non-PEAS radio programmes. There was an awareness among these students that they were listening to government produced or non-PEAS programmes because the PEAS ones were clearly referenced as PEAS-produced. The radio stations mentioned were a physics lesson on Jubilee Radio Kisoro, a geography lesson on Voice of Tooro, and biology and physics lessons on CBS radio.

In addition, one student was able to have her father purchase educational books for her to use as well as having two textbooks from before school closures, another moved into a town

³⁸ Note that this does not include reference to the packs, as the findings for this are covered in the packs specific section. The packs were designed by NCDC and distributed both through PEAS and local council leaders.
and her father paid for an economics teacher, and one student mentioned receiving some Covid-19-related papers from an NGO called Reach A Hand.

The formal sources of educational resources that the students mentioned were also mentioned by district inspectors, head teachers and teachers. Firstly, 12 interviewees cited that students accessed television lessons. The main stations that were identified were: UBC TV, Bukedde TV, BBS TV and NTV. It is important to note that many households do not own a television and therefore many PEAS students would not be able to access educational television lessons. Secondly, five interviewees explained that districts provided some funding for parents to buy newspapers that had school-work (sponsored, included on a daily basis, and distributed to local councils). The only newspaper that was identified by its title was The New Vision newspaper. Thirdly, 15 interviewees cited the radio stations that broadcast radio programmes not produced by PEAS, and it appears that most of the content is produced by the government. A district inspector said that the government educational radio programmes are broadcast on Radio UBC, Top Radio and Teso Radio. The radio stations cited by interviewees are: Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC, this airs nationwide) (5), CBS Radio (3), MAMA FM in Bukedea district (1), Radio Uganda (1), and five interviewees referenced local radio stations but did not give a name. One project staff member also identified that WorldVision was providing radio lessons for primary school students.

One NGO intervention was mentioned by an interviewee: Raising Voices works with the CAN Foundation and Joy For Children to engage communities during the Covid-19 pandemic and encouraging parents to support education. Another interviewee mentioned that the Village Health Teams were moving door to door to teach about Covid-19 prevention.

An inductive theme that emerged from the data is that alongside the formal Covid-19 response implemented by PEAS, there was a significant amount of informal support among students. A head teacher and teacher reported that students would meet with their peers in the same area (including non-PEAS students) to discuss together and share learning materials. This was a common activity among the students interviewed, with eight students reporting that they engaged with their friends during the school closures. The activities included discussion groups, watching TV lessons together, discussing the learning pack contents, sharing learning materials, notes and past papers. Clearly there was information sharing happening in these networks, with students reporting finding out about learning materials through their friends, especially friends at other schools: a student mentioned that she learned about the Maths and English resources in the newspapers from a friend; another student mentioned that she learned about question papers being distributed at another secondary school; a student reported that her friends told her about the PEAS radio programmes; and another student reported accessing a radio from a neighbouring household to listen to the radio programmes.

Six school-level interviewees also cited examples of informal efforts that are relevant to the contribution analysis. Three interviewees mentioned that some students are attending private tutoring with both PEAS and non-PEAS teachers. Two interviewees cited that some students are buying their own educational books from the bookshop to guide their learning. One interviewee mentioned that some schools have hired teachers to go into villages and teach a group of students one two weeks at a time. One interviewee mentioned that some

students are using internet cafes for their learning. And lastly, one interviewee mentioned that churches in their area are supporting learning, with one church in Buloba Trading Centre training students in life skills and another pastor offered the church spaces for lessons and brought in teachers to run S2 and S3 classes.

10.2 Barriers to learning and transition

10.2.1 Introduction

This section presents findings related to the changing barriers to learning and transition faced by marginalised girls and boys, in three subsections;

- Section 3.2.2 barriers to learning
- Section 3.2.3 barriers to transition and retention

Findings in this section relate to the following research questions:

- RQ 2: How have the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys changed throughout the course of the project?
- RQ 2.1: How have project activities responded to and accommodated the changing barriers to learning and transition across the life of the project?
- RQ 3: Was the project well-designed to meet its objectives?
- RQ 3.1 Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently?

The section closes with a contribution analysis of the changes to barriers outlined, including whether the expected outcomes in the original Theory of Change have been observed and the extent to which the project has contributed to them.

10.2.2 Barriers to learning

This section presents findings related to the barriers to learning faced by marginalised girls and boys, both before and during the school closures. Commentary is also presented on the appropriateness of the project design to address these barriers and suggested improvements, largely arising from the qualitative data in the contribution narrative. The learning outcome was not a priority for the endline evaluation and therefore minimal evidence was gathered through the primary data collection, particularly regarding barriers to learning pre-school closures.

Barriers to learning prior to school closures

The barriers to learning faced by marginalised girls and boys prior to the school closures was explored in the qualitative data. Teachers, head teachers, district inspectors and project staff interviewees were asked why they thought the learning gap between girls and boys persists.

A very strong trend to emerge from the qualitative data is that gender inequitable attitudes are a major contributing factor to the learning gap between girls and boys. Indeed, gender inequitable attitudes were identified as contributing to the learning gap between girls and boys by five project staff interviewees, seven head teachers and nine teachers. This is captured in the quote below:

Indeed the learning exists and persists especially due to the reason that here in the rural areas many people are biased about girl's education. For instance you may find that if a boy and girl come from the same home, most times boys are given time to go and read their books whereas girls are made to continue with the domestic work at home. (Head teacher)

This section analyses the six priority barriers that were reported in the data. It considers inequitable gender attitudes at the community and home level, inequitable gender attitudes at the school level, inequitable gender attitudes amongst girls themselves, barriers from the disproportionate burden of chores, barriers relating to lack of menstruation provision, and barriers for children with special educational needs. It closes by acknowledging that some data suggests some of these barriers were reducing in magnitude in the period prior to school closures.

Gender inequitable attitudes at the community and home level

At the community level interviewees identified that there are cultural biases at play in the communities that PEAS serve. The most commonly identified are that, firstly, girls are expected to do large amounts of domestic work that affects their learning (three project staff, three head teachers, four teachers). Secondly, parents often value and support boys' education more than girls' (two project staff, four head teachers, two teachers). This plays out in the following examples: some parents do not think that girls should proceed beyond a certain level of education; priority is given to boys rather than girls, for example giving them access to learning materials or opportunities, reporting back to school first, paying boys' fees first, girls staying home to do chores or to let boy continue; and lack of encouragement for girls to continue studying. Thirdly, girls are expected to marry early, and some parents marry off girls if they cannot afford school fees (two project staff, one head teacher). Fourthly, cultural and religious beliefs in the community (two project staff, one teacher), for example girls internalise the language and expectations they are exposed to before they come to a PEAS school. Two project staff interviewees explained that while progress has been made at the school level to challenge cultural gender norms about girls' education, there is a need to make changes at the community level so that girls and boys are afforded the same access and opportunities in education.

Attitudes towards gender equity and girls' education were explored in the caregiver survey, showing that female and male caregivers had similarly high gender equity attitudes overall. Female caregivers, on mean average, scored 23.32 on the survey, whilst male caregivers

scored 23.55 on average³⁹. Whilst there are areas of positive attitudes, exploration of the individual questions in the index, as well as additional questions on gender⁴⁰, highlighted areas for improvement as well. Caregivers largely agreed (99%) that girls' education is equally as important as boys' education, that girls should attend school whilst menstruating (99%)* as well as that girls have the same right to go to school as boys do (99%). All caregivers also agreed that men and women both have the right to enrol in higher education. However, only 86.3%* of caregivers agreed that when a girl gets married, or starts a family, it is important for her to continue her education. Further, fewer caregivers also believed that women should know about family planning before marriage (87.4%) than they believed that men needed to know (82.5%). Conversely, whilst all caregivers believed that boys should be allowed to participate in sports, only 96.1% believed that girls should be allowed to do the same. Notably, there was no significant relationship between caregivers' level of education and their attitudes on gender ($r_s(101) = .171$, p = .087).

Other community-level inequitable attitudes contributing to the learning gap identified by interviewees were: when deciding how to spend scarce resources parents likely to see boys education as a better investment for future return (four interviewees) and the impact of pregnancy and early marriage disproportionately affects girls' education compared to boys (three interviewees).

Gender inequitable attitudes at the school level

At the school level, while many teachers and head teachers interviewed identified inequitable gender norms at play in the community, they also expressed their own inequitable attitudes, which means that girls are also exposed to this at school. These inequitable attitudes are explored in detail below, as well as examples of positive attitudes expressed by interviewees. One project level staff identified this challenge with the 'teacher mindset', in particular with some newly recruited teachers, and how it plays out in their delivery of classes, language use and interactions with girls and boys:

I think learning gaps still exist. There are issues to deal with concerning teacher mindset, such as in terms of teacher delivery and language-use, and also in terms of being equitable when reaching out to boys and girls. For example, with some of the new [to PEAS] teachers, you might hear those teachers say things like 'Speak like a man' to male students, or that sciences are not meant for girls to do. We're strongly trying to address that with gender responsive teaching. In terms of the children, they're joining schools after having

³⁹ The lowest possible score on the scale was 2 and the highest possible score was 24. Notably, whilst the GEI toolkit mentions that their reliability score (Cronbach's alpha) was above .70 in piloting, with our sample of caregivers, the alpha score was only 0.488. The scale therefore may not have consistently measured what it was meant to with our sample, and this casts some doubt on the reliability of caregivers' scores.

 $^{^{40}}$ Questions related to gender that were asked in the survey, but are not in the GEI are indicated using an asterisk (*)

seven years of hearing that type of language and having that type of mindset, so it can be difficult to turn around. (Project staff)

Gender inequitable attitudes may be most prevalent among newly recruited teaching staff at PEAS schools, although there is insufficient evidence to conclude this as all school staff interviewed had been teaching at PEAS schools for a minimum of three years, as required by the sampling criteria.⁴¹ Two interviewees identified biases in school staff and having to train new staff to follow the PEAS approach and values as contributing factors to the learning gap between girls and boys. Below is an analysis of both gender inequitable and equitable attitudes expressed by the school staff interviewed.

The most commonly articulated inequitable gender attitudes by school staff was that girls tend to be lured into sexual activities that disrupt their learning and do not have the selfcontrol to continue their studies in the way that boys can (three head teachers, five teachers). This attitude is captured in the quote below:

There are some barriers that are unique to girls only for instance girls lack self-control when they start relating with boys in unhealthy relationships, the way the concentration of girls is taken up in boy girl unhealthy relationships is not the same way as the boys, boys have self-control while relating with girls, they remain focused to their studies compared to girls who lose concentration in their studies and end up failing at school. (Head teacher)

It is important to note that while it is appropriate to highlight that girls' learning may be interrupted by relationships, it is not equitable to apportion blame to girls for being susceptible to these relationships or that it is their fault for the disruption, especially when not examining the role of boys and men in the relationship or the cultural norms and expectations at play. The second most common inequitable attitude referenced by school staff was that girls do not put in the effort to perform well at school, compared to boys (one head teacher, five teachers). The third most common attitude was that girls are lazy compared to boys, cited by three teachers, with one saying:

Girls generally have a lazy attitude towards education compared to boys for instance boys wake up easily and early but girls have to be forced to wake up and yet they take more time preparing themselves compared to boys. The boys tend to persevere more during hardships compared to the girls who easily give up or look for other easier options which may affect their studies. (Teacher).

Two teachers attributed this lack of effort to the aspirations that girls have to raise a family. One teacher recognised that this aspiration is strongly influenced by the cultural norms and pressures that girls experience as they know that they are expected to get married and raise children at home whereas boys know that they are expected to financially provide for a family. Again, it is important to note that it is appropriate to highlight that girls might work less at school, but without exploration and consideration of why it is inequitable to attribute

⁴¹ One teacher did not meet this criteria but was interviewed to sample a Senior Woman Teacher who met the other sampling criteria. She had been in the role for one year at the time of interview. One head teacher did not meet this criteria, having been a head teacher at a PEAS school for one year, and was interviewed to meet the sampling criteria of a school leader being interviewed at every school that the students interviewed attended

this to laziness or an innate inability to work hard. This is particularly concerning when many interviewees identified that girls have a larger workload of domestic chores and have competing narratives about the worth and value of their education for their future. Other inequitable attitudes mentioned by teachers were: girls are more distracted than boys and less interested in studying when at home, in particular because they care about their looks, make-up and 'showing off' (two teachers) and that girls have more needs than boys which is difficult to manage (one head teacher, one teacher).

It is important to note that among discussions of the barriers facing girls' learning and transition, there were a number of examples of positive attitudes towards gender equity. Three head teachers reported that girls have been scoring higher marks than boys in their school:

I also noticed that our girls on the other hand are performing better than boys, in A level across the district our girls were the best and we also engage the senior woman teacher who is too close to the girls so maybe that gap exists in other schools but not ours, the girls in our school challenge boys. (Head teacher)

Two maths teachers reported encouraging girls that they can do maths and that it is not only a subject boys can excel in. For example, one teacher said:

We need to sensitise the girls that they can also do math. That is why in my classes, I usually tell the girls not to think that math is for boys. I let them know that what a boy can do they can also do. For those that listen to this advice you find then excelling for example we have even had girls getting Division One and Two. (Teacher)

One head teacher reported wanting to sensitise parents about equal distribution of work at home for girls and boys:

The schools should continue sensitization of parents about equal distribution work at home for both boys and girls. Both boys and girls should be involved in work related activities regardless of the sex for instance if there is peeling of potatoes at school, both boys and girls should be called to peel the potatoes and not girls only, because if the attitude of the young boys towards work is changed at an early age, when they have become parents, they will implement the same in their homes. Schools should practice gender equality whereby the same kind of work should be given to both boys and girls without bias on their sexes. (Head teacher)

As such, while there is evidence that inequitable attitudes are a barrier to learning that girls may experience from some teachers at school, there is also evidence that many teachers are promoting gender equitable attitudes in their teaching practice. Further examples of positive teaching practices, including gender responsive pedagogy and learner centred approaches, are explored in section 3.1.2 (teaching practices and conditions for learning).

Gender inequitable attitudes amongst girls themselves

Unsurprisingly, girls have internalised some of these gender inequitable norms and attitudes. This was identified by two head teachers and four teachers as playing out in girls believing that sciences are for girls and arts are for girls: 'girls feel that some subjects are for boys, not for girls'. (Head teacher) This gender-stereotyping comes from messaging in the community and at school, as well as partly from a lack of female teachers in maths and sciences working as a role-model. One teacher explained:

Math and girls. It has not started recently this has always been there so it is more of a belief and we always talk about this. You find girls are better in English than Math. So, the girls do not just practice Math since they just have the mentality that they cannot pass it, they feel like Math is for men. [...] The other challenge is that it is mainly the male teachers that teach Math so the girls tend to think that math is for men only. (Teacher)

The theme to emerge here is that as a result of this internalised belief, girls work less hard at the science and maths subjects. This is captured in the following quote:

The reason is that girls have a mentality that math is for boys and English for girls so you find that girls are reluctant to concentrate in Math. So, they just opt for English and History. (Teacher)

Another teacher reported that girls ask fewer questions in class because they fear the reaction of their male peers:

Other girls while in class fear to ask questions because boys laugh at them and when asked questions in class girls tend to fear answering due to the fact that when a wrong answer is given boys criticise them. (Teacher)

However, it is important to note that the students interviewed did not express gender inequitable attitudes or present evidence of internalised inequitable attitudes affecting their learning. Indeed, the students interviewed appeared confident in their learning, with a wide range of subjects identified as their favourites, with both arts and science subjects mentioned:⁴²

- Geography: four students
- English: three students
- Biology: two students
- History: two students
- Chemistry: two students
- Commerce or entrepreneurship: two students
- Divinity: two students
- Agriculture: one student
- Art: one student
- Economics: one student
- Kiswahili: one student
- Luganda: one student
- Maths: one student
- Physics: one student

⁴² Some students selected multiple favourite subjects, so the sum is greater than the number of students interviewed

Arts subjects were cited as a favourite subject more commonly than sciences, with only one student selecting Maths as their favourite. This may point to internalised attitudes, but there is insufficient evidence to conclude this.

Barriers from the disproportionate burden of chores

Another strong theme to emerge from the qualitative data is that domestic chores are a barrier to learning for girls and a major contributing factor to the learning gap between girls and boys. Domestic chores were cited as one of the factors contributing to the learning gap between girls and boys by: five project staff interviewees, four head teachers and five teachers.

You see unlike the boys, girls are given a lot of household chores to do like going to the garden, fetching water, cooking food, so they end up losing time for reading their books and they cannot even read at night when they are tired, so boys for them they have enough time to read their books. (Teacher).

The unequal allocation of chores arising from community attitudes related to equal access to education was cited by four project staff, two head teachers and two teachers. The following negative impacts of domestic chores on girls' learning were identified: girls have less time available to studying compared to boys (three head teachers, two teachers, two project staff), girls are too tired from their chores to study at night (two teachers, two project staff) and some parents stop girls from attending school to do domestic chores (one teacher). There is consensus in the data that there are strong norms in the community and among caregivers of girls that domestic chores are the responsibility of girls and that boys therefore are granted more time to study or engage in income-generating activities. However, it is worth noting that boys also face barriers related to domestic chores or supporting family business activities.

Lack of adequate menstruation provision

Another barrier to learning that was identified through the qualitative data was lack of adequate provision for girls for menstruation. Menstruation was identified as a barrier to learning that girls experience by the majority of teachers and head teachers interviewed. Lack of adequate provision for menstruation was identified either as a contributing factor to the learning gap between girls and boys or as a barrier to learning that girls face that boys do not by five head teachers and six teachers. The negative impacts that menstruation has on girls learning that interviewees identified were that girls do not attend school if they do not have sanitary pads, which is an essential scholastic material for them that many parents cannot afford (four head teachers and three teachers), girls' ability of concentrate and learn is disrupted by period pain (four teachers), and poor sanitary facilities at school encourage girls to stay home when menstruating as it is not hygiene (one head teacher). Furthermore, one head teacher reported that previously reusable pads were provided to girls and there was a notable impact on keeping girls in school.

Barriers to learning for those with special educational needs

Students with special education needs (SEN) face additional barriers to learning. Two students with visual impairments were interviewed and asked about how their disability affects their ability to learn and participate at school. Although these experiences cannot be generalised, they are indicative of the additional challenges a visually impaired student may face. For one, she derived her difficulty seeing as 'usually when I open a book, I can't see well and then tears start coming out' and the other not being able to see a long distance and struggling with her eye fogging over, itching and swelling. Firstly, when asked to describe the challenges they face at school due to their difficulty seeing, one said that she struggles to concentrate and sometimes decides to stay at home instead of attending school. The other said that she sometimes struggles to get a seat at the front of class to see. Secondly, when asked how the challenges and spends less time reading so is better than before the school closures. The other reported that due to the Covid-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs) restricting one person at a desk it has become harder to get a seat at the front of class. However, the student pointed out that the teacher helps to fix this.

The two students were asked how the school has helped these students to overcome the challenges they face at school due to their difficulty seeing, one student mentioned that the school encourages and motivates them and that her teachers encouraged her to join a discussion group where her peers helped her to understand things that she did not understand in class. For the other student, they reported that her teachers ensure that she gets a seat at the front of class and that teachers call her parents for medicine or to take her for treatment when she is in pain. This student reported that her teachers are 'compassionate and empathetic' towards her when her eye pains her and that encourages her. Her teachers also included her in the Girls' Club, which she said helped her confidence grow. For both of these students, they were included in extracurricular activities running at the school which were not aimed specifically at students with disabilities but they both were encouraged and motivated by this. Neither mentioned support in navigating the school or making accessibility accommodations, but then this did not appear to be needed with their specific visual impairments.

Perception that some barriers to learning were reducing prior to school closures

It is important to note that among some interviewees there was the perception that prior to the school closures, the learning gap between girls and boys was reducing. Some five project staff and two district inspectors reported that the learning gap was reducing. However, interviewees caveated that there was significant work to be done to close the gap. Indeed, both district inspectors reported that the learning gap increased again during the school closures due to Covid-19, with a large increase in cases of early marriage, pregnancy and abuse.

The Covid-19 school closures have caused more harm than good, it has not only affected the girls, it has also affected the boys, because the children are now idle and exposed to the community and anything can happen. We have done general inspections in the district but we have found no school for the candidate classes who has had all the students returning to school, in some schools only 50% returned to school, some had 80% returned back to school. The cases of early pregnancies in the area have increased. Early marriages in the area have increased. There is a rise of defilement cases in the district. (District Inspector)

It is important to note that the district inspector quoted above was referring generally to schools operating in their district, rather than PEAS schools specifically.

One project staff interviewee reported that in some PEAS schools girls are outperforming boys, which was supported by one head teacher who reported that in 2019 there were more girls than boys who scored Division 1 in the school. Another project interviewee pointed to exam results as evidence of improved learning for girls in PEAS schools, although another emphasised that while there were academic performance improvements for girls, boys still performed more highly. Two project staff interviewees also pointed to increased enrolment of girls across the network.

Barriers to learning during the school closures

Barriers to learning experienced during the school closures were explored in the surveys and interviews. In many ways the barriers to learning experienced by marginalised girls prior to the school closures persisted, or even worsened, during the school closures. This section presents the additional barriers to learning experienced during the school closures in six subsections. The most common and most significant barriers are outlined, then findings related to the greater income generation and support for boys, mixed perspectives on levels of support from teachers, gender inequities at home, increased challenges for older students, and the burden on domestic responsibilities are presented. Lastly, the overall increase in the level of challenges that students face is examined.

The most common and most significant reported barriers

Students were asked to indicate all of the big challenges to learning that they encountered. The most commonly reported challenges that students faced were the lack of money (61.4%), Covid-19-related school closures (20.1%) and having insufficient family support to stay in school (12.2%). Further, a correlation was done to explore the relationship between the number of barriers to learning that students faced and their level of poverty (PPI score). The result suggests that poorer students were likely to face significantly more barriers to their learning than wealthier students were likely to face (r(475) = -.263, p = .000). When specific barriers were explored, some were found to be more significantly associated with certain levels of poverty than others⁴³. Only 52.3% of students with the highest PPI scores reported having inadequate money as a barrier, compared with 75% of students with the lowest scores

⁴³ PPI scores were split into three levels. The lowest level (and the poorest students) included students who had PPI scores below 30. The second level included students with PPI scores between 30 and 49 and the highest level included students with PPI scores of 50 or more.

 $(X^2 (2, 482) = 23.075, p = 0.000)$. The poorest students (33.3%) also were significantly more likely to have inadequate family support to stay in school than the wealthiest students (6.1%), $(X^2 (2, 482) = 29.817, p = 0.000)$.

Students were also asked to indicate the most significant challenge that they faced, from amongst their full list of challenges which was discussed above. Of the challenges faced, the ones most commonly rated as the most significant challenge, by both male and female students, were having inadequate money (52.3%) and school closures (7.3%). These barriers were closely echoed by students' caregivers, with 78.6% of them noting that inadequate money was a concern. No other reason was reported at similar rates, with the next most commonly cited reasons being Covid-19 related school closures (29.1%), inadequate family support to stay in school (10.7%) and students' health (6.8%).

Whilst the overall results point to financial barriers, and school closures, as being the most challenging aspects of learning, there were a few notable variations in response when the student data were disaggregated by gender and age. Boys were significantly more likely than girls to report inadequate money as a challenge (X^2 (1, 482) = 10.501, p < 0.01), with 67.8% of boys stating this, compared with only 53.3% of girls. They were also more likely than girls to indicate that they had insufficient family support (X^2 (1, 482) = 7.469, p < 0.01). Alternatively, girls were more likely to respond stating that they had inadequate support from teachers (X^2 (1, 482) = 4.77, p < 0.05) and that pregnancy (X^2 (1, 482) = 3.845, p = 0.05) and their health (X^2 (1, 482) = 3.930, p < 0.05) were concerns. Greater income generating capacity and support for boys

The qualitative data sheds light on the barriers related to the greater income generating capacity of boys. Boys surveyed were significantly more likely than girls to report inadequate money as a challenge to learning, and a strong theme to emerge in the qualitative data is that boys are more able to generate income to contribute towards the cost of their education by working outside of school hours or during the holidays. As such, it is possible that boys face greater financial barriers to accessing education, but that they have some ability to overcome the challenge through working outside of school. Examples of the income-generating activities boys engage in are laying bricks, picking sugar cane or doing construction work. This was identified as a way in which lack of money affects girls and boys differently by ten interviewees (three project staff, four head teachers and three teachers). However, it is important to note that working outside of school poses a barrier to learning, in much the same way that girls face barriers to learning when engaged in domestic chores. Engaging in income-generating activities can take time away from school-work and leave students too tired to properly engage in learning activities.

Furthermore, a theme that emerged from the qualitative data is that boys have a larger amount of family support to continue in education as there is an expectation that they will support the family financially in the future and therefore the family will benefit from the investment in boys' education. A suggestion for why these divergences may exist is that boys' expectations of income and family support are different to girls due to cultural expectations.

Mixed perspectives on levels of support from teachers

The qualitative data was inconclusive regarding whether girls are more likely to have inadequate support from their teachers during the school closures, and therefore it only partially supports the survey findings.⁴⁴ There was an absence of examples in the data of how teachers and school leaders tailored the support provided during the school closures to the different needs of girls and boys. On the whole, teachers and school leaders articulated that boys and girls received the same intervention and activities, with the equal implementation of activities. However, when asked why girls were more likely in the survey to report that they did not receive sufficient support from teachers than boys, there was disagreement in the sample. Some 11 interviewees rejected the premise of the question. For example, four interviewees do not agree with the statement that girls received insufficient support, pointing to the equal implementation of activities. Two teachers said they thought it would not be likely for girls to report this and four teachers explained this difference by saying that girls need more attention than boys:

'This could be in the nature of male and female, that they girls needed more care and attention and the boys do not care or are easily contented. (Teacher)

Gender inequities at home

However, nine interviewees pointed to a range of gendered inequities at home that have led to the difference in girls' level of support during the school closures (six head teachers, three teachers). The overarching point is that girls had less access to phones to access the support from teachers, and that support was mediated by parents for girls more so than boys:

Girls are more controlled by their parents more than the boys. Other than the girls, most boys have personal phones so it was easier to talk to the boys than the girls. With the girls we had to through their parents, yet this wasn't easy as well. (Head teacher)

Four interviewees explained that some parents refused to give girls the phone to speak to teachers, especially male teachers. One head teacher explained that she had to talk to parents to encourage them to give the phones to girls when teachers called and recalled that some parents preferred female teachers to call them. Another head teacher reported that some parents didn't trust that the phone calls were actually from PEAS, so they had to call parents and suggested having the phone on loudspeaker during the call so they could monitor the content. Another head teacher reported that girls had less access to phones than boys. Three interviewees reported that some girls would be busy with household chores when teachers called and that teachers would be told that girls were unable to speak on the phone. One interviewee added that it was inappropriate for a male teacher to call a female student late in the evening after she had finished chores. Another difference identified by

⁴⁴ The wording of "inadequate" is taken directly from the answer option in the survey. Students were asked: 'What are the biggest challenges you face in your learning at the moment. and this finding relates to those who selected 'Lack of/Inadequate teacher support' as an answer option. The definition of adequate in this situation is based on the individual respondent's perception of whether the support they received from their teachers was enough and is not based on a comparison to non-PEAS schools' Covid-19 response activities.

two head teachers is that more boys own their own phones and therefore can be accessed directly by teachers, whereas girls had to be contacted through parents.

Increased challenges whilst learning at home

However, whilst being an older student appeared to be related to certain challenges, regardless of whether a student was at home or boarding, there were some challenges that appeared to be associated more concretely with being at home. When students' grade was considered, students in S5 were found to encounter challenges significantly more than any other year group. This is potentially because S5 students have been out of school longer as they are not a priority group for returning to school, whereas students in S4 and S6 have been boarding at school. This suggestion seems particularly potent when one considers that doing domestic chores (a challenge commonly faced at home and not whilst boarding at school) was found to be a challenge that was much more common amongst S5 students than both in S4 and S6 (X² (2, 482) = 33.655, *p* < 0.001). 16.4% of S5 students highlighted doing chores as a challenge, compared with only 1.9% of S4 students and 2.4% of students in S6. A logistic regression was also run to further explore whether there was any relationship between students' age and doing chores, whilst controlling for the effect of students' class group. No significant relationship was found, further suggesting that being at home, versus boarding, might be a key barrier to learning unless domestic chores can be reduced at home for some students. Interestingly, there was not a significant difference between girls and boys in S5 reporting chores as a challenge during the school closures. Other findings, that might be similarly explained by students encountering specific challenges at home, that may not be as common at school, were also found. Students in S5 (1.9% of them) were also the only group of students to note that harassment at home or community, such as in the form of emotional, physical or verbal abuse, was a challenge (X^2 (2, 482) = 6.133, p < 0.05). Covid-19 related school closures also appeared to disproportionately affect students in S5, with 34.6% of them stating that it was a challenge, compared with only 14.5% of S4 students and 11.6% of S6 students (X^2 (2, 482) = 31.308, p < 0.001). Finally, S5 students were also the most likely to find studying uninterrupted at home a challenging task (X^2 (2, 482) = 29.976, p < 0.001). Whilst these results paint a picture of the home learning environment being a particularly challenging one for some students, it should be noted that students were not asked, in the survey, about barriers to learning specifically whilst boarding at school.

The burden of domestic responsibilities

Although students in S5 were most likely to report domestic responsibilities as a challenge, domestic responsibilities were not amongst the top barriers faced by boys or girls. Only 6.1% of girls noted it as a challenge according to the survey data. However, contrastingly, a theme to emerge from the qualitative data is that domestic responsibilities, including chores and working in the gardens, was a significant barrier to girls continued learning at home. The main ways in which chores impacted on learning at home, were: the timing of radio broadcasts were at the same time as students were doing chores or working in the gardens (four head teachers, two teachers, one student); some students were too busy in the gardens and other activity at home to listen to the radio programmes or to study their notes (four head teachers, four teachers and three students); sometimes teachers would not be able to talk on the

phone to students when they called if they were busy doing chores (one head teacher, one teacher); students do not have their own phones, so when parents were called by teachers they might not be with the students if they were in the gardens or doing chores (one head teacher); and some students wanted to work in the gardens rather than listen to radio programme as they lost interest in learning the longer school was closed (one teacher).

An overall increase in the level of challenges that students face

The median student thought that the most significant challenge they were facing is much worse than it was before the Covid-19 school closures, with 48.9% of students stating this. Only 3.5% of students thought that the challenge was either better, or much better, than before the pandemic. There were no significant differences in these views by gender or class group. Notably though, 61.2% of caregivers considered the most significant challenge that students faced to be much worse than before the pandemic and 12.6% worse, with only 1% believing it to be better than it was before the pandemic.

10.2.3 Barriers to transition and retention

This section presents findings related to the barriers to transition and retention faced by marginalised girls and boys before the school closures. The findings related to b focus primarily on the barriers to transition from lower secondary to study at A-level. Gendered attitudes towards transition are also explored throughout. Commentary is also presented on the appropriateness of the project design to address these barriers and suggested improvements, arising from the qualitative data. Due to the constraints on data collection and the exclusion of the transition cohort at the endline, there is no evidence quantifying the changes in barriers to transition. However, perceptions of changes to barriers to transition are explored in the student survey and qualitative data.

Barriers to transition

This section starts by outlining the preferred transition pathways and how they differ by gender, as well as the varying levels of knowledge regarding the routes for progression. Students' participation in decision-making that affects their future is also explored.

Preferred pathways differ by gender

Barriers to transition, particularly A-level, were explored in the student survey and qualitative interviewees. A-level is a popular post-school pathway that students aspire to. Indeed, S4 students surveyed overwhelmingly (71.1%) indicated that after finishing lower secondary, they wanted to pursue A-levels. However, there was a significant difference in this desire along gender lines (X^2 (1, 159) = 6.748, p = 0.009). Boys and men were much more likely (81.1%) to want to do their A-levels than girls and women were (62.4%). Interviewees were asked why they think that boys aspire to study A-level more than girls do. The main theme to emerge from the data is that the cultural expectations of girls and boys are different, and that

children internalise these expectations and shape their aspirations around it. Girls know that they are expected to marry and start a family, whereas boys know they are expected to support their family. No students reported aspiring to getting married, vacationing or travelling, after lower-secondary school. More detailed analysis of students' post-school aspirations is included in section 3.1.3.







Varying levels of knowledge regarding routes for progression

Also of note is that amongst students in S4, having a desire to pursue A-levels in the future did not seem to be influenced by the number of ways in which they heard about A-level centres (F(1, 137) = 0.51, p > 0.1). The most common way that S4 students, and those in other class groups as well, heard about A-level centres, was through parents or community meetings. Some 15.8% of students overall heard of the centres through this avenue, with the number rising to 23.7% when only S4 was considered. Across all A-level outreach modes, students in S4 were the most likely to recall having heard about A-levels through them. This might be explained by the S4 cohort still currently considering A-level enrollment; perhaps students in both S5 and S6, having already been enrolled, have not actively considered the process in some time. . Students in S5 and S6 were, however, also asked to try to recall whether they had specifically received advice from teachers regarding enrolling in A-levels and whether the advice was useful. 92.5% of students in S5 and S6 stated that they received advice about A-levels from their teachers when they were still in lower secondary school. 82.2% of those students found the advice to be 'very useful', and 17.5% found the advice to be 'useful'. Only 0.3% found the advice to be 'neither useful nor unuseful' and no one found the advice to be 'unuseful'. Overall, this suggests there is strong awareness of how to enrol in A-Level, and that this is not a particularly active barrier to transition to A-Level.

Student participation in decision-making about their future

Another potential barrier to transition to A-level is how involved students are in making decisions that affect their futures. Students in S5 and S6 said that they were most likely to make the decision to study for A-levels alongside their caregivers (59%). Only 8.6% of caregivers made the decision for students, whilst 31.5% of students made the decisions by themselves. There was no significant difference in who made the decision about pursuing A-levels based on gender (X^2 (3, 324) = .111, p = 0.617). Multinomial regression analysis also revealed that there was no significant difference in who made the decision for a student to pursue A-levels regardless of students' age or poverty levels. Notably though, 68.9% of caregivers were likely to say that they made the decision together with their child, 21.6% said that they, or the adults in the family, made the decision for the child, and 9.5% said that the child made the decision for themselves.

Figure 12: 'Who made the decision for you to study for your A-levels after finishing lower secondary school?', according to S5 and S6 student survey respondents (disaggregated by gender)



Total number of respondents: 324

There were, however, some discernible differences in who made decisions about the future when all class groups were considered (X^2 (4,483) = 24.250, p = 0.000). Students in S4 were more likely to expect their caregivers to decide on what they would do after finishing secondary school (22.6%) than students in both S5 (5.7%) and S6 (12.7%). Conversely, students in S4 were the least likely to make the decision by themselves. 32.7% of students in S4 said that they would make the decision themselves, compared with 40.6% in S6 and 32.7% in S5. Overall, students across all class groups were likely to make the decision alongside their caregiver (50.9%).

Figure 13: 'Who makes the decision about what you will do after you finish secondary school?', according to student survey respondents (disaggregated by class group)



Total number of respondents: 483

Barriers to enrolling in A-level

The primary data speaks most directly to the barriers students face in enrolling in A-level. Students and caregivers surveyed were asked why their friends might be prevented from enrolling in A-level. These findings are presented first. The barriers to transition to A-level were further explored in the qualitative data. Interviewees were asked why many students aspire to study A-levels after finishing lower secondary school but are unable to fulfil this ambition. Six themes emerged from interviewees' answers: cost of A-level, preference for short courses, expectations around marriage and pregnancy, perception of difficulty of Alevel and girls' academic performance, and home-role models.

Perception of barriers affecting friends

Insight into the barriers to enrolling in A-levels were found when students in S5 and S6 were asked why their friends had not enrolled in upper secondary school. The most commonly given reasons were that their families could not afford to enrol their friends (78.1%), their friends did not want to enrol (36.1%) and their friends pursued vocational training or another course instead (26.5%). The least commonly given reasons, apart from not knowing why their friends did not enrol (2.2%), were that their friends did not know how to enrol (3.1%) and that they did not receive any advice from their teachers (3.4%).

When caregivers of S5 and S6 students were asked to consider what might prevent their child or their friends from completing school, the most commonly cited reason was inadequate money: S5 (73.3%) and S6 (89.7%). Other commonly cited reasons were bad behaviour (S5: 35.6%, S6: 20.7%) and inadequate parental support (S5: 26.7%, S6: 13.8%). Despite this, caregivers generally believed that their child would be able to complete upper secondary school (95.9%). There were also a few significant differences in the responses, concerning why their friends had not enrolled in A-level, when disaggregated by gender and

class. Boys and men (4.6%) were significantly more likely (X^2 (1, 324) = 3.759, p = 0.053) than girls and women (0.8%) to state that their friends did not know how to enrol. Grade disaggregation further revealed that students in S5 were more likely to report that their friends did not want to enrol (47.2%) whereas only 25.5% of students in S6 said this (X^2 (1, 324 = 16.550, p = 0.000). Further regression analysis, exploring the relationship between students' friends' reasons for not wanting to enrol in A-levels, and their class still showed a significant difference in the views of S5 and S6 (β =-0.79, z=-2.91, p=.004) students even when students' poverty (β =0.01, z=0.834, p=0.41), age (β =0.24, z=0.314, p=0.754) and the school that they attended were all controlled for. There was no significant relationship between students' age and poverty levels and their thought that their friends did not want to enrol in A-levels. In most cases, being from a particular school also did not appear to significantly bias a student toward thinking that their friends did not want to enrol in A-levels. The exception to this was in Hibiscus PEAS High School and Samling Kazingo PEAS, where students, regardless of the class they were in, generally were likely to think that their friends did not want to enrol in A-levels. 66.7% of students in each of those two schools thought this, compared with 36.1% of students overall across all schools.

It is therefore not clear why the difference between class groups exists. It may be the case that students in S5 are more likely to still have friends who are not enrolled in A-levels, whilst those in S6 are more likely to have friendship groups that are more exclusively made up of A-level peers, and therefore they were less likely to say that their peers were not interested in A-levels. However, we cannot be sure of that reasoning – there may be another unexplored cause. S5 students were also more likely to say that their friends had enrolled in vocational training or another course (X^2 (1, 324) = 6.079, p = 0.014).

Affordability of A-level fees

Firstly, 13 interviewees (six project staff, three head teachers and four teachers) identified that the affordability of A-level fees is a barrier to girls transitioning from lower secondary to A-level. This supports the findings from the surveys that cost is among the most significant barriers to transition. One project staff interviewee explained that the fees at A-Level are high, and this is link to by small class sizes and the cost of maintaining teachers and that fees have to be paid for two years:

The cost of maintaining teachers for A-level is high when so few students transition to Alevel, when the ratio might be 1 to 8 compared to O Level classes, so the fees have to go higher. This is the general context. (Project staff)

One interviewee emphasized that this is an issue even though PEAS fees are comparable or lower than other schools. When asked how the barrier of lack of money affects girls and boys differently, two significant themes emerged. Firstly, that boys are more able to generate income to contribute towards the cost of their education by working during the holidays, for example laying bricks, picking sugar cane or doing construction work. This is not available to girls due to cultural norms and the burden of domestic work. This was identified as a way in which lack of money affects girls and boys differently by ten interviewees. Secondly, individuals articulated that if parents have to choose they are more likely to prioritise sending a boy to A-level than a girl due to a mixture of cultural preferences for boys' education, perceived wider benefits of boys supporting the family, and fears that girls will get married or pregnant and waste the money spent on fees. This was identified by 12 interviewees, and is summed up in the quote below:

The households prefer the males to enrol in A-level because the boys are seen as future household heads, he has got responsibility ahead and yet the girls will be married and provided for by their husbands and yet the boys will need to provide in their households. The parents tend to pay the school fees of the boys before they pay for the girl child if the two are in the same school or class. (Teacher)

Another interviewee pointed out that in large families with many children, parents want their children to finish school fast so that they can send all of the children to school. This means that students have to finish early, or not proceed beyond S4, so that the family can afford to send younger children to school too.

However, there was some acknowledgement among interviewees that more parents, particularly those who are themselves educated, are selecting based on children's performance rather than gender. This was mentioned by four interviewees specifically.

I think the gap is now narrowing, the focus is now on performance, which child performs better, I have seen parents come to our offices and look for scholarships even for the girl child. (District Inspector)

From the student survey there are encouraging findings related to caregivers' support for girls' education. The median student strongly agreed that their main financial supporter thought that girls' education is equally important as boys' education. This was true regardless of the class group a student was enrolled in., or a student's gender. However, significant differences in responses still emerged along gender lines (X^2 (5, 483) = 14.007, p = 0.016). Only 93.4% boys either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, in aggregate, compared with 98.1% of girls.

Preference for short courses over A-level studies

Secondly, a theme to emerge from the data is that both girls and boys have a preference for short courses. This was mentioned by 16 interviewees (two project staff, one district inspector, five head teachers, eight teachers). One of the main reasons short courses are preferred by both parents and girls is that it is quicker to complete and start earning (11 interviewees):

Some girls may think studying A-level is time wasting so they prefer branching off to a course. Parents also think A-level is a waste of years for their girls so they prefer sending them to a course, the reason is that after lower level one joins A-level, then after that University before they can get a job, yet for a course she will spend only three more years in nursing or two in teaching course then she gets a job other than six years for University. In other words, it is the parents' perception that makes girls not continue with A-level. (Teacher)

In particular, interviewees mentioned that the courses are better if girls get married or get pregnant, rather than interrupting A-level:

Because of the bias towards the girl child, many parents fear that the girls will get pregnant while still continuing to A-level and therefore wasting their school fees money unlike the boys where school fees will not be wasted. Many parents have ill thinking that it is better that the girl completes S4 and get married so he can get dowry. (Head teacher)

One interviewee also mentioned that parents believe that nursing and teaching jobs are more readily available, and that girls aspire to lower-level jobs like tailoring or nursing so do not aspire to A-level. Girls have often been told since S1 that they will branch off to a course after S4, which shapes their expectations.

Expectations of marriage and pregnancy

Thirdly, a theme to emerge strongly related to expectations around marriage and pregnancy. There is a clear cultural expectation that girls will get married and get pregnant after S4, and that this is a strong deterrent for parents to invest in their further education. Five interviewees spoke of how girls can get lured into relationships at this stage of life, with one mentioning the particular danger of the holiday between S4 and S5 for this. Pregnancy is linked with drop out for interviewees. Also, important to note that girls tend to start school later than boys and are often aged between 18 and 20 at the end of S4, and therefore are thinking about marriage and starting a family, and parents do not think that they will wait until after completing A-level:

Fear of pregnancy, that is the perception of the parents that the girls have been patient since S1, so they are not sure if the girls can be patient enough to wait for another three years without getting pregnant, they begin to think let the girl go for a course so that if she gets pregnant, she is already somewhere. (District Inspector)

Interviewees highlighted that the expected career pathways are seen as different for girls and boys. For example, three interviewees said that the traditional academic pathway of A-Level and university is seen as more appropriate for boys than girls by many parents, and four interviewees identified that a path towards marriage and family is preferred for girls. For example, one interviewee expressed:

In some instances there might well be beliefs that A-levels are seen as an academic path in preparation for university and it might be the case that some caregivers and families still see that traditional academic path as being more appropriate for boys than girls and there may be challenging decisions to make about support for continuing education. A path toward marriage and family may be the preferred path for girls. (Project staff)

Interviewees expressed that these aspirations both affect the ability of girls to transition with the support of their family, but also affect the aspirations that girls have for themselves. Interviewees also said that boys know that if they aspire to attend university they are likely to have the backing of their parents, and that boys have the expectation that they will be expected to care for the family so have aspirations towards employment and income-generation.

One interviewee mentioned that in some areas the more education a girl has, the less bride price they may attract for their parents. Three interviewees highlighted that many caregivers have the attitude that girls will get married after S4 and therefore paying for them to study at A-Level is a waste of money. Three interviewees also said that fear of girls getting pregnant also pushes parents to pay for a course rather than A-level:

At home some parents decide to take girls to join institutions after O-level, like hairdressing, catering and others, so girls develop this thought that after O -level they can branch for a course. The parents also believe that after Senior 4 the girl will get married so they feel like it's a waste of money. (Teacher)

Lastly, one interviewee pointed out that some parents say that girls are old enough for a family after S4, which affects their transition.

Perceived difficulty of A-level studies as a deterrent

A fourth theme to emerge from the data is that there is a perception among girls that A-level is difficult to pass and therefore many girls do not want to study for fear of failure. This was mentioned by 11 interviewees (one project staff, one district inspector, seven head teachers and two teachers). One of these interviewees gave the example of girls' low self-esteem belief that they won't be able to pass:

In 2018 I had like five students who refused to join A-level, they felt that they had struggled a lot in senior four and could not manage A-level academically, so they refused to continue, they felt like A-level is for boys and opted for short courses in nursing and others. We also had those parents who could not afford A-levels, these students dropped out in Senior 4. (Head teacher)

The perception is that A-level is too difficult and that taking a vocational course is both quicker and easier, which will also cost less money. One interviewee said that parents influence girls towards short courses over A-level for this reason, and another two interviewees said that girls shy away from studying at A-level due to the general opinion that it is too difficult.

Another theme to emerge from the data is that the academic performance of girls is a barrier to A-level, with girls unable to enrol in A-level due to low grades. This was mentioned by nine interviewees (one project staff, two district inspectors, two head teachers and four teachers). One mentioned that girls can enrol in vocational courses with lower grades, which also explains the preference for short courses.

Lack of role-models who studied A-level

A final theme to emerge from the data is that girls do not have good role models at home and this shapes their aspirations of studying at A-level. This was mentioned by four interviewees, with examples such as parents without secondary education and siblings who have dropped out.

Barriers to retention

Changes to barriers to student retention the past 4 years was explored with the district inspector interviewees only. Two interviewees reported that barriers have improved, and one argued that they have stayed the same and then been worsened by the pandemic. Interviewees identified that pregnancies and early marriages have risen during lockdown. Two interviewees agreed that the barriers to retention are mostly the same for girls and boys, with the exception that girls are more affected by the barrier of pregnancy and boys are more affected by the barrier of dropping out to work.

The barriers differ because when a girl gets pregnant, the effect is more on the girl than the boy, it is different, it cannot be like the boy, it is spot on and affects her physically and everyone can see what happened, so the person can shy away, even when a girl goes for early marriage, the girl will go home and the boy will still be going to school, the public opinion will be calling the girl someone's wife which is not done for the boys. (District Inspector)

One interviewee identified a specific example in their district where children, mostly boys, drop out of school to make money to dig stones to make cement. The interviewee reported that this barrier has reduced because PEAS has sensitised about the opportunities for continued learning after dropping out and refers drop outs to the district inspection.

10.3 Sustainability

10.3.1 Introduction

This section presents findings related to the sustainability of the project's activities and impacts, in four sub-sections;

- 3.3.2 sustainability of the PEAS approach
- 3.3.3 sustainability of the Covid-19 response
- 3.3.4 sustainability plans

Findings related to the following research questions are covered in this section:

- RQ 3.1: Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently?
- RQ 3.2: [How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures,] and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?
- RQ 4: How may project activities and observed impacts be sustained after the end of the project?
- RQ: 4.1 Can these project activities and impacts be leveraged by the government and other actors?

The evidence underpinning the findings in this section are primarily drawn from the qualitative data, with some supporting project data included. The section closes with a

contribution analysis of sustainability, including whether the expected outcomes have been achieved and the extent to which the project has contributed to them.

10.3.2 Sustainability of the PEAS approach

This section examines the sustainability of the PEAS approach, with reference to different aspects of sustainability, including the project outcomes, perceived valuable activities and viability of the PEAS model, sector learning and suggested improvements to design or implementation.

Project outcomes

Due to the interruption to the final year of implementation, the targets outlined in the project logframe are no longer applicable. The midline report contains a detailed analysis of the targets that project had already met, those on track to be achieved during the final year of implementation, and those the project was unlikely to achieve. At endline, three project staff interviewees were asked which outcomes they thought PEAS was meeting or on track to meet prior to the school closures and why. The outcomes identified were advances in safeguarding at school and engaging caregivers and communities in discussions around child protection (two interviewees); student retention, particularly the focus on rigorously following up on girls who have dropped out (one interviewee); raising and expanding girls' aspirations of post-school pathways (one interviewee); and quality of learning (one interviewee). On the other hand, the following outcomes were identified by project staff as more challenging to meet: changing community attitudes towards gender equality (one interviewee), girls' confidence and ability to advocate for themselves (one interviewee), enrolment of girls in A-level (one interviewee), and targeted support for literacy and numeracy (one interviewee).

Valuable activities

Perception of the most valuable activities within the PEAS approach is an indicator that these activities are having positive impacts that are worth sustaining. Interviewees were asked what they thought are the most valuable activities happening in PEAS schools that benefit students. The activity most commonly cited by interviewees was the livelihoods and life skills training provided to students in PEAS schools (three project staff, six head teachers, five teacher), followed by extracurricular activities like games, sports, debates, art club (one project staff, four head teachers, four teachers). This is summed up by a head teacher:

Education in PEAS schools is very unique, the teaching, the learning, the resources, the time, all this is special. There are some other co-curricular activities like the livelihood programmes, life skills classes, literacy and reading classes, girls club, career guidance, child protection policy and health, all help to motivate students and engage in extra activities that are beyond classroom lessons. These are more pronounced in PEAS schools and make a big difference in the life of a child. (Head teacher)

Other commonly mentioned activities were: teacher training, including continuing professional development (CPD) sessions (one project staff, one district inspector, two head teachers), safeguarding and child protection policies and practices (one project staff, four head teacher, three teachers), guidance and counselling (three head teachers, two teachers), girls clubs (one project saff, four head teachers, two teachers), and the learner centred approach to teaching (one district inspector, two head teachers, one teacher).

Four project staff interviews were asked to identify the main aspects within sustainability that PEAS should focus on beyond 2021. Two interviewees referenced financial sustainability, namely reducing school dependence on country level support and reaching the goal of no external philanthropy by 2025.

Viability of the PEAS approach

Qualitative evidence suggests that outside of PEAS there is a positive perception of the viability of the PEAS model, which demonstrates the possibility to scale and sustain the model. The three district inspectors interviewed all agreed that the PEAS model of low-cost private secondary education is viable in Uganda, with expansion of the model across Uganda a possibility. The reason given for the viability of the model was that PEAS provides good quality education for low fees (two district inspectors). All agreed that PEAS should build more schools around the country, with one arguing that PEAS should partner with the government to achieve the government goal to have a post-primary institution in every sub-country, with PEAS setting up schools in sub-countries that lack such institutions.

Sector learning

There is evidence that PEAS is creating sustainable change at the sector level through sharing learning and resources. The three district inspectors were asked how they and the wider government have learned from PEAS and their impact. All three interviewees agreed that there is learning from the PEAS approach and that PEAS shares its learning and practice widely, as demonstrated in this quote:

The wider government is learning because the PEAS schools are not selfish, they want to improve the education performance of all Government schools around them, that's why they have extended to partner with Government schools, to see if what they are doing in PEAS schools can benefit the other schools. (District Inspector)

Two interviewees said that they have encouraged other schools to adopt the PEAS approach of having a theme/slogan that guides every academic year, whereby the theme is taught to learners and every activity is geared towards it. Two interviewees also said that they have encouraged schools to adopt PEAS' approach to internal supervision. Other examples provided include: exchange visits with other government schools, non-PEAS schools bringing in external motivational speakers, and at head teachers meeting sharing success stories and successful practices, such as termly work plans. One district inspector also mentioned that they have encouraged other schools to learn from the PEAS approach of talking to students and counselling them rather than corporal punishment

Suggested improvements

While there is a positive impression of the effectiveness and value of sustaining the PEAS approach, the qualitative data revealed that there are some suggested improvements to be made to the design or implementation of the PEAS model. This is an important consideration when regarding the sustainability of the project. Project staff, district inspectors, head teachers and teachers made a variety of suggestions. There were no strong emerging themes given the variety of suggestions, however overall there was a positive impression of the work that PEAS is doing and a strong desire for that to continue.

Among project staff, the only improvement suggested by multiple interviewees was to further develop students' vocational skills so that they have practical and life skills (two interviewees). Other notable suggestions were to have 'extrinsic motivation' for girls to incentivise their learning, such as a bursary for the top girl or most improved in a school (this was also suggested by one teacher), to incorporate digital tools to support supervision and teacher training, to have a coaching or mentoring programme for school staff alongside the teacher training and evaluation, and to have a regional conference for teachers. One project staff interviewee also suggested that there is a need to engage the community more through mass media and engaging with political structures to cause changes in community attitudes. This is supported by suggestions from teachers relating to caregiver attitudes to girls' education. Another project staff interviewee suggested that there was a need for greater engagement with district government, particularly for inspections and disseminating findings in the community.

Among district inspectors, two interviewees suggested that exchange visits for head teachers from PEAS and government schools would be beneficial for mutual learning. Regarding the Inspect and Improve programme, suggested improvements were to have more regular engagement (at least termly) and to reduce the length of the inspection tool. Another notable suggested improvement was to increase the engagement between district inspectors and PEAS central office.

Among head teachers interviewed, four had no suggested improvements or stated that they wanted PEAS to continue implementing their approach as is. Multiple head teachers requested more support to make infrastructural improvements, such as larger laboratory spaces and increased dormitory capacity. Three head teachers made suggestions related to the autonomy of PEAS schools from the oversight of the PEAS central office or government, with two head teachers expressing discontent with the top-down management and decision-making processes in place, as demonstrated in this quote:

If the schools are actually autonomous as they claim, then they should be allowed to do their own procurements like food, the misappropriation of funds or misbehavior by one school should not cause mistrust regarding procurement processes of other schools. There has been mistrust in the leadership where samples of food are taken from the school to the PEAS head office. This is a big demotivator to the school leadership, the roles of the school leaders should be reverted back to them. The work of PEAS secretariat/head office is the role of control and oversight. School leaders should be empowered to do their work, a blanket decision should not be taken that affects all the schools because of the error of one school, when the other schools have been doing well, this stagnates the process of other schools that have been doing well. (head teacher)

Two teachers thought it would be beneficial for PEAS to provide girls with sanitary pads, and the two SWTs interviewed suggested that the role should be compensated in light of the additional responsibilities and activities it includes. Other notable suggestions made by individual teachers were to reduce the student-teacher ratio, invite motivational speakers to encourage girls, to recruit more female Maths teachers to inspire girls, provide financial support and scholastic materials to girls at risk of dropping out, and provide simplified pamphlets for students to revise.

A number of areas were identified by respondents as desirable for training. Among head teachers, the most commonly identified area needing training is financial management. This was mentioned by four head teachers. Two head teachers also stated that they would benefit from training on digital technology and teaching methods, and this was also mentioned by one project level staff member. Another theme was the need for training related to the return of students to school, with one head teacher and one project level staff member raising the need for training on how to emotionally and psychologically support students on their return to school. Two project level staff members also raised the need for refresher teacher training to ensure the quality of teaching and implementation of safeguarding processes is maintained after teachers have not had regular lesson observations, CPD and feedback during the school closures, as well as one

10.3.3 Sustainability of the Covid-19 response

This section examines the potential to sustain elements of the response to the school closures due to Covid-19. The findings draw on references made in the qualitative data regarding the perceived utility of incorporating aspects of the response into regular programme activities, as well as suggested improvements to the response activities.

Benefits of incorporating response activities

Students and school-level staff were asked if they would find it helpful if the Covid-19 response activities continued to be provided once schools fully reopened. Findings are presented in four sub-sections: continuation of the radio programmes, continued implementation of the learning packs, continued implementation of SMS messages, and continued implementation of the telephone trees.

Continuation of the radio programmes

There was disagreement among interviewees regarding whether it would be beneficial for students if the radio programmes continued once schools reopen. Overall, more interviewees said it would be beneficial, with a total of 11 interviewees compared to six who said it would not be beneficial. However, more head teachers said it would not be beneficial (five) than said it would (two), whereas in contrast only one teacher said it would not be beneficial and seven

it would be. Two students who said that they listened to the radio programme said it would be beneficial.

The main reasons provided by interviewees to continues the radio programmes are to help children to continue learning at home if they are not able to return, for example if their parents cannot afford school fees (six interviewees, including both students), to catch up on lessons missed during the school closures (two interviewees), and students have got used to learning with the radio programmes (two interviewees). The quote below captures this sentiment:

It would be beneficial because not all the students will report to school some parents may lack money to take them back to school so if the radio programmes continue those that did not go back will still benefit from them. They could also be important when children are back home for holidays, this helps them revise their books. (Teacher)

Other reasons provided by individuals were that some students might not express themselves to the teachers but would call into the radio programme, the radio programmes helps keep learners informed, help students revised during the holidays, keep the students busy and safe from disease, and that non-PEAS students who have not returned to school can use it, as evidenced by this quote:

Yes, because for example my sister also used to follow the radio programme although she is not at Peas and for them, they have not yet returned to school. So those who are at home can also still benefit. (Student)

The main reasons cited by interviewees who said it would not beneficial to continue the radio programme were that students are not allowed to have radios in schools or boarding dormitories (four interviewees), it is a better investment of money into running schools than radio programmes (two interviewees), at schools teachers will teach students (two interviewees). Other reasons cited by individual teachers are that it is difficult to know if learners are listening to the programmes, that it is not possible to adapt the radio programmes to meet every school's individual needs, topics will be covered in school, and that students will not have time to listen to the radio programmes.

Because once the schools reopen, the students will be at school and not in a position to listen to any radio programmes. Besides the school doesn't allow students to bring radios, students will not have time to listen in to the shows at all, and here at school we shall be covering the same topics. (Head teacher)

Continued implementation of learning packs

There was the highest level of support for the learning packs to continue, with ten students interviewed saying that they would find it helpful for the learning pack resources, or something similar, to continue. The main reason provided was that it helps them understand what they were taught in class (four interviewees). Other reasons provided by individuals is that the packs simplify the lesson content, helps them prepare for exam questions, encourages them to learn and learn beyond the work set by the teacher. Three students said,

however, that the packs would only be helpful if they have topics and subjects covered in school and relevant to them.

Continued implementation of SMS messages

There was also a high level of support among students for the SMS messages to continue, with seven students saying that they would find it helpful. The main reasons for this was that it encourages them to study (three students) and that it reminds parents to pay school fees, as evidenced by this quote:

I prefer the continuity of the messages even after school return because they advise us how to avoid Covid-19 and encourage us to read yet all things are still ongoing. (Student)

Other reasons provided by individuals were that the advice on how to avoid Covid-19 was helpful, the SMS messages are helpful reminders, they help girls to be safe at home, parents will know that students are safe at school, parents are informed of school requirements, students can be confident because they know what to do, and it helps people to come to school.

Continued implementation of telephone trees

There was disagreement among the students interviewed about whether they would find it helpful for the telephone trees to continue. Four interviewees said that they would find it helpful to speak to a teacher on the phone once they return to school. However, seven students said that they would not find it helpful to speak to a teacher, with the main reason being that they will be able to talk to their teacher in person at school (six students), as demonstrated in this student quote: 'When I am at school, I don't expect to talk to her [the teacher on the phone because I can talk to her physically'.

Suggested improvements

Interviewees proposed a range of suggested improvements to the Covid-19 response implemented by PEAS. On the whole, there was a positive impression of the response but a recognition that some students benefited from the response more than others. Indeed, three teachers and two head teachers had no suggested improvements to the PEAS Covid-19 response. Suggested improvements are presented in five themes: access to textbooks, improvements to the radio programmes, interaction between students and teachers, sensitisation of caregivers, and school-level suggestions.

Access to textbooks

Of the students interviewed, five said that they would have benefitted from access to textbooks during the school closures. An emerging theme was that students struggled to engage with some resources that did not have their subjects included. Some five interviewees reported that the learning packs would be more effective if it had all their

subjects included, and one respondent mentioned this in regard to the radio programme. A student summed up her experience of the lack of subjects in the learning pack:

Since the pack was not containing much of my subjects I did not give it a lot of my time but for the little that was there and could understand it well, I would read and it helped me in that field so well to stay focused. The pack contained mostly sciences but my combination is for arts and my sister too in S6 at the same school. The materials were not helpful because they did not contain my subjects and even the one subject geography which was there, was for form six and too hard to understand. (Student)

A number of suggestions were made regarding additional resources that most likely stem from this: booklets with answers and questions, more notes from school, and practical guides.

Improvements to the radio programmes

Regarding the radio programmes, the main improvements that students mentioned were having more information about when the programmes were on (three interviewees), having longer programmes so could engage more with the material / not feel rushed (two interviewees), and to have more active participation with the radio programme (one interviewee). Other suggestions from students were to have online groups to discuss learning materials with classmates (one interviewee), to have more calls from teachers (one interviewee), more assessments (one interviewee), to see teachers in person (one interviewee) and to receive face masks from the school when at home (one interviewee).

Responses from teachers support some of the suggestions made by students, including two teachers who thought the radio programmes should be longer and that more subjects should be included, and one who thought the radio programmes should have more active interaction. One teacher suggested buying some radios for villages to have for communal use, to address the issue of students not having radios at home, and another pointed out the need to change the time of the radio programmes to the evening so students were not busy with chores when it was on, as evidenced in this quote:

The production would take place in the morning between 10am and 11am but that was the time parents needed to be with their children in gardens, there was need to change the time to evening hours like 7pm or 4pm and onwards or afternoon hours when students are free from work to listen. (Teacher)

For one teacher many of their students did not have a radio station broadcasting the radio programmes.

Interaction between students and teachers

The desire to have more interaction between teachers and students was apparent among interviewees, with a number of teachers suggesting different ways they wanted to interact with their students. It is important to note that many of these suggestions would have not been safe for PEAS to implement during the pandemic, but they speak to the desire to recapture the teacher-student interaction that was missing during the school closures.

Suggestions made related to this were: teachers could have taught students in small groups in their villages; teachers mark the work of the students; check in on students' studying in person; and teachers to visit students at home. Head teachers also made the following suggestions: students to have access to digital technology, such as smartphones, to access online lessons and submit work and receive feedback from teachers; teachers to go into the districts to engage with students; teachers to mark the learning packs and return the grades to students with new work.

Sensitisation of caregivers

An additional theme from the teachers was the importance of sensitising parents to ensure that students were given enough time to study. This was mentioned by three teachers. One teacher also suggested online classes would have been helpful and another that TV programmes would have been better. Lastly, an emerging trend among teachers and head teachers was that it would have been helpful for airtime to be provided to all teachers, not just class teachers as they were unable to provide guidance on subject-specific questions. There was the suggestion that airtime should have been given for at least two phone networks as caregivers have different phone lines and one head teacher reported that a month's worth of airtime was used in a week and a half, forcing teachers to have short phone calls with students.

School-level suggested improvements

Another emerging theme among head teachers was the desire to customise the PEAS response to their school. One head teacher explained that they would have liked for teachers at their school to design the packs and customise the content to their students' needs and the areas of the syllabus they had not covered. One head teacher wanted one radio programme per school rather than by region so it could be more customised to the school population.

The support to schools, should have been customized to each school, schools should have been facilitated financially, the teachers should have been facilitated to design their own packages or learners pack and distributed to the students, so if the students come back to school, it would be easy to catch up with the syllabus but everything was centralized at the PEAS Secretariat and the input of the Head teachers was not sort for in the interventions. (Head teacher)

Other suggestions from head teachers was that more compensation should have been provided for teachers who were travelling to participate in the radio programmes (three head teachers), sensitise parents to buy smartphones to enhance home learning (one head teacher), to have lessons on TV (one head teacher), and to motivate students to engage with the learning materials through a reward system (one head teacher).

At the project staff level, there were minimal suggested improvements for the Covid-19 response. The most notable suggestions that correspond with themes at the school level as about using technology to engage with parents and change their attitudes (two interviewee) and to reach out to at-risk girls (one interviewee), and to have a wider range of topics on the

radio shows, but less regarding the academic subjects rather having talk shows on violence, early pregnancy, importance of staying in school (one interviewee).

10.3.4 Sustainability plans

This section examines the project's sustainability plan and references in the qualitative data regarding the design or implementation of plans for the sustainability of the project. The sustainability plans are outlined as well as the feasibility and appropriateness assessed. It is important to note that the activities of the GEARR project are integrated into the core PEAS model as PEAS runs and owns all of its schools. Therefore, on-going activities (such as teacher training and livelihoods programmes), as well as policies (such as safeguarding and child protection) and processes (such as school inspections, audits and SIPs) will continue beyond the life of the GEARR project. As such, there are no plans to 'scale-down' operations at the end of the GEARR project in the standard school operating model.

Findings are presented in four sub-sections: Inspect and Improve programme, child protection and safeguarding, financial sustainability, and other plans for sustainability.

Inspect and Improve programme

Firstly, three project staff interviewees referenced the Inspect and Improve programme (I&I), which is a live partnership with the government. PEAS has been working with the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) since 2019 to implement a co-designed pilot of the I&I programme in government schools. The purpose of I&I is to provide school improvement support by cascading the PEAS approach to inspections and improvement planning. The I&I programme adapts components of the PEAS support and supervision model, including working with local government representatives to inspect schools and support schools to respond to inspections findings. In 2019, I&I was piloted in ten government schools in the Eastern region and in 2021 this pilot is being expanded to an additional 40 schools across all regions to understand the programmes' impact at scale. The long-term ambition of the Inspect and Improve partnership is to help the government in helping schools improve through cost-effective approaches and embedding PEAS good practice into government schools.

Child protection and safeguarding

Secondly, three interviewees also identified plans for strengthening and expanding the child protection area. Details relating to the sustainability plans regarding safeguarding and child protection are outlined in the PEAS Sustainability Plan from June 2020. Within PEAS schools, plans are in place to continue to develop the capacity of Child Protection Officers and Focal Persons through training, support and monitoring. Furthermore, the updated safeguarding standards will be rolled out and efforts are underway to ensure that all PEAS schools have the systems and tools to comply, and these standards and systems will be revised on an annual basis. Sustainability of safeguarding and child protection at the system-level is also considered:

PEAS will continue to support strengthening at the system level through sharing and promoting our child protection and safeguarding standards, policies and guidelines with other the MoES and other development partners within the country. We will work with the MoES to design a system change support package to improve girls' education in poorer performing non-peas schools.

Two interviewees mentioned plans to work with the Gender Department at the Ministry to test PEAS' child protection systems and policies, particularly focused on helping girls, and to adapt and test these practices in government schools. One interviewee mentioned that the ambition of this initiative is to develop it to be like I&I and embed practice in government schools. Interviewees noted that this progress has been delayed due to Covid-19. However, this was not included in the 2020 Sustainability Plan, although there was reference to utilising the working relationship with government officials to 'influence child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures in government schools'.

One other action outlined in the 2020 Sustainability Plan to sustain elements of the GEARR project targets teacher training to create a better learning environment for girls at school. Specifically, the project plans to re-launch of the new Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme based around a new set of 'Top 10' best practices for teachers (originally launched in 2020 but interrupted by the school closures) to improve the implementation of gender responsive pedagogical practices in PEAS schools.

Financial sustainability

Thirdly, a central component to the sustainability of the PEAS model is financial sustainability, which was explored in four project staff interviews. There is a plan to be financially sustainable by 2026, meaning reducing reliance on external philanthropy to zero by 2026 and to cover the cost of schools by sustainable revenue sources in Uganda. Originally, the project was aiming for financial sustainability by 2025, and revised the target to 2026 in light of the disruptions to programmatic implementation caused by Covid-19. The project's perception is that this revised goal is achievable despite the challenges and complications posed by Covid-19. Financial sustainability, in this plan, is a combination of network growth, income and costeffectiveness. Fees are an important part of income but not the only element of financial sustainability, and the project has incorporated expectations of lower-than-normal fee income levels for the next two years. In 2019, PEAS started a five-year business transformation programme towards achieving financial sustainability. This has included streamlining the network support and supervision team at the country office and restructuring the country office organisation. According to the 2020 Sustainability Plan, the project is now focused on reducing the operating cost per child at the school level. It is beyond the scope of the endline evaluation to assess the feasibility of the plans for financial sustainability.

Three project staff interviewees discussed the need for schools to build their financial sustainability. One interviewee explained that schools need to build sustainability for themselves beyond school fees and reduce their dependence on country level support. Two project staff cited the need for schools to have a reserve fund to use in an emergency as one of the key learnings from the school closures.

Other plans for sustainability

Other plans beyond the life of the GEARR project mentioned by interviewees were:

- Government is going to collaborate with PEAS on how to address learning loss when schools reopen. At the time of data collection, PEAS were working on quizzes and psycho-social content for this.
- Ambitions to work with the government on additional projects, aligned with their priorities and interests
- Ongoing engagement between PEAS and Director of Education Standards

Overall, the plans for sustainability of the GEARR project appear to be appropriate for the educational context and maintaining or advancing progress made through the GEARR project. As the majority project activities are embedded into the core operating model of PEAS, the plans are feasible. Plans to work with the government to develop the I&I model are feasible as they built upon an existing relationship and align with the priorities of the DES. However, there were no actions outlined in the Sustainability Plan to address high teacher turnover, which is a recurring issue that undermines the sustainability and value for money of the project activities targeting teachers.



Inception report

PEAS GEC-T Endline

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1. Introduction

This document details the proposed approach to conduct the endline evaluation of the PEAS GEARRing up for Success After School GEC-T funded project. It has been prepared following conversations with PEAS and the Fund Manager (FM) regarding the most appropriate way to adapt the endline and ensure that the evaluation is conducted in a rigorous and reliable manner.

The inception report provides context for the project and evaluation; outlines the evaluation purpose, research questions and approach; details the methods of data collection; and proposes an analytical and report writing approach.

2. Background to the project and evaluation

This section outlines the background to the PEAS GEC-T project and endline evaluation to provide context for the methodological design.

2.1 Project overview

Promoting Equality in African Schools (PEAS) is an education charity based in the UK, operating in Uganda and Zambia to improve access to quality education for marginalised young people. In Uganda, PEAS run 28 low-cost private secondary schools in the East, West and Central regions of the country, serving largely rural, disadvantaged communities where young people have limited access to secondary education.

Between 2012 and 2017, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO, formerly DFID) provided £355 million worldwide through the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) Fund, to 37 projects across 18 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to improve girls' education. PEAS' GEC-funded Girls' Enrolment, Attendance, Retention and Results (GEARR) project was implemented in Uganda from 2013 to 2017, targeting marginalised girls in PEAS secondary schools. To achieve these outcomes, the project invested in multiple areas including gender-sensitive infrastructure, school management systems and gender-responsive teacher training. The project made particular progress in improving school-based gender-sensitive environments.

In 2016, the GEC-Transition (GEC-T) window was launched with additional FCDO funding to support GEC beneficiaries to further improve their learning and continue their education. Through this window, PEAS' GEARRing up for Success After School project continues to work with girls in PEAS schools to improve their learning, while also improving their transition into further education (A-Level and higher education) and other meaningful post-school pathways.

GEARRing up for Success After School aims to achieve the following three key objectives:

- 1. Improve marginalised girls' learning outcomes through helping them to develop functional literacy and numeracy skills, curriculum knowledge, and contextually relevant economic and life skills.
- Enable marginalised girls to make successful transitions through lower secondary and into a post-school pathway of their choosing, whether that is upper secondary (A-Level), technical and vocational training (TVET), formal or self-employment, or active citizenship.
- 3. Develop a sustainable model for delivering the project activities after the end of the grant.

Over the four-year programme period, PEAS aim to reach approximately 17,000 girls in 28 co-educational schools, across 21 districts and 7 regions in Uganda. The programme will continue to invest in girls' education through a range of activities at the school, community and system level to improve access to quality education and enhance girls' transition pathways through and out of secondary school.

2.1.1 Project theory of change and assumptions

The project's Theory of Change focuses on the three key GEC-T outcome areas: learning, transition and sustainability. Together, the full set of project activities are designed to lead to six key output areas:

- 1. More girls feel well supported by their families, communities and schools to thrive in and complete secondary school.
- 2. More girls leave school with functional literacy and numeracy and contextually relevant life skills
- 3. More school leaders are equipped to support girls' transition to A-Level and drive relevant knowledge and skills development
- 4. More girls successfully transition to A-Level or alternative learning pathways
- 5. More girls leave school with an achievable plan for their future
- 6. PEAS schools are prepared to carry on project activities without grant financing

These output areas are designed to contribute to the intermediate outcomes of the project, including improved attendance rates, retention and completion rates, life skills development among girls, and improved teaching quality. In addition, the output areas are designed to contribute to the overarching outcome areas of learning, transition, and sustainability, as summarised below:

- Learning: Improvements in girls' literacy and numeracy learning assessment scores and O-Level (lower secondary UCE) results.
- **Transition**: Improvements in girls' transition from lower secondary into a successful post-school pathway (defined as upper secondary, TVET, tertiary education, economic activity and/or active citizenship). A successful transition into active citizenship is defined as graduation from S4 and entering into a household or community-based role, where the girl actively chooses and prioritises this pathway for herself, such as

choosing to get married and have children. This is measured by asking girls to list in order of priority her preferences for herself at the time of the survey: education, employment, caring for family or starting a family. Girls who are out of school or employment but prioritise caring for family or starting a family are considered to be in active citizenship. Questions about choice and happiness are also asked to triangulate the girls' preferences.

• **Sustainability**: Improved community support for PEAS schools and commitment to gender equity, improved school financial sustainability and ability to continue project activities and improved government commitment to financing gender-sensitive secondary schools and scaling project activities.

The project aims to address the following barriers, identified by PEAS as significant limiting factors for girls' learning and transition across all regions of Uganda that PEAS operates in:

- Environment for learning:
 - There is a lack of community support for girls' education.
 - Schools are not promoting gender equality.
 - Schools do not feel safe for girls to attend or learn.
- Teaching and learning:
 - There is a lack of essential literacy and numeracy skills.
 - Curriculum is irrelevant to the local economic context or future lives of girls.
 - Teachers lack the capacity to deliver a relevant curriculum.
- Leadership and management:
 - School leadership lacks the capability to drive school improvement to support girls to complete O-Level, transition to A-Level and acquire relevant knowledge and skills development.
- Conditions for learning:
 - There is a lack of accessible A-Level provision.
 - The cost of education is prohibitive.
 - \circ $\;$ There is a lack of advice on post-school pathways.
 - There is a lack of access to affordable higher education.

Project barriers were identified through learning from the GEC-1 phase. PEAS continue to work on reducing a similar set of barriers to the GEC-1 programme, in particular around safety, community support and teaching and learning practices. In addition, the GEARRing Up For Success After School project will also continue to focus on barriers to girls' transition through enhanced access to A-Level and the introduction of a livelihoods component.

The implementation of project activities and achievement of expected outputs and outcomes relies on the following set of assumptions at the system and government level, school level and project level:

- System-level assumptions:
 - Uganda avoids serious political instability.
 - Low-cost private schools maintain current levels of public support.
 - Government standards and curriculum requirements for A-Level do not change significantly.

- Higher education bursaries remain available, whereby girls continue to be able to apply for bursaries to college/university following secondary completion.
- School-level assumptions:
 - Greater opportunity to access affordable A-Level provision leads to increased attendance, retention and completion rates among girls.
 - Girls' demand for A-Level remains high in beneficiary communities.
 - School leader turnover does not rise significantly.
- Project-level assumptions regarding costs:
 - Construction costs do not rise at a considerably higher rate than current trends.
 - \circ ~ The value of GBP against UGX does not significantly worsen.

The project implements a range of activities through the GEC-T project to address the barriers described above and contribute to the intended outcomes. At the system level, the project engages in government advocacy for affordable education. At the school level, there are a range of activities, including:

- Delivering Gender Responsive Pedagogy teacher training.
- Embedding Child Protection (CP) policy and reporting framework, and conducting CP training for PEAS and school staff.
- Delivering Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers
- Embedding girls' clubs in all schools.
- Designing and embedding a livelihoods programme with specific literacy and numeracy components.
- Embedding the life skills curriculum in all PEAS schools.
- Providing contextually relevant learning materials.
- Delivering annual school improvement and school leadership development programming.
- Designing and delivering A-Level specific school leadership development for A-Level school leaders.
- Strengthening Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Boards of Governors (BoGs) to effectively supervise service delivery.
- Improving and expanding A-Level provision in PEAS schools.
- Providing safe accommodation for girls.
- Improving guidance on post-school pathways.
- Facilitating access to higher education scholarships.

At the community level, the project delivers targeted information and marketing to promote girls' education. This is particularly through working closely with the PTAs and Boards of Governors.

2.1.2 Project target beneficiaries

PEAS primary target group is girls enrolled in lower and upper secondary (grades Senior 1 – Senior 6) at PEAS schools throughout Uganda. PEAS currently operates 28 low-cost secondary schools spread across 21 districts in the West, East, North and Central regions of the country. Schools are intentionally placed in poor, predominantly rural communities that did not previously have a secondary school. As such, girls are from communities that typically are poorly served by both government and private services, and resultantly come from families that are statistically poorer and have lower prior attainment than average.

Although the typical age range for girls in secondary education in Uganda is around 13-18 years old, owing to many PEAS girls missing years of schooling due to poverty and/or personal barriers, the age range of girls in PEAS secondary schools is wider and typically between 13-22 years of age.

PEAS consider all girls enrolled in PEAS schools to be primary beneficiaries. All girls who regularly attend school will have the same exposure to project interventions. However, girls who are enrolled in PEAS schools for longer during the period of project implementation (e.g. starting Senior 1 during 2017, as opposed to starting Senior 1 in 2020) will have greater exposure over the life of the project.

The project also reaches boys as secondary beneficiaries. As PEAS is a co-educational organisation, all boys enrolled in PEAS schools over the life cycle of the project will also benefit from interventions intended to improve the quality of education in their schools. At present, boys represent 47% of total school enrolment in PEAS schools.

In terms of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), PEAS' target group includes students with mild to moderate impairments. In order to progress to secondary school, students in Uganda need to pass their Primary Leaving Examinations. Due to the additional challenges faced by children with Special Educational Needs, very few successfully complete primary school in Uganda. This factor severely limits the numbers of SEN students able to enrol in PEAS secondary schools.

2.2 Context of the endline evaluation

In March 2020 schools in Uganda were closed by the Government of Uganda as part of Covid-19 measures. PEAS schools have therefore been closed for the majority of the final year of implementation for the GEARRing Up For Success After School programme. PEAS has implemented a Covid-19 response and these activities will be included in the endline evaluation. The methodology has been updated based on the assumption that candidate classes (S4 and S6) will return to school in October 2020 and other classes will remain out of school until January 2021.

Due to widespread Covid-19 school closures, the FM has adapted the design of the endline evaluation. The endline evaluation will not follow the quasi-experimental approach followed at baseline and midline. Instead a contribution analysis approach will be used, as outlined in section 3.3. The primary focus of the design of the endline evaluation is to gather data that leads to useful learning for the project, the FM and UK government. The primary focus of the evaluation will be transition, barriers and sustainability. Learning will not be a primary focus of the evaluation, although conditions for learning will be examined.

The methodology has been designed based on the assumption that all data will be collected remotely. The enumerator team, run by RDM, will conduct phone surveys and interviews in Uganda and the Jigsaw team will conduct some qualitative data collection remotely.

3. Overview of the endline evaluation

The following section articulates the purpose of the endline evaluation, the research questions guiding the evaluation design, and the theoretical framework underpinning the methodological approach of the endline evaluation.

3.1 Purpose of the endline evaluation

At the inception of PEAS' GEC-T project, a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework was created. Under the MEL framework, monitoring data has been collected regularly on project delivery and costs by PEAS, as well as a multi-year external evaluation to assess the outcomes of the project. The endline evaluation is the final evaluation point in this multi-year external evaluation and covers the period of the final year of implementation of the project, following a baseline evaluation in 2017 and a midline evaluation in 2019. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as explained above, the purpose, questions and design of the endline evaluation has been adapted. As such, the quasi-experimental approach with the counterfactual scenario comparing learning and transition outcomes of girls in treatment and control groups is not possible.

Throughout the multi-year external evaluation, the central outcomes of learning, transition and sustainability have been explored. Due to school closures, the ability of the evaluation to assess the impact of project activities on learning is restricted to exam results. As such, the evaluation will focus on exploring impact on transition and the sustainability of project activities. PEAS seeks to utilise the learning gained through the evaluation in planning activities beyond the life of the project. PEAS also intend to share learning with the government and wider sector to influence change beyond PEAS.

The intended outcomes, intermediate outcomes and outputs of the project are outlined in the logframe. At baseline and midline, the evaluation reported against the suggested targets in the logframe. Due to the disruption to the final year of project implementation, the endline evaluation will not report against logframe targets.

During the Covid-19 pandemic and school-closures, PEAS have produced a Mid-Term Covid-Response Plan (MTRP) outlining the project's Covid-19 response and the collection and use of monitoring data during this period. The endline evaluation will incorporate this data, where applicable.

Through consultation with PEAS and the FM, two overarching purposes of the endline evaluation have been identified:

- 1. To understand the impact of original and Covid-19 response GEC-T activities on the project beneficiaries.
- 2. To understand how the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys have changed throughout the course of the project, both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

PEAS have identified the following activities as the priority focus of the endline evaluation. The methodology focuses on covering the first priority activities. This includes pre-Covid GEC-T activities and Covid-19 GEC-T activities:

Pre-covid GEC-T activities	Covid GEC-T activities
FIRST P	RIORITY
Embed child protection and safeguarding practices	Develop and broadcast Radio programmes
Teacher training	SMS and telephone tree to provide educational and pastoral support
School Improvement Plan (SIP) development and implementation	Adapt Child Protection and safeguarding reporting procedures and guidance
School inspections	Print and distribute student learning packs
School audits	Share resources and systems with governments with a focus on supporting OOS secondary students
Mock exams for UCE	
Livelihoods training	
SECOND	PRIORITY
Girls' clubs	Support School Leaders in preparations for re-opening
Life skills training	Rework school inspection plans ready for school re-opening
Supporting/overseeing school finances	Rework school audit plans ready for school re-opening
School leadership development through support of SSOs	Develop materials to help students catch up when they return to school
A level expansion strategy	Train staff to ensure they are equipped to reopen schools safely and help students to catch-up
Guidance to support student welfare and post school transitions	

3.2 Evaluation research questions

The original evaluation questions for the multi-year external evaluation are no longer appropriate for the context of the endline evaluation. The research questions are structured as primary questions (four) with additional sub-questions, which delve into specific areas to explore. This is demonstrated in the table below. All questions have been designed with the DAC evaluation criteria in mind: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The relevant evaluation components are listed for each question.

It is important to note that the research questions are informed by the Theory of Change, and seek to probe and explore the assumptions and links between the levels of the Theory of Change. The research questions explore the impact of the project and the validity of the Theory of Change. The activities implemented as part of the project's Covid-19 response do not have a separate Theory of Change, rather they are treated as an adaptation to the Theory of Change as a result of the changing operating context. As such, the research questions seek to explore how the original Theory of Change was maintained in light of the Covid-19 school closures.

RQ	Question	DAC	Mapping evaluation components			
Ħ		criteria	Pre -covid activities	Covid activities	Data sources	Outcomes
RQ 1	What impact have the GEC-T activities had on the project beneficiaries?	Impact Effectiveness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RQ 1.1	Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?	Impact Effectiveness	Mock exams for UCE Teacher training SIP development School audits	Radio programmes Student learning packs SMS / telephone trees	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Headteacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	Outcome 1 IO 4
RQ 1.2	Which project activities have facilitated the successful transition of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?	Impact Effectiveness	A-level expansion Teacher training	SMS / telephone trees	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Headteacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	Outcome 2

¹ Logframe: Outcome 1 (learning), Outcome 2 (transition), Outcome 3 (sustainability), IO 1 (attendance), IO 2 (retention), IO 3 (life skills) and IO 4 (teaching quality)

RQ 1.3	Which project activities have facilitated the development of life skills (confidence, self-esteem, livelihoods skills) for marginalised girls, and how effective were they?	Impact Effectiveness	Livelihoods training Teacher training	Radio programmes Student learning packs SMS / telephone trees	Student survey Caregiver survey Headteacher KIIs Teacher KIIs	IO 3 IO 4
RQ 2	How have the barriers faced by marginalised girls and boys changed throughout the course of the project?	Impact	Child protection SIP development School audits School inspections	Adapt child protection Sharing resources with govt.	Student survey Caregiver survey Student KIIs Headteacher KIIs Teacher KIIs DEO KIIs	Outcome 1 Outcome 2
RQ 2.1	How have project activities responded to and accommodated the changing barriers to learning and transition across the life of the project?	Relevance	Child protection SIP development School audits School inspections	Adapt child protection Sharing resources with govt.	Project staff KIIs	Outcome 3
RQ 3	Was the project well-designed to meet its objectives?	Relevance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RQ 3.1	Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently?	Efficiency	N/A	N/A	Project staff KIIs Monitoring data	N/A
RQ 3.2	How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures, and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?	Relevance	N/A	SMS and telephone tree Radio programmes	Student KIIs Headteacher KIIs Teacher KIIs Project staff KIIs DEO KIIs	Outcome 3
RQ 4	How may project activities and observed impacts be sustained after the end of the project?	Sustainability Coherence	SIP development School inspections Child protection	N/A	Student survey Caregiver survey Headteacher KIIs Teacher KIIs DEO KIIs Project staff KIIs Project sustainability plan	Outcome 3

RQ 4.1	Can these project activities and impacts be leveraged by the government and other actors?	Sustainability Coherence	SIP development School inspections Child protection	Share resources with govt.	DEO KIIs Project staff KIIs Project sustainability plan	Outcome 3
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Given the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the final year of project implementation, the endline evaluation will examine the project activities implemented through PEAS' Covid-19 response. However, it is important to note that the evaluation will not be able to draw concrete conclusions about the impact of these activities on learning, transition and sustainability, or the resilience of PEAS' schools or beneficiaries. This is beyond the scope of the evaluation and the evidence available. The evaluation will collect and consider evidence of the maintenance of conditions for learning during the school closures through project activities, the design of Covid-19 project activities, and participation in Covid-19 project activities by beneficiaries, and the effectiveness of the response in terms of conditions of learning and beneficiary and school-level feedback.

3.3 Theoretical framework

Originally, the multi-year external evaluation utilised a quasi-experimental theoretical framework, and the baseline and midline evaluations followed this approach. As this approach is no longer feasible for the endline evaluation, a contribution analysis theoretical framework will be used. The following definition of contribution analysis is used:

"Contribution analysis is a methodology used to identify the contribution a development intervention has made to a change or set of changes. The aim is to produce a credible, evidence-based narrative of contribution that a reasonable person would be likely to agree with, rather than to produce conclusive proof."²

Contribution analysis is an appropriate alternative theoretical framework for the endline evaluation for the following reasons:

- There are external factors that influence the changes experienced by project beneficiaries, and there are other development interventions being implemented in Uganda. This approach recognises that it is difficult to prove attribution for these reasons and assumes that there are usually multiple contributory factors to change.
- Contribution analysis is designed to be used alongside theories of change that explicitly set out how change is supposed to happen, as the project has done. Contribution analysis assesses changes at the different levels of the theory of change in order to compare reality with the theory.
- As it is not possible to track a cohort and use a control group, contribution analysis is appropriate as it seeks to reduce uncertainty about change and to help explain how and why changes occurred.

² Intrac, 2017. <u>https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Contribution-analysis.pdf</u>

• There has been a significant enough period of implementation of the pre-Covid activities for change to occur.

Contribution analysis follows six steps of implementation, which are outlined below and applied to the endline evaluation process.

Contribution analysis steps	Endline evaluation process
1. Set out the question(s) to be addressed	Completed in inception phase in consultation with project and FM, and outlined in inception report
2. Develop a theory of change	Developed by project at baseline Determine how the theory of change was maintained and changed for the Covid-19 response
3. Gather existing evidence	Research on context (national policy, other interventions etc.) Analysis of project monitoring data Primary data collection: Phase 1 Primary data collection: Phase 2
4. Assemble and assess the contribution narrative	Analysis of primary data Draft endline evaluation report
5. Seek out additional evidence	First project feedback round on draft report
6. Revise and strengthen the contribution narrative	Second project feedback round on draft report FM feedback round on the draft report

3.4 Use of project monitoring data

Alongside primary data collection, the endline evaluation will draw on the following sources of project monitoring data. The table outlines the monitoring data shared with the EE by the project and the anticipated use for the endline evaluation.

Monitoring data	Timeframe	Use for endline evaluation
Alumni survey	2018	RQ 1.2
School auditing scores	2017-2019	General
PPI Review report	2018-2019	General
Enrolment figures	2017-2020	General
School inspection scores	2017-2020	RQ 1.1 (conditions for learning)

Learning walk scores	2017-2019	RQ 1.1 (conditions for learning)
PLE-UCE results	2018-2019	RQ 1.1, RQ 1.2
Teaching staff database	2017-2019	Other
UCE exam results (by district)	2017-2020	RQ 1.1
UCE exam results (across the years)	2017-2019	RQ 1.1

The evaluation will also draw upon the project's MTRP to understand the context and design of the Covid-19 response and the available monitoring data. The evaluation will also draw upon the revised Sustainability Plans developed by the project.

The monitoring data does not provide insight into the primary research questions of the evaluation. As such, primary data collection will be used to answer these questions.

4. Overview of methodology

The proposed methodology is mixed-method and includes collecting data from beneficiaries. Data will be collected remotely, which reduces the scope of the number of surveys and interviews that can be completed. Survey and interview protocols will be designed to be no more than 15 minutes long, based on the guidance from the FM. This gives enumerators a buffer of five minutes during data collection, if needed, to ensure that each phone engagement is no more than 20 minutes long, as is considered best practice. It is assumed that each enumerator can collect between 7-10 surveys or interviews per day.

Data collection activities will be conducted with only PEAS schools and beneficiaries, meaning that comparison schools will not be included. There will not be cohort tracking at endline, which allows for the expansion of the student sample beyond the 12 PEAS schools included at baseline and midline, and to include boys.

The methodology follows a sequenced approach in order to collect the richest and most informative data possible. Quantitative data will be collected from students and caregivers and then preliminary analysis will inform the design of qualitative data collection tools. Qualitative data collection will then be conducted to triangulate quantitative findings and to provide rich further insights. Project data will also inform the design of tools, where applicable.

Phase	Method	Number to collect	Priority areas to cover
Phase 1	Student surveys	450	• Livelihoods training

Below is an overview of the proposed methods, with the priority areas that will be covered:

		(approx 150 from S4, S5, S6)	 Radio programmes SMS and telephone trees Student learning packs Barriers to learning and transition Aspirations and ambitions
	Caregiver surveys	100	 Radio programmes SMS/telephone trees Learning packs Barriers to learning and transition Aspirations for transition
Phase 2	Student KIIs	8	 Radio programmes SMS and telephone trees Student learning packs Barriers to learning and transition Aspirations and ambitions
	Headteacher KIIs	8	 Covid-19 response Safeguarding and child protection practices School inspections School audits Teacher training School improvement plans
	Teacher KIIs	10	 Covid-19 response Safeguarding and child protection practices Teacher training SMS and telephone trees Student learning packs
	Project staff KIIs	6 (UK and Uganda staff)	 Safeguarding and child protection practices School inspections School audits School improvement plans Sharing resources with govt Sustainability of project activities and impacts
	District Education Officer (DEO) KIIs	3	 Sharing resources with govt Sustainability of project activities and impacts

4.1 Target beneficiaries

As described in detail above, the project's primary target beneficiaries are marginalised girls enrolled in lower and upper secondary grades at PEAS schools in Uganda. The target beneficiaries are from poor, predominantly rural communities and from families that are statistically poorer and have lower prior educational attainment than average. The age of the project beneficiaires ranges from 13-22 years old. At midline, the target beneficiaries were defined as experiencing marginalisation in the following ways:

- All PEAS school girls come from rural communities
- 16% of PEAS girls come from households living under \$1.90 a day
- 81% of PEAS girls' parents/caregivers are in informal employment or are unemployed
- 54% of PEAS students' parents/caregivers did not complete O-Level and 74% did not complete A-Level
- As found at baseline, PEAS girls are at risk of early marriage or pregnancy, are under pressure to earn or care full-time and experience menstruation as a barrier to education.

Boys are reached by the project as secondary beneficiaries, as PEAS schools are co-educational. Boys therefore benefit from all project activities intended to improve the quality of education in PEAS schools. Boys come from the same background as the target girls, meaning that they are mostly from poorer rural communities with limited educational provision. Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are not a specific target beneficiary group for the project. However, some students with mild to moderate SEN are enrolled in PEAS schools and therefore benefit from the project activities.

The endline evaluation will engage with both primary and secondary beneficiary groups, girls and boys. Students with SEN will be included in the sample if a contacted student reports that they have SEN but will not be purposively selected. In line with the evaluation purpose to understand transition and barriers among project beneficiaries, the evaluation will focus on project beneficiaries in S4, S5 and S6. The juxtaposition of students in lower and upper secondary will allow for differences in barriers to transition to be explored in part, and is the only successful transition pathway available for data collection at endline (as it is not possible to track students who have successfully transitioned into TVET, higher education, employment or active citizenship). The learning cohort students engaged at baseline and endline are now in S4, meaning that they have experienced four years of project activities.

The endline evaluation will also engage with caregivers, who are not direct project beneficiaries, to gain a different perspective on the impact of project activities on beneficiaires. Headteachers and teachers will also participate in the endline evaluation as both receiving project inputs (such as teacher training and SIP development support) and implementing project activities (such as gender responsive pedagogical approaches and the livelihoods programme).

For more information about specific sub-groups of interest at endline see section 4.4 and for more details about the endline sample, see section 5.

4.2 Breakdown of responsibilities for data collection

The methodology is designed on the understanding that PEAS have contact details for students and caregivers. There is one number per student, assumed to be the caregiver at their home location. PEAS will contact out-of-school students and caregivers via SMS ahead of data collection to inform them of the research and prepare them to be contacted by a RDM enumerator during the data collection period. For in-school students the enumerator team will be given the school's contact details to coordinate data collection through the school. PEAS will facilitate introductions with project and school level staff and DEOs.

Method	Responsibilities
Training RDM enumerators	RDM and Jigsaw to provide refresher training
Student phone surveys	PEAS to provide contact list PEAS to send SMS to participants to inform them of the research and provide school contact details RDM to collect data Jigsaw to conduct data checks Jigsaw to clean and analyse data
Caregiver phone surveys	PEAS to provide contact list PEAS to send SMS to participants to inform them of the research and provide school contact details RDM to collect data Jigsaw to conduct data checks Jigsaw to clean and analyse data
Student key informant interviews	PEAS to provide contact details PEAS to send SMS to participants to inform them of the research and provide school contact details RDM to conduct interviews Jigsaw to conduct data checks Jigsaw to clean and analyse data
Headteachers key informant interviews	PEAS to provide contact details PEAS to contact participants to set up interview RDM to conduct interviews Jigsaw to conduct data checks Jigsaw to clean and analyse data
Teachers key informant interviews	PEAS to provide contact details PEAS to contact participants to set up interview RDM to conduct interviews Jigsaw to conduct data checks Jigsaw to clean and analyse data

The table below presents a breakdown of responsibilities for each method:

District education officer key informant interviews	PEAS to provide contact details or facilitate introductions RDM to contact participants to set up interview RDM to conduct interviews Jigsaw to conduct data checks Jigsaw to clean and analyse data
Project staff interviews	PEAS to provide contact details PEAS to contact participants to set up interview Jigsaw to conduct interviews Jigsaw to clean and analyse data

4.3 Evaluation timeline

The table below presents the proposed timeline for data collection and report writing, based on the assumption that the final report can be submitted after the original deadline of 31st March 2021:

Activity	Date completed by	Responsibility
Finalise methodology	9th October	Jigsaw
FM and project sign off methodology	14th October	PEAS & FM
Phase 1 tool design	23rd October	Jigsaw & RDM
FM and project sign off Phase 1 tool design (this includes one feedback round)	30th October	PEAS & FM
Contact Phase 1 participants	6th November	PEAS
Refresher training for enumerators	6th November	Jigsaw & RDM
 Phase 1 data collection Student phone surveys Caregiver phone surveys 	27th November ³	RDM
Initial analysis of Phase 1 data	9th December	Jigsaw
Phase 2 tool design	11th December	Jigsaw
FM and project sign off Phase 1 tool design (this includes one feedback round)	16th December	PEAS & FM
Contact Phase 2 participants	6th January	PEAS, RDM & Jigsaw

³ This is based on the assumption that it will not be possible to start data collection until the week beginning 16th November.

 Phase 2 data collection Headteacher key informant interviews Teacher key informant interviews Project staff key informant interviews 	15th January ⁴	Jigsaw & RDM
First draft of report to PEAS	26th March	Jigsaw
Feedback round(s) with project (Please note that time and budget allow for two rounds of feedback on the draft report)	23rd April	PEAS & Jigsaw
Submit final report to FM	30th April	Jigsaw

Please note that two days are given for feedback, and feedback must be received at least a day before any meetings or workshops to discuss it.

4.4 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

In line with the FM's GESI guidance⁵ issued at midline, the evaluation will:

- Consistently use the terminology of characteristics and barriers when discussing educational marginalisation
- Provide data on the prevalence of characteristics within the sample (at endline disaggregated by girls and boys)
- Provide data on potential barriers to transition
- Provide analysis on how characteristics and barriers intersect
- Provide data for the key sub-groups selected

The endline evaluation seeks to examine the same characteristics and barriers as baseline and midline. These characteristics and barriers have been identified by the project as important and relevant for the target beneficiaries. These will be examined in the student sample only.

The characteristics and barriers among students that the endline evaluation will examine are:

Characteristics (key sub-groups)	Barriers
Orphans (single and double)	 Safety: Fairly or very unsafe travel to schools in the area
Living in a female-headed household	 Doesn't feel safe travelling to/from school
	Parental / caregiver support:

⁴ The longer timeframe for this phase of data collection is to accommodate leave over the Christmas period.

⁵ Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Addendum - Midline Report Template

Married Mothers (all, under 16, under 18)	 Sufficient time to study - high chore burden (5+ hours) Doesn't get support to stay in school and do wall
 Poor households Material of the roof of the house they live in is thatch or tin Poverty Probability Index (PPI) score under 30 PPI score 45 or above Head of Household (HoH) unemployed or informal profession 	 Attendance: Attends school half the time (reported taking less than 2 days off school per week) Attends school less than half the time (reported taking 2 or more days off school per week) Doesn't feel safe at school
Language difficulties (cannot understand the language of instruction)	 Teachers: Disagrees that teachers make them feel welcome Agrees teachers treat boys and girls

Parental education

- HoH has no education
- Primary caregiver has no education
- Agrees teachers treat boys and girls differently in the classroom
- Agrees teachers are often absent from class

There are some important caveats to note for the endline evaluation. Firstly, it is not possible to draw comparisons between these characteristics and barriers at endline and those found at baseline and midline due to the changed sample and different school context. Secondly, the barrier questions related to school will only be asked to in-school students (S4 and S6) as they are not applicable to out of school students (S5). Thirdly, the characteristics and barriers will be disaggregated by gender to understand the different experiences of boys and girls, and where all year groups have answered the same question there will be disaggregation by lower and upper secondary school.

The endline will examine the intersection between barriers and characteristics, disaggregated by boys and girls. The intersections to be explored are based on the variables examined at midline:

Characteristics	Barriers
Student has repeated years of school Student has not repeated school years	High chore burden (5+ hours per day)
Student lives without parents Student lives with parents	Student does not agree that she gets he same support from their family to stay in school and do well
Student lives in large household of 5 or more siblings Student has 4 or fewer siblings	Student (in-school only) does not agree teachers make them feel welcome
Household has a PPI below 45 Household has a PPI of 45 or above	Student (in-school only) reports typically taking 2 or more days off school per week

We will be using the Washington Group questions to identify children with disability in the sample. As children with disability (CWD) are not project target beneficiaries, they will not be purposively sampled at endline but will be identified by the Washington Group questions and findings disaggregated. It is not anticipated that there will be a large number of CWDs in the endline sample based on the small sub-group at midline. The full list of questions can be found in Annex E. The Poverty Probability Index (PPI) questions for Uganda will be used, as at baseline and midline, to identify characteristics of poor households. The full list of questions can be found in Annex F.

4.5 Safeguarding considerations

Child protection and gender inclusion are priorities for the research. The enumerator team has previously received detailed training on child protection and safeguarding in GEC-T evaluations, including how to recognise signs of abuse and understand reporting procedures. Before data collection the enumerator team will receive a short refresher training on safeguarding and how to report incidents. Enumerators are required to sign the Jigsaw Code of Conduct (Annex D) prior to data collection to ensure appropriate behaviour throughout the data collection.

The enumerators are trained to conduct the data collection in a child-friendly manner, how to obtain informed consent, and how to respond to child protection disclosures. The enumerators are trained in how to encourage and calm the students such that they feel able to respond to the survey freely.

Data collection will be conducted in a child-friendly manner with students. This includes adequate time dedicated to rapport building. Before administering the survey with students and caregivers and interviews with headteachers and teachers, the enumerators will explain the objectives of the study and how their information will be used. Participants will be asked if they would like to participate. It will be made clear that participants can choose to end the survey or interview without giving a reason. Basic elements of good practices will be maintained, including remaining objective, offering empathy without advice, and practicing active listening.

While names will be collected to track students, enumerators will make clear to participants that their name will not be reported and their individual results will not be disclosed to anyone inside or outside the school, unless the child is identified as being at risk of harm. No individual's names will be used in the final report and all datasets shared with the project and FM will be anonymised.

Existing PEAS and FM policies and procedures will be adhered to regarding child protection, confidentiality, sensitive issues and referrals. The referral process for child protection concerns will follow the PEAS procedure. Breaches of the research ethical framework will be reported to Jigsaw.

Full ethical and safeguarding considerations and procedures are outlined in Annex A (PEAS child protection reporting procedure), Annex B (research ethics framework), and Annex C (risk assessment).

5. Methods breakdown

This section provides a detailed breakdown of each method, the target sample sizes and areas for data collection.

5.1 Student survey

In order to capture the input of the main target beneficiaries, a short survey will be conducted with students over the phone, lasting 15-20 minutes. In order to capture valuable learning about transition and barriers the students that will participate in the survey are S4 (the learning cohort year), S5 and S6 (a snapshot of students who have successfully transitioned to upper secondary). There will be one survey protocol, with additional questions for upper secondary students based on skip logic. It is suggested that S5 and S6 girls students are sampled from all PEAS A-Level Centres and then some S4 students from the original treatment school sample. Below is a breakdown of the available eligible students and the proposed sample size:

	S4	S 5	S6	Total
Eligible students	Girls: 1304 Boys: 1440 Total: 2700	Girls: 73 Boys: 115 Total: 188	Girls: 61 Boys: 96 Total: 157	Girls: 1,438 Boys: 1,651 Total: 3,089
Proposed sample	Girls: 75 Boys: 75 Total: 150	Girls: 73 Boys: 77 Total: 150	Girls: 61 Boys: 89 Total: 150	Girls: 209 Boys: 241 Total: 450

The proposed sample size of 450 survey responses is recommended as an affordable and feasible sample size for remote data collection. It is estimated that about 70 participants will be sufficient for medium to large effect sizes to be found in a regression model. Therefore, as we expect that some analyses may be conducted using only one sub-sample of students (such as girls in S6 alone, or boys in S4 alone), that the weighting of students as currently stands allows maximum freedom for in-depth statistical analysis. These analyses will produce indicative findings and valuable learning for the project regarding project activities, student aspirations, transition and barriers. Alongside descriptive statistical analysis, it will be possible to do some targeted inferential statistical analysis of data collected through the student survey. It is important to identify the variables to examine relationships between during the collaborative tool design process as there will be limited scope for exploratory inferential analysis. Some suggested inferential analysis approaches are:

- Regression analysis of the relationship between life skills index score and gender, age and upper/lower secondary school
- Chi-square tests to examine statistically significant relationships between groups, such as whether being a boy is significantly related to transitioning to A-Level and participation in particular project activities.

The student survey will be significantly shorter and more focused at endline than in previous data points. It is imperative that ethical considerations surrounding student welfare are maintained, with the survey designed to last a maximum of 20 minutes. The questions will all be closed questions and enumerators will digitally record responses into Kobo Collect. It is anticipated that the survey will cover the following areas:

- **Barriers**: what facilities do students have at home? What learning are they doing (as in, what PEAS learning activities are they participating in)? Exploration of learning conditions confidence, self-esteem, support etc.
- Aspirations and ambitions: What do they want to do next year and why? Who makes decisions? How confident do they feel that they will get there? What is in place for that to happen?
- **Exploration of participation in specific activities:** Livelihoods training, mock UCE exams, radio programmes, SMS and telephone trees, student learning packs
- Transition to upper secondary

5.1.1 School closures and return to school

The Government of Uganda announced that exam candidate classes will return to secondary schools in mid-October. As such, the student survey sample will include in-school students (S4 and S6) and out of school students (S5). The data collection timeline has been delayed until late November to allow schools and students to settle in to re-opened schools.

All data will be collected remotely and it is possible for all suggested year groups to participate in the student. S5 students will be contacted at home during the day, using PEAS contact lists. It is suggested that S4 and S6 students will be contacted for data collection at school, using a teacher's phone or a PEAS handset. RDM will liaise with the PEAS Uganda team and School Leaders to coordinate this process.

5.1.2 Sampling strategy

The sampling strategy is based on the PEAS contact lists. RDM will have access to contact details for all S4, S5 and S6 students at PEAS schools. The following approach is recommended:

- 1. Survey all available girls in S5 and S6
- 2. Top up the S5 and S6 samples with boys until the sample size of 150 per year group is reached, or all available boys have been contacted
- 3. Survey S4 students by contacting every third girl and every third boy on the PEAS contact list until the sample is met

4. Top up any shortfall in the S5 and S6 cohorts with S4 girls and boys (equal if possible)

Due to the limited available sample size of girls in upper secondary school, it is suggested that all girls in S5 and S6 across the PEAS network are sampled and the remainder to be from boys in upper secondary schools. It is recommended that the same total number of S4 students are sampled from the original 12 treatment schools, and that S4 students can be used to top up the upper secondary samples (see Annex G for a list of schools).

It is anticipated that enumerators may struggle to contact some participants or face connectivity issues. This may impact the total number of surveys feasible to be collected in the two week data collection timeframe.

We estimate that 350 surveys, with as equal a split between year groups and gender as possible, is a reasonable minimum sample size to establish trends and relationships in the sample. Enumerators will attempt to contact a participant twice, at different times of the day, before discounting them from the sample and moving onto the next student. All individuals who could not be reached will be recorded to ensure that no duplicate contacts are conducted.

Please note that the student survey sample is indicative of the PEAS student population as it is beyond the scope of evaluation and data collection timeframe to develop a representative sampling framework.

5.2 Caregivers survey

A short quantitative survey will be conducted with approximately 100 caregivers in order to explore in more detail the barriers students face to learning and transition, as well as the conditions for learning that is being maintained during school closures. The survey will explore whether girls will be able to return to school when schools reopen and the necessary conditions for this to happen. The survey will also explore caregivers' motivations related to students' transition. Similarly to the student survey, the survey will be a maximum of 15-20 minutes long and be conducted over the phone with digital data collection.

5.2.1 Sampling strategy

The sample size for the caregiver survey will be indicative, as it has been at baseline and midline. In total, 100 caregivers of students who have participated in the student survey will be sampled from the contact lists provided by PEAS. As such, the student survey should be completed first. The caregivers contacted should be split across S4, S5 and S6 students in roughly the same proportions of the student survey sample.

Enumerators should select every second caregiver from the student survey year-group samples until the sample size is reached. Enumerators will attempt to contact a caregiver three times at different times of the day before discounting them from the sample and moving onto the next contact.

5.3 School-level key informant interviews

5.3.1 Student interviews

Key informant interviews will be conducted by RDM with a small sample of female students to complement the quantitative data collected in the student survey. The purpose of the student interviews is to collect more in-depth information from students and to represent students' voices in the report. A total of eight interviews will be conducted with female students, with four sampled from S4 and two each from S5 and S6. The interviews will be conducted over the phone and will last for approximately 20 minutes. Informed by the student survey findings, a semi-structured interview guide will be developed to potentially cover the following areas:

- Radio programmes
- SMS and telephone trees
- Student learning packs
- Barriers to learning and transition
- Aspirations and ambitions

Students will be sampled from the contact lists provided by PEAS that were used in the student survey, following the same procedure. The same students should not be contacted to participate in both the survey and interview.

5.3.2 School staff interviews

Key informant interviews will be conducted by RDM with headteachers and teachers from the original 12 PEAS schools in the evaluation sample. Eight headteachers will be interviewed as well as five male and five female teachers. The interviews will be conducted over the phone and transcribed by the RDM team. The interviews will last 15-20 minutes and will follow a semi-structured interview protocol, which will be informed by the quantitative data analysis in a sequenced approach. The following priority areas will be covered:

- Covid-19 response activities
- Safeguarding and child protection practices
- Teacher training
- SMS and telephone trees
- Student learning packs
- School inspections (HT)
- School audits (HT)
- School improvement plans (HT)

5.3.1 Sampling strategy

The project will provide contact details for headteachers at each PEAS school. The enumerators will first attempt to contact headteachers from the 12 schools in the original evaluation sample (see Annex G). Enumerators will attempt to contact a headteacher three times at different times of the day before discounting them from the sample. If there is a shortfall in the sample after all headteachers from the 12 schools are contacted, then the headteacher sample can be topped up from other PEAS schools, preferably in the same region if possible.

Headteachers will be asked to provide contact details for one male and one female teacher in their school to be interviewed until the teacher interview sample is reached. Enumerators will follow the same sampling strategy as above.

5.4 District education officer interviews

Three key informant interviews with district educational officers (DEOs) will be conducted by RDM. A semi-structured interview template will be developed for enumerators to implement over the phone. The interviews will provide qualitative data on system-level sustainability and the sustainability of the project activities and impacts and how the government will leverage the activities and impacts beyond the life of the project. The Covid-19 response activity of sharing resources with the government will also be explored. Interviews will last between 20-30 minutes.

The DEOs will be identified by the PEAS team based on their engagement with the project and will facilitate an introduction to RDM.

5.5 Project staff interviews

Additionally, the Jigsaw team will conduct key informant interviews with project staff based in the UK and Uganda. These will last between 45-60 minutes and explore the following priority areas:

- Safeguarding and child protection practices
- School inspections
- School audits
- School improvement plans
- Sharing resources with the government
- Sustainability of project activities

Each interview protocol will be tailored to the role of the interviewee. It is estimated that approximately 6 interviews will need to be conducted. If project staff time is limited, the possibility of group interviews will be explored.

6. Constraints and limitations

While the endline methodology is deemed to be appropriate and feasible to meet the evaluation purpose in the time and budget available, while meeting the necessary ethical considerations, it is important to note the constraints and limitations of the approach. These are listed below and should be kept in mind throughout the data collection, analysis and writing process.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted project implementation and the endline evaluation, with the following consequences:

- Due to school closures the originally intended cohort of students are out of school and unable to participate in face to face data collection. This may lead to a challenge in recruiting participants for the endline evaluation and participants may find the data collection more disruptive to their day than when it happened in the school environment. This may have an impact on sample sizes.
- There are limitations to the type of statistical analysis and findings for the student survey. This will depend on how small effect sizes turn out to be.
- Remote data collection relies on the participants having access to technology to allow them to participate. There may be challenges recruiting participants over the phone if they are using phones that do not belong to them or have poor connectivity.
- Due to ethical considerations, remote data collection reduces the time available for each survey, meaning that the survey design is shorter and less in-depth. As such, less data can be collected than at previous evaluation points.
- Enumerators may have increased difficulty in establishing a personal connection and rapport with each participant over the phone. There is a risk that a higher number of participants may not feel comfortable participating in the data collection and therefore will not give consent.
- Because of the difficulty in building rapport with participants, particularly interviewees, and the limitations of data collection over the phone, the depth and richness of qualitative data collected may be limited.
- Due to travel restrictions for Jigsaw and the RDM enumerator team, it is not possible for a face-to-face training course for the enumerators to take place. An online refresher training will be explored as an option but this will not be as in-depth or detailed as originally planned.
- Due to the return to school for candidate classes (S4 and S6), data collection may take place at the same time as exams, which could result in fatigue for participants and a reluctance to participate in the evaluation. Data collection will happen outside of school time for these participants so as to not further disrupt their education, however it should be noted that this will increase the challenges in recruiting them.
- There may be challenges engaging schools and recruiting staff to participate in interviews with schools reopening in October, as staff will be managing a transition back to school and may not have time to participate in data collection.

- Due to the necessary changes in the endline evaluation methodological approach the findings will not be comparable to baseline and midline findings.
- The sample of the endline evaluation has been adapted and is not representative of the PEAS populations, it is indicative and sampling will be based on who is available and willing to participate in the research.
- There may be difficulties recruiting S4 and S6 students to participate in the research through contacting schools if a smaller than expected number of students return to school. Schools cannot operate both as day and boarding schools, and therefore the majority of PEAS schools are reopening as boarding schools only, which may result in some students not returning to school.

7. Analysis

7.1 Monitoring data

Basic descriptive statistical analysis of the monitoring data will be undertaken in Microsoft Excel. Trends and changes over the life of the project will be identified. These findings will inform tool design, where applicable.

7.2 Quant primary data

Once the first phase primary data collection has been completed, the student survey and caregiver survey datasets will be downloaded from Kobo Collect. Data analysis will begin with cleaning the data. This includes removing incomplete entries, duplicates, any entries from participants who do not meet the eligible criteria and recoding "other, please specify" variables. The clean datasets will be anonymised, with participants' names, contact details and location information removed.

Once the data is clean, descriptive statistical data analysis will be conducted in Microsoft Excel. Contingency tables will be constructed to explore the frequencies and patterns between different variables. These findings will inform the design of data collection tools for primary data collection phase 2.

Inferential statistical analysis, primarily regression and correlation analyses, will be conducted after the completion of all primary data collection. These analyses will be used to explore the relationships between project activities and life skills, learning and different transition pathways. There will also be examination of statistical differences in the life skills, learning outcomes and transition pathways based on participants' gender.

The design of the quantitative data analysis framework will be based on the specific research questions and variables to be explored. These will be determined during the tool design phase. Two illustrative examples of such analysis are provided below:

- *Example 1:* Girls who are engaged in more project activities will have higher confidence. This hypothesis would be examined using a regression.
- *Example 2*: Regression analysis of the relationship between life skills index score and gender, age and upper/lower secondary school

7.3 Qual primary data

Once the second phase of data collection has been completed, the transcripts from the headteacher, teacher and project staff interviews will be cleaned to be in the same format and to ensure they are all complete. An initial coding framework will be developed around the research questions associated with each template, with further codes added inductively as themes arise during the analysis process. Codes will be applied and a thematic analysis will be conducted using MAXQDA qualitative analysis software, with deductive codes identified.

7.4 Combining findings

After the monitoring data and primary data have been analysed, the findings will be combined in a process of triangulation. Convergent findings and trends will be identified and points of divergence identified and explored. This process will be structured around the research questions and report template.

8. Report writing

A full report template will be finalised after the inception phase. The report is structured around the research questions, with discussion of findings from all relevant data sources for each question.

The report will include the following sections:

Section	Description
Cover sheet	N/A
Executive summary	2 page summary of main findings
Chapter 1: Background to project	Summary of context of intervention, project design, beneficiaries and impact of Covid-19 on the project. Discussion of the Theory of Change's causal links, assumptions and rationale - and how these were maintained or changed in light of the Covid-19 school closures.
Chapter 2: Evaluation approach and methodology	Summary of evaluation theoretical framework, questions, challenges and

	limitations of the approach. Overview of data collection.
Chapter 3: Impact of GEC-T project activities	Findings for RQs 1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3
Chapter 4: Barriers for marginalised project characteristics	Findings for RQ 2, 2.1
Chapter 5: Project design and objectives	Findings for RQ 3, 3.1, 3.2
Chapter 6: Sustainability of project activities	Findings for RQ 4
Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations	Main conclusions for the research questions, commentary on the project's approach to gender and social inclusion. Recommendations for the project beyond the life of the project.
Annex 1: Intervention roll-out dates	Updated intervention roll-out dates (by PEAS)
Annex 2: EE Inception Report	
Annex 3: Data collection tools used for endline	Student survey protocol, caregiver survey protocols, key informant interview templates (headteacher, teacher and project staff)
Annex 4: Datasets and codebooks	Anonymised datasets and codebooks
Annex 5: External Evaluator declaration	
Annex 6: Project Management Response	PEAS response to the findings of the endline evaluation

The report of findings is the only deliverable associated with this contract.

Annexes

Annex A: Child protection and safeguarding reporting procedure

The PEAS Child Protection Policy can be provided in full by the project. The following excerpt outlines the procedure for reporting and responding to child protection concerns:

"Every member of PEAS staff must report all Child Protection allegations, reports or concerns according to PEAS' reporting procedures. Delays and failure to report immediately, or deliberately withholding information will be subject to PEAS disciplinary action.

"PEAS will receive disclosures from children with sensitivity and will strive not to re-traumatise children in their handling of complaints. All reported cases must be taken seriously and an investigation will be led locally by a staff member who has undergone appropriate Child Protection training.

"Any action taken in response to the alleged abuse must be based on the best interests of the child. The child's views must be taken into account with respect to further action on the alleged abuse, and they must be provided with the information required to make an informed decision on this. The objective of any response made by PEAS must be to protect the child from further harm and to support them both academically and emotionally.

:Any staff who raise concerns of a breach of this policy in good faith will be protected as far as possible from victimisation and adverse effects. Deliberate false allegations are a serious disciplinary offence and will be investigated. The subject of any complaint (alleged perpetrator) and all witnesses must cooperate fully with investigations. Their confidentiality will be protected and information that could identify them will be stored "securely and shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis."

Enumerators will be provided with the contact details and referral form by the project before the start of the data collection process.

Annex B: Research ethics framework

Jigsaw Consult seeks to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in the research. The table below details the ethical framework, including the general protocols followed and the risk assessment specific to the project. This ethical risk assessment is considered a living document and will be amended and updated throughout the life-cycle of the research, as needed. It is the responsibility of the entire research team to uphold and maintain the ethical standards set out in this framework. This includes the enumerator team. It is the responsibility of the Project Manager to follow up on reported incidents of ethical breaches, and to amend and update the risk assessment.

Ethical consideration	Jigsaw protocol	Project details
Consent	Informed, ongoing and voluntary consent is sought from all research participants. Children and adults at risk can provide consent where appropriate. Participants are able to withdraw their consent at any stage of the research.	Children at risk constitute the majority of the research sample. It is important to Jigsaw that adequate time is taken to inform participants of the purpose of the research and how their information will be used before consent is given. To that end, the project is responsible for informing participants of the research before they are contacted by enumerators. The enumerators will obtain consent before starting the information, following a script similar to this: <i>Hello, my name is XX and I would</i> <i>like to ask for your permission to</i> <i>interview you on behalf of a</i> <i>research programme which is</i> <i>aiming to improve girls' education</i> <i>in lots of countries around the</i> <i>world</i> . <i>We would like to ask you some</i> questions about you, your school and how you feel about education. This will take approximately 15 minutes. <i>If you choose to take part, the</i> <i>information you tell me will not be</i> <i>shared with your school and will</i> <i>not affect your grades. It is your</i> <i>choice to take part, you can refuse</i> <i>to answer any questions you are</i> <i>uncomfortable with, and can</i> <i>choose to stop the process at any</i> <i>time. We will record your answers</i> <i>to use them in our research but we</i> <i>will not mention you by name or</i> <i>share your personal details with</i>

		anybody outside of our team. However, if I believe that you or another child might be at risk, it is my duty to report this to somebody. Do you have any questions? Is that acceptable and do you agree to take part in our research to help improve girls' education? Informed consent will also be sought at the beginning of caregiver surveys, and key informant interviews.
Training	Jigsaw staff are trained in research ethics and current best practice in research. Contracted enumerators are trained in ethics for data collection begins.	Jigsaw will work in conjunction with the project to train the enumerators in appropriate research ethics processes.
Data collection tools	Jigsaw uses innovative and project-appropriate data collection methods. Data collection is often participatory. The tools are developed to be inclusive and accessible to all participants. Data collection tools are appropriate to the local context.	FM guidance for phone surveys and remote data collection is incorporated into the tool design. The tools will be sense-checked for the local context by RDM. This includes the surveys as well as the qualitative templates.
External evaluators and enumerators	Jigsaw regularly works with externally contracted enumerators. The recruitment processes ensures that only candidates with the appropriate and relevant expertise are selected. If enumerators are contracted directly, the recruitment process follows all Jigsaw procedures. Where external evaluators are not recruited directly by Jigsaw, the recruitment process of the supplier is reviewed to ensure it meets the requirements of the project.	RDM has a pool of experienced researchers it will draw from for the endline evaluation, including those who have been involved in data collection for the baseline and midline and with previous experience of remote data collection with children.

Data protection	Jigsaw has a comprehensive data protection policy. Data is stored on a secure server, and access is restricted to staff who require it.	Documents which contain personal information about participants e.g. names, DOB, contact details will be stored securely. Anonymised datasets will be shared with the project and the FM.
Confidentiality and anonymity	All information provided in data collection is treated confidentially and anonymously, except when safeguarding procedures are triggered. Participants are made aware of this exception.	The script for informed consent contains information on confidentiality and anonymity, including the exception for safeguarding (exact wording to be determined during tool development). We will record your answers to use them in our research but we will not mention you by name or share your personal details with anybody outside of our team. However, if I believe that you or another person might be at risk, it is my duty to report this to somebody.
Location selection	Research is conducted in a location accessible to all participants, including participants with disabilities and people living in hard-to-reach areas. Location selection also considers potential local cultural factors which may impact accessibility, and best practice conducting research with children and adults at risk.	Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all data collection will be collected remotely over the phone. As such, participants and enumerators will not be required to travel to a location for the research.
Responsibility	It is the responsibility of the entire research team to uphold and maintain the ethical standards set out in this framework. This includes the enumerators and supervisors. All members of the research team are required to sign a Code of Conduct. For each project, a member of the evaluation team is assigned overall	The Code of Conduct includes "dos and don'ts" for behaviour. This will be covered in the safeguarding refresher training session with enumerators.

	responsibility for ethics.	
Incident reporting	Jigsaw works with its clients to decide on incident reporting pathways for a project. Jigsaw has reporting procedures for safeguarding issues related to children and adults at risk. In case of a breach of ethics, there is a named person on each evaluation team for reporting purposes. Enumerator training includes information on incident reporting procedures, including for a breach of: ethics, the Code of Conduct, and the children and adults at risk safeguarding policy.	In the case of a child protection or safeguarding issue, enumerators will follow the PEAS incident reporting procedure (outlined in Annex A). In the case of a suspected breach of ethics as outlined in this framework, members of the research team should immediately report the incident to Bethany Sikes at <u>b.sikes@jigsawconsult.com</u> . The report of the breach should include the following, where available: the specific ethical consideration; the time, the date and location of the incident; the person who may have breached the consideration; details of the incident. Reports will be treated confidentially.
Research dissemination	At a minimum, research participants are informed about the dissemination plan for the research. Jigsaw encourages the dissemination of research findings to its participants.	Jigsaw is available to be contracted to write a community-friendly report of findings.

Annex C: Risk assessment framework

The risk assessment outlines the potential risks that could impact the research. Each risk is accompanied by an assessment of the probability of the risk occurring, the impact on the research should the risk occur, and a suitable mitigation and correction strategy.

Risk category	Probability (low / medium / high)	Potential impact (low / medium / high)	Planned mitigation / corrective actions
Harm to research participants	Medium	Medium	The informed consent

 psychological Participants will be asked some questions on sensitive topics, such as their experiences of being out of school during the pandemic. This could potentially be traumatic for participants. As data collection is remote, it will not be possible for enumerators to be completely confident that the participant is in a safe location where they can speak freely. This means participants may not feel able to speak freely or be a risk of negative consequences if their answers are overheard by others. 			script will be informed by trauma methodology. This includes being upfront about the pandemic and that there might be some difficult questions, and emphasising that there is no right or wrong answers. Questions will be worded to prevent triggering participants, and enumerators will be trained in how to ask sensitive questions, e.g. how to react when participants are uncomfortable or upset. Where possible questions will be open-ended and enumerators will not ask about a specific time when something happened, as much as possible. The interview will be conducted in the preferred language of the participant. The enumerators will begin the interview by asking participants to go somewhere they are safe and cannot be overheard. Enumerator to check that the participant is comfortable before starting the interview.
Harm to research participants - physical There is low risk to participants of accidents or physical harm during data collection due to remote data collection.	Low	Low	As all data collection will be conducted remotely, participants will not have to travel to participate in the research or be in the same location as enumerators. This also means the participants will not experience additional exposure to Covid-19 as a result of participating in

			the research.
Harm to enumerators - psychological The content of the surveys and qualitative templates does not include many sensitive topics. There is a small risk of psychological harm from stress associated with data collection.	Low	Low	Enumerator refresher training will include discussion of self-care while conducting data collection. This includes the importance of sleeping, a good diet, and exercise.
Harm to enumerators - physical There is low risk to enumerators of accidents or physical harm during data collection due to remote data collection. There is a small risk of harm occurring when enumerators are travelling to or from the office, where phone surveys will be conducted from.	Low	Low	The only additional physical activity the enumerators will experience as a result of participating in the research is travelling to and from the RDM office where the phone surveys and interviews will be conducted. Enumerators are responsible for planning a safe method of travel and receive a transport refund to cover their travel expenses.
Change in socio-political context Covid-19 cases are prevalent in Uganda and FCDO indicates that there may be socio-political unrest in the lead up to elections in January 2021 and in reaction to Covid-19 restrictions.	Low	High	There is low risk to participants and enumerators being negatively impacted by Covid-19 and political unrest due to the remote data collection measures. Schools may re-open, but strategies will be adjusted to continue remote data collection.
Changes in staff members - internal Jigsaw recognises that staff turnover is a risk in multi-year projects.	High	High	Jigsaw assigns multiple staff members to each project to mitigate potential risks from staff turnover/absence. When a staff member leaves Jigsaw they are expected to leave detailed handover notes for each active project with which they

			are involved.
Change in staff members - external There is a risk of staff turnover from PEAS and at the fund manager level.	High	High	Jigsaw expected the client to have a thorough handover strategy in place for new staff, and to facilitate an introduction between Jigsaw and new staff members. Jigsaw will facilitate staff turnover by virtually meeting with new staff members.
Difficulty contacting research participants As many of the research participants are children, there is a high likelihood that they are using a shared phone. This may lead to difficulty contacting participants. Also, there is a likelihood of poor network coverage and calls dropping during surveys and interviews. This is inconvenient for the research participant, who may choose not to participate, and creates additional workload for enumerators.	Medium	High	Enumerators will be provided with more contact details of respondents than the required sample size to provide a buffer for losing participants due to contact difficulties. Time for scheduling interviews with participants is included in the budget, but if there are widespread issues contacting participants that is reducing the number of surveys each enumerator can collect per day below 7, additional data collection time and costs will be incurred. This may result in reduced sample sizes. The project has contact lists for students and will send an SMS with information about the research ahead of the participants being contacted by the enumerators. This should reduce the risk of incorrect or invalid phone numbers.
Difficulty recruiting students who have returned to school	Medium	High	The evaluation will not start data collection until
The government of Uganda has mandated that schools operate only as boarding or day schools. As such, the majority of PEAS schools have decided to re-open only as boarding schools. There is a risk that some day students will not be able to return as boarding students. There is also a general challenge that students may not return to school. This would have impacts on recruiting students from S4 and S6.			schools have reopened and settled back into the new term. This allows for time for as many students as possible to return to schools and for PEAS to provide up to date contact lists of available students in school. If there are significantly lower than expected number of students available for data collection, the student survey sample size will be re-designed in discussion with the RDM, PEAS and the FM.
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High attrition rate - enumerators There is a small risk that enumerators could drop out during data collection, for example due to illness or self-isolation if Covid-19 symptoms are developed. This would impact the data collection timeline.	Low	Medium	RDM has a wide network of enumerators and will be able to recruit additional enumerators if there is a case of illness or dropout. Enumerator targets may also be adjusted. Given the short data collection period and low exposure to Covid-19 through remote data collection, the risk of dropout is low.
Inconsistencies in data collection The size of the research team, and demands of the tools could lead to errors in data and uneven data collection.	Medium	High	In the event that the enumerator team includes enumerators who have not worked on GEC-T contracts with RDM previously, the RDM supervisor will conduct an inter-rater reliability test with enumerators to ensure consistency of data collection, and results will be shared with the research team. Pre-test data will be checked for completeness and accuracy and enumerators will receive feedback. Jigsaw will check data spot checks on a regular basis.

Misuse of data Personal details of participants will be collected, including names, DOBs, phone numbers and location information. This could be misused by any of the data collection team or a third party.	Medium	High	Enumerator training will include a discussion of data protection and confidentiality. All datasets shared with the project and FM will be anonymised and with no identifying information. Enumerators will not have access to data after it has been collected and submitted. Jigsaw has a GDPR compliant Data Protection Policy that will be followed (this can be shared upon request).
Problems with technology The data collection relies heavily on electronic equipment, such as mobile phones and tablets, which could disrupt data collection if there are technical issues.	Medium	Low	RDM will ensure all enumerators are aware of optimal tablet settings for data collection. RDM is responsible for ensuring sufficient equipment is available for enumerators to conduct the research, as well as having spare equipment for use in case of emergency. RDM is also responsible for ensuring enumerators have SIM cards with a network that has coverage in the location data collection is being conducted. This may require sourcing multiple SIM cards.

Annex D: Jigsaw Code of Conduct

Note that all RDM enumerators will be required to sign this before starting data collection.

The rights, wellbeing and safety of all research participants, especially children and adults at risk, are of paramount importance.

This code of conduct applies to the full study team – including all enumerators, supervisors and Jigsaw Consult staff.

Enumerators and supervisors should:

- Treat all participants equally, as individuals, with dignity, sensitivity and respect, regardless of personal characteristics or beliefs.
- Ensure that research participants are aware of the safeguarding referral process.
- Be inclusive of people with special needs.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).
- Listen carefully to what the research participants says, and wants to say.
- Respect each person's boundaries, personal space and privacy.
- Seek informed consent in line with the project requirements.
- Use an open door policy when alone with a research participant.
- Conduct research in a room very close to open areas or rooms where other people are present.
- Report and respond to any concerns, suspicions, incidents or allegations of actual or potential abuse in line with the project's referral pathway.
- Cooperate fully in investigations of abuse.

Enumerators and supervisors should not:

- Carry out their duties whilst under the impact of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Smoke or vape in the presence of research participants.
- Ask for or accept personal contact details or invitations to share personal contact details (this includes email, phone numbers, social media handles, address, Skype), nor provide their personal contact details, except where this has been explicitly authorised by Jigsaw Consult for work purposes.
- Use language or behaviour of a sexual, suggestive or inappropriate nature.
- Take photos of the research participants.
- Physically punish or verbally abuse a research participant, or act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade.
- Use sarcasm, discrimination, negative criticism, or labelling.
- Have physical contact with research participants.
- Disclose, or support the disclosure of, information that identifies research participants.

The above is not an exhaustive list. All members of a research team should consider related actions and behaviour which may compromise the rights and safeguarding of participants. Actions that are taken outside of work hours which contradict the above will be considered a violation of this policy.

I confirm that I have read and understood Jigsaw Consult's code of conduct for research. I understand that a breach of this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action, including possible termination of my contract.

Date	Printed name	Signature

Annex E: Washington Group questions

As at midline, the endline evaluation will use the Washington Group questions to identify children with disabilities in the sample. The following Washington Group questions will be used:

- 1. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if you are wearing glasses?
- 2. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if you are using a hearing aid?
- 3. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
- 4. Do you have difficulty remembering things or concentrating?
- 5. Do you have difficulty with self care such as washing or dressing?
- 6. Using your mother-tongue, do you have difficulty communicating? (For example, understanding or being understood)

The available answer options are:

- No difficulty
- Yes, some difficulty
- Yes, a lot of difficulty
- Cannot [action] at all
- Don't know

Any student who answers "yes, a lot of difficulty" or "cannot [action] at all" will be classified as a CWD for the purposes of the endline evaluation.

Annex F: PPI questions

The PPI is a method of measuring poverty using 10 simple questions customised for different countries. PPI was designed by the Grameen Foundation to overcome the methodological challenge of determining whether households are living above or below the \$1.25 PPP poverty line. PPI uses 10 simple questions to determine the likelihood that a household is living below the poverty line. The country specific questions for Uganda were generated from statistical analysis of national household surveys and advice from country experts. The 10 questions are multiple choice and each answer is assigned a score (found on the PPI scorecard). The questions to be included in the endline student survey are:

- 1. How many members does the household have?
 - a. Nine or more (score 0)
 - b. 8(3)
 - c. 7 (4)
 - d. 5 or 6 (6)

- e. 4(8)
- f. 3 (12)
- g. 2(21)
- h. 1(28)
- 2. Are all household members ages 6 to 12 currently in school?
 - a. No (0)
 - b. Yes (2)
 - c. No one ages 6 to 12 (5)
- 3. Can the oldest female head/spouse read and write with understanding in any language?
 - a. No (0)
 - b. No female head/spouse (0)
 - c. Yes (3)
- 4. What type of material is mainly used for construction of the wall of the dwelling?
 - a. Unburnt bricks with mud, mud and poles or other (0)
 - b. Unburnt bricks with cement, wood, tin/iron sheets, concrete stones, burnt stabilized bricks, or cement blocks (4)
- 5. What type of material is mainly used for construction of the roof of the dwelling?
 - a. Thatch or tins (0)
 - b. Iron sheets, concrete, tiles, asbestos, or other (5)
- 6. What source of energy does the household mainly use for cooking?
 - a. Firewood, cow dung or grass (reeds) (0)
 - b. Charcoal, paraffin stove, gas, biogas, electricity (regardless of source), or other (6)
- 7. What type of toilet facility does the household mainly use?
 - a. No facility/bus/polythene bag/bucket etc. (0)
 - b. Uncovered pit latrine (with or without slab), Ecosan (compost toilet), or covered pit latrine without slab (4)
 - c. Covered pit latrine with slab (6)
 - d. VIP latrine or flush toilet (11)
- 8. How many member mobile phones do members of your household own?
 - a. None (0)
 - b. One (7)
 - c. Two (12)
 - d. Three of more (22)
- 9. Does any member of your household own a radio?
 - a. No (0)
 - b. Yes (7)
- 10. Does every member of the household have at least one pair of shoes?
 - a. No (0)
 - b. Yes (9)

Annex G: List of PEAS schools

School	Baseline/	Added at	A-level
	Midline	midline	centres

Onwards and Upwards			
Kiira View Secondary school	YES		
Sarah Ntiro			
Green Shoots			
Hibiscus PEAS High School	YES		YES
Pioneer PEAS High School	YES		
Kuc Ki Gen			
Bwesumbu PEAS High school	YES		
Kithoma PEAS High School			
Samling Kazingo PEAS	YES		YES
Forest PEAS school	YES		
PEAS Bridge			
Kigarama PEAS Bridge			
Ngora PEAS	YES		
Samling Kichwamba			
Nangonde PEAS High School			
Malongo PEAS High School	YES		
Nyero PEAS High school	YES		
Mukongoro PEAS High School		YES	
Kityerera High School			
Akoromit PEAS High School		YES	
Apeulai PEAS High School	YES		
Toroma PEAS High School			
Ndeija PEAS High School	YES		
PEAS Frontieres High School			
PEAS Aspire High School			
PEAS Noble	YES		
Samling High School Nama			

Inception report v3

Project level KII template

Version 2, January 2021

Participants	 School Support Officer School Support Officer Head of School Network Child Protection and Safeguarding Specialist Head of Quality Assurance Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Data Lead Chief Technical Officer 		
Target number	7		
Interview	Jigsaw (using GoogleDocs)		
Data collection method	Google Meet (or other digital platform)		
Time allocation	45-60 minutes		
Relevant research questions	RQ 2.1, RQ 3.1, RQ 3.2, RQ 4, RQ 4.1		
Priority areas for discussion	Safeguarding and child protection practices		
(from Inception Report)	School inspections		
	School audits		
	School improvement plans		
	Sharing resources with the government		
	Sustainability of project activities		

Interview template

Interviewee summary

Some of this information will be provided by PEAS and can be completed prior to the start of the interview. The rest can be filled out after the interview with information collected during the discussion.

Name	
Gender	
Role on project	
Date & time of interview	
Platform for interview	
Interviewer	
Note-taker	

Consent script

Hello, my name is XX and I work for a research consultancy called Jigsaw Consult. I would like to ask for your permission to interview you on behalf of PEAS, who have contracted Jigsaw to conduct an endline evaluation of the GEARRing Up For Success project.

In this interview we want to discuss the original and Covid-19 project activities, project design and implementation, sustainability and lessons learned. We would like to draw from your expert knowledge and experience of the project as [ROLE OF PARTICIPANT]. This will take approximately 45-60 minutes.

We will use the information from this interview to contribute to a report for both PEAS and the Fund Manager. During the interview, we will take written notes to record your answers, which we will then analyse to develop our research findings. We will use your role title, but not your name, when writing up these findings in our report.

Are you happy to proceed?

Do you have any questions before we start?

Questions

Background

To be asked to everyone

- 1. Tell me about your own role in the GEARRing Up For Success project.
 - a. Probe: How long have you been in this role?
- 2. How did your role change, if at all, during the Covid-19 school closures?
 - a. Probe: What was your involvement in the design or implementation of the activities during the Covid-19 school closures?

Project activities: design and implementation

To be asked to everyone

- 1. PEAS is aware that a learning gap persists between girls and boys, and may have widened during the school closures. In your opinion, why does this learning gap persist and what do you think should be done about it? [RQ 2, 2.1]
 - a. Probe: Can you give me examples of the learning gaps that you have observed?
 - b. Probe: In your opinion, what should PEAS start, stop or continue doing to address this learning gap?
 - c. Probe: Has this learning gap changed across the life of the project (2017-2021)? If so, how has it changed and why do you think those changes happened?
 - d. Probe: What else was happening that could explain the changes, for example other interventions in the local or national context?
- 2. Studying A-levels after finishing lower secondary school is a popular post-school pathway that students aspire to, but we have found that many students are not able to fulfil this ambition. Why do you think this is? [RQ 2, 2.1]
 - a. We have also found that boys aspire to study A-levels more than girls. Why do you think this is? [*RQ* 2, 2.1]
 - b. Probe: Do these findings correspond with your experience working with PEAS schools with marginalised students?
 - c. Probe: How do you think the barrier of a lack of money to enrol in A-levels affects girls and boys differently, if at all?
 - d. Probe: How do you think households with limited funds and multiple children decide which child can enrol to study A-levels?

- e. Probe: Can you give any examples from your experience that speak to this?
- f. Probe: Has this learning gap changed across the life of the project (2017-2021)? If so, how has it changed and why do you think those changes happened?
- g. Probe: What else was happening that could explain the changes, for example other interventions in the local or national context?
- 3. How have schools continued to support students by maintaining conditions for learning and providing psycho-social support in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures? [RQ 3.2]
 - a. Hint: By "conditions for learning" we are referring to the external requirements for an effective learning environment, including but not limited to access to: appropriate and relevant learning materials, adequate nutrition, adequate sanitation, psychological support.
 - b. Probe: What specific activities contributed towards the maintenance of conditions for learning? How?
 - c. Probe: How did these activities change over the course of the school closures and reopening of schools to S4 and S6 students?
 - d. Probe: How would you describe the impact of these activities?
 - e. Probe: What else was happening that could explain the changes, for example other interventions in the local or national context?

Project activities: design and implementation - specific questions by role

Ask to Head of Network, Quality Assurance, MELD Lead and Chief Technical Officer

- 1. Looking back across the life of the project, prior to the Covid-19 school closures, which outcomes and outputs do you feel that PEAS was successfully meeting and why do you think this was achieved? [RQ 3.1]
 - a. Probe: Looking at the logframe from midline, some examples of met or exceeded targets are: the number of marginalised girls who transition through key stages of education, training or employment, high scores on the life skills index, and girls feeling that teachers treat girls and boys equally in class. Can you speak to the factors driving the success of these outcomes or outputs?
 - b. Probe: In your opinion, has the project delivered these outputs and outcomes efficiently? Why do you think this?
 - c. Probe: What could have been done differently?

- d. Probe: What effect do you think that the school closures will have on these outcomes and outputs?
- 2. Can you tell me which outcomes and outputs were not being met and what the main challenges were to meeting them? [RQ 3.1]
 - a. Probe: Looking at the logframe from midline, some examples of outcomes/outputs that were not met are: higher SEGMA/SEGRA scores than comparison schools, O-Level completion rates for girls, gender equality attitudes among caregivers. Can you speak to the factors driving the challenge of meeting these outcomes or outputs?
 - b. Probe: In your opinion, has the project delivered these outputs and outcomes efficiently? Why do you think this?
 - c. Probe: What could have been done differently?
 - d. Probe: What effect do you think that the school closures will have on these outcomes and outputs?

Ask to Head of Network, CP and Safeguarding, Quality Assurance & Chief Technical Officer:

- 1. Please describe how and why safeguarding and child protection practices have changed over the course of the project. [RQ 1]
 - a. How has this been adapted during the Covid-19 school closures?
 - b. Probe: What improvements or changes need to be made to these practices in the future?
 - c. Probe: How would you describe the impact of the safeguarding and child protection practices?
 - d. Probe: What else was happening that could explain the changes made, for example other interventions in the local or national context?

Ask to MELD Lead, Head of Network, Quality Assurance:

- 1. We have seen the audit and school inspection scores from 2017-2019. For the audits, it appears that there have been marginal improvements in the average score and number of schools scoring full marks, although there are some schools with lower scores. In your opinion, what are the main reasons for these changes? [RQ 1]
 - a. Probe: How is the information found through the audits used?
 - b. Probe: How do you use the information in your role?
 - c. Probe: Have you seen any changes to project delivery as a result of the audit findings? Can you give me examples?
 - d. Probe: In your opinion, is the audit a helpful tool for PEAS? Why?

- 2. The inspections did not reveal significant change, although there was an increase in the number of schools in the "good" rating. Why do you think this is? [RQ 1]
 - a. Probe: How is the information found through the inspections used?
 - b. Probe: How do you use the information in your role?
 - c. Probe: Have you seen any changes to project delivery as a result of the inspection findings? Can you give me examples?
 - d. Probe: In your opinion, is the audit a helpful tool for PEAS? Why?

Ask to School Support Officers and Head of Network:

- 1. Please describe the work done on the school improvement plans throughout the project. [RQ 1]
 - a. Probe: How has this work changed over the course of the project?
 - b. Probe: Can you give me an example of how you have engaged with the school improvement plans?
 - c. Probe: How has this been adapted during the Covid-19 school closures, and moving forward with schools reopening gradually? [RQ 3.2]
 - d. Probe: How would you describe the impact of this activity?
 - e. Probe: What else was happening that could explain the impact, for example other interventions in the local or national context?

Sustainability

Ask to Head of Network, Quality Assurance, MELD Lead and Chief Technical Officer:

- 1. Thinking about sustainability of the GEARRing Up For Success project, there are many aspects to sustaining the project impacts, from activities, capacity, behaviours and attitudes and ownership, and more. In your opinion, what are the main aspects that PEAS should focus on sustaining beyond 2021.
 - a. Probe: Why do you think these should be sustained?
 - b. Probe: What is the evidence supporting your prioritisation of these aspects of sustainability?
- 2. Please describe to me how PEAS plan to sustain these aspects of the project beyond the life of the project. [RQ 4]
 - a. Probe: How does PEAS plan to sustain project activities? [probe specific activities mentioned in the previous question]
 - b. Probe: How does PEAS plan to sustain the capacity gained by schools, staff and students? [probe specific capacity mentioned in the previous question]
 - c. Probe: sustainability of linkages
 - d. Probe: sustainability of ownership

Ask Quality Assurance and Chief Technical Officer:

- 1. Can you tell us about your plans to share resources with the government? [RQ 4.1]
 - a. Probe: How is this contributing to the sustainability of the project?
 - b. Probe: What steps have already been taken to implement this?
 - c. Probe: How can the project activities and impacts be leveraged by the government and other actors?
 - d. Probe: What is PEAS' role in supporting the government to leverage project activities and impact?
- 2. How does this project fit into the wider plans for full financial sustainability of PEAS schools by 2025? [RQ 4]
 - a. Probe: In the enrolment data there is a noticeable drop in the number of students enrolled in 2019 and 2020 compared to 2017 and 2018. It is our understanding that this was primarily caused by fee increases and the ending of the government USE subsidy. Is this the case, in your opinion? If not, what caused the drop?
 - b. Probe: What is the impact of decreased enrolment on the sustainability of PEAS schools, both financial and otherwise, in your opinion?

Ask to School Support Officers and CP and Safeguarding:

- 1. In your experience, what do you think are the most valuable activities happening in PEAS schools that benefit students? Can you give me examples of how the students benefit from the activities? [RQ 4]
 - a. Probe: how are students benefiting differently in PEAS schools compared to other schools? Why do you think this?
 - b. Probe: What is different about teaching in a PEAS school to any other schools you have taught in?

Lessons learned

- 1. Looking back across the life of the project, what changes or improvements would you make to the project design or implementation, if any? [RQ 3]
 - a. Probe: What about changes to improve students' access to education and learning experience?
 - b. Probe: What about changes to support teachers and school staff?
 - c. Probe: What about changes to improve working with the government? [RQ 4.1]

- 2. What are the key learnings that PEAS should take away from their response to school closures due to Covid-19? [RQ 3.2, RQ 4]
 - a. Probe: What are the key learnings to be taken from how PEAS schools are set up to withstand interruptions such as the Covid-19 school closures? How can these be applied as schools are reopened?
 - b. Probe: What are the key learnings relevant for the education system nationally?
 - c. Probe: What are the main successes and challenges of the PEAS response to the Covid-19 school closures?
 - d. Probe: How will these lessons learned be incorporated in future project design?

Wrap-up

To be asked to everyone

- 1. Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your experiences that we have not already discussed?
- 2. Do you have any questions for me?

Facilitator Comments

The researcher can include relevant notes on anything that may be relevant for analysis here, including but not limited to demeanour of the participant eg. was the participant uncomfortable answering certain questions? Did any questions seem hard for the participant to answer?

Qualitative sampling criteria

December 2020

Overview

The process of re-drafting the qualitative tools has focused on determining the sampling criteria and identifying the priority areas to address the "so what" questions arising from the initial analysis of the student survey. These tools move away from the use of qualitative data to triangulate findings from the qual, and instead focus on what the qualitative data can give that the quantitative cannot and exploring trends in the quantitative data.

The decision was made in the review call with the FM and PEAS to purposefully sample interviewees. The sampling criteria for each key informant interview template is outlined below. During the review process the following priority areas were identified to dig into with the qualitative data:

"So what" priorities from Phase 1 analysis	Where to be addressed
61% of students reported accessing educational resources that are not produced by PEAS during the school closures: what other educational resources are available and how were they used for maintaining conditions for learning?	Ask all student KIIs Ask all teachers and HTs DEOs to contextualise response in their districts
There was a high level of agreement among students accessing Covid-19 activities that they were helpful (over 90% for each): what did students find particularly helpful about each activity in helping them to continue learning at home / maintaining conditions for learning? How was each activity used by students?	Ask all student KIIs about packs, SMS and trees
PEAS is aware that a learning gap persists between girls and boys, and may have widened during school closures: why does this learning gap persist and what should be done about it? What should PEAS start, stop or continue?	Headteacher and teacher KIIs
The student survey data does not provide insight into how teachers supported students, although the data shows that girls were more likely to say that insufficient teacher support was a barrier to learning than boys: How did teachers use telephone trees and how did they tailor their support to students?	Student KIIs Teacher KIIs
PEAS radio programmes are not available in all regions, and 51% of respondents had tuned into them: why are some students not tuning in when it is available? How are students continuing to learn where radio programmes are not	Student KIIs - questions based on whether they go to a school in an area where PEAS broadcast their radio

available? How are listeners of the radio programmes using the content? What do they find engaging and helpful for their learning?	programmes
The student survey found that among S4 students the most popular post-school pathway is to study for A-Levels, however boys were significantly more likely to select this: Why are boys saying that they want to study for A-levels more than girls? How does the barrier of lack of money to enrol in A-levels affect girls and boys differently?	Teachers, Headteacher & DEOs KIIs

One of the "so what" areas mentioned in the call was using the qualitative data to understand why some students were not receiving SMS, as they are sent to all PEAS students. We will ask all students about SMS (alongside trees and learning packs) as it is an activity targeting everyone but will not sample based on having received an SMS or not. This is because the quantitative data answers why this is:

- Of the 139 students who have never received an SMS (29% of the student survey sample), the most common reasons for not having received the SMS are: the caregiver has never received a message (32%), not having accessing to a phone (27%), "don't know" (14%), the caregiver does not share the message (9%), not staying with the caregiver so not receiving the messages (6%) and other (12%)
- No students reported not being able to understand the language of the SMS, that they are too busy to read the SMS, that they received too many and stopped, or stopped because they did not like the content.

The PEAS radio broadcasts are available and unavailable in discrete areas, whereas SMS and telephone trees target all PEAS students and it appears that learning packs were distributed in all schools (according to the phase 1 data). As such, the purposeful sampling strategy is based on distinguishing between schools in areas that PEAS broadcast the radio programmes and those schools in areas without the broadcast. Teacher and headteacher sampling is based off the student sample for comparability. Therefore, we will triangulate within the qualitative data but not between the quantitative and qualitative data.

Kobo

Prior to starting the survey the enumerator will fill out the sampling criteria to ensure that the appropriate questions are asked to each interviewee. There will be one base interview template for each sample, which will have the relevant questions for the sampling criteria asked through skip logic. For example, before the interview begins the enumerator will record in Kobo whether the interviewee has a visual impairment, and if they select "yes", the enumerator will be prompted to ask the visual impairment specific questions.

Student KIIs

In the re-worked template for the student KII, the primary research questions will be RQ 1.1 and RQ 3.2, in order to focus on understanding how activities maintained conditions for learning.

RQ 1.1	
RQ 3.2	

Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?

How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures, and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?

Sampling strategy

General sampling criteria:

- The final sample should consist of 8 interviews, with 4 S4s, 2 S5s and 2 S6s
- If a sampled student is in S5 and S6, they must have completed lower secondary at a PEAS school
- If a sampled student is in S4, they must have completed 2 years in that PEAS school (e.g. S3 and S4)
- The students will be sampled from the student survey, as all girls at S5 and S6 were sampled for survey so there are no others available, and for consistency it is better to have the same sampling strategy for all interviewees. Jigsaw will pull out all the survey respondents who match the criteria and give the names to RDM.

Purposeful sampling criteria:

- Four students from schools that are in regions that the PEAS radio programmes are broadcast:
 - 2 students who listen to the radio programmes, 1 of whom is visually impaired
 - $\circ\quad$ 2 students who do not listen to the radio programmes
 - Of these students: 2 are S4s, 1 is S5 and 1 is S6
- Four students from schools that are not in regions that the PEAS radio programme are broadcast:
 - \circ 4 students
 - \circ $\,$ Of these students: 2 are S4s, 1 is S5 and 1 is S6 $\,$
 - $\circ \quad \text{One of these students is visually impaired}$

"So what"

The following "so what" questions from the quantitative data will be explored:

- The "so what" for radio listeners is understanding how the radio programmes were used to maintain conditions for learning, and understanding why students find the radio programmes helpful (high levels of agreement about helpfulness in the survey).
- The "so what" for non-radio listeners in regions where radio is available is to understand why they are not tuning in, as only 11% of respondents to the survey reported that they did not listen to the programme because it was not available in their region. We also need to understand where they are finding educational content and what impact it is having on maintaining conditions for learning.
- The "so what" for non-radio listeners in regions where radio is not available, is where they are finding educational content and what impact it is having on maintaining conditions for learning.
- 61% of students reported accessing educational resources that are not produced by PEAS during the school closures: what other educational resources are available and how were they used for maintaining conditions for learning?
- SMS, telephone trees and learning packs target all PEAS students and there was a high level of agreement among students accessing Covid-19 activities that they were helpful (over 90% for each): what did students find particularly helpful about each activity in helping them to continue learning at home / maintaining conditions for learning? How was each activity used by students?
- The student survey data does not provide insight into how teachers supported students, although the data shows that girls were more likely to say that insufficient teacher support was a barrier to learning than boys: How did teachers use telephone trees and how did they tailor their support to students?

Teacher Klls

The teacher KII sample is based on the student KII sampling strategy. The main research question that will be explored in the revised template are:

RQ 1.1	Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?
RQ 3.2	How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures, and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?
RQ 4	How may project activities and observed impacts be sustained after the end of the project?

Sampling strategy

General sampling criteria:

- A total of 10 teachers at PEAS schools will be interviewed
- 5 interviewees should be male and 5 should be female
- All interviewees should have been teaching at the PEAS school for at least 3 years

• All interviewees should either teach maths/numeracy or English/literacy

Purposeful sampling criteria:

- All teachers should be sampled from schools attended by the student interviewees, thus ensuring that there are schools that are and are not in regions where PEAS broadcast their radio programmes, as well as having a mixture of lower and upper secondary schools
- 2 of the female teachers interviewed should be Senior Women Teachers

"So what"

The following "so what" questions from the phase 1 survey will be explored:

- The student survey data does not provide insight into how teachers supported students, although the data shows that girls were more likely to say that insufficient teacher support was a barrier to learning than boys: How did teachers use telephone trees and how did they tailor their support to students?
- PEAS is aware that a learning gap persists between girls and boys, and may have widened during school closures: why does this learning gap persist and what should be done about it? What should PEAS start, stop or continue?
- 61% of students reported accessing educational resources that are not produced by PEAS during the school closures: what other educational resources are available and how were they used for maintaining conditions for learning?
- The student survey found that among S4 students the most popular post-school pathway is to study for A-Levels, however boys were significantly more likely to select this: Why are boys saying that they want to study for A-levels more than girls? How does the barrier of lack of money to enrol in A-levels affect girls and boys differently?

Headteacher KIIs

The headteacher KII sample is based on the student KII sampling strategy. The main research question that will be explored in the revised template are:

RQ 1.1	Which project activities have facilitated the learning of marginalised girls, and how effective were they?
RQ 3.2	How have schools continued to support students in the wake of the Covid-19 school closures, and to what extent can the related activities be sustained?
RQ 4	How may project activities and observed impacts be sustained after the end of the project?

Sampling strategy

General sampling criteria:

- A total of 8 headteachers at PEAS schools will be interviewed
- There is no gender quota, although if there are any female headteachers of PEAS schools it would be good to include them
- All interviewees should have been at the PEAS school for at least 3 years

Purposeful sampling criteria:

• All teachers should be sampled from schools attended by the student interviewees, thus ensuring that there are schools that are and are not in regions where PEAS broadcast their radio programmes, as well as having a mixture of lower and upper secondary schools

"So what"

The following "so what" questions will be explored:

- PEAS is aware that a learning gap persists between girls and boys, and may have widened during school closures: why does this learning gap persist and what should be done about it? What should PEAS start, stop or continue?
- 61% of students reported accessing educational resources that are not produced by PEAS during the school closures: what other educational resources are available and how were they used for maintaining conditions for learning?
- The student survey found that among S4 students the most popular post-school pathway is to study for A-Levels, however boys were significantly more likely to select this: Why are boys saying that they want to study for A-levels more than girls? How does the barrier of lack of money to enrol in A-levels affect girls and boys differently?

DEO KIIs

Sampling strategy

General sampling criteria:

- DEO for at least one year (to include time before the school closures)
- DEO in an area that has a PEAS school
- No gender requirement

Purposeful sampling criteria:

- At least 1 interviewee from an area where PEAS is broadcasting the radio programmes
- At least 1 interviewee from an area where PEAS is not broadcasting the radio programmes
- As PEAS will be facilitating introductions to the DEOs, it makes sense to contact the DEOs who have a high level of engagement with PEAS

"So what"

The following "so what" question will be explored:

- 61% of students reported accessing educational resources that are not produced by PEAS during the school closures: what other educational resources are available and how were they used for maintaining conditions for learning?
- The student survey found that among S4 students the most popular post-school pathway is to study for A-Levels, however boys were significantly more likely to select this: Why are boys saying that they want to study for A-levels more than girls? How does the barrier of lack of money to enrol in A-levels affect girls and boys differently?

7374 PEAS (Promoting Equality in African Schools)

'GEARRing Up for Success After School' GEC-Transition Project

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Framework

Author: Rachel Linn, Head of Monitoring & Evaluation, PEAS

Version 4

Updated 11th April 2018 (post-baseline)

1. Introduction

PEAS (Promoting Equality in African Schools) operates a network of 28 low-cost private schools throughout Uganda which serve disadvantaged, predominantly rural communities. PEAS' GEC 'GEARR' project successfully improved <u>G</u>irls' <u>Enrolment</u>, <u>Attendance</u>, <u>Retention and Results at lower secondary level across our network of schools. Our GEC-Transition project, titled 'GEARRing up for Success After School', will support these same girls to make the next step by completing the lower secondary cycle and transitioning to a successful pathway of their choosing.</u>

The project will run for four years from April 2017 – March 2021, with key objectives as follows:

- Enable marginalised girls to make successful <u>transitions</u> through lower secondary school and into a post-school pathway of their choosing, whether that is upper secondary (A-level), technical and vocational training (TVET), formal or self-employment, or active citizenship
- Improve marginalised girls' <u>learning</u> outcomes through helping them to develop functional literacy and numeracy skills, curriculum knowledge to prepare for national exams, and contextually relevant economic and life skills
- Develop a sustainable model for delivering the project activities after the end of the grant

Project Context and Theory of Change

To deliver against these objectives, the project will undertake a range of targeted activities which address the barriers that prevent marginalised girls in Uganda from achieving good learning and transition outcomes in large numbers. At present, only 35.9% of girls who enrol in secondary school in Uganda successfully complete lower secondary. The transition rate from lower to upper secondary is extremely low, with only one in five girls (21.4%) enrolling in A-Level.¹ Furthermore, only 0.98% of the female population in Uganda aged 25+ has completed at least a short cycle tertiary degree.² These depressing figures indicate that the barriers to girls' school completion and transition are substantial.

Our Theory of Change and project activities are summarised in the diagram overleaf, and are based around responding to the specific, school-based barriers that we have identified stand in the way of girls completing secondary school and transitioning to a pathway of their choosing. The diagram also outlines the assumptions that underlie our Theory of Change.

Beneficiaries

The project will work with all girls enrolled in PEAS schools in Uganda. Due to the nature of the communities PEAS works in, PEAS considers all enrolled girls to be marginalised girls. As evidence of this, external research has found that PEAS students are statistically poorer and have statistically lower prior attainment than students in government or other low-cost private schools in Uganda³. This is because PEAS schools are affordable, non-selective, and intentionally located in underserved communities. The project interventions will be designed to support all adolescent girls (aged approx. 13-20) who enrol in lower or upper secondary across PEAS' 28 schools located in rural communities throughout the Western, Central, Eastern and Northern regions of Uganda.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Principles

The key principles of our MEL approach are as follows:

- Regular monitoring of project delivery to assess whether activities intended to drive project outcomes are being delivered within planned timelines and to the expected scale
- Regular monitoring of project delivery costs to assess whether activities are being delivered cost effectively
- Conducting a multi-year, external evaluation to assess the outcomes of the project and counterfactual scenario by comparing the learning and transition outcomes of girls in treatment and control groups
- Using evidence from the project's delivery experience and the evaluation to generate learnings for internal and external audiences to drive improved outcomes for girls

¹ Republic of Uganda, Ministry of Education & Sports Sector Factsheet 2002-2015

² UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013

³ Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), 'Evaluation of the PEAS Networks under the Uganda Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programme', Midline Report, 2017

PEAS GEC-T	EAS GEC-T Theory of Change Diagram & Project Activities					
Outcomes	LEARNING • Improved girls' literacy • Improved girls' numeracy • Improved girls' O-Level results	TRANS • Improved transition ra secondary into (i) upp TVET & tertiary educa activity, and (iv) active	SITION ates from lower ber secondary, (ii) ation, (iii) economic e citizenship	SUSTAINABILITY Improved community support for PEAS schools and commitment to gender equity Improved school financial sustainability and ability to continue project activities Improved government commitment to financing gender sensitive secondary schools and scaling project activities	 The PPP agreement between PEAS and the GoU remains at least at the level it is in 2016 Uganda avoids serious political instability Low cost private schools maintain current levels of public support 	
Intermediate outcomes	 Student attendance – Improved girls' attendance rates Student retention and completion rates – Improved between-year retention and improved S4 and S6 completion rates for girls Student life skills development – Girls acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in life outside school Student self-esteem – Girls develop a belief in their own abilities and self-worth 				 The option to access affordable A-Level provision translates into higher girls' attendance, retention and completion rates 	
Outputs	 More girls feel well supported 2. by their families, communities and schools to thrive in and complete secondary school 	More girls leave school with functional literacy & numeracy and contextually relevant life skills	 More school leaders an equipped to support gin transition to A-Level ar relevant knowledge & s development 	 4. More girls successfully transition to A-Level 5. More girls leave school with ar achievable plan for their future 6. PEAS schools are prepared to carry on project activities without grant financing 	 Girls' demand for A-Level in beneficiary communities remains high School leader turnover does note rise significantly 	
Activities*	 Deliver community information & marketing to promote girls' education Deliver Gender Responsive Pedagogy teacher training Embed CP policy and reporting framework, and conduct CP training for PEAS & school staff Embed girls' clubs in all schools Deliver CPD for Senior Women Teachers Develop alumni tracking & engagement capabilities 	Design & deliver subject specific training for English & Maths teachers Design & embed livelihoods programme with specific literacy and numeracy components Embed life skills curriculum in all PEAS schools Provide contextually relevant learning materials	 Deliver annual school improvement and school leadership developmen programming Design & deliver A-Leve specific school leadersh development for A-Lev school leaders Strengthen PTAs/BoGs effectively supervise se delivery 	 Improve & expand A-Level provision in PEAS schools Provision of safe accommodation for girls Improve guidance on post-school pathways Facilitate access to higher education scholarships Government advocacy for affordable education through at improved PPP Set up endowment fund to improve school finances 	 Government standards and curriculum requirements for A- Level do not change significantly Construction costs do not rise at a considerably higher rate than current trends The value of the GBP against the UGX does not significantly worsen over the period of the grant Higher education bursaries are available 	
Barriers	Environment for Learning • Lack of community support for girls' education • Schools not promoting gender equality • Schools don't feel safe for girls to attend or learn	Teaching and Learning Lack of essential literacy and numeracy skills Curriculum irrelevant to local economic context or future lives of girls Teachers lack capacity to deliver a relevant curriculum	Leadership and Manage School leadership lacks capability to drive school improvement to support complete O-Level, trans A-Level and acquire reli- knowledge & skills deve	Conditions for Learnings the olLack of accessible A-Level provisiont girls' to sition toCost of education is prohibitiveLack of advice on post-school pathwayselopmentLack of access to affordable higher education		

* Note that activities highlighted in green will be partly or wholly funded and implemented under PEAS' DfID Uganda SESIL grant.

2. Learning from GEC 1

There were several lessons learnt from the GEC 1 evaluation which have influenced our approach to the GEC-T evaluation. The key reflections were as follows:

Need to agree measures of learning appropriate to secondary age students and context

The Early Grade Reading and Maths Assessments (EGRA and EGMA) which were recommended by the Fund Manager as the key learning tests for GEC 1 made it difficult to assess literacy and numeracy progression amongst older students. This was not unexpected, as the tests are – by definition – designed for earlier grades and test skills taught at primary level in Uganda. As many girls could, for example, already read over 100 words per minute by midline, relying solely on this subtask of the EGRA meant that it wasn't possible for girls to demonstrate the acquisition of higher order literacy skills over time, such as reading comprehension and the ability to make inferences from text. In a sense, the girls hit a ceiling on what they could achieve on a test of reading fluency only. This was especially problematic for PEAS, as the inability to meet improvement targets on the EGRA and EGMA tests meant the organisation lost money through its Payment by Results contract. For the GEC-T evaluation, we will ensure that the tests selected for assessing literacy and numeracy are age, stage, and context-appropriate.

Need to plan for high attrition rates at secondary level and a cross-sectional analysis approach

The GEC 1 evaluation had planned for a 20% attrition rate between baseline and endline to maintain a statistically significant sample for a cohort tracking study. However, drop-out rates are depressingly high at secondary level in Uganda, with – as mentioned – only 1 in 3 girls who enrol successfully completing O-level nationally. In line with this statistic, the evaluators encountered very high attrition rates at each evaluation point. As an example, only 11% of girls surveyed at baseline were recontacted at both midline and endline. This equated only 16 individuals in the control group, where drop-out was highest. Given national trends are unlikely to have changed in the year since the GEC 1 endline evaluation, it is advisable that the GEC-T evaluation plan for attrition rates of circa 20-30% for each year of implementation. Given this would likely mean sampling every single girl enrolled in the study schools during the baseline year – an expensive and highly time consuming exercise – we would recommend planning for a cross-sectional approach to data analysis from the start and using high numbers of substitute girls within the learning cohort.

Need to appoint a sufficiently skilled evaluator to meet demands of the evaluation

PEAS encountered substantial challenges managing the GEC 1 evaluator. These included (i) poor project planning and organisation, (ii) poor understanding of learning assessments, (iii) insufficient quality assurance processes for fieldwork, (iv) poor data management and organisation, and (v) weak quantitative and qualitative analysis and writing skills. On reflection, the firm appointed was not of a sufficient quality to manage the high demands of the GEC evaluation, and PEAS staff had to intervene more than was expected or desirable to ensure the evaluation was delivered on time and to the quality expected. For the GEC-T evaluation, PEAS will be conducting a more robust selection process and recruiting from a wider pool of Uganda-based and international evaluators to hopefully identify a higher quality partner who can manage the demands of the evaluation independently.

Need for quality assurance of enumerator training and fieldwork

While we hope to appoint a higher competency evaluator to minimise the need for high-contact oversight, a lesson learnt from the GEC 1 evaluation was the need for the project to quality assure enumerator training and the initial days of fieldwork. During the baseline evaluation, PEAS took a hands-off approach and the fieldwork team conducted their work unaccompanied. When the team returned, it became apparent that enumerators had only half the learning results needed - this was due to enumerators having told girls the learning tests were 'optional', and many girls refusing to sit them as a result. Key information needed to calculate learning test scores was also missing, such the time remaining on the EGRA reading passage (several girls did finish the passage at baseline). As the data was deemed unusable, the team had to be sent back into the field with oversight from the PEAS team, which was a costly and time inefficient exercise for all involved. To mitigate the risk of such challenges recurring at midline and endline, PEAS took a much stronger role in co-leading enumerator training and spending time in the field observing and coaching the fieldwork teams. This led to substantial improvements in the quality of tool administration and the data collected by the external evaluator. PEAS hopes to not be as hands-on during the GEC-T evaluation. However, the team will plan to participate in at least the baseline training and initial week of fieldwork with the evaluator team to quality assure these processes and identify any potential issues early on.

3. Monitoring

Monitoring will take place on a quarterly basis, when the project will provide an update against its GEC-T workplan (see separate document). The project workplan outlines the full range of activities to be completed each quarter, the project staff responsible for delivering each activity, and metrics that will be used to measure progress against each activity with targets for completion. Each activity line is also mapped to the specific output area and outcome(s) that it will support. This workplan – combined with quarterly visits by the GEC country monitors to observe delivery of project activities – will be the main tools used for tracking project delivery and identifying whether the project is on track to achieve its target outputs and outcomes.

The workplan will be updated each quarter by the project staff responsible for delivering the activities ahead of submission to the Fund Manager. A summary of financial spend over the preceding quarter in delivering project activities will also be provided for review.

Once a year, the project will also provide an update on progress against the output targets in its log frame via its annual report. The table below summarises the project's log frame output indicators and tracking methods. The selected log frame indicators are all impact-focused measures which assess whether change is taking place in the domains expected to deliver project outcomes. Delivery-focused measures are tracked separately in the project workplan to provide a view on whether project activities needed to drive progress in each output area are being delivered at the quantity and rate expected.

In the interest of using time and resources efficiently, the project will use the baseline, midline and endline evaluation points to collect data against several output indicators which can easily be woven into, for example, the girls' or caregivers' surveys. During Year 2, PEAS will incorporate assessing and reporting against the Year 2 targets into its own internal monitoring and evaluation processes.

Output 1: More girls feel well supported by their families, communities and schools to thrive in and complete secondary school					
esses whether Annually feel their school rides equal port to male and ale students					
esses whether Annually feel their family rides equal port to male and ale children in studies					
cks girls' own Annually vs on gender ty and whether spectives are nging over time					
cks caregivers' Annually vs on gender (except Y2) ty and whether spectives are nging over time)**				
	s and schools to thrive in an esses whether feel their school rides equal port to male and ale students esses whether feel their family rides equal port to male and ale children in r studies cks girls' own vs on gender ity and whether spectives are nging over time cks caregivers' vs on gender ity and whether spectives are nging over time cks caregivers' vs on gender ity and whether spectives are nging over time charter spectives are nging over time charter spectives are nging over time charter spectives are nging over time charter skills				

Table 1: Outputs for measurement

Output 2.1	% of girls who believe their literacy classes are helping them to improve their ability to read and write	External evaluation girls' survey, PEAS annual perception surveys*	Assesses whether girls find literacy curriculum supplement classes effective	Annually		
Output 2.2	% of girls participating in the livelihoods programme who feel the classes are providing them useful economic skills	PEAS annual perception surveys (for first measurement point after programme is launched); external evaluation girls' survey	Assesses whether girls find the livelihoods programme relevant and effective	Annually (from Y2)		
Output 2.3	% of girls passing Mathematics at O-level relative to national average pass rate	Annual UCE exam results for girls in PEAS schools	Tracks whether teacher training and numeracy strategies are improving maths results	Annually		
Output 2.4	% of girls who believe their life skills classes are providing them useful knowledge for life outside school	External evaluation girls' survey, PEAS annual perception surveys*	Assesses whether girls feel the life skills programme is relevant and effective	Annually		
Output 3: Mo knowledge 8	ore school leaders are equipped to a skills development	support girls' transition t	to A-Level and drive rele	evant		
Output 3.1	# of PEAS schools offering A- level	School enrolment records, external evaluator spot checks	Tracks the expansion of A-level provision across the PEAS network	Annually		
Output 3.2	Average school leader performance management scores	PEAS HR team annual reviews of school leadership teams	Assesses whether school leadership programme and support provided by PEAS is helping school leaders to improve practice	Annually		
Output 3.3	Average learning walk scores (at end of T3)	Termly learning walks conducted by PEAS Education CPD team (n.b. involves a series of scored classroom observations)	Assesses whether CPD training provided to teachers is helping them improve classroom teaching practice	Annually		
Output 4: More girls successfully transition to A-Level						
Output 4.1	% of girls who aspire to study at A-level and feel it will be possible for them to enrol	External evaluation girls' survey, PEAS annual perception surveys*	Tracks whether guidance counselling and expansion of A-level influences girls' aspirations and ability to transition	Annually		
Output 4.2	% of S3 and S4 students who have received advice about A- level from their school	External evaluation girls' survey, PEAS annual perception surveys*	Tracks whether guidance counselling is reaching all girls	Annually		

Output 4.3	Transition rate between S4-S5 in PEAS schools offering A- level	School enrolment records, external evaluator spot checks	Tracks whether internal transition rate is increasing as PEAS expands A- level offering	Annually		
Output 5: Mo	ore girls leave school with a realistic	and achievable plan fo	or their future			
Output 5.1	% of girls who know what they want to do after finishing O- level/A-level and can describe a plan to achieve their goal(s)	External evaluation girls' survey, PEAS annual perception surveys*	Tracks whether counselling is helping girls select and define a plan for after school	Annually		
Output 5.2	% of first-year graduates who are doing what they aspired to do after leaving school	External evaluator transition cohort survey, PEAS annual alumni survey***	Tracks whether in- school counselling and skills-based curriculum helped students to define a realistic pathway and pursue it	Annually		
Output 5.3	% of S3 and S4 female students who have received advice about post-school options while at school and rate the advice as useful	External evaluation girls' survey, PEAS annual perception surveys*	Tracks whether guidance counselling is reaching all girls and is seen to be effective	Annually		
Output 6: PEAS schools are prepared to carry on project activities without grant financing						
Output 6.1	PEAS is making progress towards agreeing a new public private partnership (PPP) with the Ministry of Education & Sports to finance school operating costs	PEAS staff meeting notes	Assesses whether progress is being made against key project strategy for securing school sustainability based on qualitative evidence	Annually		
Output 6.2	% of school operating costs that are covered through local, renewable income sources	PEAS Uganda year- end accounts	Tracks whether schools are moving closer to being able to operate/carry on project activities without external finance	Annually		

*To be used during Year 2 measurement point only. Because the project is being delivered over four years, for the second year of reporting only we will add this question to our annual student perception surveys (which survey a representative sample of boys and girls across all our schools) since no evaluation activities will be happening.

**PEAS will not be able to report against this indicator in Y2 when no evaluation activities are happening because we do not have an internal process nor budget to conduct annual surveys with a representative sample of parents.

***To be used during Year 2 measurement point only. Because the project is being delivered over four years, for the second year of reporting only we will add this question to our annual alumni surveys (which survey a sample of boys and girls who have left our schools) since no evaluation activities will be happening.

4. Key evaluation questions

The key evaluation questions are derived from our Theory of Change, and query whether the project activities are successfully impacting on the project's target outcomes and intermediate outcomes. They also seek to generate learnings by identifying which project activities have been the most successful and why, and assessing whether these activities can be delivered sustainably by PEAS and/or other actors. The project evaluation questions are as follows:

1. What impact did the project have on marginalised girls' learning and transition from lower secondary education and into (i) upper secondary education, (ii) technical and vocational training, (iii) economic activity, and (iv) active citizenship?

- 2. What impact did the project have on girls' school attendance, retention and completion rates?
- 3. What impact did the project have on girls' life skills development and self-esteem?
- 4. Which project activities facilitated the transition of marginalised girls through education and into productive post-school pathways and why? Which activities have increased marginalised girls' academic learning and skill development and why?
- 5. Was the project well-designed to meet its objectives? Did the project deliver outputs and outcomes efficiently? Was the project good value for money?
- 6. Will the most successful project activities be sustained and how? Can these activities be leveraged by government and other actors?

These questions link directly to the GEC programme evaluation questions, which focus on impact and drivers for girls' learning, transition, and sustainability globally. The GEC programme evaluation questions are provided below for reference. The project evaluation is intentionally designed to provide usable evidence against each of these areas.

GEC programme-level evaluation questions

- 1. Was the GEC successfully designed and implemented? Was the GEC good Value for Money?
- 2. What impact did the GEC Funding have on the transition of marginalised girls through education stages and their learning?
- 3. What works to facilitate transition of marginalised girls through education stages and increase their learning?
- 4. How sustainable were the activities funded by the GEC and was the program successful in leveraging additional interest and investment?

5. Evaluation design

The evaluation will take place over three data collection points – the first year of project implementation (2017 - baseline), the third year of project implementation (2019 - midline), and the fourth year of project implementation (2020 - endline) to produce a final evaluation report by March 2021. Annual spot check visits will also be conducted to track enrolment, attendance, retention and completion trends. The evaluation will focus primarily on measuring the project outcomes and intermediate outcomes, though – in the interest of time and resource efficiency – will also collect information on a selection of project outputs during the years when evaluation activities will be taking place.

5.1 Research design

The evaluation will use a quasi-experimental design. This is because the nature of PEAS' programme does not enable girls to be randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. Doing so would require that treatment and control schools be willing to admit any girls assigned to them from a randomised pool. This would require schools to use the same admissions criteria and charge the same (or zero) fees, so that assignment to either scenario would not disadvantage families. Given the secondary education sector in Uganda is not structured in this way – with even government secondary schools charging fees, and a high degree of diversity in admissions standards and costs across different schools – it is unlikely an RCT could be undertaken on PEAS' programme unless it was driven by the Ministry of Education & Sports. Furthermore, given the GEC-T evaluation wishes to sample many of the same girls who benefitted from the GEC 1 interventions, it will not be possible to completely randomise the treatment assignment, since these girls will already have self-selected into the treatment group via their enrolment choice.

Given the size and geographical spread of the PEAS network in Uganda (28 schools across 21 districts with 7,000+ girls enrolled), it is expected that a subsample of PEAS schools will be selected for participation in the evaluation. This selection will need to be made by the evaluator, ensuring a representative balance of schools from different regions, and of different sizes, ages, and with and without A-level sections.

The project's 'GEC 1 beneficiaries' are considered to be any girls who were enrolled in lower secondary during the final year of GEC 1 project implementation (2016). During the GEC-T baseline year, these girls will be enrolled in grades Senior 2 - Senior 4. Given the transition points that the project is targeting (through lower secondary, and into upper secondary, TVET, work, or active citizenship), the vast majority of GEC 1 beneficiaries will have left PEAS schools by the time of the final year of project implementation (2020). This is due to both low rates of transition from lower to upper secondary nationally (currently 21.4%), and also because many students choose to change schools for A-level –

predominantly for a change of environment and/or to enrol in a school that offers the specific A-level subjects they wish to study.

The table below provides an overview of the expected transitions of girls currently enrolled in lower secondary over the years of the evaluation. The boxes shaded in grey indicate the point at which each cohort grade is no longer expected to be enrolled in the study schools in large numbers.

Baseline Grade (2017)	Y2 Grade (2018)	Midline Grade (2019)	Endline Grade (2020)
S1	S2	S3	S4
S2	S3	S4	S5, TVET or Work
S3	S4	S5, TVET or Work	S6, TVET, or Work
S4	S5, TVET or Work	S6, TVET, or Work	University, TVET or Work

Table: Expected grade progression 2017-2020

For the reasons above, it will be necessary to follow different samples of girls for learning and transition. The learning cohort should be drawn from girls who will be in the study schools for the majority of the evaluation period, and as such can be expected to meaningfully benefit from interventions designed to improve their learning. As can be seen above, the only cohort grade that will enable this tracking all the way through is girls currently enrolled in Senior 1. PEAS also hopes that – through expanding its A-level provision over the course of the project – the current Senior 2 and Senior 3 cohorts may also transition into Senior 5 within PEAS network schools in greater numbers by the midline and endline years. As such, the Senior 1 - Senior 3 year groups will form the cohort to be sampled and tracked at the school level for learning during all evaluation points, with a larger proportion (70%) of girls sampled from Senior 1 to account for the expected higher attrition rates at midline and endline among the Senior 2 and Senior 3 cohort groups.

For the transition cohort, it is suggested that the grades containing the GEC 1 girls (grades Senior 2 – Senior 4) be sampled. All these girls are expected to complete lower secondary and transition to a post-school pathway by the end of the project, making them the most meaningful group to study for understanding transition. This transition cohort will be identified in schools during the baseline year, and subsequently tracked either via their schools (if they are expected to still be enrolled in a study school) or at their households at the midline and endline evaluation points.

5.2 Measuring outcomes

In line with the fund requirements, the project will be measuring three high-level outcomes through the evaluation: learning, transition and sustainability. The project will also tracking four intermediate outcomes: attendance, retention and completion, life skills, and self-esteem. Sustainability is dealt with in the following section, while all outcomes and intermediate outcomes are outlined below.

Learning

Learning will be assessed through three measures: (i) literacy, (ii) numeracy and (iii) curriculum attainment. For literacy and numeracy, PEAS is open to piloting the adapted Secondary Grade Reading and Maths Assesments (SeGRA and SeGMA) being developed by the Fund Manager. Though PEAS cannot determine definitively at this stage if the tests will be appropriate to its context due to example assessments not having been shared, the skills that the tests purportedly will assess⁴ appear appropriate to secondary age students. PEAS will work with the Fund Manager and appointed evaluator to review these tests and pilot them with a sample of students before approving them for use as the key evaluation measures for assessing Payment by Results.

Furthermore, PEAS would like to include a third measure of learning in the form of curriculum attainment. This will be assessed via girls' results in the annual Uganda Certificate in Education (UCE) examinations which all students sit at the end of Senior 4. These examinations assess curriculum learning and require students to sit a number of core subjects – including English, Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The exams are highly important to girls' educational outcomes, as girls who do not pass UCE fail to receive a secondary certificate and cannot transition to further education. Similarly, girls who receive poor UCE results may not be able to transition to the school or pathway of their

⁴ For literacy, these skills will include reading comprehension with analytical and inferential questions, plus potentially short essay construction. For numeracy, these skills will include advanced multiplication and division, proportions (fractions, percentages), space and shape (geometry), measurement (distance, length, area, capacity, money) presentation questions, and Algebra.

choosing, as many schools set admissions criteria for upper secondary. As such, improving the performance of girls in UCE exams is also highly important to enabling girls to transition successfully in the context of Uganda.

As implied, this third measure of learning will be assessed differently from literacy and numeracy, as lower secondary students only sit UCE exams once at the end of Senior 4. School-level UCE results disaggregated by gender are available on request from the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). PEAS would suggest that the evaluator obtain this data for all treatment and control schools from UNEB annually to assess how successive cohorts of girls are improving their exam performance, particularly given a large number of the project interventions are focused on improving teaching and learning of the national curriculum.

The evaluation will also assess learning qualitatively by asking girls a range of questions exploring (i) what progress they feel they're making in their learning/achievement, (ii) whether they feel they're reaching their potential, (iii) what individual, school-, household-, and community-based factors impact their learning, and (iv) reasons why they and/or their peers don't always perform as well as they could. This qualitative information will be collected through interviews as well as focus groups with girls currently enrolled in the study schools.

Transition

The second programme-level outcome, transition, will be measured through household surveys which track girls' pathways over time. As the baseline cohort will be girls enrolled in lower secondary school, successful transition will be defined as – in the first instance – progression through successive grades of lower secondary education, and afterwards into (i) upper secondary, (ii) technical and vocational training (TVET), (iii) safe, paid employment or self-employment, or into (iv) active citizenship. By 'active citizenship', we mean largely household or community-based roles which girls who have completed secondary school might choose for themselves over other pathways, such as getting married and having children. The element of <u>choice</u> will be crucial in determining whether this is counted as a successful transition for a particular individual, and will require the evaluator to ask a series of carefully designed questions exploring girls' agency and happiness in their current pathway. However, we believe that girls who have completed lower secondary and are no longer minors should be able to decide if they are ready to start their own families, and can actively contribute to community life within these roles.

The range of post-school pathways that are considered 'successful' transitions reflects the project's view that girls should be empowered to choose their own pathways after completing O-level, and also that continuing into higher levels of education may not be financially viable or desirable for many girls from poor, rural families. The diagram below outlines transitions that the project considers successful.



The inverse of the diagram above is that girls who have not transitioned into one of these pathways will not be considered to have transitioned successfully. So, for example, a girl who dropped out of lower secondary before completing Senior 4, or a girl who dropped out of upper secondary before completing Senior 6 would not be considered to have transitioned successfully. This is because PEAS is focused on supporting all girls who enrol in its schools to successfully complete the level they are studying for.

Similarly, a girl who finished Senior 4 but was not found to be in one of the four pathways outlined above would not be considered to have transitioned successfully.

The evaluation will assess successful transition quantitatively by counting the number of girls from the baseline tracking cohort each year who are determined to be in one of the successful pathways above, and using this percentage to estimate the number of girls across all project beneficiaries who are similarly likely to have transitioned successfully. The evaluation will also track how many girls have moved into each of these pathways (e.g. % transitioning from O-level to A-level, % transitioning from O-level to TVET, etc), as it will be of interest in helping the project understand the main pathways taken by girls from rural communities after leaving school.

The evaluation will further assess transition qualitatively by asking girls a range of questions exploring (i) the extent to which they have had choice and agency in selecting their current pathway, (ii) what individual, school-, household- and community-based factors contributed to them being in their current pathways (both positive and negative), and (iii) reasons they and/or their peers drop out or don't transition after completing school. This qualitative information will be collected through interviews with cohort girls, as well as focus groups with girls who are both currently enrolled in the study schools and have left the study schools.

The evaluation will also track four intermediate outcomes as described below.

Intermediate Outcome 1: Attendance

Attendance is an important intermediate outcome because, if girls are not in school to participate in curricular and non-curricular activities, they will miss out on the teaching and support activities intended to benefit them. Missed time away from school may make it difficult for girls to pass their exams and transition to the next stage in their education and/or lives. Attendance is thus a clear and important driver of the higher-level outcomes of learning and transition.

As of the start of the 2017 school year, all 28 PEAS schools in Uganda have access to an electronic school information system for tracking student attendance. As this system is able to aggregate average attendance rates broken down by gender, term, week, class and other variables, it is suggested the figures generated by this system be used to provide the most robust view on girls' attendance rates. During school visits, the evaluation team can ask school leaders to generate a standardised report from the system which will provide the figures they need for the period under review.

For consistency and comparability of figures across the evaluation years, it is suggested that the evaluation team always look at attendance rates for the same term. This is because attendance rates can fluctuate substantially across the year. Particularly in the rural, farming communities where most PEAS schools are located, students are often taken out of school at the time of a harvest for several days to weeks to support their families. Many poor students also skip school for some or all of a term to save on fees, and then return later in the year. As such, comparing attendance between randomly selected weeks across the year is likely to generate highly variable numbers, and require substantial caveats from the external evaluator. This was the experience of the evaluators during the GEC 1 evaluation, who were trying to collect attendance rates for the week prior to each spot check visit, and relayed a longlist of reasons why individual schools' attendance rates were not comparable or useable for the specific week examined (for example, because a public holiday had been called and the majority of students travelled home, exams were taking place and entire classes were not present, etc).

Given the baseline evaluation will be happening at the start of Term 3 in Uganda – and subsequent evaluation points will likely happen during the same period in the school calendar – it is suggested that <u>average girls' attendance during Term 2</u> always be taken as the figure for comparison at each school. For schools visited during Term 3 evaluation points and/or spot checks, the evaluators can collect this information directly from the system themselves. For schools that are not visited by the evaluators during Term 3, PEAS can request that the schools send in the required attendance report and then pass this on to the evaluator team for analysis.

This quantitative data provided through the schools' information management systems will be quality assured through spot checks conducted by the external evaluator. All schools sampled for the study will receive an annual, unannounced spot check visit during each year of project implementation. During the spot check visits, the evaluators will focus on comparing recorded attendance v. physical attendance for the date of the spot check in order to obtain a view of the reliability of school registers. The evaluators

will also collect information from the school information management system to obtain a view of average attendance rates, and collect data on enrolment, drop-outs and retention (see intermediate outcome 2 below).

Importantly, the attendance outcome will not be measured in control schools. This is because, based on experience from GEC 1, very few non-PEAS secondary schools have adequate systems for keeping up-to-date attendance records and providing average figures over a set period of dates. The evaluators sought to collect this information from the five control schools included in the GEC 1 evaluation and found the vast majority couldn't provide useable data, making it impossible to draw reliable comparisons. To minimise wastage of time and resources, attendance data therefore will not be collected from control schools.

The evaluation will also assess attendance qualitatively by asking girls a range of questions exploring (i) what individual, school-, household- and community-based factors affect their attendance in school (both positive and negative), (ii) whether they are able to attend school as much as they would like, and (iii) reasons they and/or their peers miss school. This qualitative information will be collected through interviews and focus groups with in-school girls sampled for the learning cohort.

Intermediate Outcome 2: Retention & Completion

As with attendance, retention and completion are important intermediate outcomes that directly link to transition. If schools are not managing to retain girls and support them to complete their lower secondary (O-level) exams, this will make it impossible for girls to transition into one of the successful pathways described above.

Within the evaluation, girls' between-year retention rates and school completion rates will be tracked for O-level and A-level students using the school information management system present in all 28 PEAS schools. The system allows school leaders and administrators to record when a student drops out of the school and the reasons why (if known). This data is then used to automatically generate reports which provide an overview of termly and YTD drop-out and retention rates, as well as the percentage of students who have dropped out for different reasons (e.g. inability to pay fees, pregnancy, transfers, etc). Lower secondary completion rates can be deduced by looking at the previous year's Senior 4 classlist during Term 3, and deducing how many of those students were enrolled at the school in Senior 6 classlist during Term 3, and deducing how many of those students were enrolled at the school during Senior 5.

These figures generated by the system can be quality assured during spot check visits. During the unannounced visits, evaluators can check the list of enrolled students obtained during the previous year's spot check visit against the current school enrolment list to determine how many students have left the school in the intervening period, and compare this number with the school's reported figures. To quality assure whether schools are recording drop-outs accurately, evaluators could also ask a girl from each class who was enrolled at the school during the previous year to review the previous year's enrolment list for her class and indicate to the evaluators which peers have left school in the intervening period.

As with attendance, this outcome will be assessed in intervention schools only, as it is not anticipated control schools will have the ability to provide accurate, comparable figures on retention and school completion rates.

The evaluation will also assess retention and completion qualitatively by asking school leaders and girls a range of questions exploring (i) what individual, school-, household- and community-based factors cause girls to drop out of school, (ii) what actions are taken by schools to follow up with girls who drop out, and (iii) what barriers schools have been unable to resolve for girls who do not re-enrol. This qualitative information will be collected through interviews and focus groups with both in-school girls and girls who have left school, as well as through interviews with school leaders and teacher focus groups.

Intermediate Outcome 3: Life Skills

PEAS considers 'life skills' to be the critical personal skills, knowledge and attributes needed for students to be successful in life both inside and outside school. Similar to the Fund Manager's definition of this area, the PEAS life skills curriculum identifies some of these skills as planning, problem-solving,

communication, and self-management. The PEAS life skills curriculum also focuses on key areas of knowledge development pertinent to adolescents, such as sexual health and personal hygiene.

Life skills are an important intermediate outcome because they enable girls to make successful transitions both between stages of education, and into productive livelihoods after school. Particularly for girls who will be beginning work or taking on a community role after completing lower secondary, it is essential that they develop the skills needed to enable them to make good economic and personal decisions.

The acquisition of life skills will be assessed quantitatively using a life skills index being developed by the Fund Manager. Though the index itself has not yet been released, it is anticipated this will be a multi-question survey that produces an average score across several key dimensions of life skills. When the index is released, PEAS will need to review its content to ensure the domains tested align with the areas of skill development its programme focuses on – this is to ensure students are not unfairly tested against areas that they would have little opportunity to develop, such as ICT skills, for example. However, it is anticipated it should be possible to use the index with potentially minor adaptations. These questions will be added to the in-school girls' survey for the learning cohort, as it is most appropriate to track life skills acquisition amongst students who are being exposed to the project interventions targeting this area.

Life skills will also be measured qualitatively through participatory focus group discussions wherein girls will be asked to undertake a role play and/or respond to a case study of an example situation through which particular behaviours, attitudes, and areas of knowledge development can be assessed. This qualitative approach to assessing life skills will be designed collaboratively with the evaluation team and based on the evaluator's abilities in this area. Interviews and focus groups with girls will also ask questions exploring (i) girls' perceptions of their own personal skill development, (ii) what individual, school-, household- and community-based factors affect their skill development (both positive and negative), and (iii) what skills they are learning through school which they feel will be most useful and least useful to their lives, and which skills they feel they are missing.

Intermediate Outcome 4: Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a key enabler of both girls' learning and transition. PEAS' own education approach identifies having a 'growth mindset' as foundational to a student's progress in school. In other words, if a student does *not* have a growth mindset – and believes their intelligence is fixed, and they will not be able to achieve beyond a certain level regardless of effort – this will negatively impact their learning outcomes and increase the likelihood of them becoming demotivated and dropping out of school. As such, academic self-belief – and broader girls' self-esteem – are an important building block of learning and successful transitions.

Self-esteem will be measured quantitatively using a self-esteem index being developed by the Fund Manager. Though the index itself has not yet been released, it is anticipated this will be a multi-question survey that produces an average score across several dimensions of self-esteem. When the index is released, PEAS will need to review its content to ensure it is appropriate to the messages and attitudinal development its programme focuses on. However, it is anticipated it should be possible to use the index with potentially minor adaptations. These questions will be added to the in-school girls' survey for the learning cohort, as it is most appropriate to track the development of self-esteem amongst girls who are being exposed to the project interventions targeting this area (e.g. Girls' Clubs, mentoring by Senior Women Teachers).

Self-esteem will also be measured qualitatively through interviews and focus groups with girls that will ask questions exploring (i) changes in their level of confidence both inside and outside school, and (ii) what individual, school-, household- and community-based factors affect their levels of confidence (both positive and negative). Interviews with school leaders and teacher focus groups will also ask questions probing for any observed changes in the level of confidence displayed by girls in the school.

The table below summarises the quantitative approach to measuring each of the high-level outcomes and intermediate outcomes.

Table 2: Outcomes for measurement

Outcome	Level at which measurement will take place	Tool and mode of data collection	Rationale	Frequency of data collection
Literacy	School	GEC SeGRA	Assesses higher- order literacy skills appropriate to secondary age students*	3 evaluation points
Numeracy	School	GEC SeGMA	Assesses higher- order numeracy skills appropriate to secondary age students*	3 evaluation points
Curriculum Attainment	School	UCE (Uganda Certificate in Education) O-level examinations	Assesses curriculum learning and whether schools are supporting girls' achievement in end of secondary exams	3 evaluation points
Transition	Household	Household-based girls' survey	Tracks whether and where girls have transitioned to	3 evaluation points
Intermediate outcome 1: attendance	School	School electronic attendance records, attendance spot checks	Uses most complete information on girls' attendance (i.e. YTD average) with method for guality assurance	Annually
Intermediate outcome 2: Retention & Completion	School	School electronic enrolment records, verified through enrolment spot checks	Uses most complete information on current enrolment and drop- out rates (i.e. YTD average across all schools) with means of verification	Annually
Intermediate outcome 3: Life skills	School	School-based girls' survey	Assesses how school-based interventions (e.g. life skills curriculum) is impacting on girls exposed to interventions	3 evaluation points
Intermediate outcome 4: Self- Esteem	School	School-based girls' survey	Assesses how school-based interventions (e.g. Girls' Clubs, SWT mentoring) are impacting on girls exposed to interventions	3 evaluation points

*As examples of these tests have not yet been shared, PEAS still wants to review their content prior to determining definitively whether they are appropriate to the project's context. However, the range of skillsets tested through these adapted tests – as described in section 5.5.2 of the MEL framework part 2 guidance – look broadly appropriate to secondary age students.

5.2.1 Sustainability

In line with the programme requirements, sustainability will be measured at three levels -(1) school, (2) community, and (3) system - with the evaluator assigning scores from 1-4 to assess the progress the project has made in embedding sustainable change in these dimensions at each evaluation point.
As such, we have sought to define below what sustainable change would like for our project at each of these three levels.

At the level of <u>schools</u>, the project will be sustainable to the extent that (i) school leaders and teachers believe the project activities have led to positive changes for girls and are desirable to continue, (ii) limited or no outside investment (i.e. further training or funds provided by the PEAS Secretariat) is needed to continue the project activities at the school level; and (iii) school staff have sufficient capacity and resources to continue the project activities at their school. The method for assessing sustainability in this area will be interviews with school leaders and focus group discussions with teachers. The evaluators may also wish to look at the on-going costs (in terms of both time and money) of delivering project activities to deduce the degree to which these costs can be absorbed by schools.

The intermediate outcomes which will contribute to school-level sustainability are attendance as well as retention & completion. This is because, if project activities help to reduce absenteeism and drop-outs, this will both (a) increase school's revenue (from school fee collection) improving their ability to take on project costs, and (b) increase schools' motivations to continue the activities, as school leaders have school-specific targets for improving student attendance and retention linked to their performance management reviews, and will see continuation of the activities as a means to meet those targets.

Within the <u>community</u>, sustainable change will be secured to the extent that parents of PEAS students and other adults in the community (i) demonstrate commitment to supporting all girls' learning and transition in an equitable manner with boys, and regardless of girls' personal circumstances or abilities; (ii) demonstrate preparedness to challenge non-gender equitable views amongst other community members; and (iii) support the gender-focused activities of PEAS schools and want them to continue. The key method for assessing change in this dimension will be caregiver interviews conducted in households, as well as focus groups with community members comprised of both PEAS and non-PEAS parents.

The intermediate outcomes which will contribute to community-level sustainability are girls' life skills development and self-esteem. This is because community attitudinal and behaviour change is long-term work which is unlikely to be fully achieved during the timescales of the project. As such, girls who benefit from project interventions will be key to promoting gender equitable views in their communities and challenging negative stereotypes, as well as setting different expectations for their own daughters to promote change over time. To do this successfully, girls will need to develop the confidence and life skills needed to be engaged citizens in their communities, and empowered members of their households.

At the <u>system</u> level, sustainability will be identified by the extent to which (i) local and national government stakeholders support the gender-focused activities of PEAS schools and want them to continue; (ii) The Ministry of Education & Sports demonstrates progress towards agreeing a new secondary school Public Private Partnership policy to finance non-state schools to continue delivering gender-focused activities (without having to pass on costs to beneficiaries); and (iii) local and/or national government stakeholders are developing plans to scale project activities to other schools or locations outside the PEAS network. The method of assessment for this area should be interviews with District Education Officers in the areas where PEAS operates, as well as interviews with key officials in the Ministry of Education & Sports overseeing the secondary education sector and/or gender. It should be noted that the latter interviews may be difficult for the evaluator to secure. To the extent that such materials are accessible, the evaluators could also review government policy and/or budget documents related to the secondary school sector and/or gender strategies to assess commitment to continuing and/or scaling the activities and approaches advocated by the project.

The intermediate outcomes which will promote system-level change are attendance and retention & completion. This is because the Ugandan Ministry of Education & Sports is already highly concerned with girls' high drop-out rates and underachievement relative to boys at lower secondary level. If the project can show that its activities have made sustainable improvements in these areas, the government is more likely to be motivated to finance and/or adopt them as a means of hitting national targets.

Table 3: Sustainability outcome for measurement

Sustainability	Where will	What source of	Rationale – clarify how you	Frequency of
Level	measurement	measurement/verific	will use your qualitative	data
	take place?	ation will you use?	analysis to support your	collection
			chosen indicators.	
School	School	School leader	Mixed methods approach will	3 evaluation
		interviews, teacher	help deduce school's interest	points
		focus groups, review	and ability to sustain project	
		of cost data	activities after grant period	
Community	Household	Caregiver interviews,	Will assess community	3 evaluation
		focus groups with	members' support for project	points
		community members	aims and commitment to	
			sustaining changes for girls	
System	Local and	Interviews with local	Will assess government	3 evaluation
	national	and national	support for project aims and	points
	government	government officials;	willingness to finance	
	offices	review of policy	continuation and/or scaling of	
		documents	project activities	

5.3 Ethical protocols

5.3.1 Child protection

As the evaluation will involve conducting 1-to-1 research in school and community-based settings with marginalised children exploring sensitive topics – such as gender-based violence – high standards of child protection practice will need to be planned for and adhered to by the evaluation team. To ensure the evaluator is able to meet child protection standards, PEAS will enact the following plan:

- Asking evaluators to detail in their proposals their policies and practices related to child protection, and asking questions about this area during evaluator interviews to assess experience and preparedness;
- Requesting the evaluator to recruit fieldwork teams (and especially enumerators) that are (i) gender-balanced, with a preference for hiring larger numbers of qualified female Research Assistants, and (ii) conduct background checks on all staff to ensure there are no child protection concerns;
- Having all fieldwork staff sign PEAS' child protection policy;
- Carrying out dedicated training sessions on Child Protection prior to each evaluation point; this will
 include practical advice for fieldwork staff on areas such as creating an appropriate interview
 setting, how to discuss difficult topics, how to identify signs of distress or discomfort amongst
 interviewees and respond appropriately, how to report any disclosures made by children, parents,
 or staff, etc;
- Involving PEAS' child protection lead in the design and review of interview questions exploring sensitive topics, such as stereotypes, gender-based violence, and children's safety, to ensure questions are sensitively phrased and contextually appropriate;
- Quality assuring fieldwork training sessions and the first week of baseline fieldwork to ensure child protection standards are being adhered to;
- Following up with school leaders in PEAS schools participating in the evaluation to request feedback on working with the evaluation team and to flag any concerns;
- Anonymising all data related to individuals from analysis of qualitative and quantitative results and shared datasets; and
- Reserving the contractual right to require the evaluator to remove any staff who have breached Child Protection best practice from the evaluation team, and to terminate the evaluation contract in the case of any serious breach of the child protection policy by the evaluator team.

PEAS will communicate these expectations proactively to the evaluator, and avail its own staff to support the evaluator in developing appropriate child protection plans and responding to any issues that may arise during the course of fieldwork.

5.3.2 Ethics

In addition to the child protection standards above, which relate to all activities involving the participation of children, PEAS will work with the external evaluator to ensure the following research ethics are adhered to across the evaluation stages.

Evaluator recruitment and management

- Setting as key criteria in the recruitment process that evaluators have demonstrable and appropriate expertise conducting research with children, and existing child protection and ethics standards in place; questions will be asked about these areas during the evaluator interviews to assess the experience and preparedness of evaluator teams;
- Requiring that evaluators share their recruitment criteria for all staff working on the evaluation, which should include (i) conducting background checks to ensure no staff have records involving child abuse or other inappropriate behaviour; (ii) requiring staff to have experience working with children and conducting research on sensitive topics; (iii) ensuring staff speak local languages in the regions where research will be conducted; and (iv) ensuring gender balance within the fieldwork teams, with a preference for recruiting greater numbers of sufficiently qualified female research assistants to conduct 1-to-1 interviews with girls; and
- Requiring the evaluator to name an individual with overall responsibility for ethics within the evaluator team, and develop a comprehensive risk register with appropriate mitigating actions for review as part of the evaluation plan submitted before each data collection point.

Research planning:

- Reviewing fieldwork tools to ensure that all information requested is essential and will be used for a specific purpose in the analysis phase to make good use of participants' time;
- As above, involving PEAS' child protection lead in the review of interview questions exploring sensitive topics, such as gender stereotypes, gender-based violence, and personal safety to ensure questions are sensitively phrased and contextually appropriate;
- Ensuring research tools and processes are designed to be accessible to all, including for example

 designing adapted versions of evaluation tools for children with visual or hearing impairments,
 and providing additional time on tasks to avoid sample bias by screening out children from particular
 categories of marginalisation;
- Ensuring that research tools and data collection methods are comprehensively tested before each data collection period to ensure they are age, gender, and context appropriate, and accessible; and
- Ensuring all research staff are sufficiently trained in child protection and ethics standards, as well as the administration of all tools ahead of the start of each fieldwork period.

Research approval processes:

- Obtaining a letter of support from the Ministry of Education for the research covering all evaluation years;
- Writing to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) copying the District Education Officers in all regions where research will be conducted to explain the study and obtain a stamped letter of approval (copies of this letter should be maintained by fieldwork teams and shared with participating schools);
- Visiting the District Education Office (DEO) and/or the District Inspector of Schools (DIS) in all sampled districts at the start of each evaluation period to explain the background to the study and specific activities to be undertaken in schools; and
- Contacting all sampled schools ahead of each evaluation point to inform them of the planned visit date to their school and activities to be undertaken, and to make adjustments to fieldwork plans to accommodate schools' needs within reason.

Data collection:

- Designing an incident response protocol for review ahead of the start of fieldwork, and monitoring
 its implementation during fieldwork; this should include clear advice to fieldwork staff on how to, for
 example, (i) support individuals who may become distressed during the data collection, (ii) identify
 and respond to any personal safety concerns, and (iii) respond appropriately to any child protectionrelated disclosures made by study participants;
- Ensuring all evaluation subjects have given informed, voluntary consent at each evaluation point. This will require (i) designing an approach to explaining the purposes of the evaluation and how individuals' responses will be used that is appropriate to the age, context and educational

attainment of child and adult participants, (ii) ensuring individuals are not pressured in any way to take part in the evaluation, and know they can end their participation at any point; and (iii) designing a meaningful process for gaining and recording informed consent from children and adults;

- Selecting a location for interviews that is fully accessible to all participants, and that appropriate adaptations are made to data collection processes to accommodate the needs of participants with impairments.

Data analysis, storage and report writing:

- Outlining data protection protocols and systems for review within the Evaluation Plan submitted ahead of each fieldwork period to ensure confidentiality of participants' data and safe storage over the years of the evaluation;
- Anonymising all data shared with the project and Fund Manager to protect participants' identities; and
- Identifying and outlining any limitations or biases in the data collected, and the subsequent conclusions that can be drawn within evaluation reports and presentations of research findings.

Dissemination

- Ensuring study participants are informed after each evaluation point of the outcomes of the study, and how findings are being used via accessible, appropriate media (see section 11.2)

PEAS will proactively communicate these expectations to the evaluator, and monitor adherence to agreed ethical standards over the course of the fieldwork.

6. Sampling framework

The requested Sampling Framework template has been completed for all PEAS network schools in Uganda and is embedded as an annex in this document. At the time of writing, the PEAS M&E team is working on obtaining a list of potential non-PEAS secondary schools to sample for the control group.

6.1 Target groups

The target project beneficiaries will be girls enrolled in lower and upper secondary at PEAS schools throughout Uganda. PEAS currently operates 28 low-cost secondary schools spread across 21 districts in the Western, Central, Eastern and Norther regions. Schools are intentionally placed in poor, predominantly rural communities that did not previously have a secondary school.

Due to the nature of these communities, PEAS defines all girls who enrol in its schools as marginalised. As evidence to support this view, a 2016 external study comparing the student population in PEAS schools to government and other private schools in Uganda found that PEAS students were statistically poorer, came from larger, less educated families, ate less meals per day, spent a longer time travelling to school and doing household chores, and had worse prior attainment than students in both government and other private secondary schools in Uganda. All of these differences were statistically significant.⁵ For this reason, PEAS does not sub-divide its student population into further categories of marginalisation, but rather implements activities in a way that should benefit the learning and progression of all students.⁶

As of Term 1 2017, there were 7,493 girls enrolled in PEAS schools in Uganda. Less than 2% of these girls were enrolled in the A-level section (grades Senior 5-6), meaning the vast majority of beneficiaries are currently enrolled in lower secondary (grades Senior 1-4). Approximately 6,000 of these girls were enrolled in PEAS schools during the previous year and benefitted from the GEC 1 project activities. It is suggested that this cohort (girls currently enrolled in S2-S4) be used as the sample for tracking

⁵ Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), 'Evaluation of the PEAS Networks under the Uganda Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programme', Midline Report, 2017

⁶ As an important caveat to this, schools leaders of course do recognise that some students have particular circumstances – such as disability or early pregnancy – which require a bespoke approach. These needs are dealt with via PEAS' child protection policies and teacher pedagogy training, which are part of the fabric of the organisation. However, the GEC-T project activities won't sub-divide students and carry out interventions unique to particular sub-groups. The interventions instead will benefit students across the whole school, with school leaders empowered to adapt school practices and activities to the needs of particular individuals.

transition, while girls in Senior 1 be used as the sample for tracking learning. An explanation of the reasons for this approach is provided in section 4.3 below.

A list of the current PEAS schools in Uganda, their location, year of opening, and student populations as of Term 1 2017 is provided below for reference. The evaluators should use this as their sample for selecting study schools, while ensuring a representative mix of schools (i) from different regions, (ii) of different ages, (iii) of different sizes, and (iv) which both currently have and do not have A-level sections.

PEAS			Age & Locatior)	Enrolment				
School	School Name	Year	District	PEAS	0 1	A 11	Tetel	Ciril-	%
Code		Founded	District	Region	O-Level	A-Level	Total	GILIS	Girls
UG-P01	Onwards and Upwards Secondary School	2008	Wakiso	Central	536	118	654	378	58%
UG-P02	Kiira View Secondary School	2009	Jinja	Central	413	10	423	214	51%
UG-P03	Sarah Ntiiro Secondary School	2009	Mayuge	Central	446	17	463	265	57%
UG-P04	Green Shoots Secondary School	2010	Hoima	Central	522	0	522	213	41%
UG-P05	Hibiscus High School	2011	Ntungamo	Western	640	50	690	376	54%
UG-P06	Pioneer High School	2011	Mityana	Central	296	0	296	160	54%
UG-P07	Lamwo Kuc Ki Gen High School	2011	Lamwo	Eastern	449	0	449	220	49%
UG-P08	Bwesumbu PEAS High School	2012	Kasese	Western	551	0	551	270	49%
UG-P09	Kithoma PEAS High School	2012	Kasese	Western	474	0	474	212	45%
UG-P10	Samling-Toro PEAS High School Kazingo	2012	Kabarole	Western	640	0	640	386	60%
UG-P11	Forest High School	2008	Mubende	Central	594	18	612	290	47%
UG-P12	PEAS Bridge High School	2013	Mitooma	Western	646	0	646	379	59%
UG-P13	Kigarama PEAS High School	2013	Sheema	Western	628	0	628	353	56%
UG-P14	Ngora PEAS High School	2013	Ngora	Eastern	625	0	625	310	50%
UG-P15	Samling Kichwamba High School	2013	Kabarole	Western	475	0	475	272	57%
UG-P16	Nangonde PEAS High School	2012	Namutumba	Central	443	0	443	211	48%
UG-P17	Malongo PEAS High School	2012	Mayuge	Central	483	0	483	205	42%
UG-P18	Nyero PEAS High School	2013	Kumi	Eastern	608	0	608	322	53%
UG-P19	Mukongoro PEAS High School	2013	Kumi	Eastern	550	0	550	265	48%
UG-P20	Kityerera PEAS High School	2013	Mayuge	Central	606	0	606	296	49%
UG-P21	Akoromit PEAS High School	2013	Amuria	Eastern	756	36	792	356	45%
UG-P22	Apeulai PEAS High School	2014	Amuria	Eastern	419	0	419	213	51%
UG-P23	Toroma PEAS High School	2014	Katakwi	Eastern	454	0	454	224	49%
UG-P24	Ndeija PEAS High School	2014	Mbarara	Western	317	0	317	176	56%
UG-P25	Noble PEAS High School	2015	Ibanda	Western	525	0	525	279	53%
UG-P26	Aspire PEAS High School	2015	Ibanda	Western	651	0	651	378	58%
UG-P27	Frontiers PEAS High School	2015	Isingiro	Western	295	0	295	145	49%
UG-P28	Samling Nama	2015	Mpigi	Central	230	0	230	125	54%
Total 14272 249 14521 7493 52%									

Table: PEAS Uganda Schools, Enrolment at Term 1 2017

While it is desirable to have a full picture of the different barriers to transition around each school community, given the geographically diverse locations in which PEAS schools are located, it is suggested that the evaluator first select a representative sample of PEAS schools to be included in the study. The specific barriers to transition in these particular communities (e.g. as dictated by the availability of upper secondary and TVET institutions, employment opportunities, etc) can then be mapped comprehensively to identify any factors that may hinder or support transition for girls in specific communities.

To select a comparison group, it is suggested that the evaluators <u>not</u> use the same 5 control schools that were included in the GEC 1 evaluation. This is because the previous evaluation team did not manage the on-going participation of the schools well, such that more than one of these schools showed substantial resistance to participating in the endline evaluation activities. Also, none of these schools have A-level sections, making them inappropriate to use as a comparison for the GEC-T project, in which PEAS will be expanding A-level capacity and encouraging internal transitions between O-level and A-level.

Again, given the geographically diverse locations in which PEAS schools are located, it is suggested the evaluator first select the PEAS schools which are to be included in the study. Comparison schools can then be selected to be located in the same districts and, as much as possible, the same subcounties as the selected PEAS schools to ensure girls have comparable opportunities for transition. It is further suggested that comparison schools meet the following criteria to ensure that their student intake is as closely matched to PEAS schools' student intake as possible:

- Part of the government's Universal Secondary Education (USE) programme, which provides subsidies for qualifying students to attend secondary school
- Cater for both day and boarding students
- Co-educational i.e. no single sex schools
- Sample should include a mix of government and low-cost, privately-operated schools
- Sample should include a mix of O-level only and mixed (O-level and A-level) schools

Data on secondary school locations, types, and size is available from the Ugandan Education Management Information System (EMIS) upon request from the Ministry of Education & Sports. PEAS will make a special request to the Ministry to get ahold of the needed identifying information to enable the evaluators to draw a representative sample of schools meeting the criteria above.

4.2 Control groups / Counterfactual scenario

As implied above, the comparison group will be derived by first identifying a set of comparable control schools located in the same districts where PEAS schools operate – this is the 'sampling cluster'. This approach will ensure – as much as possible – that barriers to transition related to geographic location are consistent across treatment and control groups. Within this sampling cluster of eligible schools, control schools should then be randomly selected, and study subjects randomly selected from the list of eligible girls enrolled at each of the schools.

To avoid contamination effects, the evaluation team should confirm with selected control school girls – before beginning any learning tests or interviews – whether they have ever previously been enrolled at a PEAS school. If they have previously enrolled in a PEAS school, then the girl should be removed from the comparison sample and replaced with another eligible girl. It is important to confirm this information with sampled girls and/or their caregivers directly, as school leaders often will not know the previous institutions attended by students.

Beyond this, key demographic information should be collected on sampled students to help control for any differences between the treatment and control populations that might impact their learning progression in the absence of any intervention. This should include information on household poverty status, prior attainment (via girls' Primary Leaving Exam scores), family size and status, whether girls are enrolled in boarding or day sections, disability status, and other potential individual factors which external research has found impact upon learning outcomes. It should be noted that PEAS expects that several of these demographic factors might vary substantially between its student population and the control population, as other external evaluations of PEAS schools in Uganda have found this to be the case.

To assess the additionality of outcomes, the evaluation will compare the starting points of treatment and control groups on measures of learning, and compare the relative progress made by each of these groups between each evaluation point to determine whether levels of progress differ. As such, it does not matter whether the treatment and control groups have comparable scores on the learning measures at baseline, since it will be their <u>progress</u> that is compared rather than absolute scores. This comparison is called an unadjusted difference-in-differences approach.

However, and as implied above, the evaluator might find that sampled treatment and control groups differ in ways that could impact on their learning progression regardless of exposure to the project interventions. To account for this effect, it is suggested that the evaluators test whether any of the demographic indicators collected on individuals are statistically predictive of learning test scores and differ between treatment and control groups. Where this is found to be the case, the evaluators should control for these factors in running regression analysis so that treatment and control groups are compared in a like-for-like manner as much as possible. This comparison is called the adjusted difference-in-differences approach. The evaluators will need to determine which approach to data analysis is most appropriate given the data collected at the each evaluation point.

4.3 Cohort tracking

Due to the transition point that the project is focused on (lower secondary into upper secondary, TVET, work, or active citizenship) and the low rates of girls who are likely to continue their studies within the

same schools after lower secondary,⁷ it will be necessary for the study to use separate learning and transition cohorts in order to maintain a large enough sample for statistically significant comparisons of learning and transition outcomes. During the baseline year, the sample for both these cohorts will be identified in the study schools. However, in subsequent years, the transition cohort will be tracked at their households and the learning cohort in schools.

4.3.1 Learning cohort

As the project is being implemented over four years, during which time all GEC 1 girls are expected to complete lower secondary and transition into one of the identified post-school pathways, the learning cohort will need to be sampled from lower grades to enable tracking of girls who are in school and benefitting from the project interventions designed to improve learning. Furthermore, as enrolment in A-level grades is substantially smaller than O-level grades – due both to the need for smaller class sizes and less demand for A-level education – if the study relies substantially on tracking a cohort grade that is expected to be in A-level by the midline or endline years, this could create issues for maintaining a sufficiently large sample size to generate statistically significant findings.

To account for these challenges, it is was agreed that 100% of the learning cohort be drawn from girls enrolled in Senior 1 (the first year of lower secondary) across the treatment and control schools. This is because the Senior 1 girls are expected to be enrolled in the study schools for the whole of the grant implementation period, whereas girls in higher grades are expected to leave school before the midline and endline evaluations if they progress at a normal rate without repeating any years (see table below for expected progression pathways). The learning cohort should be tracked at each evaluation point starting at the study schools to determine if girls are still enrolled, and to make appropriate substitutions if they are not (see section 4.3.3).

Baseline Grade (2017)	Y2 Grade (2018)	Midline Grade (2019)	Endline Grade (2020)
S1	S2	S3	S4
S2	S3	S4	S5, TVET, Work, or AC
S3	S4	S5, TVET Work, or AC	S6, TVET, Work, or AC
S4	S5, TVET, Work or AC	S6, TVET, Work, or AC	University, TVET, Work, AC

Table: Expected grade progression 2017-2020

4.3.2 Transition cohort

At baseline, the transition cohort will be identified in the schools, and will be girls currently enrolled in grades Senior 2-Senior 4 who were enrolled in their schools during the previous year. In PEAS schools, these will be girls who benefitted from the GEC 1 interventions, hence why they are the preferred cohort for tracking transition. The evaluators should collect detailed contact information – including the location of girls' households and contact details for at least 2-3 persons who know the girl well – so that the girl can be tracked during subsequent years of the evaluation after she has left school. These girls will remain as the transition cohort all the way through the study, during which time they will be expected to finish lower secondary school and transition into one of the target pathways described in section 5.2. The table below provides an overview of the expected progression of the transition cohort over the four years of project implementation.

Table: Transition cohort expected progression 2017-2020

Baseline Grade (2017)	Y2 Status (2018)	Midline Status (2019)	Endline Status (2020)
S2	S3	S4	S5, TVET, Work or AC
S3	S4	S5, TVET, Work, or AC	S6, TVET, Work or AC
S4	S5, TVET Work, or AC	S6, TVET, Work, or AC	University, TVET, Work. AC

For the transition cohort, tracking will start at the school for girls who are expected to still be enrolled in school, and proceed to the household if they are found to not be enrolled. For girls who are not anticipated to still be enrolled in school, tracking will start at the household, where evaluators will seek to determine where the girl is currently enrolled/living. If the household has moved, then the additional

⁷ Nationally, the transition rate between O-level to A-level for girls is 21.4%. Many students also opt to change schools at this point for a change of environment and/or to attend a school that teaches the A-level subjects they wish to study.

contact information collected at baseline should be used to track the girl. Due to the possibility that girls may have moved far away from their communities to, for example, attend TVET institutions or seek employment, the evaluation team may need to design a flexible approach to conducting followup interviews with the transition cohort, including potentially completing interviews via phone to minimise the time and travel costs connected to tracking transition.

4.3.3 Replacement strategy

Within the learning cohort, any girls who are determined to no longer be enrolled in the study schools should be replaced with comparable girls. Replacement girls should be enrolled in the same grade as lost girls had they progressed through school at a normal rate without repeating any grades. The evaluator should also screen replacement girls to ensure they have been sufficiently exposed to the intervention or control conditions prior to being tested. It is suggested the criteria be that the replacement girl has been enrolled in the study school for at least a full year prior to the evaluation point. Given drop-out rates at secondary level in Uganda are incredibly high – the GEC 1 evaluation saw attrition rates of c.80% from baseline to endline – it is suggested that the study plan for a cross-sectional approach to analysis from the start.

Within the transition cohort, following a replacement strategy is arguably inappropriate, as the nature of transition relies on comparing where girls are enrolled in one year compared to the previous year. Furthermore, replacing girls who cannot be located with girls who can more easily be located (for example, because they have proceeded to enroll in A-level at the study schools) could introduce selection bias into the sample and the study's conclusions. For this reason, the baseline sample size for transition will intentionally be inflated to account for expected attrition at each evaluation point. Although it is difficult to estimate how many girls will be impossible to contact via their households at each evaluation point – as attrition data from the GEC 1 evaluation was based on girls leaving the study schools, rather than being wholly uncontactable – a conservative estimate would suggest the study plan for 10% attrition for each year of project implementation (i.e. 30% attrition by the endline evaluation in Y4).

4.4 Power calculations and sample sizes

Suggested sample sizes for the learning and transition cohorts to yield statistically significant results for tracking each of these outcomes are provided below. These power calculations have been completed by the Fund Manager and may be subject to revision pending further statistical advice.

As indicated in the table, the cells highlighted in yellow indicate the numbers of girls who will overlap between the learning and transition cohorts. Without double-counting these girls, the total number of girls who need to be sampled at baseline and tracked at each subsequent evaluation point is approximately 1,455.

Baseline		Learning		Transition		
Grade	%	Treatment	Control	%	Treatment	Control
S1	70%	390	195	-	0	0
S2	20%	111	56	33.3%	193	97
S3	10%	56	28	33.3%	193	97
S4	-	0	0	33.3%	193	97
Total	-	557	279	-	579	291
Total Girls Sampled at Baseline					1,455	

4.5 Benchmarking

As the project is tracking different learning and transition cohorts, benchmarking for learning and transition will also have to be carried out separately. For learning, benchmarking will be conducted by testing a sufficiently large sample of girls enrolled in each of the higher grades the baseline cohort is expected to be in at midline and endline (S4, S5 and S6) in the selected study schools to establish the standard distribution of scores at each grade/age on the same learning test. This testing will be conducted during the baseline fieldwork, and will help to set targets for expected learning progress at each evaluation point.

For the transition cohort, benchmarking will be more complex, in that the evaluator will need to establish the general levels of transition for girls from one year of lower secondary to the next, and from lower secondary into the different post-school pathways identified across the wider community. To accomplish this, a short benchmark transition survey will need to be developed and conducted with a sufficiently large sample of girls <u>not</u> currently enrolled in the study schools, but who were enrolled in lower secondary during the previous year. In other words, the evaluator will need to draw a benchmark sample from girls living in the same districts that the study schools are located in, but who are not currently nor have previously been enrolled in the study schools. This will enable the evaluator to determine the prevailing transition rate in the community between each grade/stage that the transition cohort will be moving through over the years of the evaluation.

7. Baseline study

The baseline study will broadly involve the same activities as all three evaluation points, with the key additional requirements that (i) learning tests will need to be piloted in advance of fieldwork to assess whether they are appropriate for assessing literacy and numeracy at secondary level. Secondly, (ii) girls from benchmark grades will need to be tested during the baseline fieldwork only to establish the normal performance and distribution of scores for girls as they progress through successive years of secondary education. Lastly, (iii) benchmark schools will need to be visited and a sample of previously enrolled girls surveyed to assess baseline transition rates in the community. As such, the baseline evaluation will need to plan for additional fieldwork time and resources as compared to the other evaluation points.

8. Evaluation governance

8.1 Evaluation steering group

The evaluation will be commissioned by the project (PEAS), who will be the lead partner responsible for managing the external evaluator's contract, reviewing and signing off deliverables, and managing contract payments. The key positions at PEAS responsible for managing the evaluation – and names of individuals currently employed in these roles – are provided below for reference:

- Head of Monitoring & Evaluation, Rachel Linn
- Uganda M&E Manager, Denis Kaffoko
- Chief Technical Officer, Laura Browh (project sponsor)

The external evaluator will also be expected to maintain regular contact with the Fund Manager's Monitoring & Evaluation team, who may make requests of the external evaluator from time to time. In all cases, these requests should jointly be communicated to the project so that the evaluator's workload can be managed appropriately.

The project will be responsible for:

- Providing the evaluator with a clear terms of reference and suggested workplan
- Sharing all GEC-T Fund Manager guidance with the evaluator
- Quality-assuring the evaulator's operations (particularly in relation to fieldwork and child protection practices)
- Quality assuring the evaluator's deliverables in terms of completeness, clarity, and adherence to evaluation requirements

In turn, the evaluator will be responsible for:

- Reviewing all GEC-T Fund Manager guidance to ensure evaluation planning and deliverables meet requirements
- Developing and managing the evaluation workplan
- Drawing the sample for the evaluation and securely maintaining contact information for all sampled schools and individuals
- Establishing and maintaining relationships with control schools and communities
- Piloting all research activities
- Training field research teams and conducting mixed-methods primary research
- Data entry, cleaning and editing
- Data analysis and report-writing

A full terms of reference further clarifying the responsibilities of both parties is included as an Annex.

8.2 External evaluator

Due to mentioned issues with quality of the GEC-1 evaluator (cf section 2), and the fact that the GEC-T evaluation will require a more robust approach to qualitative research, the project will be commissioning a new evaluator for GEC-T.

To identify an appropriately skilled and experienced evaluator, the project will be running a competitive tender process. To identify competitive firms based both in and outside Uganda, this process will be managed from the PEAS UK office. The key steps in this process will be as follows:

- Notification of forthcoming tender advertised across different M&E forums and sent to existing contacts; prospective evaluators send requests to receive ToR
- Terms of Reference (ToR) published and sent directly to evaluators who have expressed interest; ToR also advertised on M&E forums and in Ugandan newspapers
- Evaluator proposals received and reviewed by panel applying consistent scoring system against key selection criteria
- Shortlisted applicants (target 2-4) invited for structured interviews with panel consisting of project staff and a representative from the Fund Manager
- References of preferred candidate checked and samples of work reviewed prior to contracting

Data validation

To ensure the validity of data, all qualitative and quantitative data collection activities will be carried out by the external evaluator. The project may observe some of these activities during training and fieldwork for quality assurance purposes (see below), though in no case will project staff be directly responsible for undertaking data collection activities and/or interfering with active data collection activities. This is to ensure the project does not influence the responses given by subjects or in any other way compromise the integrity of the evaluation exercise.

Together with the external evaluator's field managers, the project may occasionally check a sample of completed learning tests and/or interview scripts to ensure these accurately record the responses provided by subjects. Any errors in recording responses – whether intentional or not – will be flagged to the evaluators' field managers to follow up with enumerators.

9. Data quality assurance

9.1 Training

Together with the external evaluator's management team, the project will help design the training for the pilot testing and baseline evaluation. This will include briefing enumerators and researchers on child protection requirements and good evaluation practice, and having all staff who will be working in schools sign PEAS' child protection policy.⁸

The training will involve walking through each of the evaluation instruments in detail, and having enumerators role play administering the learning tests and surveys. During the GEC 1 endline evaluation, a particularly helpful strategy was to recruit more enumerators than were needed for fieldwork, and use the weeklong training process to observe each enumerator and identify those best prepared to take to the field. This led to higher levels of accuracy in learning test administration in particular.

Provided the baseline fieldwork is successful, it will then be the external evaluator's responsibility for organising and overseeing training ahead of the midline and endline evaluation points.

9.2 Piloting

Prior to each data collection period, the evaluation instruments to be used will be piloted with a sample of students and school leaders who are not part of the evaluation sample. Provided not all PEAS schools are included in the evaluation sample, it will likely be possible to do this in 1-2 PEAS network schools.

⁸ N.B. This is party of PEAS' own requirements for any external parties conducting research with children in its schools.

During the fieldwork pilots, enumerators should be observed by field managers administering the learning tests and surveys. Field managers will check that tools are being administered correctly, and note any challenges with comprehension of questions or instructions on the part of subjects and/or enumerators. Enumerators will also be asked to make notes on any challenges encountered in administering the tools. After the conclusion of the pilot, these feedback points will be consolidated and used to update the tools before finalising them for use during the fieldwork period. For this reason, it is recommended that pilots take place no less than five days before the start of fieldwork.

9.3 Data cleaning and editing

Data checking and cleaning should be carried out by the external evaluator. Particularly where data is being transferred from written scripts into an electronic format, it is expected that managers should regularly check a random sample of scripts against entered data for accuracy. If data accuracy is poor, the evaluation manager should ensure all entered data is re-checked against original scripts to correct any discrepancies. For this reason, the evaluator should also securely maintain all original scripts until the end of the evaluation contract.

Data cleaning should also be managed by the external evaluator. The evaluator should ensure no required fields are left blank – or provide a satisfactory explanation if fields are left blank – and sense check entered figures for accuracy. For example, if all students are recorded to have achieved the same score on a particular sub-task in the entered learning test data, this should raise questions and be followed up by the external evaluator prior to sharing any datasets with the project or Fund Manager.

Data will be anonymised by removing any identifying information (such as subject's names) from datasets before they are shared with the Fund Manager. Again, this will be the responsibility of the external evaluator.

10. Risks and risk management

While there are several potential risks that could undermine the quality of the evaluation and/or the project's ability to deliver against its MEL strategy over the four-year grant period, the risks below are those that are considered most likely to occur. Some of these challenges were encountered during the first GEC evaluation, and as such are highly likely to occur again. We have proposed actions to mitigate against each perceived risk, though will work constructively with the evaluator and Fund Manager to comprehensively address both these and any unforeseen challenges that may arise.

Potential risks	Probability of risk occurring	Potential impact on project's success	Proposed actions to mitigate risks that have both significant probability and impact/importance
After baseline, control schools refuse to participate in subsequent rounds of data collection	High	Medium	This challenge was encountered during PEAS' GEC 1 evaluation, with more than one control school refusing visits from the evaluator at different evaluation points. To mitigate against evaluation fatigue in the control group, we would suggest the evaluator (i) establish proactive relationships with control schools from the start and maintain regular communications, (ii) share emerging results from the evaluation with control schools after each data collection point, and (iii) consider budgeting for some non-distorting incentive for continued participation which could be offered to schools and individuals, such as giving out simple stationery (notebooks, pens) after completing surveys.
Actions or behaviours of evaluation team put children at risk and/or undermine trust of participating schools	Low	High	As detailed in the Child Protection and Ethics section, PEAS and the evaluation team will set clear standards for appropriate conduct when working in schools and communities. All evaluation team members will be required to sign PEAS' child protection policy and will be trained on it during the

Table 4: Risks and mitigations

			pre-fieldwork enumerator training. PEAS will follow up with school leaders after each round of fieldwork to request feedback on working with the evaluation team, and will reserve the contractual right to demand the evaluator to remove staff from the project immediately if any concerns related to child protection and/or inappropriate conduct are raised by staff, students or community members.
PEAS girls enrolled in S4 do not transit into S5 in PEAS schools in large numbers	High	Medium	Due to the substantial possibility that girls may elect to change schools for A-level and/or choose to follow different pathways after completing Senior 4, we are proposing that the learning cohort be comprised primarily of girls who will be in Senior 1 during the baseline year, and hence are projected to still be in Senior 4 during the endline year. Sampling of the Senior 2 and Senior 3 cohort age groups will need to account for the fact that >80% of them are unlikely to still be found in PEAS schools at the point they could transition to A-level.
Girls who have left treatment and control schools cannot be easily tracked in their communities	High	High	During the GEC 1 evaluation, the evaluator team faced challenges in following up with girls who had graduated from treatment schools. This was largely because the evaluator hadn't budgeted appropriate time for doing this work, or collected good information to follow-up with girls who had left school. Given this will be a critical element for assessing transition during the GEC-T, we are suggesting that the evaluator (i) budget sufficient time for following up with the anticipated numbers of girls who will have left school at each evaluation point, either in person of over the phone, (ii) record multiple sources of contact information for each girl - including the names of multiple relations and mobile numbers where available, and (iii) work with school leaders as a source of knowledge on where graduates have moved on to, and where to begin looking for them.
Survey tools and learning tests are not delivered to a consistently high standard by enumerators to yield reliable data	High	High	As this challenge was encountered during all data collection phases of the GEC 1 evaluation, we anticipate it is likely to occur during the GEC-T evaluation as well, particularly where enumerators may not be familiar with the tests to be used and/or have much assessment expertise to support good quality test administration. To mitigate against this risk, PEAS will support the evaluator to co-design and deliver the baseline fieldwork training to ensure enumerators are sufficiently trained on good testing practice, and selected for the fieldwork team based on their competencies in this area. Secondly, PEAS staff will quality assure the first week of fieldwork by following the teams in the field to observe the administration of the evaluation tools and provide coaching and feedback to enumerators and field managers.
Key MEL staff leave PEAS, the Fund Manager, and/or the	High	Low	Over four years, some turnover in the teams managing the evaluation across the project, evaluator and Fund Manager is to be expected. To

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11. Learning

11.1 Learning strategy

PEAS aspires to be a learning organisation, and staff already use programme evidence to review the performance of particular strategies and approaches. Within the first GEC project, PEAS organised several internal workshops to review the evidence emerging from the programme and discuss what activities and strategies might need to be adapted, dropped, or rethought to fulfil the project's objectives effectively. While PEAS doesn't have a highly formalised approach to undertaking such reviews, typical points in the year when evidence is synthesised to inform decision-making are (i) ahead of annual country planning processes, (ii) after examination results are released, and (iii) after evaluation and research reports are published. The PEAS M&E team would plan to use the evidence emerging from the GEC-T evaluation in the same way to inform the organisation during key decision-making periods and to generate organisational learnings.

In terms of sharing learnings externally, PEAS is planning to join the GEC learning cluster on School Governance & Management (Learning Cluster 3). As part of its DfID Uganda SESIL programme grant, PEAS will be designing, piloting and rolling out a school leadership development programme over the same years as its GEC-T project. School management is an area PEAS believes is integral to driving strong learning outcomes, and which PEAS already has strong experience in – a recent study of school management and value add in Uganda found that leadership teams in PEAS schools on average scored an entire point higher than the Ugandan average (on a 5 point scale) in the quality of their school management practices, and that this explained much of the reason PEAS schools also scored 2 points higher than the national average on student value add.⁹ Given PEAS will already be generating evidence and learning in this area via the design of the school leadership programme, we therefore feel it will be most appropriate for us to contribute formally to this learning cluster.

PEAS' participation in the learning cluster will be led by the Education Manager in the UK Technical Team. The Education Manager will be responsible for coordinating reflections from Uganda team members and developing the learning products specified below. We anticipate producing four products over the course of project implementation, likely in the form of a series of 1-pagers and/or short presentations based on the format of the learning cluster meetings. These products and anticipated timelines are outlined below.

2017: Summary of research on school management and learning outcomes in Uganda; overview of PEAS' rationale for designing a school leadership development programme

2018: Summary of findings from pilot of programme in selected PEAS schools (largely qualitative evidence)

2019: Summary of data on programme impact, drawing upon (i) school leadership development programme monitoring data; (ii) PEAS' internal M&E data on school leadership performance and student learning progress; and (iii) GEC-T midline evaluation evidence (if available in time).

2019/2020: Package of finalised tools (e.g. school leadership standards, training guides) prepared for sharing with other projects

⁹ Lee Crawfurd, 'School Management in Uganda', RISE Programme Working Paper, June 2016, see: http://www.riseprogramme.org/sites/www.riseprogramme.org/files/Crawfurd%20School%20Managem ent%20in%20Uganda.pdf

Beyond this more formalised participation, PEAS would also like to receive updates from all the other learning clusters, as all topics are relevant to PEAS' work, and areas where PEAS is keen to learn from the experience of other projects and organisations.

11.2 Stakeholder engagement, dissemination and influencing

The key project stakeholders from a MEL perspective, and the ways in which PEAS plans to engage them with the GEC-T project are summarised in the table below. PEAS will develop all listed engagement materials internally, and work with the project evaluator to ensure appropriate materials are communicated to control schools and subjects sampled for the evaluation.

Stakeholders	Engagement Approach & Purpose	Timing
Internal		
PEAS staff	 Share updates on programme performance via workshops with staff, presentations, and short, summary reports <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Inform programme design and adaptation; (ii) celebrate achievements 	Minimum annually
PEAS schools participating in the evaluation	 Inform schools of evaluation objectives and requirements via briefings Share updates on programme learnings via short summary reports <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Secure and maintain participation in the evaluation; (ii) Inform school-level programming and support strategies for girls 	After each evaluation point
PEAS students and caregivers sampled as part of the evaluation	 Inform subjects of evaluation objectives and requirements via briefings Share updates on programme learnings via short summary reports <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Secure and maintain participation in the evaluation; (ii) Inform individuals of study findings and how information will be used 	After each evaluation point*
External		
Control schools participating in the evaluation and spot check activities	 Inform schools of evaluation objectives and requirements via briefings Share updates on programme learnings via short summary reports Purpose: Secure and maintain participation in the evaluation 	After each evaluation point*
Control school students and caregivers sampled as part of the evaluation activities	 Inform subjects of evaluation objectives and requirements via briefings Share updates on programme learnings via short summary reports <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Secure and maintain participation in the evaluation; (ii) Inform individuals of study findings and how information will be used 	After each evaluation point*
District Education Offices and Ministry of Education & Sports	 Share project information and findings via short reports and meetings with officials <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Maintain support for PEAS' programme in Uganda; (ii) Demonstrate good practice to build trust in PEAS/PPP school operators; (iii) Generate interest in scaling project activities 	On-going (during regular engagement meetings)
DfID Uganda and other development partners	 Share project information and findings via short reports, presentations, and meetings 	On-going (during regular

	<i>Purpose:</i> (i) Generate support and interest in PEAS' programme in Uganda; (ii) Generate interest in scaling project activities	engagement meetings)
Other GEC-T projects and organisations working on girls' education in Uganda and/or globally	 Share project learnings via short reports, presentations, and meetings <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Influence sector best practice; (ii) generate interest in scaling and/or adapting most successful project activities to drive improved outcomes for girls in multiple settings 	At least annually via learning cluster; on-going (during engagement meetings)
Academics & education researchers	 Share project activities via short reports and presentations (i.e. at conferences) <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Generate interest in PEAS' programme; (ii) Demonstrate good practice to build trust in PEAS/PPP school operators; (iii) Influence sector best practice 	Ad hoc (during engagement meetings and conference presentations)
PEAS' donors and supporters	 Share project successes and learnings via short reports, presentations, and meetings <i>Purpose:</i> (i) Maintain and grow support for PEAS' programme; (ii) Generate interest in match funding activities and/or scaling activities to other countries where PEAS operates (e.g. Zambia) 	On-going (during regular engagement meetings)

*N.B. These engagement activities will need to be managed by the external evaluator, as it is not appropriate for PEAS to know the identities of the girls and caregivers sampled for the evaluation. Similarly, the evaluator should be responsible for maintaining good relations and sharing information with control schools, as it is not appropriate for PEAS to engage directly with these schools to avoid contamination effects.

12. Evaluation workplan

12.1 Timetable

The timetable below provides an overview of dates for key evaluation activities across the four years of project implementation. Given the short window available for accessing secondary schools during Term 3 in Uganda before the national exam period, it is important that annual fieldwork activities are delivered on time.

Action	Responsible	By when?
Evaluator Recruitment		
Evaluation Terms of Reference published	Project	23 rd Jun 2017
Evaluator proposals due	Bidders	10 th Jul 2017
Interviews with shortlisted evaluators and review of references completed	Project & FM	12 th Jul 2017
Evaluation contract confirmed	Project	14 th Jul 2017
Inception Phase		
Inception Meeting held	Project & Evaluator	w/c 17 th Jul 2017
Design of (i) Child protection framework, (ii) Sampling framework, (iii) Data collection strategy including cohort tracking design, and (iv) Primary research instruments for baseline completed	Evaluator (with guidance from Project & FM)	4 th Aug 2017
Draft Inception Report submitted for review	Evaluator	4 th Aug 2017
Piloting and calibration of learning tests	Evaluator	w/c 7 th Aug 2017
Meeting with Evaluation Steering Group and feedback provided on Inception report	Project, FM & Evaluator	w/c 14 th Aug 2017
Feedback incorporated and Final Inception Report submitted	Evaluator	25 th Aug 2017
Baseline Evaluation		
Enumerator training and piloting of baseline tools	Evaluator	4 th – 13 th Sep 2017

Baseline fieldwork period ¹⁰ , including collection of T2 2017 attendance data and completion of attendance spot checks	Evaluator	18 th Sep – 14 th Oct 2017
Draft baseline report and data analysis submitted for review	Evaluator	13 th Jan 2018
Final baseline report submitted incorporating project feedback	Evaluator & Project	31 st Mar 2018
Year 2 Attendance Spot Checks		
Completion of annual attendance spot checks and collection of T2 2018 attendance data	Evaluator	Oct 2018
Midline Evaluation		
Review of midline fieldwork tools and sampling approach	Evaluator & Project	Jul 2019
Enumerator training; piloting of midline tools	Evaluator	Aug-Sep 2019
Midline fieldwork period	Evaluator	Sep – Oct 2019
Completion of annual attendance spot checks and collection of T2 2019 attendance data	Evaluator	Oct 2019
Draft midline report and data analysis submitted for review	Evaluator	Jan 2020
Final midline report submitted incorporating project feedback	Evaluator & Project	31 st Mar 2020
Endline Evaluation		
Review of endline fieldwork tools and sampling approach	Evaluator & Project	Jul 2020
Enumerator training; piloting of endline tools	Evaluator	Aug-Sep 2020
Endline fieldwork period	Evaluator	Sep – Oct 2020
Completion of annual attendance spot checks and collection of T2 2020 attendance data	Evaluator	Oct 2020
Draft endline report and data analysis submitted for review	Evaluator	Jan 2021
Final endline report submitted incorporating project feedback	Evaluator & Project	31 st Mar 2021

12.2 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the parties involved in delivering this MEL strategy, and the individuals with overall responsibility for each area, are outlined below:

Project:

- Designing, reviewing and updating MEL strategy, Head of Monitoring & Evaluation
- Designing, reviewing and updating activity workplan, and compiling quarterly and annual reports on project delivery for review by the Fund Manager, *Uganda Grants Manager*
- Compiling quarterly and annual project financial information for review by the Fund Manager, Uganda Grants Manager
- Setting a clear terms of reference for the evaluation and suggested workplan, *Head of Monitoring & Evaluation*
- Appointing the external evaluator and managing the evaluation contract, *Head of Monitoring & Evaluation*
- Providing project information to the evaluator and facilitating access to PEAS staff and schools required to participate in the evaluation, *Uganda M&E Manager*
- Sharing all GEC-T technical guidance with the evaluator, Head of Monitoring & Evaluation
- Reviewing all evaluation planning documents, policies, tools and reports, and providing timely feedback, *Head of Monitoring & Evaluation*

Evaluator:

¹⁰ N.B. Term 3 starts on 18th September 2017 in Uganda; fieldwork should be completed no later than the fourth week of term (and ideally by the third week in term) to not interfere with the UCE and UACE examination period, during which time many students and teachers will not be available in schools.

- Reviewing all GEC-T technical guidance and proactively raising any issues to the project and/or Fund Manager to ensure evaluation planning and deliverables meet all requirements, *TBC*
- Developing, managing and updating the evaluation workplan, TBC
- Drawing the sample for the evaluation, and securely maintaining contact information for all sampled schools and individuals, *TBC*
- Establishing and maintaining relationships with control schools and communities, including sharing evaluation findings with control schools and control participants, *TBC*
- Developing a comprehensive Evaluation Plan ahead of each data collection period, including all research and ethical protocols, research and cohort tracking plans, and data collection tools for review by the project and Fund Manager, *TBC*
- Piloting all research activities, TBC
- Training field research teams and conducting mixed-methods primary research, TBC
- Data entry, cleaning and editing, TBC
- Secure data storage and sharing of requested, anonymised data with the project and Fund Manager in an accessible format, *TBC*
- Data analysis and report-writing, submission of key deliverables in time for review and incorporation of feedback from the project, *TBC*

Annexes:

1. Logframe



Annex 1. Project log frame (270318).xlsx

2. Completed ToR for evaluators



Terms of reference for external evaluator

3. Draft Sampling Framework



Sampling framework - PEAS v1.xlsx