

Mid-Term Review Report for the SEAQE 2 project - Ethiopia

Norad Collected Reviews

09/2022

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Ethiopia SEAQE 2

Mid Term Review



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I BACKGROUND

The SEAQE 2 project is focused on providing secondary and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to female and male students from the East Shewa and West Arsi Zones in Ethiopia to enable them to access, engage and learn in inclusive, quality and relevant learning environments. SEAQE 2 in Ethiopia strongly supports education pathways for youth, out of school children (OOSC), children with disabilities and others that experience marginalisation. In this phase of the project, ADRA Ethiopia hoped to leverage public/private/non-profit partnerships for increased quality, market-relevance, and innovation in education. The result being that students would gain knowledge, skills and values to become productive and responsible citizens.

Prior to the start of SEAQE 2, the new, more liberal government came into power and rapidly pushed a series of reforms, including the lifting of many human rights restrictions. Thousands of political prisoners were released, including journalists and opposition leaders. A new peace treaty was signed with Eritrea, resolving a decades-long stalemate. Since then, the space for Non-government organisations (NGOs), including management protocols, has improved significantly. NGOs can access most parts of the country.

Despite this progress, intercommunal conflicts impacted the target area. Approximately 620,000 Ethiopians were displaced due to fighting in the Southern and Oromia regions, and an attempted coup during May-June 2019 forced another state-of-emergency in Ethiopia. This conflict and rioting affected project activities. It disrupted activity flows and affected the education system as schools closed frequently and teachers and staff reported feeling insecurity.

In the first year of SEAQE 2, the project focused on securing permission from the government for the project and completing the baseline. Community consultation and awareness campaigns were undertaken, especially in the two areas selected for school construction. This was also a time when the Ethiopian government adopted a new education structure, shifting from an 8-2-2 model (8 - primary, 2+2 secondary) to a 6-2-4 model (6 lower primary, 2 junior primary, 4 secondary). It is anticipated that this change will increase services and benefits offered to students in secondary education, enabling groups that experience marginalisation an opportunity to stay in school longer. The project provided each of the four TVET centres a new classroom block, where accounting, secretary skills and Information Communication Technology (ICT) planned to be taught. It was hoped that these would be relevant to the local economy and attractive to girls, who are underrepresented in the Ethiopian TVET sector.

The year 2020 was one of continued security risks, armed conflict and significant disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, progress was modest. Significant unrest intensified in late June 2020 following the assassination of Oromo artist and activist Hachalu Hundessa on June 29, 2020. In SEAQE 2 areas, buildings, hotels and shops suffered arson attacks and widespread property damage was observed. This led to the loss of hundreds of lives and the detention of thousands, fuelling tension in communities. This impacted the project, as the construction of new school buildings was delayed. In November, fighting broke out between the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) and Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) and resulted in the massacre of 600 civilians. At the time, the UN estimated that more than one million people had been internally displaced because of the fighting. Schooling was disrupted by closures due to the conflict and it is feared that the psychosocial wellbeing of students would be impacted alongside significant socio-economic impacts. Military movements in and around towns and SEAQE 2 supported schools have increasing security concerns among stakeholders and fears among students, particularly boys, about forced military recruitment. In August 2021, ADRA provided safety and security training to SEAQE 2 project staff on evacuation and project implementation risk management procedures.

The year 2020 was also the time when significant effects were felt from the Covid-19 pandemic. By March 16 schools across the country had closed and remained closed for over seven months. This directly impacted more than 10 million in the Oromia region where the SEAQE2 program is implementing activities. By April, the Ministry of Education (MoE) introduced the government's preparedness and response plan to ensure the continuity of basic education. This plan promoted digital learning, audio-video programs and material distribution. ADRA Ethiopia assisted with education materials. Student's access to radio and digital learning was incredibly limited in rural areas, so it is expected that rural children, children living in poverty, children with disabilities and students with non-literate families would have been disadvantaged. Once schools reopened, a double shift system was implemented in many schools, extending school days to 6 (from 5). This placed extra pressure on school administration and teachers without financial benefit. The government decided to give free promotion to the next grade level in all primary and secondary schools, except for the graduating levels of grades 8 and 12, which had to sit the standardised examinations.

When schools reopened (September 2020), it was evident that measures taken by the government to mitigate the pandemic would have a negative effect on students and teachers. Most schools were unable to meet the strict requirements for opening, and some only supported graduate classes (Grade 8 & 12) whereas others delayed opening. To promote children's return to school for the 2021/22 academic year, ADRA embarked on a massive enrolment promotion campaign, reaching an estimated 120,000 community members across 90 administrative wards (kebeles). This helped bring children back into school following Covid-19 school closures and SEAQE 2 was able to meet 2021 enrolment targets.

The SEAQE 2 project supported the Oromia Education Bureau and the schools to enable the safe return of students. This will be elaborated in the findings below.

2 SAMPLE

2.1 SCHOOLS VISITED

Data was collected in a total of 18 schools, four of which were TVET centres and two were preparatory schools. The remainder were secondary schools. The enumerator team was able to complete data collection within a week, having four teams available to undertake data collection each day.

Table 1: Schools visited in the MTR

	School Name	Town/District		School Name	Location
1	Kelo Secondary school	Kelo Duro Kebel/ Negelle Arsi	10	Jido Secondary school	Jido town/ATJK
2	Watera Secondary school	Watera kebel/ Negelle Arsi	11	Oitu Secondary school	Oitu kebele/ATJK
3	Gode secondary school	Gode kebel/Negelle Arsi	12	Bulbula Secondary school	Bulbula town/ATJK
4	Heban Degaga Secondary school	Goljota town/ Heban Arsi	13	Adami Tulu Secondary school	A/Tulu town/ATJK
5	Beseku Secondary school	Beseku town/ Negelle Arsi	14	Galo Hirape secondary school	Galo Hirape kebele/ATJK
6	Negelle Arsi Preparatory	Negelle Arsi town	15	Bulbula TVET Center	Bulbula town/ATJK

7	Dole Secondary school	Dole kebele/Negelle Arsi	16	Meki TVET College	Meki town/Dugda
8	Shopa Secondary school	Shopa Genet/Heban Arsi	17	Bora TVET Center	Bote town/Bora
9	Bulbula Preparatory school	Bulbula town/ATJK	18	Modjo TVET Center	Modjo town

2.2 FINAL SAMPLE

A total of 612 individuals were surveyed including 353 males and 239 females, plus 20 partner individuals whose gender was not reported. Of this number, a total of 79 students were assessed from Grade 7/TVET and 294 students from Grade 10, including 187 males and 186 females.

Table 2: Participants interviewed for the MTR

	Total	Males	Females
Students	Grade 7/TVET – 79 Grade 10 – 294 Total: 373	187	186
Teachers	36	26	10
Headteachers	18	17	1
Parents	79	49	30
SMC	83	71	12
Education authorities	3	3	0
Partners	20		
Total	612	353	239

3 FINDINGS

3.1 SUMMARY

Several high-level findings have been extrapolated. These are:

- The barriers facing girls are likely to have been exacerbated due to Covid-19. Overall, changes made to the project because of Covid-19 were relevant but not sufficient to support those that experience significant marginalisation an opportunity to return to school once schools reopened. For instance, head teachers and education authorities noted that children who experience marginalisation did not return to school. This included children from remote areas, children from poor households, girls and children with disabilities.
- Female students performed lower than male students in the TVET and Grade 10 assessments, especially in numeracy. The results are statistically significant with a high confidence value indicating that this result may be reflective of the situation in TVET and secondary schools in Ethiopia. Whilst consistent with baseline findings, the findings indicate that female students in Grade 10 and lower need additional support in Mathematics and would also benefit from support in Literacy, to ensure they can access future employment and education opportunities.

- Students had a positive association with their school and their teacher. This was also a finding in the baseline and indicates that barriers to learning and education continuity may not be school based.
- The door-to-door campaign was a successful strategy for identifying and supporting the enrolment of OOSC and children with disabilities (this strategy was also used in Somalia).
- Setting up girls' clubs, running a girls education campaign and holding information sessions with parents as well as building toilets and a separate hand washing station for girls were all identified as strategies employed to support girls to return to school. It is unclear what interventions are happening within the school to support children with disabilities beyond teacher training.
- Most partners agreed (11) or strongly agreed (7) that the changes to the school environment worked to support children's learning and were suitable for schools to be safe learning environments.
- Attention has been paid to teacher wellbeing but not in a deliberate focused manner that responds to the key issues that may be affecting teachers.
- Coordination between ADRA and its partners was compromised by Covid-19. One in five partner respondents disagreed that they received good support from ADRA (no explanation for this rating was provided).

3.2 RELEVANCE

Needs of the target population (barriers & gaps)

The SEAQE 2 project is highly relevant to supporting the education needs of children in Ethiopia, including girls and children with disabilities who experience marginalisation.

The SEAQE 2 proposal outlined the profound barriers to education that children face in the target communities. These included poverty, which creates both financial barriers (school fees, learning materials, uniform, transport etc) and opportunity costs (the costs of sending a child to school verse their contribution to supporting the family livelihood through chores, looking after siblings and child labour), distance to school, early marriage, safety, including gender based violence, in the community and school and inequitable resource allocation for education facilities, teachers and learning materials in rural areas. **According to MTR respondents, existing barriers to education have been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures.**

While the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for both girls and boys in primary, lower and upper secondary are similar, there are significant disparities in access to education between urban and rural children and children living in poverty. **Only 69 percent of girls compared to 78 percent of boys pass the secondary education certificate. Girls are disadvantaged in learning outcomes.** Girls' learning achievement is lower than boys and their participation and achievement decrease as the grade level increases.

Children with disabilities face significant barriers to receiving a quality education in Ethiopia. Negative cultural norms and attitudes towards children with disabilities are profound. Children with disabilities are considered a curse from God and hidden in the house and denied their right to an education. According to UNICEF (2018), only 0.7 percent of children with a disability in Ethiopia are reported to be in school.

The SEAQE 2 project response to the barriers to education faced by children who experience marginalisation, including girls and children with disabilities, in the SEAQE 2 target areas were relevant. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic (2019), the project focused on establishing and strengthening partnerships, including with Disabled People Organisations (DPOs), and running

school enrolment promotion campaigns, which resulted in almost 500 OOSC being enrolled in school and 285 OOSC being enrolled in TVET. Inclusive education training was provided to teachers, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) were trained to mobilise communities to send girls and children with disabilities to school, administrative personnel received Education Monitoring Information System (EMIS) training to collect, analyse and report on inclusion, girls clubs were formed, and gender and disability inclusion were monitored in the classroom. **According to the 2019 SEAQE 2 Progress Report, community led mobilisation initiatives for door-to-door campaigns to reach out to families with OOSC and children with disabilities was a highly relevant and effective tool for promoting and supporting the enrolment of children who experience marginalisation. MTR respondents also highlighted the role that continuous awareness raising on inclusive education and the rights of children with disabilities had on changing community attitudes and behaviours towards children with disabilities and supported their enrolment in school.**

The SEAQE 2 project response in support of improving the capacity of teachers to provide a quality education were also relevant. **Interventions focused on teacher professional development both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic through the provision of in-service teacher training, support for mentoring and coaching sessions and peer learning.** During the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, ADRA expanded support for teacher training to include distance learning and online training.

Needs because of COVID

The project's efforts to adapt and respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and school closures were relevant to the needs of students, target schools and communities. The SEAQE 2 project supported the rollout of the government Covid-19 response and recovery plan by lobbying and coordination with the education office to support distance learning via digital and modular approaches. To this end, SEAQE 2 supported distance learning through the provision of equipment and materials (photocopiers, printers, toners, paper etc..) to the district office so that learning materials could be printed and distributed to learners. In partnership with the education office, ADRA trained PTAs, head teachers and education authorities on how to support and strengthen home learning.

Return to school interventions were relevant to creating a safe learning environment and promoting children's return to school. **MTR respondents reported that schools implemented the Covid-19 guidelines, provided Covid-19 hygiene and PPE and upgraded WASH facilities to keep children safe upon their return to school.** ADRA trained education personnel on Covid-19 safety guidelines and trained PTA to mobilise communities to contribute resources towards improvements to school environments, including school security in response to civil unrest in 2020, to support children's safe return to school.

SEAQE 2 made relevant efforts to engage girls in distance learning and support their return to school. Setting up girls clubs, running a girls education campaign and holding information sessions with parents as well as building toilets and a separate hand washing station for girls were all identified as strategies employed to support girls to return to school.

Overall, SEAQE 2 partners in Ethiopia thought that the changes made to the project because of Covid-19 were relevant. **Most partners agreed (11) or strongly agreed (7) that the changes made worked to support children's learning and that program interventions were suitable for schools to be safe learning environments.** However, evidence from the MTR suggests that while the SEAQE 2 project interventions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and school closures were relevant and appropriate, **they were not sufficient to support those that**

experience the most marginalisation, including children living in poverty, children in remote areas, girls and children with disabilities, to engage in distance learning or return to school once schools reopened.

Social emotional wellbeing

SEAQE 2 efforts to support the social and emotional wellbeing of children are highly relevant to the needs of children in the target areas where state fragility and widespread communal conflict continues to create a climate of stress and fear among communities. To date, **SEAQE 2 has formed partnerships with five NGOs/Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) that support inclusive education. These include agencies that focus on child protection and psychosocial support services for vulnerable children, including girls and children with disabilities. At the school level, sports and cultural activities, setting up different peer clubs, offering sessions with the school counsellor and training teachers on social emotional wellbeing were strategies used to support children's social and emotional wellbeing.**

3.3 COHERENCE

Consistency and complementarity with other initiatives (gender equity, Education for All, COVID response and recovery, etc.,)

The MTR found that the SEAQE 2 in Ethiopia was highly consistent with and complementary to government policies and priorities. Education authorities at both local (2 respondents) and state (1 respondent) level as well as partner staff (27 respondents) reported that ADRA has supported the implementation of national education policies and priorities, including Education for All, Inclusive Education, Gender Equity and COVID-19 response and recovery plans. Education authorities were able to identify a range of ways in which ADRA supported the MoE's Covid-19 response plan, including through supporting schools to implement Covid-19 guidelines, upgrade WASH facilities and provide remote learning opportunities. Education authorities noted ADRA's support for distance learning through purchasing reading books, developing and printing home learning packs and providing electronic devices as well as engaging parents through information sessions on the importance of education. **According to ADRA Ethiopia staff, the close relationship between ADRA and education authorities at all levels is a result of trust building and 'walking the talk' - fulfilling plans on time and with quality.**

Within the TVET sector, the SEAQE 2 TVET strategy involves close collaboration with TVET authorities and local businesses to align TVET courses with local job opportunities and foster local business support. MTR respondents reported that ADRA's support to engage with local businesses helped to improve the practical training offered, the opportunities for internships, the curriculum used and tools and equipment.

ADRA Ethiopia partner staff either agreed (16 respondents) or strongly agreed (9 respondents) that ADRA coordinated and partnered well with other NGOs and civil society groups. ADRA has facilitated communication between schools and local DPOs and international NGOs who are supporting the schooling of children with disabilities and girls. These are collaborations that are continued from SEAQE 1. According to ADRA Ethiopia staff, SEAQE 2 supported the implementation of Covid-19 guidelines that were developed by UNICEF.

ADRA Ethiopia remained active on relevant education and emergency cluster coordination mechanisms to ensure timely Covid-19 prevention and response planning.

3.4 EFFICIENCY

The Covid-19 pandemic and continued state fragility caused disruption to the efficient delivery of the SEAQE 2 project, and this was beyond ADRA’s control. Lockdowns, limited travel to the field and restrictions on the number of people who could gather at one time meant that project activities were delayed and in some cases meetings were cancelled.

Despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, ADRA Ethiopia with support from ADRA Norway worked diligently to proactively adapt the SEAQE 2 project to implement activities that could be implemented in a safe way and to adjust others to be Covid-safe (e.g., by working in smaller groups or through home-based work). ADRA Norway initiated webinars, online training and meetings with SEAQE 2 ADRA partners, including Ethiopia. Webinars focused on adapting education activities to reach program objectives as well as child safeguarding and protection. Online meetings between ADRA Norway and ADRA Ethiopia were also conducted to update the risk analysis and mitigation measures resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cost efficiency was also affected with the Covid-19 pandemic negatively affecting the inflation rate. For instance, construction contracts were compromised following Covid-19 price hikes on construction materials, such as cement, which according to ADRA Ethiopia tripled in price. ADRA Norway made budget adjustments in 2020 to accommodate changes to program implementation plans because of Covid-19. In Ethiopia, budget modifications included an increase of approximately 10% in overall funds. These funds were allocated to mitigate inflation hikes for construction activities and procuring and supplying a substantial amount of learning materials to support schools once they reopened.

According to ADRA SEAQE 2 partners in Ethiopia, SEAQE 2 was professionally managed, was cost effective and project activities were conducted in a timely manner. However, 4 out of 20 partner respondents (or 20 percent), disagreed that they received good support by ADRA. Unfortunately, no explanations were given for this rating.

3.5 EFFECTIVENESS

Program achievements SEAQE 2 results framework

At baseline, the high quality of education was reflected in the ETLE Assessment results, with Ethiopian SEAQE 2 schools, considering all indicators, scoring an average of 2, higher than other countries in SEAQE 2.

Table 3: Outcome achievements

Outcome	Indicator/s	Baseline	Milestone	MTR
	# and % of learners in supported educational institutions achieving expected standards of quality, inclusive and effective learner-friendly education environments	0%	25%	4% (484 (161f, 323m) of 10,431(4032f, 6,399m) learners in schools 94% (527=221f, 306m) of 560 (235f,325m) TVET students
	% reduction in gender disparities in learning achievements in end-of-school exams	2.9% higher in males than females	4% reduction so 2.7% higher males than females	

	% and # of learners (f/m) who are generating their own income or accessing further education after completing TVET	0%	70%	45% (330 of which 174f, 156m) of 726 learners
Outcome 1: More marginalised children and youth access and participate in inclusive education	% and # of out-of-school children (f/m) enrolled in supported educational institutions that remain in the learning institution the following year.	n/a	70%	73% (164 children, of which 68 f; 96 m) of 226 out-of-school children
	# and % of learners (f/m) that benefit from education in supported educational institutions that meet the expected standards of inclusive education	0%	35%	9% (1,011(382f,629m) of 10,991(3,974f, 6,130m) learners
Outcome 2: More children and youth learn in safe, protective and healthy education institutions	# of learners (f/m) enrolled in supported educational institutions	9524 learners	10,104 learners	10,991(4,267f, 6,724m) of which 560 (235f, 325m) are TVET learners
	% and # of learners (f/m) enrolled in supported educational institutions that remain in the educational institution the following year	n/a	70%	83 % (5,005 = 2,189f, 2,816m) of 6,007(2,197f; 3,810m) learners.
	# and % learners that benefit from education in supported educational institutions that meet expected standards for healthy, safe and protective institutions	0%	35%	4% (483(203f, 280m) of 10,991 learners
Outcome 3: Learner's benefit from improved quality teaching and relevant learning	# and % of supported educational institutions where educational personnel and PTAs/SMCs are achieving expected standards of effectiveness and quality	0%	35%	11% of 18 supported educational institutions (0% of 14 schools; 50% of 4 TVET centres)
	# and % of learners in supported educational institutions achieving the minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics	24%	35%	47% (37% F, 56% M)
	% and # of learners (f/m) in supported TVET institutions who completed/passed the appropriate TVET level	0%	80%	45% (330 (174f, 156m) of 726 (383f, 343m) passed the appropriate level
Outcome 4: Learners, parents, communities and other stakeholders are more positively engaged with educational systems	# and % of supported educational institutions that meet the expected standards for participation of learners, parents and employers	0%	35%	11% of 18 institutions
	# of private sector companies contributing resources to the TVET sector	0	1	2
Outcome 5: Strengthened civil society influences education policies and practices	# of research and advocacy documents developed by civil society	0	1	1
	#of policies, plans and budgets developed/ revised to include quality, equitable, safe and/or inclusive education and/or protection for marginalised groups	0	1	0

Overall, ADRA staff and CSO partners are confident that the SEAQE 2 project is on track to deliver its targets by the end of the program, all agreeing or strongly agreeing in this assessment.

Progress is evident in most outcome areas. Results have been hampered due to COVID-19 and insecurity. At this stage, school institutions are gradually improving according to the ETLE standards whereas TVET centres have made more progress. The proportion of students that are staying until the following year is higher than expected indicating that schools can effectively encourage students to return to school. Parental and student engagement is an area where further improvement is required. Student results, especially for male students in TVET and Grade 10 is above the milestone target, which is very encouraging.

3.5.1 Outcome 1 (access to learning for girls, children with disabilities etc.)

This outcome is focused on OOSC, girls and children with disabilities access to education.

Table 4: Outcome 1.1 enrolment of OOSC since 2019.

	2019 Target	2019 Actual	2020 Target	2020 Actual	2021 Target	2021 Actual
OOSC return to supported learning institutions	220 (123 f; 97 m)	498 (227 f; 271 m)	220 (123 f; 97 m)	226 (102f, 124m)	220 (147f,93m)	242 (113 f, 129m)

Organising school enrolment promotion campaigns and collaborating with teachers to mobilise local communities resulted in 498 OOSC reengaging with school, which was a doubling of the country target for 2019. Additionally, inclusive education training was conducted in the same year to 150 teachers (11 f; 139 m) where teachers created action plans for how to improve awareness of inclusive education in their school communities, how to share their knowledge with peers, and how to collaborate with partners. This continued in 2020/21 alongside **training for school administrations, school staff, school clubs, civil society organisations, and health and police officers and has contributed to retaining students in learning institutions.** The numbers reached in training was lower (177) than the target (294), due to difficulties faced in mobilising schools during the pandemic. **In relation to OOSC enrolments, the target was surpassed in 2020** with 88 percent of OOSC enrolled in the 2019/20 academic year remaining in the learning institution for the 2020/21 academic year and 226 (104 f; 122 m) OOSC enrolled in education institutions from a target of 220, although fewer girls than expected managed to enrol (target: 147 f; 73 m).

In 2021, 72 percent of OOSC enrolled in the 2020/21 academic year remained in learning institutions for the 2021/22 academic year and a further 242 (113 f; 129 m) OOSC enrolled in education institutions from a target of 220, representing an achievement of 110 percent. As with 2020/21 retention trends, more male (96 or 78 percent) than female (68 or 65 percent) OOSC were retained, suggesting that more needs to be done to support and then retain OOS girls in education. School enrolment campaigns targeting OOSC, particularly girls, children living with a disability and school dropouts, were conducted in December 2021. A total of 5,838 (2,217 f; 3,631 m) students, PTA members, community members, teachers and local authorities were reached. Campaign topics included child protection, GBV and harmful traditional practices. Coordination meetings with District education and school level stakeholders were also conducted to support the identification and tracking of OOSC once enrolled.

In the baseline, girls' education was highlighted as a significant issue, and this continued in the first years of SEAQE 2. At baseline, 40 percent of girls were married as children and only 16 percent of secondary school-aged girls attended schools. Gender-based violence, early child marriage and other harmful social norms are identified as barriers to girls' participation in education. **These barriers persist and may have been exacerbated due to Covid-19. Girls were readily identified as at high risk of drop out by education authorities and all (100%) reported that early marriage and having to work to support the family were common reasons why girls were unable to access learning when schools were closed.** This was reinforced by headteachers, who also identified a lack of parental support as an additional barrier for girls. When schools opened, one in three education authorities reported that girls faced difficulties returning to school. **Almost half of the head teachers interviewed (44.4 percent) stated that many girls did not return to school after school closures. It may be too early to define these as 'withdrawals or dropouts' but delayed start and irregular attendance are often predictors of early dropout.**

Most schools tried to support the return to school of girls. Most head teachers (72 percent) and PTA members (78 percent) reported that their school tried to support girls to return to school. **Parents noted girls clubs, establishing girl friendly toilets, holding a girls education campaign and information sessions for parents as typical activities conducted.**

Similarly, children with disabilities were most likely to miss access to distance learning. Education authorities shared that this was due to limited access to learning materials and devices at home. Half reported neglect and parents unwilling to support their children's learning at home. **According to head teachers and SMC members, children with disabilities lacked parental support for their education during Covid-19 school closures and children with disabilities were less likely to access home learning materials. SMC members also noted domestic violence (17 percent) and neglect (11 percent) as barriers to the participation of children with disabilities in distance learning.**

More than one in three headteachers (39 percent) reported that children with disabilities did not return to school after school closures. This was also confirmed by education authorities, who reported that children with disabilities faced difficulties returning to school. **Unlike the support offered to ensure girls returned to school, less than half of headteachers (44 percent) reported that their school undertook activities to support the return to school of children with disabilities.** Most schools that did support children with disabilities to return to school did so through the provision of teaching aids / support staff and information sessions with parents. A minority (12.5 percent) of schools provided more disability inclusive toilets and developed visual aids for Covid-19 awareness in braille.

Overall efforts and strategies to improve enrolment of girls and children with disabilities are viewed favourably by ADRA Ethiopia staff and partners, the majority agreeing or strongly agreeing that the contributions have been effective. They did however make suggestions on improvements that could be made, especially as girls education is still a concern. **There was a feeling that interventions were generic rather than specific to the unique barriers girls face and that a deeper analysis of the barriers may help to inform a more tailored response. Additionally, there were suggestions to improve Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) programming and ensure this is integrated alongside other girls empowerment and life skills activities.** Importantly, they touched on the importance of considering the multidimensional nature of the marginalisation of groups of girls and children with disability and the unique challenges that they might be facing.

ADRA Ethiopia staff noted a significant change in community attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities. Continuous awareness raising on inclusive education and the rights of children with disabilities has resulted in a significant change in community attitudes which has supported the enrolment and participation of children with disabilities in school. This is supported by head teachers, 94 percent of whom think the SEAQE 2 program has helped change behaviours and attitudes towards children with disabilities. Like suggestions provided by ADRA Ethiopia staff and partners, further improvements could be made to improve the enrolment of children with disabilities. **The availability of assistive devices, improving the early detection and screening of children with disabilities, strengthening partnerships with referral agencies and providing training that is more tailored to specific disabilities are areas of support.**

3.5.2 Outcome 2 (inclusive and safe learning environments)

This outcome is focused on establishing safe, inclusive and healthy learning environments for students and covers gender sensitive infrastructure (classrooms, electricity, toilets, and safe drinking water), inclusive policies and linkages to health and protective services.

At baseline, the schools in Ethiopia required assistance with purchasing reference books and information technology equipment (e.g., computers and electricity generators). Half the schools did not have sufficient water supply and electricity and one in three schools needed refurbishment of some classrooms due to damage and cracks in the walls. Some schools required new classrooms. As far as sanitation facilities were concerned, most schools had latrines with no running water and no locks, the supply of soap was also not seen anywhere. These latrines were dark due to a lack of electricity supply.

In 2019, planning for construction of two schools and a new classroom block in each of the 4 TVET centres where accounting, secretary skills and Information Communication Technology (ICT) were to be taught was undertaken. Construction began in the TVET centres but not in the schools as approvals were not granted until November of that year. Plans were also finalised for toilet construction and water installation, scheduled for completion in 2020. In 2020, however, funding cuts assured, and schools were not able to improve basic infrastructure and other necessary facilities, including toilet construction and WASH facilities as planned. This triggered a shift toward mobilising the community to contribute resources. Construction efforts were also hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic with delays due to shortages in construction materials. By the end of 2020, over 50 percent of the planned construction had been completed and by the end of 2021, 100 percent of the planned construction was achieved. The 4 TVET centres were also provided with computers (26 each) to support ICT training and e-learning.

On 22 September 2021, the 4 TVET centres were handed over to the Ethiopian government in an official ceremony attended by key government stakeholders, local authorities, community members and the media. Government officials recognised the SEAQE 2 project's support for girls education, reflected on the sustainability of the project, committed to replicating the good practices established by the project and awarded ADRA and the SEAQE 2 project a Certificate of Appreciation.

Improvements to school infrastructure, including classroom construction, WASH facilities and electricity supply, at two schools was ongoing throughout 2021. By the end of 2021, construction activities were 74 percent completed at Shalla Billa preparatory school and 71 percent completed at Suro secondary school. District authorities have been conducting quarterly monitoring of construction activities and construction activities are due to be completed by the end of March 2022.

In Ethiopia, the project trained 81 (10 f; 71 m) school and TVET community members in 2019 about Child Protection (CP) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This aimed to sensitise stakeholders prior to developing the codes of conduct. In 2020, the child protection policy and supplementary codes of conduct were signed off and distributed to all target schools and TVET centres. In 2021, 33 education personal (5 f; 28 m) and 36 PTA/SMC members (9 f; 27 m) from schools and TVET centres were provided with CP policy and practice training, which included training on the code of conduct and reporting and referral mechanisms.

The referral mechanism was activated in 2020, and a total of 25 students have received support for health, protection and guidance and counselling. This represents only 17 percent against the cumulative 2021 target of 150 referrals. These incidents were reported to the school principals who referred the cases to Women and Children Affairs and then to the police and court where appropriate. The incidents included stress, rape, abortion, abduction, forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and violence. It was noted in the 2020 annual report that strengthening of the referral system and child protection will continue to be a strong focus of the program in Ethiopia. In 2021, counselling and guidance training was provided to 23 councillors and education personnel (9 f; 14 m) and 18 (7 f; 11 m) child protection stakeholders, including representatives from child and women affairs, police and health officers, were engaged to strengthen child protection referral and case management services.

The MTR findings supported much of what was shared in the annual reports. According to headteachers, only a few schools had managed to build disability inclusive toilets and WASH facilities and it was not perceived to influence the promotion of disability inclusion. This is explained by the funding challenges in 2020 and delays experienced due to the pandemic.

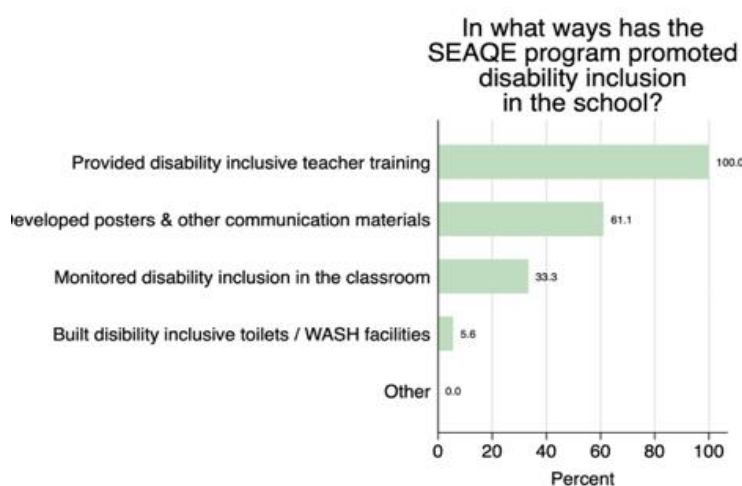


Figure 1: Ways that the SEAQE program has promoted disability inclusion

Most head teachers (83 percent) reported that SEAQE 2 program interventions have created some positive improvements in disability inclusion within their schools and 94 percent of head teachers think this has improved teaching practices and 89 percent of head teachers think this has helped improve the learning outcomes of children with disabilities. Eighty one percent of teachers reported having received training in disability inclusion and 86 percent of teachers reported this has led to some change in their inclusive teaching practices. However, there is room for improvement, with 17 percent of head teachers reporting that there was only a little change to disability inclusion within their schools. **Head teachers had suggestions for improving disability inclusion, including upgrading WASH facilities, classrooms and the school compound to be more disability inclusive and providing**

additional training and a specialist inclusive education teacher and teaching and learning materials.

Concerningly, the majority (78 percent) of head teachers and teachers (89 percent) did not think that children with disabilities face safety risks in the community or at school. However, according to 40 percent of head teachers, domestic violence prevented children with disabilities from accessing distance learning. Of the teachers (11 percent) that reported safety concerns for children with disabilities at school, shaming (50 percent), discrimination (50 percent), violence (25 percent) and bullying and harassment (25 percent) were all reported.

3.5.3 Outcome 3 (teaching)

This outcome is focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and aims to strengthen school governance structures and systems, improve teacher capacity and practice, provide effective and relevant teaching and learning materials and more relevant knowledge, attitudes, values and life skills for learners.

At baseline, gender differences were visible in teacher numbers with only 11 percent of teachers being female. It was noted that this was due to male teachers tending to teach in the higher grades in secondary schools and is a legacy of traditional gender roles.

According to headteachers, teachers in all 18 SEAQE 2 schools have been trained in disability inclusion and a third of schools are monitoring disability inclusion in the classroom. Similarly, SEAQE 2 has invested in strengthening gender inclusion within supported schools. **Eighty three percent of teachers reported having received training in gender inclusion and 75 percent of teachers reported that this has led to some improvement in their gender inclusive teaching practices. The provision of menstrual hygiene packs, girls clubs, monitoring gender inclusion in the classroom and girl education campaigns were implemented by over 50 percent of schools.** Head teachers reported that this has created some positive improvements in gender inclusive teaching practices, has led to improved learning outcomes for girls and has helped change attitudes and behaviours towards girls education.

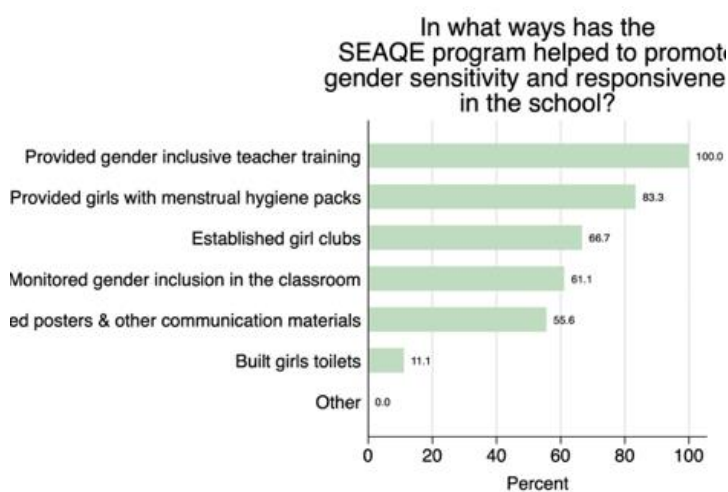


Figure 2: Ways that the SEAQE program has promoted gender sensitivity and responsiveness in the school.

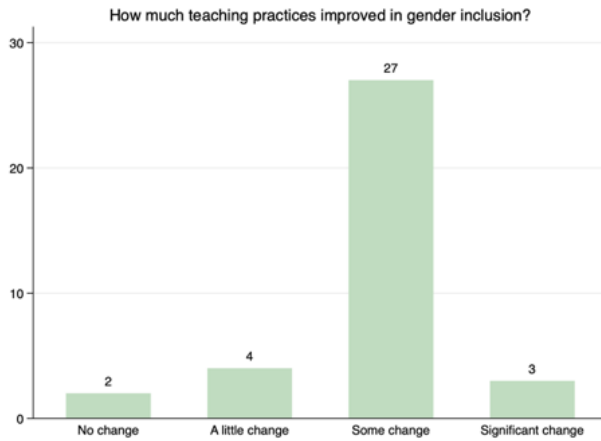


Figure 3: The extent to which gender inclusive teaching practices have changed as reported by teachers.

While teachers identified a lack of budget (61 percent) and no resources to help their students (47 percent) as their main challenges during Covid-19 school closures, 75 percent of teachers were able to provide some resources to their students. However, only 39 percent of teachers were able to support small tutorial sessions for their students and only one in four were able to conduct occasional home visits.

Only 3 out of 18 head teachers reported E-learning being introduced by the SEAQE 2 program at their school. **In the limited number of schools where E-learning was introduced, head teachers reported that it had a positive impact on the quality of education as children were more interested in learning and it improved children’s digital literacy skills.** According to teachers, E-learning helped improve student access to learning materials and student engagement and led to improved learning outcomes.

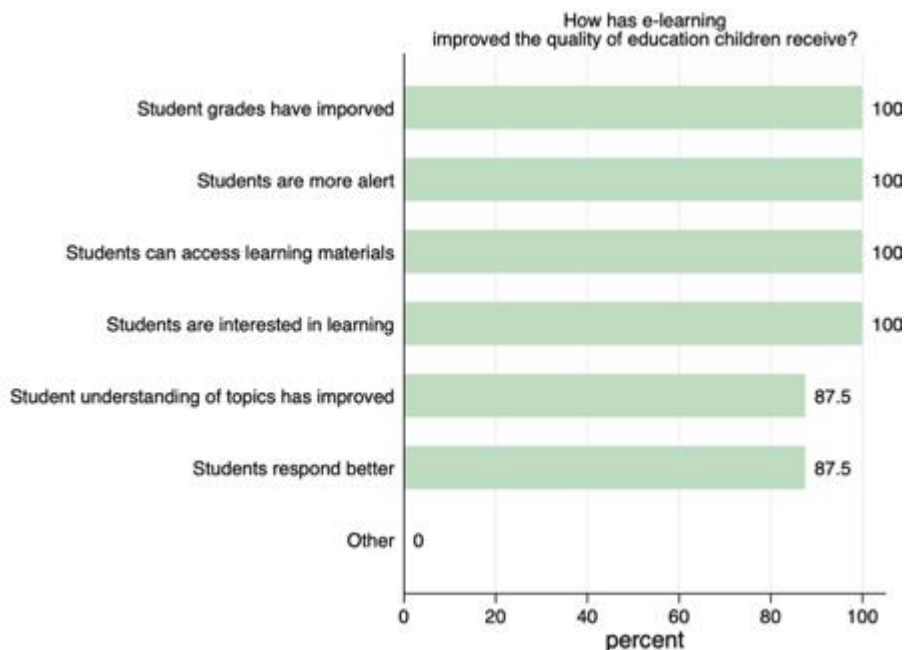


Figure 4: Impact of e-learning on quality education as reported by teachers.

A lack of electricity and poor internet connection was identified by 100 percent of teachers as a barrier to children’s access to E-learning opportunities.

Overall, the majority (56 percent) of teachers thought that the SEAQE 2 project was effective in promoting students' safe return to school while 44 percent of teachers thought the project was somewhat effective.

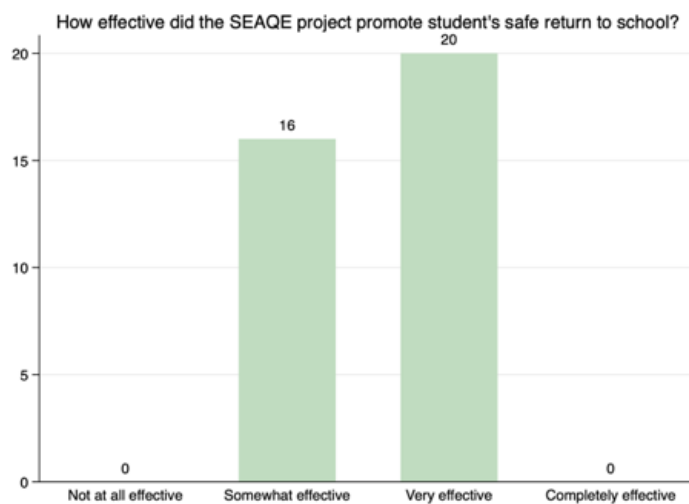


Figure 5: The effectiveness of the SEAQE project in promoting students' safe return to school according to teachers.

Results were similar in relation to how effectively the project prepared teachers for a safe reopening, with 58 percent of teachers reporting the project was highly effective and 42 percent reporting that the project was somewhat effective in preparing teachers for a safe reopening.

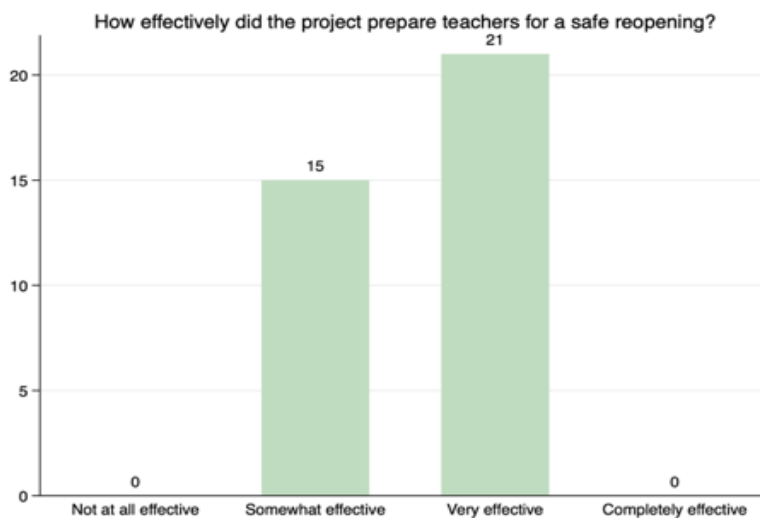


Figure 6: The effectiveness of the SEAQE project in preparing teachers for a safe reopening according to teachers.

Despite efforts to prepare schools and teachers for a safe reopening of schools, 61 percent of PTA members reported that their child did not feel safe to return to school when schools reopened. **Most SMC members (61 percent) and PTA members (61 percent) thought that the project was somewhat effective in engaging parents to promote children's return to school and in preparing students for returning to school safely (67 percent).**

Most PTA members (89 percent) thought that more frequent parent - teacher meetings, more feedback on their child's performance (72 percent) and more events

showcasing student achievement and performance would strengthen parental engagement in school.

SMCs were highly active in supporting a safe return to school. According to SMC members, they were particularly active in the return to school campaign, helping communicate and monitor Covid-19 guidelines and helping to distribute Covid-19 hygiene and PPE.

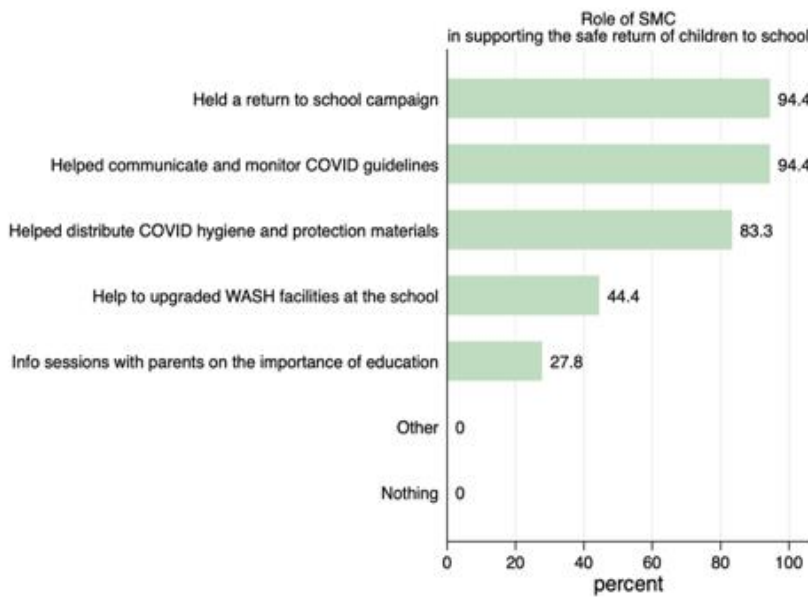


Figure 7: Role of SMC in supporting the safe return of children to school as reported by SMC members.

SMC members had a raft of suggestions for how SEAQE 2 could help improve SMC management in the next two years. **Most SMC members would like training and support on how to support the education of girls and children with disabilities as well as training on financial management, leadership and governance.**

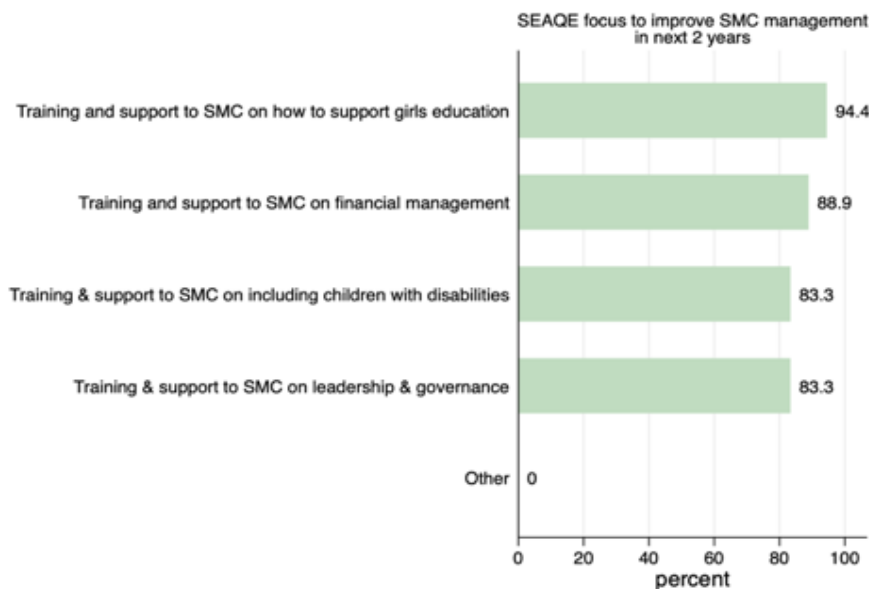


Figure 8: Suggested improvements in SMC management in the next two years according to SMC members.

ADRA supported teacher training both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic through the provision of in-service teacher training, support for mentoring and coaching sessions and peer

learning. One in five head teachers and teachers reported that training through teacher training institutes was a training strategy employed at their schools both before and during Covid-19. **Forty four percent of teachers identified training through the teacher training institutes as most valuable to their professional development.**

During Covid-19, ADRA expanded support for teacher training to include distance learning and online training. **However, many teachers did not consider distance learning and online learning valuable, with 44 percent of teachers identifying distance learning and 33 percent of teachers identifying online training as the least valuable to their professional development.**

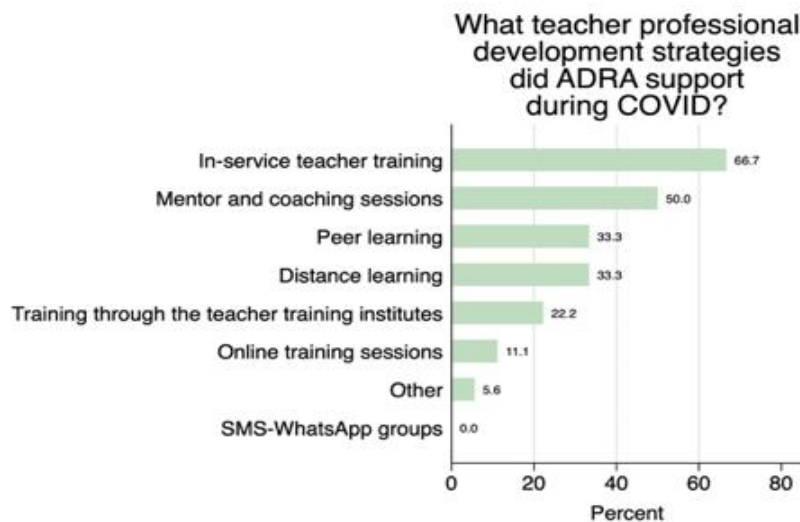


Figure 9: Teacher professional development strategies which ADRA supported during COVID-19.

The mentoring program was considered highly effective by 56 percent of head teachers and somewhat effective by 44 percent of head teachers. **61 percent of teachers identified mentoring and coaching and peer learning as the professional development activities they found most valuable.**

Overall, most head teachers (78 percent) thought that the quality of the teacher professional development program was average, and 22 percent thought it was above average. Head teachers rated the quality of teacher professional development materials similarly, with 72 percent rating the quality of materials as average and 28 percent as above average. Subject specific training, follow up to support teachers to put training into practice and higher-level training were suggestions made by head teachers to improve the teacher professional development program. Teachers also reiterated these suggestions.

Support for teachers' social and emotional wellbeing may not have gotten the attention it deserved, with one in five (or 20 percent) of head teachers and teachers reported that no extra activities have been done to support the social and emotional wellbeing of teachers. Those schools that have provided support for teacher's social and emotional wellbeing have done so through setting up teacher support / learning circles (head teachers: 67 percent; teachers: 61 percent) and offering sessions with a school councillor (head teachers: 50 percent; teachers: 39 percent). Teachers also reported being provided with more teaching and learning materials (56 percent), a teacher wellbeing pack (44 percent) and teaching assistance (33 percent). **When asked what support should be provided for teachers' social emotional wellbeing, 100 percent of head teachers and 97 percent of teachers thought that setting up teacher support / learning circles and offering sessions with a school councillor (head**

teachers: 89 percent; teachers: 61 percent) should be provided. 86 percent of teachers also thought that more teaching and learning resources were needed and a third of teachers (33 percent) identified the need for an additional support payment. **SMC members thought that advocacy to increase teacher salaries and benefits (44 percent) and to improve housing for teachers (39 percent) should be a focus for the SEAQE 2 program in the next two years to improve teacher wellbeing.**

3.5.4 Outcome 4 (parent, community and other stakeholder engagement)

This outcome is focused on improving the engagement of learners, parents and communities to strengthen schools and children’s learning and development. This outcome includes efforts to strengthen partnerships between TVET centres and the private sector to improve the TVET sector.

Indicator 4.2.1.a: Number of parents (f/m) of learners in supported learning institutions participating in positive parenting training

COUNTRIES	2019 TARGET	2019 ACTUAL	2020 TARGET	2020 ACTUAL	2021 TARGET	2021 ACTUAL
Ethiopia	80 (40 f; 40 m)	0	160 (80 f; 80 m)	90 (20 f; 70m)	240 (120 f; 120 m)	129 (28 f; 101 m)

Due to delays in project approvals, activities related to this indicator did not take place in 2019. This was also the case for the indicator related to parents participation in family strengthening activities. In 2020/21, a total of 129 parents participated in positive parenting training, representing 54 percent of the cumulative target for 2021. The lower than expected achievement was attributed to budget constraints. Parents were selected if they were perceived to be positive role models and influential in engaging other parents. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions on gatherings, activities related to family strengthening did not progress.

Indicator 4.4.1: Number of collaborations between the private sector and supported educational authorities/institutions established with the purpose of bringing private skills and expertise to the vocational training sector (Norad indicator 3.1.5)

COUNTRIES	2019 TARGET	2019 ACTUAL	2020 TARGET	2020 ACTUAL	2021 TARGET	2021 ACTUAL
Ethiopia	0	4	1	31	2	27

In 2019, each target TVET centre established partnership agreements with 4 parastatal companies (which are industry groups that have some political authority and indirectly serve the state). Internship activities did not commence in 2019, as the project focused on start-up activities and exploring potential partnerships with the private sector.

In 2020, ADRA Ethiopia was able to support TVET institutions to establish new partnerships with private companies and charitable organizations. A total of 31 small, medium and large private sector enterprises signed a Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the TVET centres focused on training provision. The objectives of these partnerships were to provide trainees and trainers with experiences in technology transfer, technical expertise and KAIZEN application and entrepreneurship. In addition, TVET centres collaborated with their new partners to exchange resources and facilitate internships and placements for trainings. In 2021, 27 collaborations were established/ renewed between private companies / charitable organisations and the 4 SEAQE 2 supported TVET centres in support of TVET training and internship opportunities. A total of 288 (151 f; 137 m) TVET trainees and 8 training living with a disability (5 f; 3 m) undertook internships in 2021, an achievement of 296 percent against the 2021 target (100).

Head teachers have recognised this work, most (87.5 percent) of whom report that ADRA has supported them to engage with the business community. It was noted that this helped the practical trainings offered and created opportunities for internships.

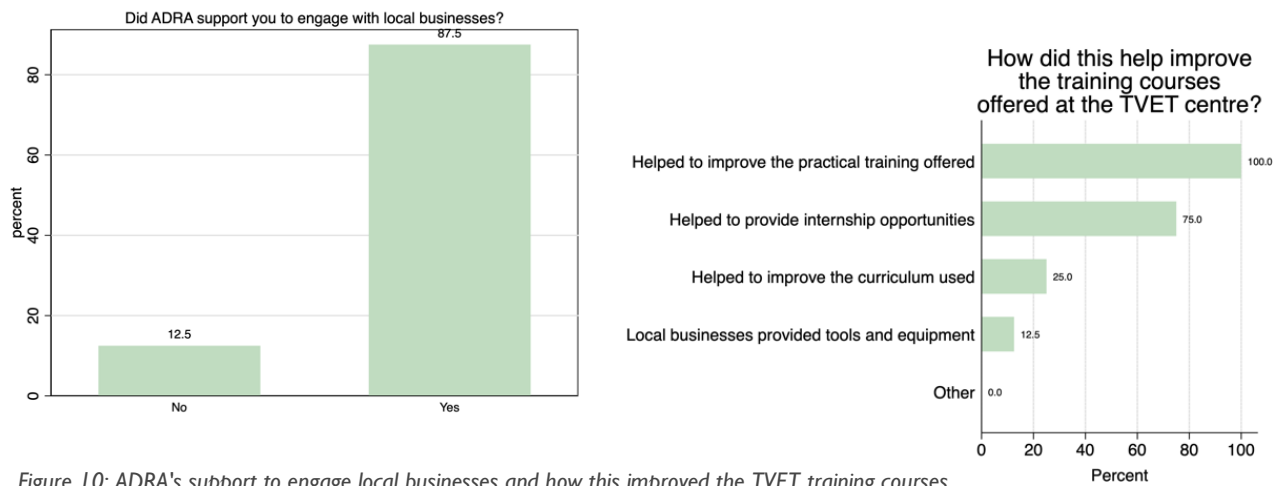


Figure 10: ADRA's support to engage local businesses and how this improved the TVET training courses.

Regarding Covid-19 and return to school activities, parents felt they were effectively engaged to support children's safe return to school, with most (61 percent) reporting engagement was effective and over one in three (38 percent) reporting engagement was highly effective.

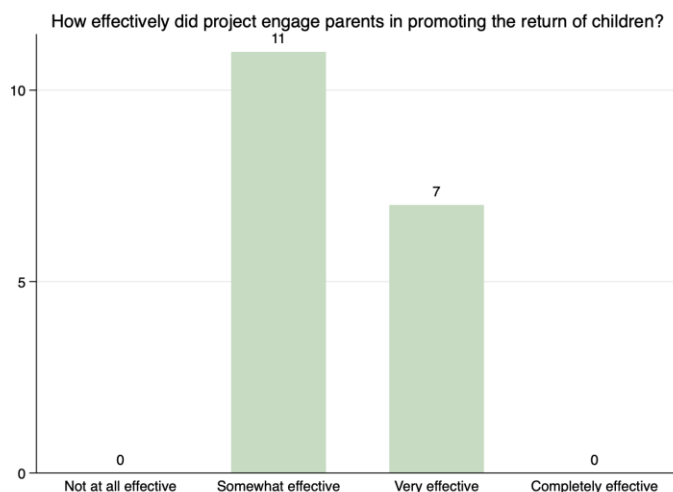


Figure 11: The effectiveness of parents engagement in promoting the return of children to school according to teachers.

Parents felt that engagement could be improved by more frequent discussions with teachers and more information about their child's learning progress. Over 66 percent felt that it would be wonderful if there were more events showcasing student achievement and performance.

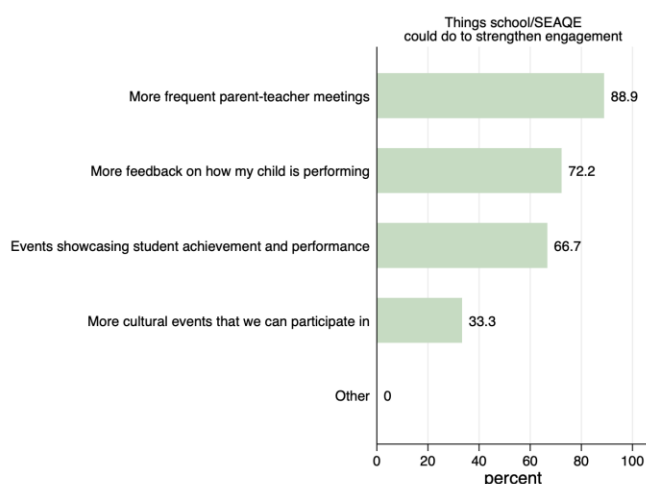


Figure 12: Things that the school/SEAQE 2 could do to strengthen engagement according to teachers.

3.5.5 Outcome 5 (civil society influence & policy change)

This outcome is focused on strengthening civil society influence on education policy and practice through improved capacity to track, monitor and advocate for inclusive education and the education rights of children who experience marginalisation. This outcome focuses on strengthening civil society fora and networks to support dialogue more effectively between civil society and governments.

In 2019, limited activities were conducted under this outcome. In 2020, focus was on two CSOs, Biftu Bira Youth and Reproductive Health Association and Girar Bet Tehadiso Mahber, that have advocated for inclusive education and support children with disabilities in medical, material and awareness creation services. Girar Bet Tehadiso Mahber provides services for children with disabilities. These include identifying disabled children who need further treatment or need to undergo medical treatment as well as providing medication, mobility materials, eyeglasses, hearing aids, etc. The result of these partnerships has enabled an increase in the enrolment of children with disabilities and girls, as well as increased retention and motivation in students attending school.

In 2021, civil society engagement was expanded to five agencies (3 CSOs and 2 INGOs) and a capacity assessment using the Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) was conducted. Capacity assessments were encouraging with partner agencies demonstrating strong technical and organisational capacity to monitor, lead and advocate for improvements to inclusive education. OCAT assessment results have informed partner capacity building plans for 2022 and will enable the tracking of progress against **Indicator 5.1.2: Number of local civil society organisations that demonstrate better technical and organisational capacities to monitor, lead on and advocate for improved education for groups who experience marginalisation.**

One civil society fora and network was created in 2020 and six fora / networks were created in 2021, with members from six CSOs including: Food for Hunger (FH), Girar Be Tehadiso Mahber, Cheshire Service Ethiopia, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Ethiopian Centre for Disability and Development (ECDD) and Biftu Bira Youth and Reproductive Health Association. The aim of these networks is to deliver on the SEAQE 2 policy change agenda through greater cooperation and collaboration among CSOs and between CSOs and government authorities. To this end, CSO representatives participated in two partnership and networking meetings / trainings in 2021 designed to strengthen SEAQE 2 project partnerships and influence and an Inclusive Education advocacy guide

was developed, in cooperation with the Norad funded TOFI 2 project. The Inclusive Education advocacy guide has been validated and approved for implementation in Ethiopian schools.

According to the 20 partner respondents, 16 felt that SEAQE 2 was having a positive influence on policy change while 3 respondents were unsure.

3.6 IMPACT

Learning Assessments

The learning assessments are important indicators of effectiveness. Initiatives such as teacher professional development and/or an inclusive learning environment are often evaluated based on their contribution to student learning outcomes. The surveys and assessments provided the following by way of evaluation.

- More males (94.1 percent) than females (89.2 percent) love coming to school.
- Male and female students had positive associations with school.
- More female students (74.2 percent) than male students (68.4 percent) feel that their teacher is good at helping them learn and understand the lessons.
- Most male (96.8 percent) and female students (97.8 percent) reported feeling safe at school and not witnessing any corporal punishment.

Overwhelmingly, students had a positive association with their school and their teacher. This was also a finding in the baseline and indicates that barriers to learning and education continuity may not be school based.

Overall

For TVET

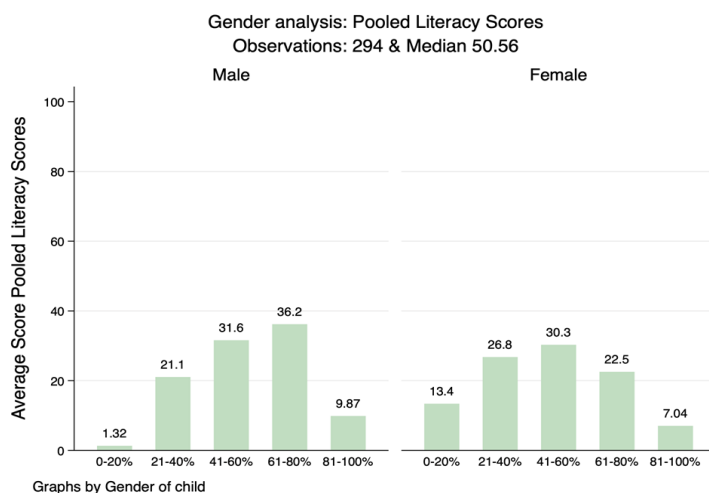


Figure 13: Pooled literacy scores for TVET students by gender

When pooled, male students performed better than female students in TVET literacy and numeracy assessments. Compared to Year 10 females, TVET females performed slightly better with more (30.3 percent) able to score between 41 - 60 percent for the pooled assessment score. Almost one in ten female students performed above 80 percent in the pooled assessment only slightly lower than males

(9.87 percent). Most males scored between 61- 80 percent in their pooled scores. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

For Year 10

When pooled, male students performed better than female students in Year 10 literacy and numeracy assessments. Almost one in three females scored below 20 percent overall compared to just over one in ten males. Most males scored between 41-60 percent whereas most females scored between 21 - 40 percent. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

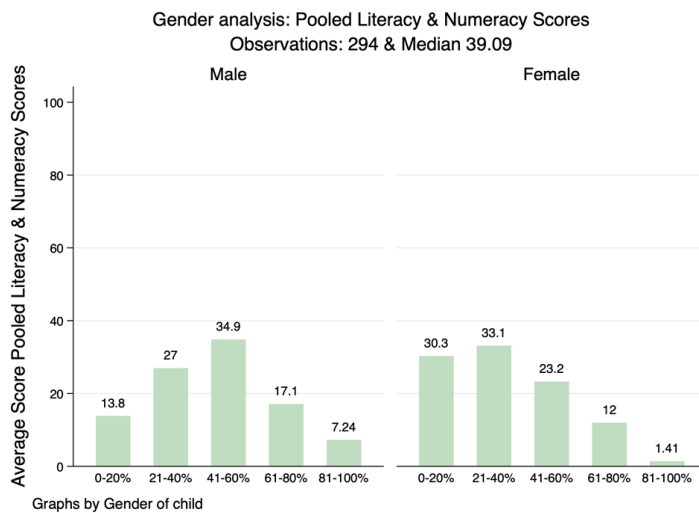


Figure 14: Pooled literacy and numeracy scores for Grade 10 students by gender

Literacy - TVET students

Overall

The average score obtained in the literacy assessment was 64 percent, almost double the score obtained in the numeracy assessment discussed below. Scores were more comparable in literacy than they were in maths where the differences between male and female scores were starker. Fifty percent of female students obtained a score between 61 - 80 percent compared to 54 percent of males. One in five males were able to obtain an overall score above 80 percent compared with only one in twenty females. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$.

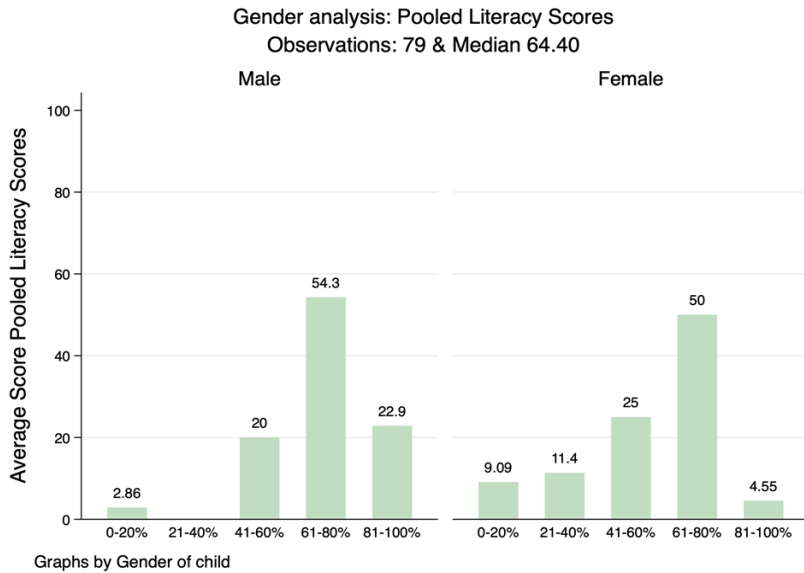


Figure 15: Pooled literacy scores for TVET students by gender.

Word knowledge

In this task, students were required to read 10 words provided that were selected considering national curriculum standards. Scores are counted based on the number of words pronounced correctly. The maximum score for this subtest was 10.

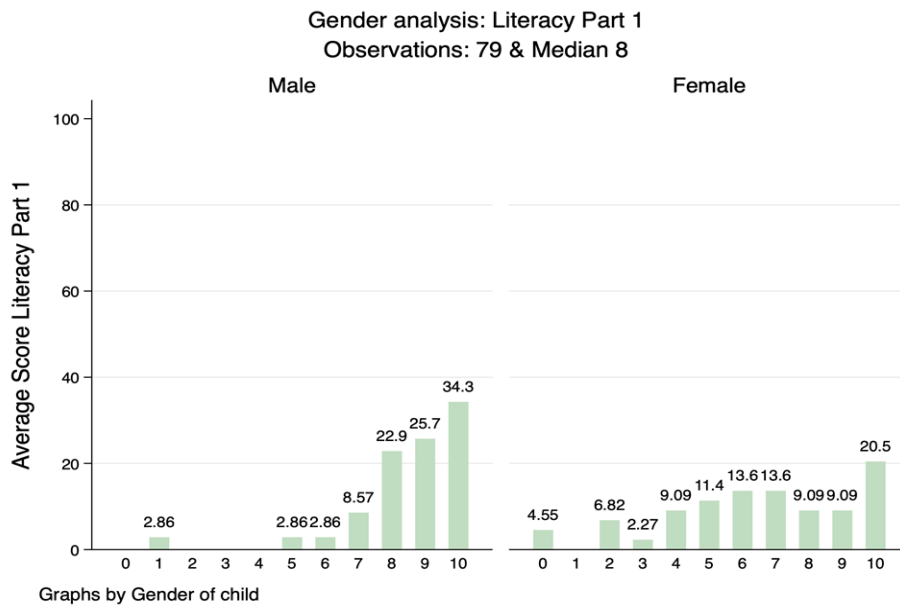


Figure 16: Word knowledge subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

Males students performed well in this subtest with most students answering 8 or more words correctly. Female students differed and results were variable across the cohort. While one in five female students were able to pronounce all the words correctly, one in three pronounced five or less words correctly. Indeed, one in 20 female students could not read one word from the list provided. This result is statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$.

Reading

In this task, students were required to read a passage about tigers and elephants. There were 62 words to be read in this passage.

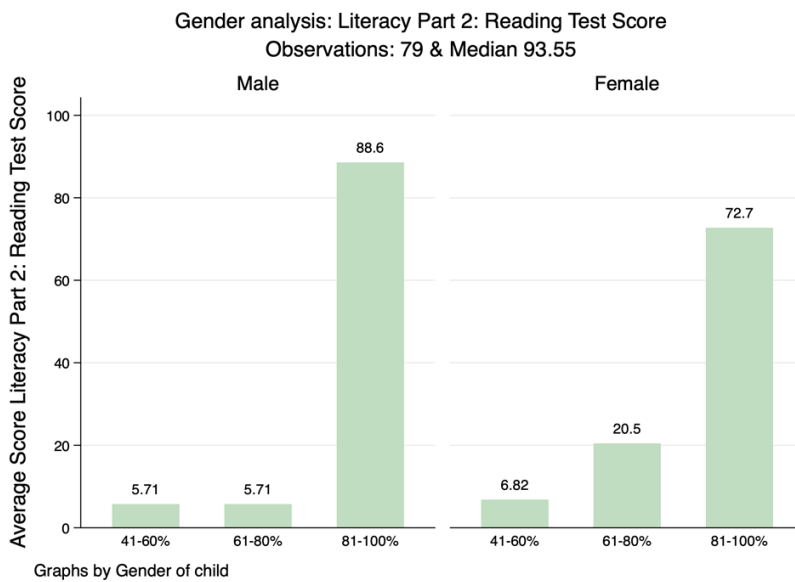


Figure 17: Reading subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

Overall, 15 percent of students were able to read the passage without error, obtaining the maximum score available (100 percent) for this subtask. Almost 90 percent of male students read the passage with fluency scoring above 80 percent on the subtest. Whilst not as high as males, almost three quarters of females scored above 80 percent on the subtest.

Reading comprehension

Following the reading passage, students were asked four comprehension questions that were a mix of factual, inference and evaluative questions.

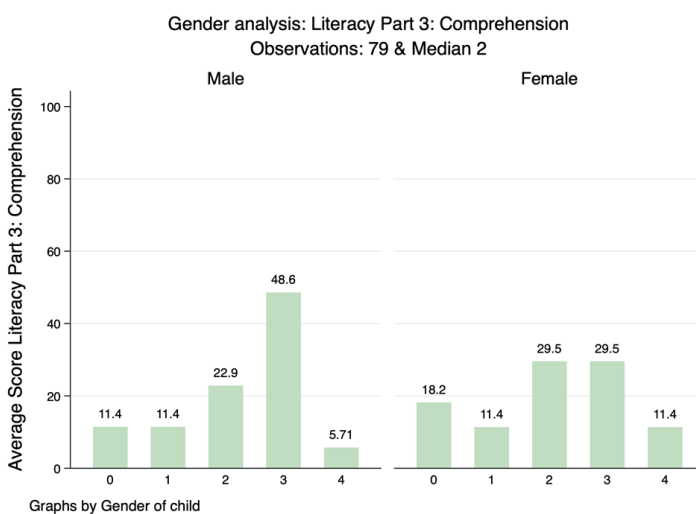


Figure 18: Reading comprehension subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

Students scored on average 2 out of the 4 questions correctly. Almost half the male students were able to answer 3 questions compared to less than one in three girls. Interestingly, more females

(11.4 percent) than males (5.7 percent) answered all four questions correctly. It suggests that whilst female students may not be as fluent as male students, many are able to comprehend what they have read. Still, almost one in five struggled to comprehend the text.

Listening comprehension

In this task, students were required to listen to a text which described wind energy and then answer four questions based on the text.

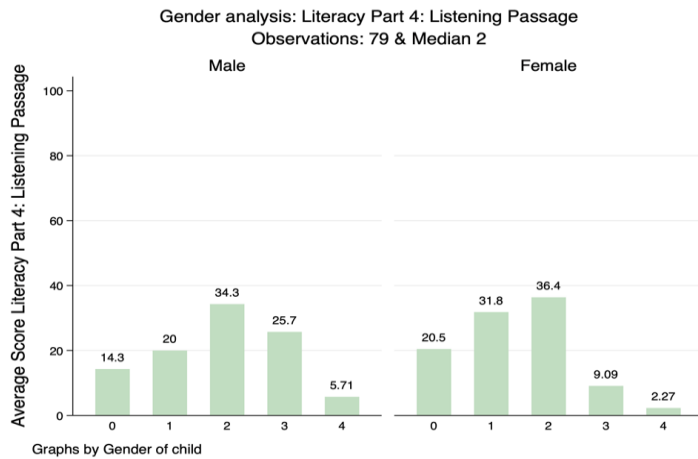


Figure 19: Listening subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

In this subtest, results between male and female students were a little similar with students scoring an average of 2 out of 4 questions. One in four male students answered 3 out of 4 questions correctly compared to only one in ten female students.

Numeracy TVET students

Overall

The average score obtained in the numeracy assessment was 33 percent. Female students were more likely to obtain lower scores with over 50 percent of females scoring 0-20% on the four subtests. There were no females that scored above 80 percent and only one in 10 scoring between 61- 80 percent. Most male students scored above 50% on the four subtests and almost one in ten obtained a score above 80 percent. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.01$.

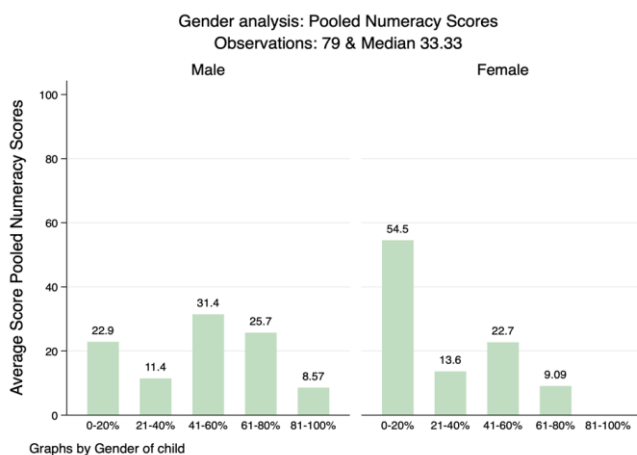


Figure 20: Pooled numeracy scores for TVET students by gender.

Understanding of operations

In this assessment, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. The equations were a mix of decimal number multiplication and division and fraction subtraction and multiplication. A functional understanding of operations would be required to answer these questions.

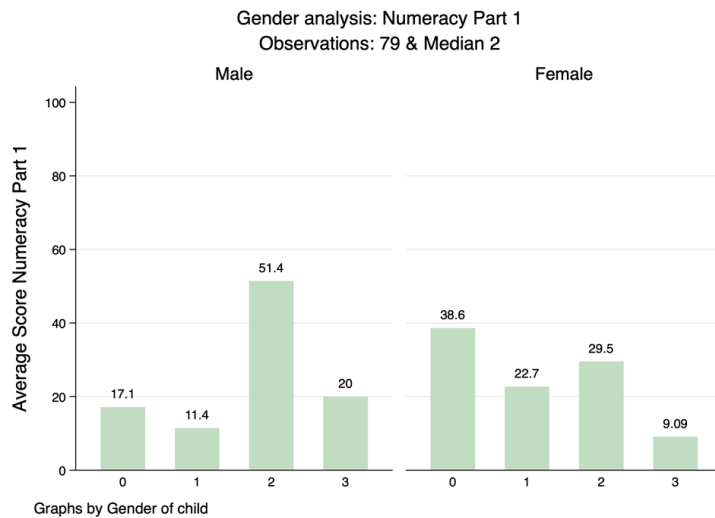


Figure 21: Understanding operations subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

As shown in the figure, more female students (38.6 percent) than male students (17.1 percent) were not able to answer any questions correctly and more female students (22.7 percent) than male students (11.4 percent) were able to answer one question correctly. Male students performed well in this subtask answering on average 2 out of 3 of the questions correctly. Indeed, 20 percent of male students answered 3 questions correctly, which was the maximum score, compared to only 9 percent of female students. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.01$.

Word problems

Like the previous sub-test, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. The questions required students to undertake calculations of cost, time, distance and probability based on word problems. To solve the problem, students would have needed to create equations based on the information provided in the sentences.

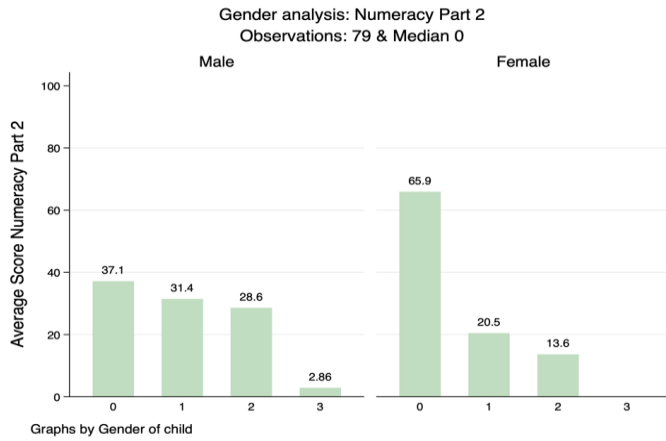


Figure 22: Word problem subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

Overall students found this subtask difficult with 65.9 percent of female students and 37.1 percent of male students unable to answer any of the four questions provided. A small proportion (13.6 percent) of female students were able to answer 2 questions correctly compared to male students (28.6 percent). The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$. Several reasons to explain the challenges faced by students are worth exploring further. Due to the requirement for reading, the students may have struggled to understand the text and therefore were not able to translate the text into equations to solve. They may lack experience with this form of mathematics. The students that undertook this assessment were TVET students, having left formal school at an early age. It is likely that they may not have been exposed to some of the foundational skills required to solve word problems.

Simple linear equations

Like previous sub-tests, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. In all questions, students needed to identify the number x in each of the equations. Knowledge of basic operations and linear expressions was required.

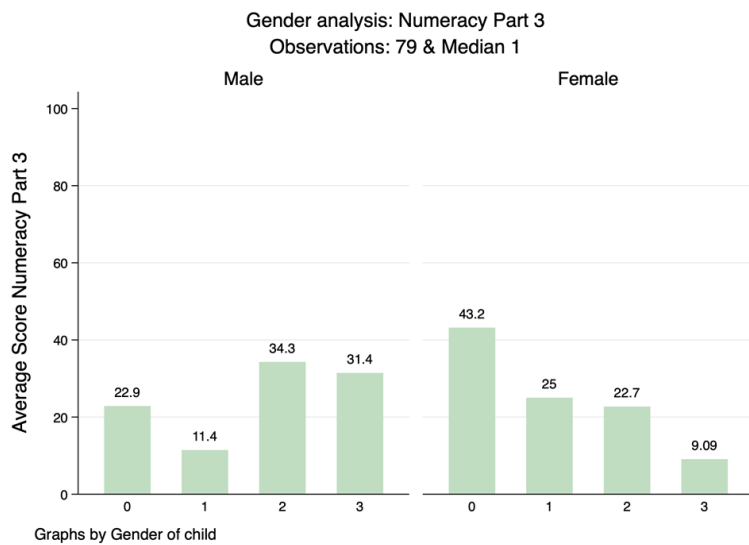


Figure 23: Simple linear expression subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

Students performed better in this subtest and while female students scored lower than male students, almost 60 percent were able to answer at least one question. Male students understood

the requirements of this subtest with 65 percent able to answer two or three questions correctly. It shows that male students have a stronger concept of linear equations than female students. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$. It is probable that some of the vocational skills they are exposed to use formulations like linear equations such as in building and construction. It is unclear why 43.2 percent of females struggle with this subtest and their prior education experiences may be related.

Data representation

Like previous subtests, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. In this subtest, students are required to interpret the pie graph and answer questions about portions of whole numbers.

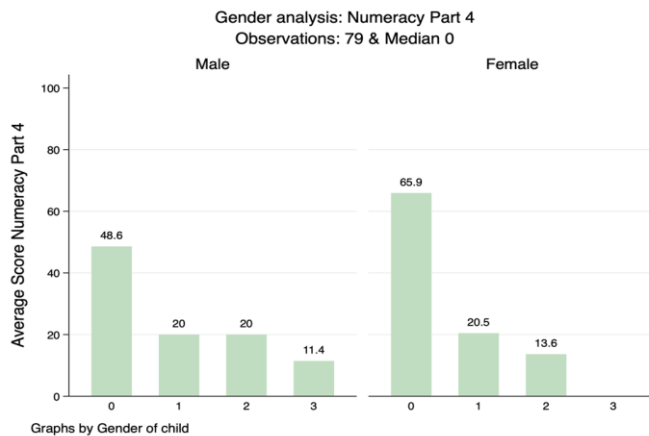


Figure 24: Data representation subtest scores for TVET students by gender.

A similar spread of results in this subtest to Part 2 where many students (65.9 percent females and 48.6 percent male students) were unable to answer the questions which required them to interpret the graph. It is evident that data representation and interpretation is unfamiliar to females and many males, although 11.4 percent of males were able to answer all the questions correctly, so evidently have prior education experiences of using graphs and understanding parts of whole numbers and proportions. Once again, the gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$.

Literacy - Grade 10 students

Overall

The average score obtained in the literacy assessment was 50.6 percent, with one in three students scoring between 61 - 80 percent. A higher percentage of male students scored between 61-80 percent and a comparable percentage (less than 10 percent) of male and female students scored above 80 percent. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

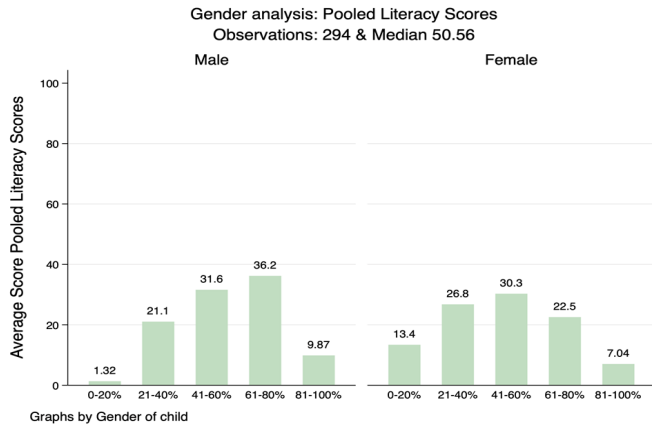


Figure 25: Pooled literacy scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

Word knowledge

In this task, students were required to read 10 words provided that were selected considering national curriculum standards. Scores are counted based on the number of words pronounced correctly. The maximum score for this subtest was 10.

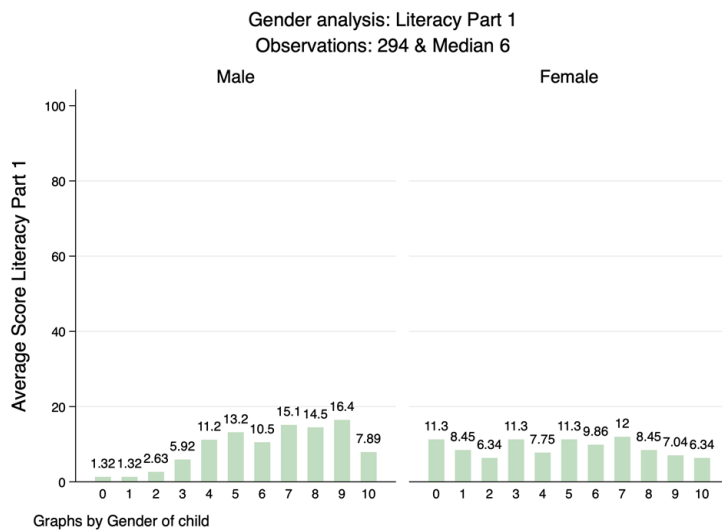


Figure 26: Word knowledge subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

There was a more even distribution of results for male and female students, especially those who were able to pronounce at least five of the words in the list. This demonstrates that the cohort had a diverse range of abilities with less distinction between male and female students although male students have performed better. There is a higher proportion of female students who have scored less than for on this subtest. This result is statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

Reading

In this task, students were required to read a passage about tigers being an endangered species under threat by poachers. There were 117 words to be read in this passage.

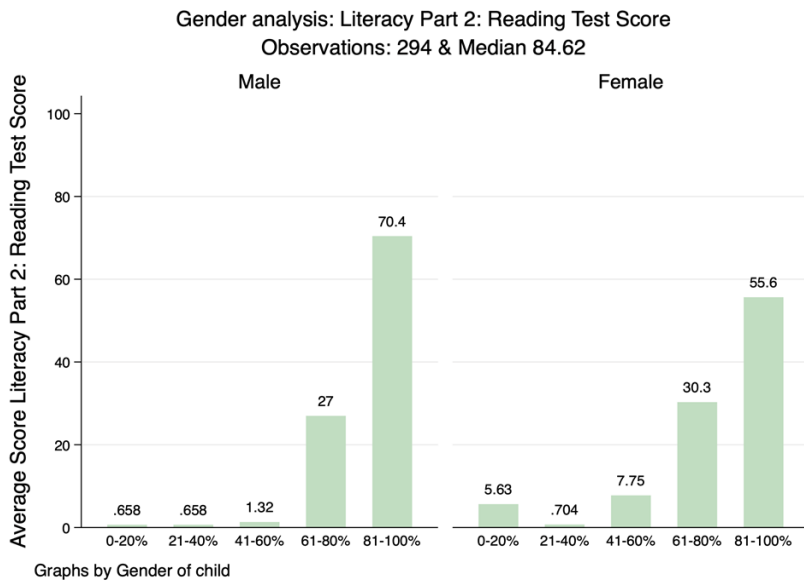


Figure 27: Reading subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

Similar to the findings for TVET students, male and female students did well in this subtest. The average score for this subtest was 84 percent with 70 percent of males and 55 percent of males obtaining above 80 percent. Only 2 percent obtained a perfect score and one in 20 female students were unable to read the passage. This result is statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

Reading comprehension

Following the reading passage, students were asked four comprehension questions that were a mix of factual, inference and evaluative questions.

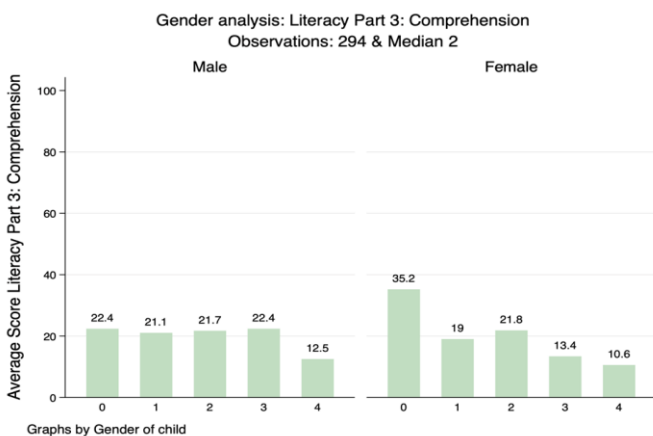


Figure 28: Reading comprehension subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

Students scored on average 2 out of the 4 questions correctly. There were however one in three students (mostly likely females) who were unable to answer any questions. We assume because they may have had trouble reading the text. The data (above) does not necessarily show this, unless we disassociate reading from comprehension and say that students may have read the text but not understood what they have read. This was more likely to be the case for female students. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$.

Listening comprehension

In this task, students were required to listen to a text which describes the third longest metro system, the London Underground, and then answer five questions based on the text they listened to.

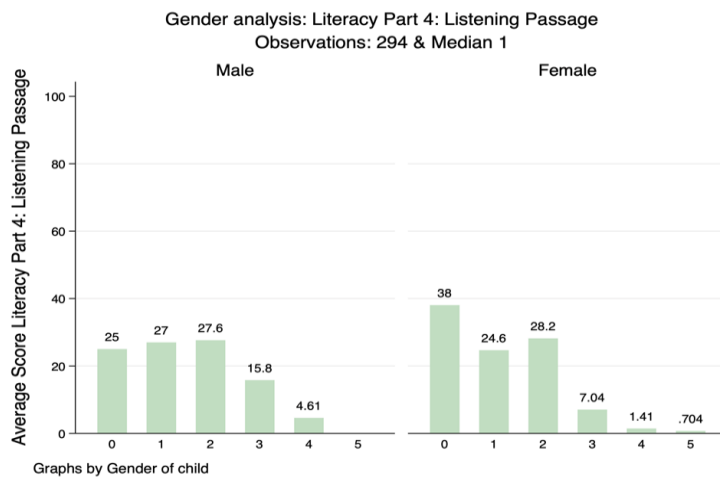


Figure 29: Listening comprehension subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

In this subtest, more female students (38 percent) than male students (25 students) were unable to answer any questions. This would suggest that these students have not understood the text that was read to them. Students on average were only able to answer 1 out of 5 questions. Very few students (20 percent males and 9 percent females) were able to answer more than three questions. This is lower than the reading comprehension task, which is a little unusual as usually students' listening comprehension skills are stronger than their reading comprehension skills as they develop these skills earlier in their lives and well before they go to school.

Numeracy Year 10 students

Overall

The average score obtained in the numeracy assessment was 25 percent which is a lower score than the TVET students obtain in their assessment. Over half of the female students scored less than 20 percent on the numeracy assessment compared to 36.8 percent of male students. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.01$.

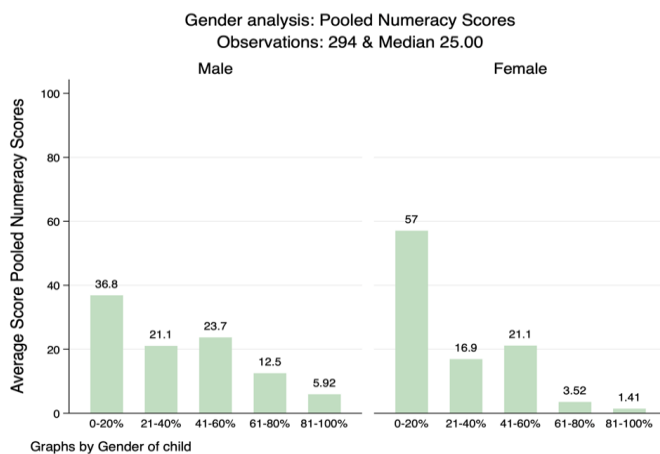


Figure 30: Pooled numeracy scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

Understanding of operations

In this assessment, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. The problems were a mix of fraction multiplication and division with brackets requiring an advanced understanding of operations.

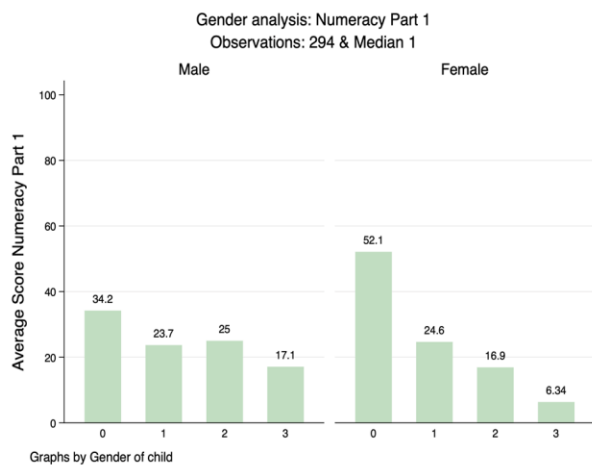


Figure 31: Understanding operations subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

In this subtest, 43 percent of students were unable to answer any of the questions, most of these students were female (52.1 percent). Whilst a high number of students struggled with complex operations, a few students, indeed 17.1 percent of male students and 6.34 percent of female students obtained the highest score for this subtest. In this cohort of students, there is significant variation in results, although the majority appear to struggle with complex operation. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

Word problems

Like the previous sub-test, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. The questions required students to undertake measurements, and a few required an understanding of circumference.

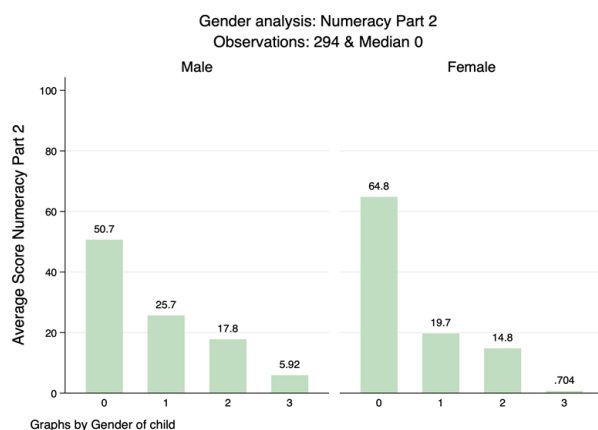


Figure 32: Word problem subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

This subtest was obviously more difficult than the previous with 57 percent of students unable to answer any of the questions provided. Similar to the previous sub-test, more females (64.8 percent) than males (50.7 percent) did not answer any questions in this subtest. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.05$. It is difficult to know whether students attempted this question or did not attempt the questions. Perhaps overwhelmed by the previous question, some

students may not have attempted the problems. Two of the questions were percentage calculations, one required knowledge of π , the other ratios. Students may not have the means or memory of some of the rules required to solve these problems.

Linear equations

Similar to previous sub-tests, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. Two of the questions, students needed to identify the number x in the equations. One required simplification and the other reorganisation. Knowledge of linear expressions was required.

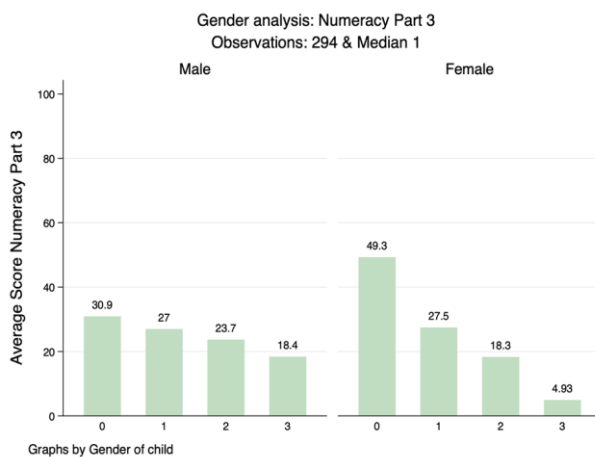


Figure 33: Linear expression subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

Students performed a little better in this subtest and while female students scored lower than male students, over a half of female students were able to answer at least one question. This compared to almost 70 percent of male students. Almost one in five male students obtained full marks for this subtest, demonstrating that male students may have a stronger concept of linear equations than female students. The gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.001$.

Data representation

Similar to previous subtests, students were required to select 3 questions from a choice of 4 to answer. In this subtest, students are required to interpret the column graph and answer questions about portions of whole numbers.

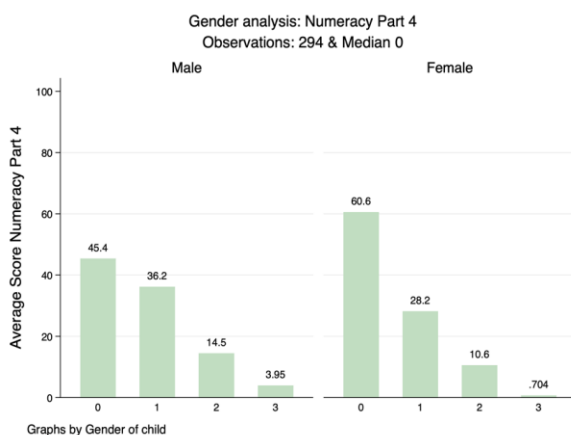


Figure 34: Data representation subtest scores for Grade 10 students by gender.

The average student did not answer any questions in this subtest. Similar to previous subtests, females struggled with this subtest with only one in three able to answer a question. Male students performed better with over 50 percent of males answering at least one question. Once again, the gender differences were statistically significant with a p value $P \leq 0.01$.

3.7 SUSTAINABILITY

In the original design document, ADRA had defined the parameters for sustainability; to increase organisational commitment, capacity at all levels, strengthened systems, and lasting knowledge assets for education. The program planned to bring about this change through capacity building activities directed at institutional, organisational and individual levels of the education system. According to the approach, this would encourage actors to work together under a common purpose and would subsequently lead to increased government commitment toward the education system, greater availability of resources from the community, private sector and donors toward education services and more effective inclusive education and TVET reforms. It was noted in the design that the strengthening of civil society would create sustainable change that could hold the government accountable for inclusive and quality education policies, practices, plans and budgets.

In the plan for Ethiopia, ADRA noted the arrangement that is already in place with the government and supported by an MoU. ADRA provides infrastructure support for school/TVET facilities, and some learning materials, while the MoE is responsible for equipping these facilities, employing more teachers and working with the community to maintain the facilities. School construction is regularly monitored by the MoE so that schools meet technical specifications and can be handed over to the MoE once completed. A key strategy is to ensure this commitment is upheld by government and community. Additionally, ADRA's partnership model for TVET with the private sector aims to strengthen the relevance of TVET training, enhance employability of TVET students and promote job creation and local economic growth.

It was envisaged that exit strategies be developed in a phased approach gradually transferring activities to community, education institutions and CSOs over the lifetime of the project. In previous projects, ADRA Norway has learned that a successful close-out requires participatory phase-out planning.

Progress regarding these strategies has been impacted by Covid-19 related project delays, although the private sector partnerships for the TVET centres is progressing well, laying a strong foundation for sustainability.

Of the 20 partner respondents, 14 (or 70 percent) either agreed or strongly agreed that they know about the program's sustainability strategy. Four respondents (or 20 percent) did not know, and one respondent disagreed with the statement. This indicates that more work needs to be done to engage partners on plans for sustainability.

Fifteen respondents (or 75 percent) either agreed or strongly agreed that the benefits of SEAQE 2 would last beyond the life of the program, while 5 either disagreed, strongly disagreed or did not know, indicating that some partners are doubtful that SEAQE 2 benefits will last. This result is similar to what was reported by head teachers. Sixteen out of 18 head teachers (or 88 percent) thought that progress made through the SEAQE 2 program would remain after the project ends. Interestingly, only 2 out of 18 head teachers have shared approaches with other schools.

Respondents thought that approaches used in Covid-19 could be used to support education for children who experience marginalisation. However, this is in contrast with most Head teachers (89 percent) who thought that the distance learning program could not be expanded to support OOSC.

There are also promising signs that the support to teacher professional development will be integrated into the government system, with 19 partner respondents noting agreement in the progress being made. Most (17 respondents) felt that the child protection mechanism established can continue without ADRA's ongoing support with three doubting this at present.

3.8 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Gender

Over a third of head teachers (36 percent) reported that children were not safe at home during school closures.

Head teachers reported that boys are at risk of child labour (39 percent), conscription into armed forced / militia groups (39 percent), domestic violence (11 percent) and security issues (6 percent) and that while no new risks have emerged because of the Covid-19 pandemic, existing risks have increased. Over 52% of children engage in child labour, and the problem is worse in rural areas.

While most teachers (81 percent) thought that boys' safety was not a concern at school, almost one in four (19 percent) thought boys faced safety concerns at school. Teachers reported that boys face violence (29 percent), shaming (14 percent) and bullying and harassment (14 percent) at school.

Head teachers reported that girls face a significant risk of GBV (39 percent), child labour (39 percent), domestic violence (28 percent), forced marriage (17 percent) and security issues (11 percent) and that while no new risks have emerged because of the Covid-19 pandemic, existing risks have increased. The SEAQE 2 project proposal outlined widespread sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in both communities and schools and girls face harassment, degrading treatment and sexual attacks on the way to or at school. Child marriage rates are high, with 2 in every 5 girls married before 18 and 1 in 5 girls married before the age of 15. Almost 1 in 5 girls give birth before the age of 18.

One in four teachers (25 percent) reported that girls face safety issues at school. Teachers reported that girls are at a significant risk of GBV (67 percent) at school and face greater risks of shaming (44 percent) and bullying and harassment (44 percent) than boys.

Children with disabilities

Children with disabilities face intersecting vulnerabilities which increase their exclusion. Disability is considered a curse so children with disabilities are generally stigmatised by families, communities, teachers and their peers.

The majority (78 percent) of head teachers and teachers (89 percent) did not think that children with disabilities face safety risks in the community or at school. However, according to 40 percent of head teachers, domestic violence prevented children with disabilities from accessing distance learning. Of the teachers (11 percent) that reported safety concerns for children with disabilities at school, shaming (50 percent), discrimination (50 percent), violence (25 percent) and bullying and harassment (25 percent) were all reported.

Child Protection

Two of the 18 SEAQE schools do not have protection mechanisms and reporting channels available according to head teachers. ADRA has supported child safeguarding and protection within schools. According to head teachers, most schools have been provided with child protection training, training on corporal punishment, information campaigns and support to develop a child safeguarding and protection policy.

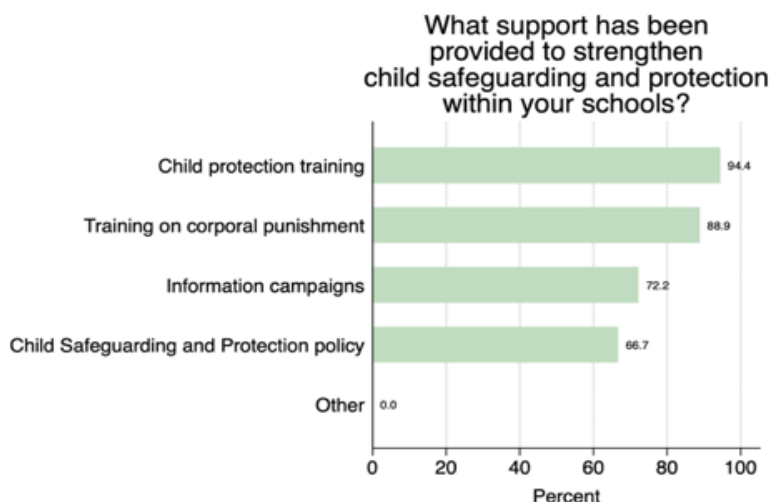


Figure 35: Support provided to strengthen child safeguarding and protection in schools.

Children within SEAQE 2 target communities and schools face a myriad of child protection risks and project interventions to strengthen child safeguarding and protection mechanisms in target schools and communities are highly relevant to the needs of children who experience marginalisation, including girls and children and disabilities.

Despite the support provided to date, almost one in five (19 percent) teachers reported that they tend to do nothing in response to safety issues and 17 percent of teachers were not sure what they could do. The typical response to safety issues by teachers was reporting to the head teacher (81 percent).

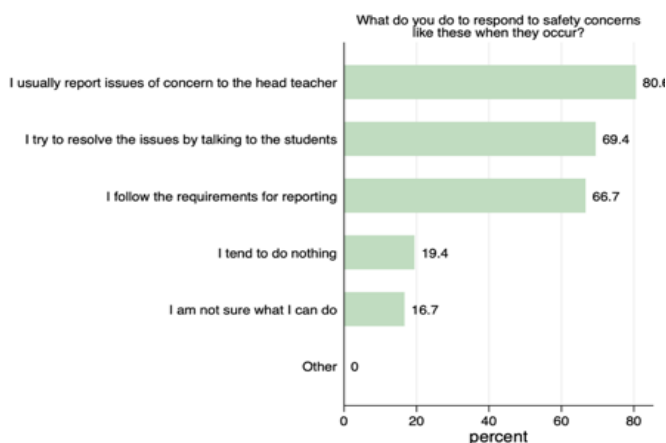


Figure 36: Responses by teachers on what they do to respond to safety concerns.

MTR respondents identified protection risks faced by boys, girls and children with disabilities in SEAQE 2 communities and schools. Within communities, child labour, conscription into armed forced / militia groups, particularly for boys, domestic violence, gender-based violence and security issues were all identified. Within schools, violence, shaming and bullying and harassment were reported as widespread issues that affected girls and children with disabilities more than boys. According to MTR respondents, protection risks have increased because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

ADRA has supported the strengthening of child safeguarding and protection systems within SEAQE 2 communities and schools. Child protection training has been provided to children teachers, SCMs/PTAs, parents/caregivers, community leaders as well as local government staff from relevant

departments. A comprehensive child protection policy and code of conduct has been developed and was agreed and signed with Head teachers and Deans of all SEAQE 2 project schools and TVET centres and is being rolled out to teachers and school communities.

Mapping and referral systems to relevant service providers have been established and are working. While referrals have not reached expected targets, cases of stress, rape, abortion, abduction, forced marriage, FGM and violence have been reported and appropriate referrals to health, psychosocial and protection agencies, including police and women and children affairs, have been made.

Despite this progress, evidence from the MTR suggests that more needs to be done, particularly concerning the safeguarding and protection of children with disabilities. While child protection reporting and referral mechanisms have been established, they appear not to be widely used yet.

Conflict sensitivity

SEAQE 2 program interventions have been conflict sensitive. ADRA Ethiopia has been responsive to local conflict dynamics and staff noted how the trust and respect they have built within SEAQE 2 communities has contributed to their safety and security. They explained how communities often warned them about armed groups in the area and/or approached armed groups about not targeting ADRA staff during times of conflict.

MTR respondents reported that the SEAQE 2 project has not affected the relationship between different groups. The vast majority of ADRA partners agreed or strongly agreed that SEAQE 2 had not caused any harm to children, schools or communities and that ADRA Ethiopia were conflict sensitive, although 2 partner staff disagreed with this statement. Unfortunately, no explanation was provided for these responses.

4 LESSONS LEARNED

- An initial focus on school construction helped communities to see tangible benefits from ADRA's support. This contributed to building respect, trust and goodwill between ADRA and the target communities, which were important precursors to community mobilisation and engagement activities.
- Creating a sense of community ownership of the schools was essential to community mobilisation efforts. A strong sense of community ownership meant that communities willingly gave land, funds and their labour.
- Communication alone may not be sufficient to address fears regarding Covid-19. Tailored strategies that are culturally, linguistically and age appropriate and ensuring the school is applying a consistent approach to addressing parents, teachers and students concerns is critical.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

I. For support to students

- a. Tailor and target support for the return to school of children who experience the most marginalisation, including children living in poverty, children who live far from school, girls and children with disabilities. This should include financial support as poverty is a significant barrier and has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- b. Whilst interventions to re-engage girls appears to have been effective, the strategies used to re-engage children with disabilities is less clear and schools still felt ill equipped to support children with disabilities. A deeper analysis of the issue preventing children from disability accessing schools needs to be undertaken to determine the most suitable intervention. Evidence suggests that a response should be 'whole school,' and involve school leaders, teachers, students, parents and disability support services. Learning from the TOFI project is encouraged to create linkages and ensure best practice is considered and applied.
- c. Further explore gender differences in learning outcomes and work with schools to map a suitable intervention that can support girls in Year 10 and younger to address their learning gaps in literacy and numeracy. Evidence suggests that high intensity tutor groups can be beneficial to address learning gaps.
- d. Continue to strengthen social and emotional learning (SEL) and psychosocial support for students, through the network of CSOs established to support inclusive education. One in five Head teachers thought that no extra activities were needed to support children's social and emotional wellbeing and about a third (30 percent) of teachers did nothing to support social and emotional wellbeing among their students. There seemed to be some activities undertaken to support SEL, as reported by teachers, which could be expanded upon, ensuring that school administration and parents are engaged in support of these activities.
- e. Continue to strengthen child safeguarding and protection within SEAQE 2 schools and communities.

II. For parents

- a. Review parent teacher meetings and work with teachers to ensure they are regularly providing feedback to parents on their child's progress.
- b. Review engagement with parents and consider expanding cultural events and ceremonies to encourage parental participation. Parents highly value this.
- c. It is evident that parents of children with disabilities may need more support to understand their role and the sources of support available within the community. Often parents of children with disabilities may feel isolated and ensuring the school community includes parents of children with disabilities is an important undertaking.

III. For teachers

- a. Teacher wellbeing is strongly associated with teacher management and support. It is likely that teachers performance is being impacted by the conditions of their employment as teachers. As well as strengthening programs to promote social emotional wellbeing of teachers, advocacy is needed to address salary concerns.
- b. Revisit the approach to teacher professional development (TPD) to identify where improvements can be made, ensuring that teacher's views are considered and strategies that have been proven to be effective in improving teaching practice, such as teacher learning circles, mentoring and coaching, are scaled up. Interestingly, teachers reported activities such as these to be the most meaningful. In a conducive environment, working with teachers to map their competencies against the teacher competency framework (TCF) and developing a program that addresses gaps should be considered.
- c. Strengthen and scale up collaboration with teacher training institutions and other providers in support of teacher professional development in SEAQE 2 target schools.

IV. For SMC

- a. Most SMC members would like training and support on how to support the education of girls and children with disabilities as well as training on financial management, leadership and governance.

V. For education authorities

- a. ADRA to provide more information about activities to ensure local authorities have a good understanding of ADRA's work. Seventy seven percent of education authorities were unaware of the work that ADRA have been undertaken.

VI. Project improvement

- a. Ensure the sustainability approaches are reviewed regularly and progress begins in developing the architecture for the exit strategy. This takes time and significant consultation with stakeholders.
- b. If resources allow, continue to invest in establishing secondary schools so that children can continue their education. This could mean expanding to adjacent districts where education access remains limited.
- c. Some partners did not feel supported by ADRA. Explore with current partners where expectations may not be met and seek to address this through a structured capacity building program.