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Concern's  
Knowledge  
Quarterly  
Review

# KNOWLEDGE MATTERS

Access, Quality and Wellbeing:  
Experiences and learning from  
Concern's Education Programmes



**CONCERN**  
worldwide

**Any contributions, ideas or topics for future issues of knowledge matters.  
Contact the editorial team on email: [knowledgematters@concern.net](mailto:knowledgematters@concern.net)**

**The views expressed are the author's and do not necessarily coincide with those of Concern Worldwide or its partners.**

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## **Knowledge Matters basics**

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**Knowledge Matters** offers practice-relevant analysis relating to the development and humanitarian work of Concern Worldwide. It provides a forum for staff and partners to exchange ideas and experiences. The publication is committed to encouraging high quality analysis in the understanding of Concern's work. Concern staff and partners document their ideas and experiences through articles. Articles are very short – 500 – 1,500 words. Usually you only have space to make two or three interesting points. Here are some tips on writing a short feature article:

- Start by imagining your audience – a Concern colleague. Why are they interested – why do they want to read what you have to say? When you identify what your most important point is, say it straight away, in the title or first sentence.
- What can others learn from your story? Focus on this. Remember to back up your story with evidence. This can be got from evaluations.
- It's easier to get people reading if you start with the human perspective – mentioning real people and real-life events. (You don't have to give names).
- Use short sentences. Use Concern's style guide to help you.
- Keep paragraphs to a maximum of six lines long.
- Use clear language. Many of the readers of Knowledge Matters are non-native English speakers, so think carefully about using idioms or colloquial language that might not be easily understood by others.
- Always avoid assuming too high a level of knowledge of the topic you are writing about, on the part of the reader.
- Use active sentences ('we held a workshop' not 'a workshop was held by us')
- Use short and clear expressions.
- Keep your title short - no more than eight words.
- Where necessary use photos to accompany the narrative but ensure that you follow the Dochas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages.

**Cover image:** Aamun (name changed to protect identity) attending class at '21st November School' which is supported by Concern Worldwide. Location: Hawlwadag District, Mogadishu, Banadir Region, Somalia. Date: Sept, 2015. Photographer: Mohamed Abdiwahab

# CONTENTS

Page

## **Brief Findings from the Education Meta Evaluation (2015 – 2017)**

*Amy Folan, Shezleen Vellani and Chris Pain*

4

## **Displaced Somali Children Benefit from Stable Education**

*Ahmed Abdulkadir Abdi*

10

## **Education Bilingue Améliorer la Qualité de l'apprentissage au Niger**

*Issoufa Halidou Moussa*

15

## **Bilingual Education Improving the Quality of Learning in Niger**

*Issoufa Halidou Moussa*

20

## **Supporting Children through the Home Learning Techniques Initiative in Lebanon**

*Shezleen Vellani*

25

## **Holistic Education Programming Supporting Syrian Children to Integrate into the Formal Education System in Turkey**

*Anna Spector and Andy Buchanan*

29

## **Supporting Children's Wellbeing in Concern's Education in Emergency Programmes**

*Amy Folan*

34

## **Safe Learning Model – Promoting Wellbeing and Quality Education in Sierra Leone**

*Anni Lehto*

38

## **From the Issue editors**

Welcome to the latest edition of Knowledge Matters, which looks at Concern's work in Education across both Development and Emergency contexts. The education programme has a technical focus on improving the lives of extremely poor children by increasing **access** to high **quality** primary education and supporting child **wellbeing**. Concern believes that all three outcomes are important to address if we want to make a positive impact in the lives of the children where we work.

There has been a shift in the countries that Concern provides education support to over the past two years. In line with the Global Education Policy and Strategy, there has been an increased focus on Education in Emergencies with the expansion of traditionally development focused programmes in countries such as Niger, Sierra Leone and Somalia to include Education in Emergency responses, and a substantial expansion in recent years of the programme in Lebanon and Turkey. Currently, Concern provides education support in 12 countries.

The issue starts with a brief summary of the main outcomes from the education meta-evaluation conducted this year and then goes on to share learning emerging from our various programmes in Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Somalia, Sierra Leone and Niger. Each of the articles presents a unique approach to how access, quality and wellbeing are being addressed in education programmes within the various contexts and shares some of the lessons learned and promising practices emerging.

In Somalia, Concern is helping communities affected by displacement find stable and sustainable solutions to accessing quality education. Niger outlines their work around bilingual literacy interventions. The Home Learning Techniques curriculum in Lebanon builds the capacity of parents to support their children at home in their learning and development. In Turkey, Concern provides Syrian children with opportunities that help them integrate into the formal education system. Turkey, Lebanon and Syria have all incorporated psychosocial support in their programmes. Finally, the Safe Learning Model (SLM) being implemented in Sierra Leone, seeks to prevent and respond to school-related gender based violence (SRGBV) and gender inequality issues that negatively affect children's learning.

We would like to thank all the contributors to this Knowledge Matters for their valuable reflections, and above all, the Concern staff, partners and communities who continue to work tirelessly to build better lives for the most vulnerable children. We hope that you enjoy learning about Concern's education programmes in some of the countries in which we work. If you would like more information on any of the projects, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

**Amy Folan and Shezleen Vellani**

# Brief Findings from the Education Meta Evaluation (2015 – 2017)



By: Amy Folan, Shezleen Vellani and Chris Pain



*School girls and teacher pictured in classroom at Concern supported school near Mogadishu, 2017, Photo Credit: Marco Gualazzini*

## Introduction

Education is an integral element within all of Concern's work, including capacity building and behaviour change across the various development and emergency programmes. The specific Education programme has a technical focus on improving the lives of extremely poor children in a sustainable way by increasing **access** to high **quality** primary education and supporting child **wellbeing**. Concern's Education Policy focuses on primary education, targeting extremely poor children, with a special emphasis on girls as a particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged group. In 2018, a meta-evaluation of Concern's Education programme from 2015-2017 was carried out.



## Improving the lives of extremely poor children in a sustainable way by increasing access to high quality primary education and supporting child wellbeing.

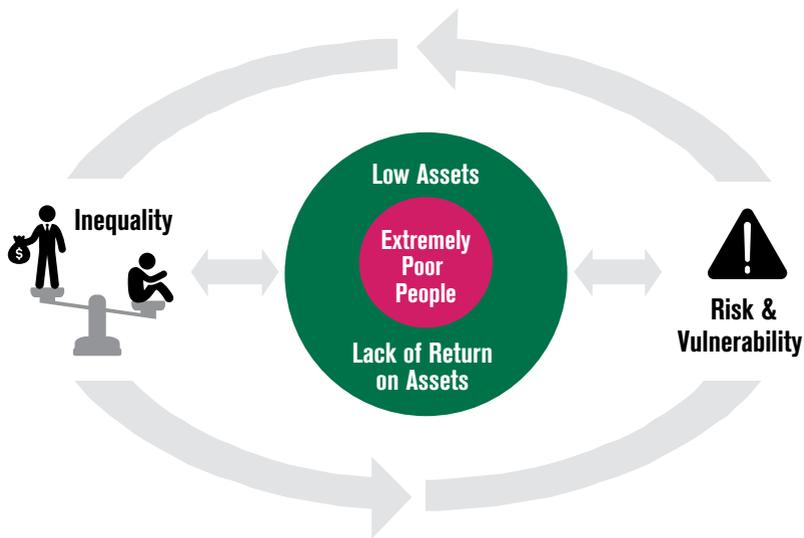
### Access, Quality and Wellbeing

Ten out of the 14 Education Programmes reviewed as part of the meta-evaluation (Afghanistan, Burundi/Rwanda, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia, Niger, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Turkey) include all three Education Policy Focus areas of Quality, Access and Wellbeing. The focus on **Quality** has meant targeting improved learning outcomes in both formal and non-formal learning environments through Continuous Teacher Professional Development (CTPD) including in-service training and in-classroom coaching, provision of teaching and learning materials and a specific focus on Early Grades Reading. Education Quality has been measured using the Early Grades Reading Assessment (EGRA) since 2013, and all country programmes saw significant improvements in EGRA results from baseline to endline. In terms of **Access**, the indicators included in the Irish Aid Results Frameworks show a steady increase in girls' attendance rates from baseline to endline across countries (with the exception of Haiti), with attendance targets met or exceeded across the board. The **Wellbeing** focus across 11 of the 14 programmes included a combination of initiatives to reduce and respond to School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV), increase school safety and disaster risk reduction as well as an increased focus on social emotional learning and psychosocial support particularly within the emergency contexts. Globally, the effective measurement of wellbeing and SRGBV is challenging, particularly with children of early primary school age. From 2014-2016, the measures used for wellbeing across the IAPF grant were varied with four indicators used by five country programmes. Although some minimal progress is evident from these results, the validity and reliability of measures is unclear. From 2017, the standard indicators for measuring SRGBV and child wellbeing have been consolidated and extensive investment made into the development of a meaningful and robust wellbeing index with the support of UCD-School of Education through the Safe Learning Model.



### How Concern Understands Extreme Poverty

In terms of ensuring an alignment with How Concern Understands Extreme Poverty, our education programmes all support the development of human **Assets**, such as the knowledge, abilities and skills that are essential for enhancing income earning and increasing returns on natural, financial, social and physical assets. **Risk and Vulnerability** is being addressed by all education programmes to some extent. The majority of programmes are aiming to prevent, reduce and respond to SRGBV, one of the most significant risks faced by both boys and girls in the contexts in which Concern works, while others have embedded emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction into their programmes to address the risks associated with emergencies and crisis contexts. School Management Committees (SMC) and Parent



Teacher Associations (PTA) have been supported to develop plans and carry out drills to prepare schools and children for both natural and conflict related emergencies. In terms of addressing issues of **Inequality** as a systemic driver of extreme poverty, the majority of programmes aim specifically to target girls for increased school enrolment and attendance by engaging female community members and aiming to increase the cadre of female teachers in schools. However, despite, improvements in girls' access to education, there remains significant challenges with reducing inequality of learning outcomes. Disability has not been addressed across the majority of education programmes; with the notable exceptions of Lebanon and Turkey, where links to the stand alone protection programmes have increased the capacity of the teams to address some of the basic needs of and inequalities faced by children with disabilities.

All Education Programmes included in the meta-evaluation have a strong focus on **micro** level interventions, with direct support to schools or non-formal learning spaces, teachers and students at a community level. Ten of the 14 country programmes engage at a **meso** level, specifically with provincial or district level Ministries of Education and Councils. Engagement with national level Ministries of Education has been lower than community and district level engagement, with the majority of country programmes engaged with the national level for basic coordination, and eight of the 14 demonstrating meaningful **macro** engagement directed at policy change and system strengthening.

### DAC Criteria

The 14 Education programmes were also assessed against the DAC criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability. Across all programmes, relevance scored the highest with an average score of 3.3 on a 4-point categorical scale indicating a

rating of satisfactory. The criteria of effectiveness and impact were considered satisfactory with average scores of 3 and 2.9 respectively. Efficiency and sustainability were the lowest scoring with scores of 2.8 and 2.2 suggesting an overall rating of satisfactory but with some (major) reservations for these aspects of the programme.

DAC Criteria	Extended DAC Criteria	Key Question
Relevance	Relevance Appropriateness	Are our programmes reaching the extreme poor? Are our programmes the most appropriate ones? Are we applying learning from success and failure?
Efficiency	Efficiency	Are these programmes as efficient as possible or providing good value for money?
Effectiveness	Effectiveness Coverage	How do we know that we are adding value in this area? Is our evidence representative and verifiable (strong and appropriate)? What evidence or learning are we contributing?
Impact	Impact	Are our programmes having a positive effect / result on the lives of the extreme poor? Are we achieving any systemic change?
Sustainability	Connectedness Coherence	Is this impact being sustained or is it sustainable? How is this impact being brought to scale by others?

On **relevance**, the geographic targeting of programmes ensures that we are working in the poorest areas and reaching the extreme poor. The Education programme has seen a shift from predominately development contexts to an increased focus on Education in Emergencies. The focus on refugees and internally displaced populations in Lebanon, Turkey, Somalia and Niger further demonstrated the effectiveness of reaching the most vulnerable school aged children within crisis contexts. The programmes in both Lebanon and Turkey have a strong focus on language to facilitate Syrian refugee children to transfer to public schools in their host communities. The programmes in both Niger and Somalia have been designed to respond to the poor learning outcomes identified through the EGRA. In Afghanistan, Concern has been supporting Community Based Education schools to allow pupils to attend classes closer to their homes and thus improving both attendance and retention rates of girls in schools. Overall, the introduction of the EGRA in 10 out of the 14 Education programmes has enabled teams to have a consistent and reliable metric in which to assess the key areas of strength and weakness on the Literacy component of their Education Programme.



*CI student and teacher at Guezza Primary School participate in a Hausa Literacy lesson, Bambaye, Niger, February 2018, Photo Credit: Amy Folan*

In terms of **effectiveness** the improvement of learning outcomes and school attendance rates in Niger, Sierra Leone and Somalia strongly indicate that Concern is adding significant value to the educational opportunities of children in the areas in which we work. In Somalia, where the young Federal Government does not have the capacity to support a national Education system, the work of Concern has provided direct support to the education of children and to the development of a functional system as a whole. Internationally we have contributed to the Global Education sector through participation in a number of technical working groups and communities of practice that focus on the niche areas identified in our strategy. Of particular importance has been the attention given to the Safe Learning Model and the research being undertaken with UCD, this is the first of its type to be conducted globally that explicitly looks at the impact of addressing SRGBV on Literacy learning outcomes.

Ultimately, it is important for us to know whether the work we have undertaken has had a positive **impact** on the lives of the Extreme Poor. This is viewed as being highly satisfactory in a number of countries, for instance in Turkey and Lebanon, the programmes have been providing safe spaces for children affected by extreme adversity to develop and learn, ultimately allowing them to resume a level of normalcy and enter or re-enter formal education systems. During the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, Concern's Education team took on a lead role in the continuation of Learning during school closures by supporting the Ministry of Education to develop and roll out radio learning and community learning initiatives. In Afghanistan, the development and distribution of high quality textbooks has improved student attendance in general, and the support to community leaders has significantly increased girls' attendance.



**Concern is adding significant value to the educational opportunities of children in the areas in which we work.**



*Community Learning Group engaging with the Radio Learning programme during Ebola outbreak, Sierra Leone, 2015, Photo Credit: Alhaji Ahmed*

In addition to asking whether impact has been achieved we also focus on whether it is being **sustained** and taken to scale by others. Eight of the 14 country programmes have had direct impact at policy change and system strengthening at the macro level. The programme in Niger has been the most successful due to the uptake of initiatives by both district and national Ministries of Education, particularly in the area of bilingual literacy. Another notable success has been in Kenya where the Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET) Guidelines, which were signed in 2016 after many years of lobbying and advocacy on the part of our Kenya team, provide standards for non-government schools that ensure all children accessing these schools are provided with education of an acceptable standard.

The biggest challenges to sustainability interventions have faced have been around directly recruiting and incentivising teachers and facilitators for the programmes. While the level of support provided to various structures, including, schools, PTAs and SMCs and community groups, has been substantial, the reports reviewed do suggest there is potential that these structures are able to continue implementation beyond the support of Concern. An unintended impact of developing capacities of teachers in more remote areas, has been their subsequent transfer to less hard to reach and better-resourced schools, presenting challenges in terms of the sustainability of the impact of programmes for the extreme poor.

## Final Thoughts

In conclusion, the clear and focused Global Education Strategy has meant that there is a strong and consistent understanding of the core elements of Concern's holistic Education programming; Access, Quality and Wellbeing.



*2nd Grade Teacher, at St. Peter's Primary School in Sagante, Marsabit County, Kenya, 2016, Photo Credit: Kieran McConville*

# Displaced Somali Children Benefit from Stable Education



By: Ahmed Abdulkadir Abdi

## Introduction

Continuous learning is essential to realizing the potential of education but remains challenging in a protracted crisis like Somalia, where Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Returnees typically experience disrupted education due to constant flux and, unpredictable evictions from their camp homes. In this context, we highlight the cases of two IDP children, Amina and Hassan, to illustrate the difference Concern's efforts are making to their education and their lives.

Amina is a 16-year-old girl now in Standard 5, and has been living in Aliyowkerow IDP camp in Baidoa for 6 months, since she returned from Dabaab Camp in Kenya. Until August 2018, Amina attended the private Rainbow Primary School in Baidoa town, where she experienced challenges including unaffordable cost of school after UNHCR's 9-month support ended (her parents were unable to pay school fees, or to buy essential school materials), and the notable distance between her home and school.

Since 9th September 2018, Amina has attended the Concern established and supported Hanano Primary School near her residence in Baidoa.

### ***In Amina's words***

*I like this Hanano [Concern supported] School because it is a public school, not private. It is free and permanent, and the good thing I like about it is that it is very near to my home and has all services I had in my previous school in Kenya, or better. We have good teachers and receive learning materials free and I feel this school is permanent, like Dhagahley School which I attended in the refugee camp in Kenya.*

Asked if she would move to another school, Amina responded wholeheartedly:

*Absolutely no, I will not go anywhere from this school! Why? I have everything here; I have free education, I will be here 'til I finish my primary education and if I could have secondary education in Hanano – I will also be here.*



**Continuous learning is essential to realizing the potential of education but remains challenging in a protracted crisis like Somalia.**

Somalia has one of the lowest primary school enrolment rates in the world. Approximately 30% of all school-age children have access to learning opportunities, with over three million children remaining out-of-school; those in South and Central Somalia being worst affected<sup>1</sup>. Among rural and IDP children the situation is even worse, with only 17% enrolled in primary schools<sup>2</sup>, mostly in NGO-run temporary learning centers. This situation has been aggravated by the extreme 2016 & 2017 droughts and worsening humanitarian situation, alongside continuing conflict in many locations. Since November 2016, approximately 366,000 school-aged children (or almost half of all IDP children) have been displaced<sup>3</sup>, with dire consequences for education. In other words, given overall enrollment figures and the limited access that IDP children do have to education, almost 50,000 children who would otherwise have been enrolled lost their opportunity to attend school, between November 2016 and August 2017<sup>4</sup>.

Historically, many displaced children and returnees have access to educational opportunities in temporary learning centers run largely by non-governmental organizations, but repeated displacements since 2016 have significantly increased dropout rates.

## Action and Implementation

Under the European Union-funded Durable Solutions project in Baidoa (South West State), Concern works with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to provide lasting solutions to the problem of limited access to essential services faced by many IDPs, including education, water and sanitation, hygiene and health services. To provide sustainable education services, Concern has helped establish public schools by working with key stakeholders, especially communities and the MOE. Steps taken include:

1. Initial **consultations with the MOE** to identify sites for school construction, based on land availability and proximity to resettlement or IDP sites.
2. **Negotiations with community leaders** and host community representatives, to secure land on which schools can be built.
3. **Engaging the government** to issue official land titles for contributed land (as above), before beginning construction.
4. Drawing-up **agreements with communities, supported by official government-issued documents**, to secure the ownership of school land and property.
5. The **recruitment and training of teachers** for quality learning.
6. The **establishment and support of Community Education Committees (CECs)**, including providing initial training on their roles and responsibilities.

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1. Somalia 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview. [www.unocha.org/somalia](http://www.unocha.org/somalia).

2. Somalia 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview. [www.unocha.org/somalia](http://www.unocha.org/somalia)

3. Ibid

4. Somalia 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview. [www.unocha.org/somalia](http://www.unocha.org/somalia)



*Distribution of learning materials in Class 3 at Hanano Primary School, Somalia, September 2018, Photo Credit: Ahmed Abdi*

## Achievements

Following the establishment of two IDP/ host community schools in Baidoa, the enrolment of IDP children has exceeded initial expectations, indicating high demand for continuous learning in the area (which lacks permanent formal schools, even for host communities).

Primary School	Anticipated enrolment	Actual enrolment	Teachers
Hanano School	400	750	20
Wadajir Community School	400	500	20
Total		1,250	40

Hassan, a 13 year old in grade 4, has been living in Wadajir IDP camp (also Baidoa) for the last 2 years. He previously attended an NGO-supported emergency education learning centre near Hanano. Prior to this Hassan lived in Warawa village, Baidoa district, until the family was forced to move to a Baidoa IDP camp when their livestock were wiped out in the recent drought. The lack of a school in Warawa meant he could no longer attend school.

### **In Hassan's words**

*The school I was attending was just an emergency education [facility], it was only 3 grades; grade 1 up to grade 3. That means I will not be there this year, as the emergency centres do not have grade four. We were not taking the complete curriculum, I was just learning literacy and numeracy, sometimes the school is completely closed and the teachers are not well qualified.*

In contrast, Hassan shared the following about the Concern-supported school he now attends:

*I like Hanano [Concern supported school] because... Hanano is the only permanent school structure in the area, I knew when its construction was started and we were waiting for it. This school is a formal school which is free of charge we have been given books, pens, school bags and everything that we will use for our learning, so I like Hanano and am very happy to have it. Hanano is in our villages, it is nearby and good education services are available... I will not move anywhere, I will stay here for my primary education... there is no reason to go to another school. In the town schools are either emergency centres or private, which charge school fees that my parents may not be able to pay.*



*Hanano Primary School Parade, first day at school, Somalia, September 2018, Photo Credit: Ahmed Abdi*

## **Challenges**

Identifying available land suitable for school construction proved a major challenge, as most land within the vicinity of the IDP camps is privately owned or already allocated for other use by the government or community. Consequently, acquiring adequate and suitable land for the construction of Hanano School involved lengthy, intense discussions with the host community, Clan leaders, religious leaders and government officials. "Suitable" land often identified is in reality too far from resettlement areas and IDP camps to be viable, especially given security concerns which impact on the distances children can safely travel (walk) to reach school.

The above factors have delayed the construction of a similar school in Afgoye. However, following long negotiations suitable land has recently been contributed by community members and school construction is due to start soon.

## Lessons and Concluding thoughts

As Amina and Hassan's responses illustrate, the provision of accessible, affordable (free) and suitable educational opportunities remains critically important to many IDP children and their families. Efforts to establish and support such schools for IDP/ host community children, in suitable locations, with quality teaching and learning take time and demand careful negotiation with the relevant communities and authorities, but they can have a lasting positive impact on the lives of children affected.

The experience of Concern in Somalia, as the above examples illustrate, shows the potential benefits and long-term gains of supporting the establishment and running of accessible schools for returnees, IDPs and host community members (as appropriate), in contexts of protracted crises. Significantly, such schools when supported to ensure high quality education can promote much-needed integration between IDPs and host communities. They can make a huge, positive difference to the lives of the children who attend them and inspire confidence in these children, minimizing interruptions to their learning and education.



**The provision of accessible, affordable (free) and suitable educational opportunities remains critically important to many IDP children and their families.**



*Class Session in Grade 5 at Hanano Primary school, Somalia, September 2018, Photo Credit: Ahmed Abdi*

Through its support for the Hanano and Wadajir Community schools in Baidoa, Concern is actively contributing to the strengthening of durable solutions for vulnerable, displaced children in Somalia. The establishment of these schools and ongoing support to teachers and communities is helping create a more positive, responsive environment for displacement- (or mixed migration) affected communities in the South West State of Somalia, towards ensuring access to quality education for all children.

# Education Bilingue Améliorer la Qualité de l'apprentissage au Niger



Par: Issoufa Halidou Moussa

## Introduction:

L'évaluation PASEC (Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN) 2014 (publiée en 2016) résume ainsi l'état de l'école dans les pays de la CONFEMEN (Conférence des ministres de l'Education des Etats et Gouvernements de la Francophonie) « la grande majorité des élèves ne disposent pas des compétences attendues dans le cycle primaire ». Pour le Niger «La situation est inquiétante. Près de 40% des élèves en fin de primaire ont toujours des difficultés sur les compétences élémentaires de début de scolarité». 90,2 % des élèves sont en dessous du seuil « suffisant » en langue en début de cycle et 91,5 % des élèves sont en dessous du seuil « suffisant » en lecture en fin de cycle.

Au Niger, bien avant le PASEC 2014, une évaluation des acquis scolaires des élèves du cycle primaire (2007) avait fait ressortir que « les résultats en français au CP sont désastreux. Au cœur de ce domaine, l'échec de l'apprentissage du code compromet tous les autres domaines d'apprentissage et l'ensemble du cursus scolaire. Faute de pouvoir accéder à la lecture courante, les élèves ne peuvent aborder ni les consignes, ni les énoncés de problème, ni leurs leçons...L'apprentissage du codage-décodage doit donc trouver une priorité parmi les relances pédagogiques».



**Pour le Niger «La situation est inquiétante. Près de 40% des élèves en fin de primaire ont toujours des difficultés sur les compétences élémentaires de début de scolarité».**

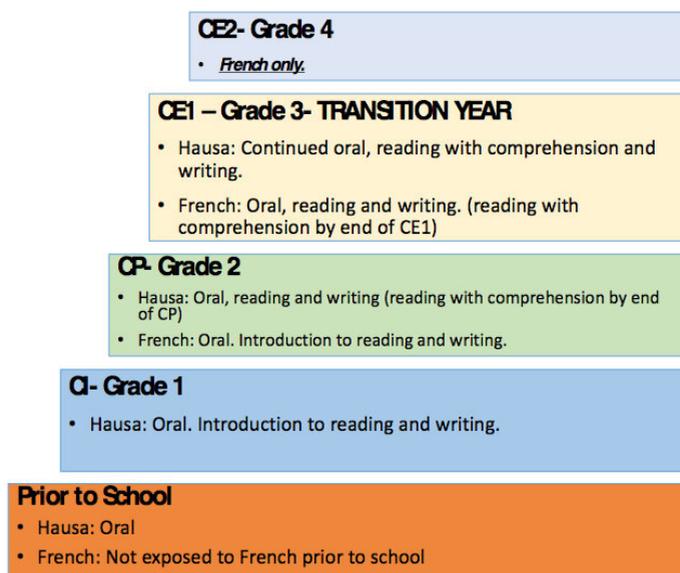
## Une Approche Bilingue

La langue d'enseignement au Niger est le Français qui est une langue étrangère différente de la langue maternelle. L'utilisation exclusive de la langue française dans le système d'enseignement / apprentissage couplée au manque d'une approche rigoureuse de la lecture et de l'écriture constituent les raisons essentielles de la contre-performance au cycle primaire. Toutes les évaluations ont préconisé le recours à la langue nationale que maîtrisent le maître et l'élève, pour la construction du savoir en classe. Ainsi, une approche de la lecture et de l'écriture articulant langues nationales et français serait une solution forte. En réponse

aux évaluations et conformément à la stratégie globale de Concern en matière d'éducation qui est axée sur l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement primaire, le Programme Niger a mis en œuvre l'approche rapide de lecture et écriture dans un modèle bilingue. Utilisation de la langue maternelle de l'enfant (L1) et du français (L2).

Le modèle utilise une conception bilingue transitoire de sortie précoce, qui repose sur la preuve que l'apprentissage de la lecture dans la langue maternelle de l'enfant est plus efficace et peut être transféré dans une langue seconde. Le passage de l'enseignement basé sur la L1 à l'enseignement basé sur le français est introduit progressivement à partir du CP (grade 2), avec un passage complet à l'enseignement du français en CE2 (grade 4) comme le montre le diagramme ci-dessous.

### ***Grade Focus - Transition Plan***



En raison du caractère plutôt novateur de l'initiative, il fallait, pour sa mise en œuvre, prévoir un certain nombre d'actions dont les importantes sont les suivantes : plaider auprès des parents et des enseignants, renforcement des capacités des acteurs-clés, suivi dans les classes.

### **Engagement de la Communauté**

Même étant évident que l'utilisation de la langue première de l'enfant pouvait apporter une plus-value aux plans pédagogique, didactique, psychologique et socioculturel, cela peut sembler évident aux spécialistes de l'éducation, mais les parents et les communautés craignent légitimement que se concentrer sur la langue maternelle puisse avoir un impact négatif sur les perspectives de leur enfant, alors que le français est la langue requise

pour l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur et les perspectives d'emploi. L'aspect engagement de la communauté est essentiel pour aider les parents à comprendre comment l'alphabétisation en L1 profitera à leur enfant. Il est nécessaire d'amener les parents d'élèves et les enseignants à y adhérer en toute connaissance de cause à travers les foras et les réunions organisées à cet effet. Et c'est ce qui fut fait à Tahoua, dans les écoles de la zone d'intervention Concern depuis l'année 2014. Les différentes réunions et échanges avec la communauté ont permis un engagement communautaire qui a facilité l'appropriation de l'enseignement bilingue par les parents car sans ce travail il sera difficile d'avoir une implication des parents et des communautés. Ces rencontres ont certes été des moments de plaidoyer en faveur du bilinguisme scolaire mais aussi de rappel des expériences réussies dans ce domaine au Niger comme d'autres pays.



**Différentes réunions et échanges avec la communauté ont permis un engagement communautaire qui a facilité l'appropriation de l'enseignement bilingue.**

### **Développement Professionnel Continu des Enseignants**

L'élément le plus pertinent dans cette innovation est le renforcement des capacités des principaux acteurs qui sont les enseignants et les directeurs d'école mais aussi les encadreurs pédagogiques : inspecteur et conseillers pédagogiques. La direction régionale, pour l'encadrement administratif, était présente aux différents ateliers de formation. La formation consiste, chaque année, en un regroupement des enseignants et des encadreurs pour une durée de vingt-cinq jours pendant les grandes vacances et en un autre, moins long, durant l'année scolaire, d'environ cinq jours. Quinze jours sont consacrés à l'apprentissage de la langue haoussa qui celle de la zone d'intervention et les dix autres aux techniques de l'ARL.



*Des élèves de CI de l'école primaire de Guezza participent à un cours d'alphabétisation en Haoussa, Bambaye, Niger, février 2018, Photo Credit: Amy Folan*

Pour rendre les enseignants aptes à conduire un enseignement / apprentissage dans la langue première (Hausa), il est nécessaire de partager avec eux un module dont les axes principaux sont les suivants : l'alphabet et les règles d'orthographe du hausa, la morphologie (nominale et verbale) du hausa et la phrase (simple et complexe) du hausa. Par contre, en ARL ( Apprentissage Rapide de la Lecture) l'accent est mis sur les aspects-clés dont : les principes du bilinguisme, cinq champs de compétences en lecture (Outils de la langue, Conventions de textes en lecture, Connaissance du vocabulaire, Fluidité (rapidité, rythme de lecture), Compréhension) et quatre en écriture (Caractéristiques des textes en écriture, Production d'un message tenant compte d'une situation de communication écrite, Cohérence et cohésion d'un texte, Style).

Dans la classe, l'ARL se déploie ainsi : comme les lettres codent des sons, il faut entraîner les élèves à entendre les sons, à les isoler dans des mots et des syllabes, à jouer avec. Alors, pendant les premières semaines : Nouvelles de la classe, jeux à valeur pédagogique, chanson de l'alphabet, comptine des lettres, pour développer les différentes consciences : alphabétique, phonologique (phonémique et syllabique). Cela veut dire qu'un accent est mis sur le décodage. Une autre discipline la lecture guidée, avec ses trois étapes (pré lecture-lecture-post lecture). Le travail sur la compréhension conduit à formuler des hypothèses et à les vérifier au fil du texte. Enfin l'écriture guidée (pré écriture-écriture-post écriture) où les élèves sont amenés à la production de textes écrits de leurs niveaux.

### Voir un Impact Positif

Dès la première année de la mise en œuvre de l'utilisation de la langue nationale hausa couplée à l'ARL, il a été constaté une nette amélioration des rendements scolaires des élèves notamment grâce à l'évaluation conduite par la DESASO (Direction de l'Évaluation et du Suivi des Acquis Scolaires) du Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire en 2015. En effet, les écoles appuyées par Concern sont nettement mieux classées que les écoles dites bilingues traditionnelles et celles traditionnelles (classiques) comme l'illustrent ces tableaux :

**Tableau 1:** Scores moyens en lecture des lettres et des syllabes

Initiatives/ groupe témoin	Letters	Syllabes
Bilingue_traditionnelle	21,61	13,53
<b>Ecole_Zone Concern</b>	<b>47,88</b>	<b>33,50</b>
Ecole_traditionnelle	21,83	12,04

**Tableau 2:** Proportion d'élèves dans les niveaux de maitrise de la lecture des lettres de l'alphabet et des syllabes.

Initiatives/ groupe témoin	Letters	Syllabes
Bilingue_traditionnelle	6,3%	4,3%
<b>Ecole_Zone Concern</b>	<b>37,5%</b>	<b>22,5%</b>
Ecole_traditionnelle	5,8%	2,2%

Avec l'enquête EGRA, les normes de lecture se sont améliorées sur le plan statistique dans les écoles de la zone d'intervention de Concern car la comparaison entre l'évaluation de base en lecture début novembre 2013 et l'évaluation finale de mai 2017 montrent une réduction statistiquement significative de la proportion d'enfants incapables de lire un seul mot.

Au départ, presque tous les 787 élèves (96% à 100%) de 2e année et 3e année du primaire étaient incapables de lire un seul mot en français ou en haoussa. Au bout du compte, ce pourcentage avait été ramené entre 25% et 34%, mais avec un échantillon plus réduit de 547 élèves en 2017. Il y avait une réduction statistiquement significative des scores nuls dans les deux langues, les deux niveaux et dans les sous-tâches d'habileté supérieure de la lecture et de la compréhension orales, et dans la sous-tâche de compétence inférieure de la connaissance des sons de lettre, des mots inventés et des mots connus.

Parallèlement à une réduction du score zéro, il y a eu une augmentation constante du score moyen dans toutes les sous-tâches des deux grades et des deux langues. Par exemple, en lecture orale, les notes des élèves de 3e année passent de 0 à 15 mots corrects à la minute en haussa et de 0 à 13 mots en français, entre niveau de base et niveau de fin.

Si l'écart entre les sexes est réduit par rapport à l'ensemble de données, un écart constant apparaît au niveau de la 3e année du primaire.



**Parallèlement à une réduction du score zéro, il y a eu une augmentation constante du score moyen dans toutes les sous-tâches des deux grades et des deux langues.**

### **Leçons Apprises**

Une culture d'évaluation formative est très importante pour améliorer le niveau d'apprentissage des élèves. Nous avons proposé des remédiations pédagogiques précises dans les trois grands domaines qui construisent la raison. Mais au-delà de leurs détails, l'esprit qui prévaut est celui de l'évaluation formative à inculquer ou à conforter chez les enseignants. Il ne suffit pas de «faire le programme» pour que les élèves acquièrent réellement des compétences. Il est au contraire nécessaire de veiller à la mise en place de ces compétences. Une culture de la responsabilité, du résultat réel confronté au résultat attendu doit irriguer quotidiennement la pratique des classes. Les enseignants doivent rester à l'affût des indices qui valident ou invalident l'efficacité des apprentissages. Sans attendre l'installation de l'échec, ils doivent être capables de relancer leurs élèves en panne.

Ce souci professionnel doit amener les enseignants à faire régulièrement le point sur les acquis réels constatés chez chacun des élèves et sur les besoins éventuels de reprendre les apprentissages non acquis. Mais aussi et surtout, des outils doivent être mis à leur disposition.

Le succès des écoles Concern repose, en partie, sur le suivi régulier des encadreurs (Directeurs d'école, conseillers pédagogiques et inspecteurs) mais aussi, celui moins fréquent des formateurs qui ont permis de corriger à temps les lacunes des enseignants qui tiennent les classes. Sans ces différents suivis, il serait sûrement difficile de parvenir à de tels résultats. Cette embellie ne doit guère obstruer les difficultés du genre : le niveau assez faible des enseignants, la problématique du transfert de L1 à L2, le faible niveau de description des langues nationales, la rareté des spécialistes des langues nationales.

# Bilingual Education Improving the Quality of Learning in Niger



By: Issoufa Halidou Moussa

## Introduction:

The 2014 PASEC evaluation (Programme to assess CONFEMEN education systems), published in 2016, summarises the state of schools in CONFEMEN (Conference of Education Ministers of Francophone States and Governments) countries as follows: “The vast majority of students do not possess the skills they are expected to acquire in primary school”. In Niger, “the situation is worrying. At the end of primary school, almost 40 % of students still have difficulty with basic skills that should be acquired in the early school years.” 90.2 % of students are below the “sufficient” threshold in language at the beginning of primary school and 91.5 % of students are below the “sufficient” threshold in reading at the end of primary school.

In Niger, well before PASEC 2014, a 2007 evaluation of skills acquired by students in primary school revealed “results in French at CP level (grade 2) are disastrous. At the heart of this issue, failure to learn the code (language) compromises all other domains of learning and the entire school curriculum. Without being able to read fluently, students are not equipped to handle instructions, solve problems or understand their lessons. Learning the code and how to decode must therefore be given priority when considering new teaching methods.”

## A Bilingual Approach

The language of education in Niger is French, which is a foreign language different to the mother tongue. The exclusive use of French in the teaching/learning system, coupled with the lack of a rigorous approach to reading and writing, are the underlying reasons for poor performance at primary school level. All the evaluations have recommended using the national language spoken by the teacher and students for building knowledge in the classroom. As such, an approach to reading and writing that combines national languages and French would be a good solution. In response to the evaluations and in accordance with Concern’s overall education strategy, which focuses on improving the quality of primary school teaching, the Niger Programme has implemented a bilingual rapid approach to reading and writing - use of the child’s mother tongue (L1) and French (L2).

The model uses an early exit transitional bilingual design, which is based on evidence that learning to read in the child’s first language is more effective and can be transferred to a second language. The transition from teaching in L1 to teaching in French is gradually introduced from CP level (grade 2), with a complete switch to teaching in French at CE2 level (grade 4) as shown in the diagram below.

## ***Grade Focus - Transition Plan***

### **CE2- Grade 4**

- *French only.*

### **CE1 – Grade 3- TRANSITION YEAR**

- Hausa: Continued oral, reading with comprehension and writing.
- French: Oral, reading and writing. (reading with comprehension by end of CE1)

### **CP- Grade 2**

- Hausa: Oral, reading and writing (reading with comprehension by end of CP)
- French: Oral. Introduction to reading and writing.

### **C1- Grade 1**

- Hausa: Oral. Introduction to reading and writing.

### **Prior to School**

- Hausa: Oral
- French: Not exposed to French prior to school

Given the rather innovative nature of the initiative, a number of measures were required for its implementation. Some of the most important actions included: advocacy with parents and teachers, skills building for the key actors involved, and classroom monitoring.



**The model uses an early exit transitional bilingual design, which is based on evidence that learning to read in the child’s first language is more effective and can be transferred to a second language.**

### **Engaging Communities**

Even though it is clear that using the child’s first language could provide added value in pedagogical, didactic, psychological and socio-cultural terms, this may seem obvious to education specialists, but parents and communities legitimately fear that focusing on the mother tongue may have a negative impact on their child’s prospects, since French is the language required for secondary and higher education and employment prospects. Involving the community is essential in order to help parents understand how learning to read and write in the L1 will help their child. It is necessary to persuade parents and teachers to support the initiative in a fully informed way, through forums and meetings organised for this purpose. And this is what has been done in Tahoua since 2014 in the schools within Concern’s intervention zone. The various meetings and exchanges with the community have fostered community

engagement which has facilitated parental ownership of the bilingual education, because without this work it will be difficult to involve parents and communities. These meetings have, of course, been opportunities to advocate in favour of bilingual education, but also to remember successful experiences in this field in Niger and other countries.

### **Continuous Teacher Professional Development**

The most important element of this innovative initiative is building the skills of the main actors involved - not only teachers and school principals, but also pedagogical supervisors: inspectors and pedagogical advisors. The regional management, involved in administrative supervision, was present at the various training workshops. Each year, the training consists of teachers and supervisors gathering together for 25 days during the long holidays, plus a shorter meeting of approximately five days during the school year. 15 days are dedicated to learning the Hausa language, which is spoken in the intervention zone, and the other 10 days are dedicated to ARL, a rapid learning technique for reading.



*CI students at Guezza Primary School participate in a Hausa Literacy lesson, Bambaye, Niger, February 2018, Photo Credit: Amy Folan*

To enable the teachers to conduct teaching/learning in the first language (Hausa), a module is shared with them which focuses on: The Hausa alphabet and spelling rules, Hausa morphology (nominal and verbal) and Hausa sentences (simple and complex). However, in ARL (a rapid learning technique for reading) the focus is on these key aspects: the principles of bilingualism, five areas of competence in reading (language tools, conventions of reading texts, vocabulary knowledge, fluency (speed, reading pace), comprehension) and four in writing (characteristics of written texts, production of a message taking into account a written communication situation, coherence and cohesion of a text, style).

In class, ARL is rolled out in this way: since letters signify sounds, the students must be taught to hear the sounds, to isolate them in words and syllables, and to play with them. During the first weeks: Class news, educational games, alphabet songs, rhymes with alphabet letters, in order to develop different forms of knowledge: alphabetical, phonological (phonemic and syllabic).

This means that emphasis is placed on decoding. Another discipline is guided reading, with three stages (pre-literacy, literacy, post-literacy). Work on comprehension skills is carried out by formulating hypotheses and verifying them in the text. Finally, guided writing (pre-writing, writing, post-writing) where the students are guided in producing written texts at their own level.

### Seeing a Positive Impact

Since the first year of implementing use of the Hausa language coupled with the ARL, a clear improvement in educational outcome has been noted, thanks to the evaluation conducted by the Department of Primary Education's DESASO (directorate for evaluation and follow up of learning achievement) in 2015. In fact, schools supported by Concern are clearly higher ranked than traditionally bilingual schools and traditional schools as illustrated in these tables:

**Table 1:** Average scores in reading letters and syllables

Initiatives/control group	Letters	Syllables
Traditional_bilingual	21.61	13.53
<b>School_Concern zone</b>	<b>47.88</b>	<b>33.50</b>
Traditional_school	21.83	12.04

**Table 2:** Proportion of students at the level of mastering reading letters of the alphabet and syllables.

Initiatives/control group	Letters	Syllables
Traditional_bilingual	6.3 %	4.3 %
<b>School_Concern zone</b>	<b>37.5 %</b>	<b>22.5 %</b>
Traditional_school	5.8 %	2.2 %



**Schools supported by Concern are clearly higher ranked than traditionally bilingual schools and traditional schools.**

With the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), reading standards have improved statistically in schools within Concern's intervention zone. A comparison of the initial assessment at the start of November 2013 and the final evaluation in May 2017 shows a statistically significant reduction in the proportion of children unable to read a single word.

At the start, almost all of the 787 students (96 % to 100 %) in the 2nd and 3rd years of primary school were incapable of reading a single word in French or Hausa. At the end, this percentage had dropped to between 25% and 34%, but with a reduced sample of 547 students in 2017.

There was a statistically significant reduction in zero scores in both languages, at both levels and in the subtasks of higher-order reading skills and oral comprehension, and of slower-order skills in recognising letter sounds and invented and familiar words.

Parallel to a reduction of zero scores, there was a constant rise in average scores in all the subtasks in both grades and both languages. For example, in reading aloud, the scores of 3rd year students rose from 0 to 15 correct words per minute in Hausa and from 0 to 13 words in French between the baseline and endline.

Although the gender gap is small in relation to the overall data set, a constant gap appears at the level of the 3rd year of primary school.

## **Lessons Learned**

A culture of formative assessment is very important in improving the learning level of students. We proposed targeted pedagogic remediation in the three major areas which develop reasoning. But beyond their prescribed tasks, the prevailing spirit is to inculcate or encourage formative assessment by teachers. It is not enough to just “follow the programme” if students are really to acquire skills. It is also necessary to supervise the acquisition of those skills. A culture of responsibility, of comparing actual results to expected results, should be a daily part of classroom practices. Teachers must watch out for indicators that validate or invalidate the effectiveness of learning processes. They must be capable of restarting stalled students, without waiting for failure to set in.

This professional concern should lead teachers to regularly review the actual recorded achievements of each student and the need to go back over any learning not acquired. But also, and above all, tools must be available to them.

The success of Concern’s schools rests, in part, on regular monitoring by supervisors (school directors, educational consultants and inspectors) and also, less frequently, by trainers who are able to correct in time the omissions of class teachers. Without these different approaches, it would surely be difficult to achieve these results. This bright outlook should not belie the challenges of the task: poorly qualified teachers, difficulties transferring from L1 to L2, scarce linguistic description of national languages and the lack of specialists in them.



**The success of Concern’s schools rests, in part, on regular monitoring by supervisors (school directors, educational consultants and inspectors) and also, less frequently, by trainers who are able to correct in time the omissions of class teachers.**

# Supporting Children through the Home Learning Techniques Initiative in Lebanon



By: Shezleen Vellani

## Background

An estimated 1.75 million school aged children in Syria and over 40% of Syrian refugee children remain out-of-school<sup>1</sup>. The government of Lebanon, host to over 1 million Syrian refugees, has made efforts to broaden Syrian refugee children's access to the public education system. However, barriers to education remain high and include associated costs of going to school, such as learning materials, books and transport. Other issues including safety in schools, language challenges and high levels of child labour continue to keep Syrian children out of school.

Concern Lebanon has been providing children with early childhood education opportunities, language classes and homework support to increase their access to learning opportunities. In addition to this, parents realise the importance of supporting their children at home. However, many parents and caregivers do not have the confidence, skills or the know how to help them. Concern has therefore, developed the Home Learning Techniques curriculum, which builds the capacity of parents so that they can engage in activities at home that help their children in their development and academics.

## Importance of Home Learning

Involving families with their children's homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions recognises that the school, home and community all play a role in the holistic environment within which children learn. Various research suggests that:

- Increased learning opportunities at home have a positive effect on literacy and numeracy attainment at school.
- A positive home learning environment is even more important than parent occupation, education or income on children's learning.
- Home learning environments impact school readiness and can improve independence and creativity once at school.



**The school, home and community all play a role in the holistic environment within which children learn.**

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, 2017

While some parents recognise that they are their children's first teachers, certain challenges and barriers prevent them from engaging in this activity. These can include:

- Parents are unfamiliar with the school culture in their new country and are not sure how to get involved.
- Not having adequate literacy skills that keeps parents from reading to their children.
- Refugees have other challenges to deal with, such as meeting their basic needs and do not have time to engage in any activities at home with their children.
- There is no culture of reading for pleasure and most parents think that the best way to support their children at home is through homework support.

## **What is Family Literacy?**

The term family literacy is used in several ways: (1) to describe the study of literacy in the family, (2) to describe a set of interventions related to literacy development of young children, and (3) to refer to a set of programs designed to enhance the literacy skills of more than one family member<sup>2</sup>.

Family literacy can describe the way parents, family and community members use literacy at home and in their communities. Family literacy can apply to all families and all literacy activities that take place within the family, not just school like activities.

There is considerable evidence of a relationship between reading regularly to a child and that child's later reading achievement<sup>3</sup> and within a Home Learning Techniques curriculum, parents are empowered to support their children's literacy skills, by telling stories and reading to them, regardless of their literacy levels.

Furthermore, based on evidence from Concern's work in Liberia and Haiti, we have learned that having books at home can have a positive impact on reading fluency.



**There is considerable evidence of a relationship between reading regularly to a child and that child's later reading achievement.**

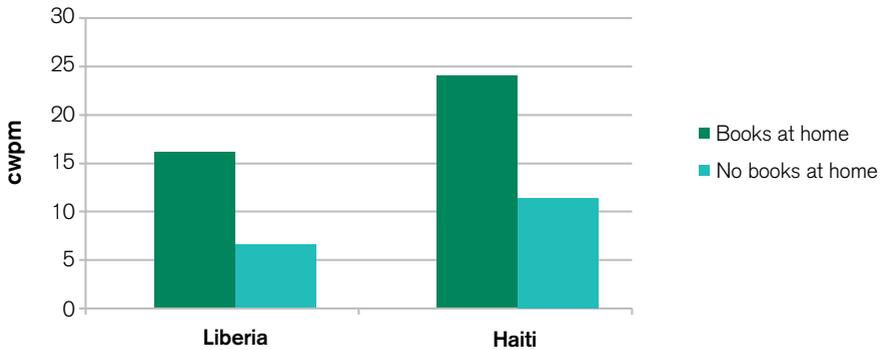
In Liberia, after 3 years of schooling, students scored an average of 16cwpm when they reported having access to books at home, compared to 7cwpm for students with no access to book. Students from Haiti who reported bringing books home from the school library to read also scored significantly better in reading fluency, at 24cwpm compared to 12cwpm for those who did not.

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<sup>2</sup> Britto & Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Handel, 1999; Wasik et al., 2000

<sup>3</sup> National Research Council, 1998

Reading fluency based on books at home



### Action and Implementation

Concern recognises the importance of community involvement and the critical role that parents play in their children’s learning and development. In an assessment carried out by Concern to better understand how parents in Lebanon support their children in the early grades, 68% reported lacking adequate skills to help their children effectively. Based on this need, Concern developed the Home Learning Techniques Initiative, which provides caregivers with information on child development and strategies to support their children at home.

Based on this assessment, a Home Learning Techniques curriculum has been developed to support families. The objectives of the curriculum are as follows:

- Demonstrate the value of home learning and impact on learning outcomes.
- Encourage parents to support the cognitive development of their children.
- Provide practical and useful examples of home learning that can be used, regardless of the parents’ own educational level, with a focus on family literacy.

An emphasis has been placed on family literacy and numeracy, as these activities are in line within Concern’s strategic focus and are important to develop in the early years. Training was delivered to parents by Lebanon’s Education team and both staff and parents shared feedback so that the curriculum can be revised and strengthened. The 10 week Home Learning Techniques curriculum for Lebanon includes:

Session	Topic
Session 1	Developmental Stages of Children’s Growth (Birth - 5 Years)
Session 2:	Age-Appropriate Play Activities to Promote Children’s Development
Session 3:	Positive Parenting
Session 4:	Supporting Children’s Language and Literacy Skills at Home

Session 5:	Using Read-Alouds and Storytelling with Children at Home
Session 6:	Developing Simple Literacy Materials with Available Resources at Home
Session 7:	Developing Children's Cognitive and Numeracy Skills at Home
Session 8:	Simple Brain-Building and Numeracy Activities at Home
Session 9:	Developing Children's Artistic and Musical Skills
Session 10:	Supporting Children with Learning Disabilities

### Challenges, Successes and Lessons Learned

Lebanon has recently finished the first round of training for parents. During the pilot phase, Concern learned that by providing this training, we are addressing some of the needs of the communities. Parents found the training beneficial and stated that they would try to implement what they learned in the home. One of the challenges experienced was that mothers were attending the training, more than fathers were. This needs to be addressed, as fathers also play an important role in their children's development and learning. In addition to this, some parents felt the sessions took up too much of their time and should be shortened. Additional lessons learned include:

- Since the training, parents are spending more time playing with their children at home.
- Children used to spend a lot of time on the internet but families are now reading together more.
- Families enjoy telling stories together.
- Parents have a greater awareness around positive parenting techniques.

Based on the work and lessons learned in Lebanon around home learning, the team will revise the curriculum in order to meet the needs of the communities. Lebanon has shared the curriculum and feedback with the Turkey office who have adapted the curriculum to meet the needs of their communities, and will conduct a pilot soon.

If you would like more information on the Home Learning Techniques Initiative or would like to learn more about family literacy, please feel free to contact the Education Advisor at [shezleen.vellani@concern.net](mailto:shezleen.vellani@concern.net).



*Koucha Centre, Lebanon, February 2018,  
Photo Credit: Sibi Bizri*

# Holistic Education Programming Supporting Syrian Children to Integrate into the Formal Education System in Turkey



By: Anna Spector and Andy Buchanan

## Background:

Since the start of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, 3,559,262 Syrian refugees have registered in Turkey, 47% of whom are children<sup>1</sup>. As of August 2018, 38% of school-aged Syrian children in Turkey are still out of school<sup>2</sup>. In Sanliurfa Province, approximately 55% of children are not enrolled in school<sup>3</sup>. Some children have significant gaps in their education as they have not attended school for over four years. In December 2017, Concern conducted a household assessment of families to identify out of school children in Sanliurfa. The most common reasons for children not attending school were: the need to work to support family income (27%), low literacy rates and missed years of education (16%), a lack of interest in school (12%), and the lack of school transportation and the distance from home to school (12%), among others<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, past internal assessments found that education access was hindered due to child marriage, lack of access to medical devices such as hearing aids, tension between host and refugee communities, peer bullying, limited knowledge of Turkish language and challenges obtaining proper legal documentation.

The Turkish Government now requires students entering grades 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10 to enter the Turkish formal school system and has decided to close all Temporary Education Centers (TECs) within the next two years. Although Syrian children have started to enroll in Turkish schools alongside Turkish children, this move comes with challenges such as language barriers, resistance from teachers and parents, and the need for psychosocial support (PSS).

## Action and Implementation:

In order to support the Government of Turkey's integration policy, Concern has developed interventions that focus on access, quality and wellbeing. Concern Turkey's Education Programme aims to improve access to education by mitigating economic barriers through

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Turkey, Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, by the date of 13 September 2018 [http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection\\_915\\_1024\\_4748\\_icerik](http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection_915_1024_4748_icerik)

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, Turkey Education, August 2018 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/65444>

<sup>3</sup> Source: Interviews with Coordination Unit for Education for Refugees in Sanliurfa Provincial Education Directorate (PNED), December 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Concern Turkey, Barriers to Education Assessment, December 2017

financial support to families with one-off needs (hidden school fees, medical equipment, etc.), as well as the provision of monthly financial assistance for vulnerable families dependent on child labor. The programme supports quality and wellbeing through the provision of one-on-one teacher mentoring; school preparation courses for Syrian children, focusing on Turkish literacy and psychosocial support; and social cohesion activities in and around schools to improve inclusion and collaboration between the host and refugee communities and minimize peer bullying.

During the 2016/17 and 2017/18 school year, Concern provided conditional financial assistance of 300 TRY to mitigate child labor. The original amount of 300 TRY per household was based on discussions with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the amount that vulnerable Turkish children received from the Ministry of Family and Social Policy for keeping regular school attendance. Before starting the programme Concern evaluated how much money children working on the streets were making and found that children could make up to 900 TRY per month in southeast Turkey. In 2018, on average children enrolled in the programme were making 18.83 TRY per day. During the 2017/18 school year, Concern supported 350 Syrian students through the conditional cash for education programme and only 22 students (6.6%) have returned to work. Based on the last 18 months of implementation, it has become clear that the program needs to provide cash incentives for more than one child per household, as well as a further incentive for families to send their girls to school (and to avoid resorting to early marriage). The programme will be modified at the beginning of the 2018/19 school year to ensure that more children continue their education and are integrated into the formal education system.

Between 2016 and 2018, Concern Turkey ran an informal education (IFE) programme, which aimed to bridge school-aged Syrian refugee girls and boys into formal education through accelerated learning programmes with a focus on Turkish and Arabic literacy. Concern ran eight IFE centers and supported two partners to run parallel programmes. The IFE centers promoted physical and emotional wellbeing and provided a safe space for children to build their critical thinking and problem solving skills, while building a foundation in literacy. The programme supported 6,499 students and so far 2,343 children have successfully transitioned into the formal education system. Thirty new centers will open at the end of 2018 in seven provinces across Turkey.



**The IFE centers promoted physical and emotional wellbeing and provided a safe space for children to build their critical thinking and problem solving skills, while building a foundation in literacy.**



*Students at a partner IFE center in Adiyaman, Turkey, 2017, Photo Credit: Kelle Koltukta Independent Pictures.*

In April 2017, Concern conducted the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) literacy assessment in the eight IFE centers in Turkish and Arabic. The assessment indicates improvement in Arabic literacy. At the start of the programme, 83.5% of students were at the beginner level, and after three months, the number of children at beginner level decreased to 57.6% as more children were able to accurately recognize letters. While girls and boys entered the programme with similar literacy levels, fewer girls made it beyond the beginner level. Turkish literacy was also assessed with the same student group: 90.4% of students were at the beginner level, and at the end line, only 79.1% were at the beginner level; the number of children able to accurately identify Turkish letters increased by 10.4%. While more girls than boys started at beginner level, slightly more girls than boys remained at the beginner level. The ASER results indicate that Syrian children preparing to enter the formal education system in Turkey have very low literacy rates and need tailored support to learn Turkish. Children entering primary school need to have the capacity to learn subject knowledge in Turkish, and teachers providing literacy instruction to Syrian students need to receive the appropriate training to teach children a new language and provide integrated psychosocial support.

One of the largest barriers to children accessing quality education is the limited capacity of teachers in southeast Turkey. Many of the teachers that Concern works with have a wealth of experience, but they have not received training on working with children who have been affected by conflict and crisis and need support preparing children to integrate into Turkish Public Schools. During the 2016/17 school year, Concern provided one-on-one teacher

mentoring to 372 Syrian teachers in grades 2, 3 and 4. The Teacher Mentoring Programme aimed to improve nine core competencies, including language, classroom management, teaching and learning materials, teaching methods, lesson planning, positive reinforcement, subject knowledge, questions for comprehension and teacher engagement with students on learning and wellbeing. Teachers scored 66% during the first classroom observation, and the average score improved by 14% by the fourth visit. The improvement achieved by the teachers, with the support of the mentors, shows that one-on-one teacher mentoring has a positive impact on the quality of teaching.



**Many of the teachers that Concern works with have a wealth of experience, but they have not received training on working with children who have been affected by conflict and crisis.**

In order to mitigate tension between Syrian and Turkish students in and around schools, Concern conducts social cohesion activities promoting inclusion and collaboration. These activities not only support integration, but also assist Syrian students in learning Turkish by building relationships between students. Tension between Syrian and Turkish youth is growing and is one of the main barriers keeping children out of school. Examples of social cohesion events include sports activities, festivals, performance arts events and wellbeing activities.

### **Key challenges/successes**

Concern's programmes have successfully supported over 2,600 refugee children integrate into the formal education system in Turkey. It has supported social cohesion for 2,500 Turkish and Syrian children. While these programmes have been very successful, integration of refugee children in the formal education system is very challenging due a myriad of reasons including language of instruction, host community acceptance, refugee community hesitance regarding sending their children to Turkish public schools, school capacity and peer bullying.

A significant challenge to implement the programme has been building trust with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and getting permission to deliver teacher training and informal education activities. Turkey has a strong education system and is committed to enrolling all Syrian children into school. However, due to the number of refugee children in Turkey and the various challenges that Syrian children face regarding integration, specialized education in emergencies programmes need to be developed and accepted. The majority of Concern's education programme has been suspended for nine months. Concern is now working closely with the MoNE to build a programme that will support children.



**Concern's programmes have successfully supported over 2,600 refugee children integrate into the formal education system in Turkey.**

## **Lessons:**

In order to support Syrian children integrate into the formal education system in Turkey, it is clear that holistic programming targeting access, quality and wellbeing is needed. Furthermore, the education programme cannot work in a silo, but rather in partnership with the Protection and Livelihoods programmes to ensure greater integration between refugee and host communities. Additionally, an integrated response is necessary to ensure access to government services and combat child labour.

## **Concluding thoughts:**

Based on the lessons learned from previous programming Concern Turkey has developed a new programme in partnership with MoNE. The new programme will support over 30,000 children access quality education in seven provinces in Turkey. The Building Tomorrow programme has been designed to support access, quality and wellbeing in line with Government of Turkey's integration policy and improve the capacity of Turkish public schools.



**In order to support Syrian children integrate into the formal education system in Turkey, it is clear that holistic programming targeting access, quality and wellbeing is needed.**

# Supporting Children's Wellbeing in Concern's Education in Emergency Programmes



By: Amy Folan

## Introduction:

Psychosocial wellbeing refers to the psychological state of an individual (the mind, thoughts, feelings, behaviour, knowledge and skills) linked to the social connections and support around them (relationships, interaction with the environment and the quality of social support). Adverse experiences such as extreme poverty, emergencies, conflict and violence can negatively impact on psychosocial wellbeing and for children, this can also hinder their ability to learn and develop.



**Psychosocial wellbeing refers to the psychological state of an individual (the mind, thoughts, feelings, behaviour, knowledge and skills) linked to the social connections and support around them (relationships, interaction with the environment and the quality of social support).**

Taking this into consideration, Wellbeing is a vital aspect of Concern's Education programming in both development and emergency contexts. Following on from Concern's Global Education Workshop in 2016, there has been a heightened awareness of the need to increase the support to improving children's psychosocial wellbeing across our Education in Emergency programmes through the integration of more structured Psychosocial Support (PSS) interventions.

*Psychosocial Support includes all processes and actions that promote the holistic wellbeing of people in their social world. It includes support provided by family, friends and the wider community. It can be used to describe the interventions by humanitarians to serve the psychological, social, emotional and practical needs of individuals (children and adults), families, and communities, with the goal of protecting, promoting and improving psychosocial wellbeing. Social and Emotional Learning is a component of PSS and is the process of acquiring core competencies to recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations constructively.*

## The PSS Working Group:

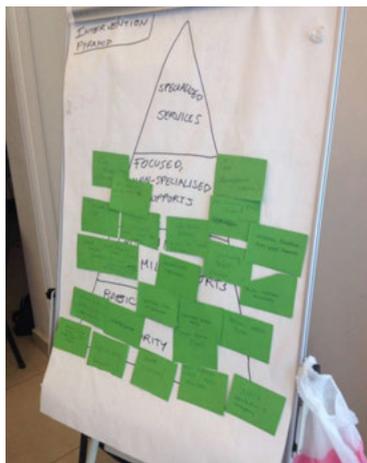
Although Concern has been implementing interventions that incorporate various degrees of Psychosocial Support across several sectors for many years, as the organisation continues to shift focus to working in increasingly fragile and conflict affected contexts and protracted crises, this need has become more evident. In response to this expansion and evolution of programming and to ensure Concern's interventions in this area are of high quality and in line with global standards, a working group was initiated in June 2017. The working group was established to support and strengthen the Psychosocial Support activities within the protection and education programs of the Syria response, and to pave the way for a more structured organisational approach to Psychosocial Support.

The PSS Working Group brings together key Concern staff currently working within programmes containing Psychosocial Support components from across the organisation (specifically the Education and Protection technical leads from Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria as well as the Humanitarian Protection Advisor, Education Advisors and Desk Officers for the region). The group works to develop and improve PSS-related programming in the Syria regional response, learn from experience to inform other regions, share resources and capacity as well as identify and articulate the clear boundaries and limitations of Concern's PSS interventions.

In November 2017, the PSS working group met in Beirut to share their experiences and learning around PSS programming and begin mapping out the overall framework for Concern's approach to Psychosocial Support. This included identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of current PSS programming and ascertaining the limits and boundaries of our work to ensure the principle of 'do no harm' is upheld.



The team from Lebanon conducting a SWOT analysis of their existing PSS programming at the PSS Working Group Meeting in Beirut, Lebanon, November 2017, Photo Credit: Amy Folan



Mapping out our existing PSS programming on the PSS Intervention Pyramid at the PSS Working Group meeting in Beirut, Lebanon, November 2017, Photo Credit: Amy Folan

In 2018, a series of regional PSS manuals were finalised including materials for training PSS facilitators, curriculum for adults that is aligned to the Engaging Men and Boys and Sonke curricula and a PSS activity bank for children. A Training of Trainers workshops was held in Turkey in September 2018 with participants from Lebanon and Turkey present and then replicated for staff in Syria.

### **Snapshots of PSS programmes in action:**

#### ***Providing structured Social and Emotional Learning alongside Academic Learning:***

In **Syria**, the new Education in Emergency programme will be drawing on the IRC Safe Healing and Learning Space model. A Safe Healing and Learning Space is a secure, caring and predictable place where children living in conflict and crisis settings can learn, develop and be protected<sup>1</sup>. The curriculum of the Non-Formal Education centres is designed to not only support children to develop foundational Literacy and Numeracy skills but also to develop Social and Emotional competencies and reduce emotional distress.

#### ***Psychosocial Support and Language Development:***

Syrian children entering the Education system in **Turkey** are faced with numerous challenges, one of which is not being familiar with the language of instruction in their new school environments. The team in Turkey aim to provide children with safe and supportive environments with curriculum focused on improving school readiness and wellbeing while developing Turkish language skills.

#### ***Equipping Teachers to Integrate PSS into the classroom:***

In **Turkey, Lebanon** and **Syria**, teachers in both formal and non-formal education setting are being supported to address the psychosocial wellbeing of children and improve their school readiness. Teachers are provided with basic skills to create safe and emotionally supportive learning environments as well as banks of activities they can utilise in the classroom to promote children's Social and Emotional Learning.

### **Lessons Learned:**

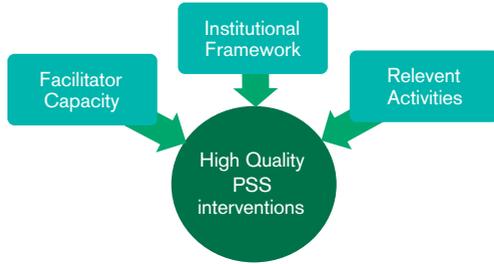
The nature and objectives of activities aimed at supporting children's wellbeing are obviously important, however, through the work of the teams on the PSS working group it is evident that the approach of the implementing staff backed up by a strong institutional framework helps to increase impact, relevance and coherence in PSS interventions. Conscious, active efforts and emphasis have to be placed on these three aspects, to avoid having superficial activity-focused practice such as ad hoc recreational activities, and ensure interventions have clear structure and purpose.

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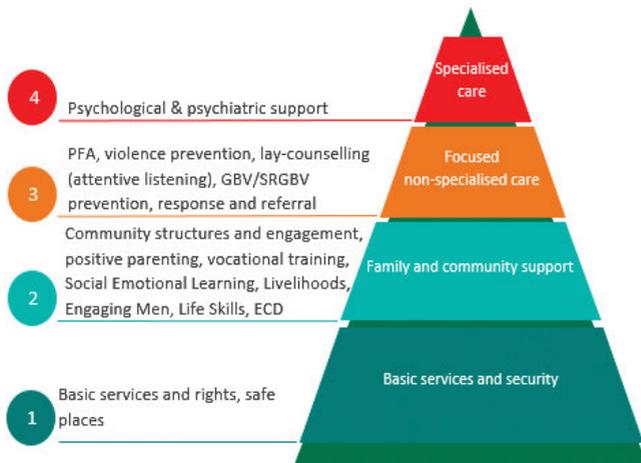
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rescue.org/resource/safe-healing-and-learning-spaces-toolkit>



The approach of the implementing staff backed up by a strong institutional framework helps to increase impact, relevance and coherence in PSS interventions.



High-Quality Psychosocial Support interventions rely on individual **facilitator's capacity** (attitude, knowledge and skills), on an **institutional framework** (allowing teams to process together and providing a frame to think and act) and on **relevant activities**, chosen thoughtfully to respond to specific needs. The establishment of the PSS working group has provided clear structure and boundaries as to the scope of Concern's engagement in PSS, providing the teams with a strong institutional framework and developing the skills and knowledge of teams to implement meaningful and robust activities. The learning and experience sharing that has ensued as a result of this group, has not only greatly improved PSS-related programming and capacity in the Syria regional response but also laid the foundations for informing other regions and improving Concern's capacity to effectively support children's wellbeing through Education in Emergency programmes.



Concern integrates PSS interventions within comprehensive programming, engaging in the **three lower levels** of the pyramid of intervention and allowing linkage and communication in between levels. Concern **does not directly implement any form of specialised care.**

If you would like more information on Concern's engagement with PSS programming or the PSS Working Group feel free to contact the Senior Education Advisor, Amy Folan (amy.folan@concern.net).

# Safe Learning Model – Promoting Wellbeing and Quality Education in Sierra Leone



By Anni Lehto

*“There are some teachers who send us to the bush to fetch fire wood for their homes as a form of punishment... most times after such hard job we go home very tired and exhausted, as a result, we do not study. [...] sometimes we are asked to bring bathing soap and toothpaste for the teachers and for some of us whose parents cannot afford it we have no option but to receive some lashes from our teachers. There are times if we are not beaten we are asked to clean the school toilets.” -10 years old girl, Tonkolili District*



*Primary School,  
Tonkolili District,  
Sierra Leone, 2018,  
Photo Credit: Anni  
Lehto*

## Introduction

Education is a basic human right. Through quality education, children acquire the skills and knowledge that they need to lead a happy, successful life. However, around the world, the right to education is not fulfilled for a variety of reasons, ranging from extreme poverty to conflict. Sometimes children do have access to school, but instead of a positive, conducive learning environment, they face violence.

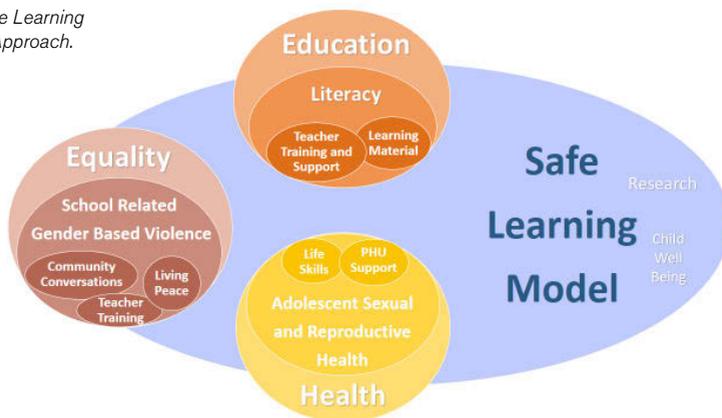
In Sierra Leone, not every child has the opportunity to go to school or to be free from violence. Past conflict, with its negative effects on education, and poverty together with the lack of or dilapidated school buildings, unpaid teachers, and harmful and discriminatory gender roles and attitudes, all contribute to a situation where children's right to education

does not materialise. School related gender based violence (SRGBV), corporal punishment and sexual abuse in particular, is a violation that decreases children’s wellbeing and negatively affects their learning.

### Safe Learning Model

To address the aforementioned issues, Concern Worldwide has developed the Safe Learning Model (SLM), which is part of an integrated programme being implemented between 2017 and 2021 in Tonkolili District, Sierra Leone. The aim of the programme is to provide access to quality education in a safe learning environment, improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH), and enhance livelihoods, protection and wellbeing of the target communities in the district.

*The Safe Learning Model Approach.*



As an integrated programme, it incorporates activities in three sectors: education, livelihoods, and health. The SLM seeks to prevent and respond to SRGBV by adopting a holistic approach to education. The programme strives to counter the issues of SRGBV and gender inequality that negatively affect children’s learning outcomes and can lead to children dropping out of school, as well as improve children’s wellbeing.

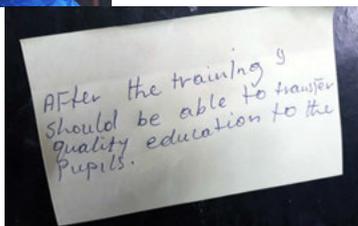
### From pilot to full implementation

The 2017/2018 school year witnessed the pilot phase of the SLM intervention in 10 different communities (5 treatment and 5 control communities) in the Tonkolili District. Starting from September 2018, the Safe Learning Model is rolling out in 100 communities across Tonkolili District.



Concern Worldwide launching the Safe Learning Model programme at the chiefdom level, Mobonto, Tonkolili District, Sierra Leone, 2018, Photo Credit: *Anni Lehto.*

The SLM implements multiple interventions in all of the three sectors. Interventions in livelihoods include improving food production, for example with a system of rice intensification and small-scale irrigations, and increasing access to social services and support systems such as village savings and loans groups (VSLs). Activities in the health sector vary from improving maternal and child health (in partnership with Peripheral Health Units), to improving adolescent sexual reproductive health (ASRH).



*Teacher's expectations from a Competency Based Early Grade Literacy -training held in Tonkolili, Sierra Leone, 2018, Photo Credit: Anni Lehto*

Interventions in the education sector include teacher training on early grade literacy and SRGBV, holding teacher learning circles, coaching of teachers' teaching competencies and provision of teaching and learning materials.

*"Though we have some teachers who after Concern's trainings no longer punish us but advise us to do the right thing, for those who have still not changed, I would like Concern to provide them additional training on this matter" - 10 years old girl, Tonkolili District*

SRGBV interventions at the school level address different aspects of the problem, from prevention to response, incorporating health, education, protection and gender initiatives through Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Clubs, as well as training of teachers and school management committees (SMCs) on changing negative gender norms and attitudes in the classroom.

At the community level, interventions engage parents and the wider community to address SRGBV and challenge unequal gender roles and attitudes. Examples of community-level activities include, dealing with behaviours leading to violence and attitudes that promote gender based violence through Community Conversations (CCs) and the Living Peace approaches. CCs engage community members to identify issues related to SRGBV, gender inequality and ASRH in their communities and support them to take action. Living Peace is an approach that supports couples with school-aged children in reducing violence in the household, challenging traditional gender roles and attitudes, and improving the school attendance of their children, especially girls.

*"Most times when I failed to listen to her [wife] advice, I encountered problems on the way. And I will say to myself, if only I had listened to my wife this would not have happened but yet I never listened to her advices as I believed it is only the woman that should take her husband advice" –Living Peace participant, Tonkolili District Graduation ceremony of Living Peace participants, Tonkolili District. Photo: Anni Lehto*



*Graduation ceremony of Living Peace participants, Tonkolili District, Sierra Leone, 2018, Photo Credit: Anni Lehto*

## **Research component**

Globally, there exists a lack of evidence and clear guidance on effective SRGBV programming. To address this gap, in 2012, Concern Worldwide commissioned another NGO, Promundo, to conduct a desk study on Theories and Promising Practices on Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality. Based on the findings, Concern designed the Safe Learning Model to prevent and respond to SRGBV within education programmes<sup>1</sup>.

The objective of the research component within the SLM is to test how the different elements of the programme activities work in improving literacy and child wellbeing, and reducing SRGBV, as well as how the different aspects of the programme interact. The hypothesis of the research is that children are able to learn better if they are safe and protected from SRGBV and they live in communities where there is support for gender equality. The University College Dublin (UCD) School of Education is leading on the research component. The research aims to influence macro-level change by contributing to the evidence base on what is effective in improving education outcomes for children at risk of SRGBV.

<sup>1</sup> The report can be found here: <https://concern2com.sharepoint.com/sites/KExchange/Publications/Research%20on%20Theories%20and%20Promising%20Practices%20on%20Engaging%20Men%20and%20Boys%20in%20Gender%20Equality%20.pdf#search=engaging%20men>



The hypothesis of the research is that children are able to learn better if they are safe and protected from SRGBV and they live in communities where there is support for gender equality.

In order to measure the impact of the intervention, the target communities are divided into four groups of 25 communities as in the table below. All of the 105 communities receive health and livelihoods interventions, whereas education and SRGBV interventions vary in the different community groups.

The purpose of having different intervention groups is to find out if the statement; children learn better, when they are safe, can be confirmed.

Group	Comparison	Intervention 1	Intervention 2	Intervention 3
	25 Communities	25 Communities	25 Communities	30 Communities
Safe Learning interventions		Literacy	Literacy + SRGBV school level	Literacy + SRGBV school level + SRGBV community level
Integrated programme	Livelihoods and ASRH Services	Livelihoods and ASRH Services	Livelihood and ASRH Services	Livelihoods and ASRH Services

### The way forward

Children cannot be expected to learn and develop in an unsafe environment. Their surroundings, homes and communities have an impact on them. In order to improve children’s learning and wellbeing, we need a holistic approach that considers safety and security in schools and communities where children live. Some promising statements have been gathered since the beginning of the program:

*Teachers performing a role-play exercise during Social-Emotional Learning -training, Tonkolili District, Sierra Leone, 2018, Photo Credit: Anni Lehto*



*"I can assure you that it [corporal punishment] has drastically minimised, but whenever such cases come to my notice I always make sure I address it appropriately with the teachers involved and this is also helping to minimise punishment on children" -Head teacher, Tonkolili District*

*"From the sessions, I realised that I was the cause of all the problems in my home, I felt so ashamed to face my wife [...] I took advantage over her because I am the head of the home but one night I woke her up and apologised and she accepted. Since then, I started being a good husband, I consult her in decision making, help her in the domestic work and even take care of the children" -Living Peace participant, Tonkolili District*

*"When the facilitator will start talking on how a man should not force her wife to have sex, should assist her in domestic duties, not to deprive a woman on financial matters as long as it is for the development of the home and a lot more, my husband will turn slow and look at me and shook his head. One afternoon we were alone in the house, for the first time my husband knelt down and said sorry for all his wrongs and asked that the good advises we are getting from the sessions [...] we start implementing them in the home." -Living Peace Participant, Tonkolili District*



**By promoting a safe, accessible and positive learning environment, and fighting against harmful gender roles and attitudes, together with our programme participants, we can work towards a future where schools and communities are safe.**

There is still a long way to go to make schools and communities safe and to achieve gender equality in Sierra Leone. By promoting a safe, accessible and positive learning environment, and fighting against harmful gender roles and attitudes, together with our programme participants, we can work towards a future where schools and communities are safe. We want schools and communities to be free of violence and discrimination, where children can acquire the skills and knowledge they are entitled to.

*All the quotes are from case studies conducted by Mabrat Abdulai (Concern Worldwide Sierra Leone).*



*Concern staff facilitating a session with teachers and members of school management committees on teachers' attitudes towards students, Makelleh, Tonkolili District, Sierra Leone, 2018, Photo Credit: Anni Lehto*

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### For whom is the publication

All staff involved in designing, implementing, managing, monitoring, evaluating and communicating Concern's work. This publication should also be shared with partners.

### What this publication includes

- Promising practice
- Organisational learning
- Promotion of multi-sectoral and integrated approaches to programming
- Links to full reports

### What it doesn't include

- Targeted recommendations
- Additional evidence not included in the papers cited
- Detailed descriptions of interventions or their implementation

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**Connell Foley**: Editorial Adviser

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