



USAID | SOMALIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



SOMALIA PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES (SPSS)

SOMALIA YOUTH LEARNERS INITIATIVE (SYLI) BASELINE REPORT (DELIVERABLE)

IDIQ AID-623-I-14-00009

TASK ORDER AID-623-TO-14-00001

SOMALIA PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES (SPSS)

October 23, 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI) under IDIQ AID-623-I-14-00009, Task Order AID-623-TO-14-00001

SOMALIA PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES (SPSS)

SOMALIA YOUTH LEARNERS INITIATIVE (SYLI) BASELINE REPORT (DELIVERABLE)

IDIQ AID-623-I-14-00009
TASK ORDER AID-623-TO-15-00001

Submitted: October 23, 2015

Authors: Marta Colburn with Daniel Mwero, Jane Meme and Ahmed Hassan

International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI)

In the US:
IBTCI Home Office
8618 Westwood Center Drive
Suite 400
Vienna, VA 22182
Telephone : +1.703.749.0100

In Kenya:
Park Suites Building, Suite #9, Ground Floor
Parklands Road, Nairobi
Telephone: +254.786.866.793

IDIQ AID-632-I-14-00009

DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

Cover Page Photo: Jubba Secondary School, Kismayo Region, Federal Government of Somalia, September 2015.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The baseline study team would like to recognize the contributions of Ipsos, and Data & Research Solutions (DARS) who carried out data collection in Somalia under challenging circumstances. The baseline study team members complemented one another's skills and approaches in producing the following report.

Additionally, the baseline study team would like to express their appreciation to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education of the Federal Government of Somalia for their valuable input to and support for this research endeavor, and particularly to Professor Mohamed Abdulkadir Nur, Director General, and the staff of the Non-Formal Education Directorate. Additionally, sincere thanks goes to the Somalia Youth Learners Initiative team who facilitated all aspects of this research, in particular Olad Farah, Chief of Party (COP), Sadia Ali Aden, Deputy COP, Ahmed Madey Mohamed, Deputy Somalia Youth Learners Initiative Program Manager, as well as the various field staff who were essential in data collection process. Finally, special thanks are extended to the personnel from other stakeholders in the secondary education landscape in Somalia, especially USAID/Kenya and the USAID/Kenya and East Africa/Somalia Office staff, whose guidance and insights helped to provide a deeper understanding of SYLI and the importance of education for young people in the future of the country.

Last, but most important, we wish to thank students and teachers from secondary schools, community leaders and parents who, despite their daily challenges of family, work and study in a fragile Somalia, gave crucial time to be participate in this baseline study. Their insights and thoughts are the heart of the findings and conclusions of this study.

Baseline Study Team

Marta Colburn, Team Leader
Daniel Mwero, Senior Researcher
Jane Rita Meme, Qualitative Researcher
Ahmed Adan Hassan, Education Expert

CONTENTS

- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... I
- CONTENTS..... II
 - TABLE OF TABLES..... II
 - TABLE OF FIGURES..... III
- ACRONYMS V
- GLOSSARY OF TERMS VI
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY I
 - EVALUATION PURPOSE AND BASELINE STUDY QUESTIONS I
 - BASELINE STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS..... I
 - HIGHLIGHTS FROM FINDINGS II
 - CONCLUSIONS II
 - FUTURE DIRECTIONS III
- I. INTRODUCTION I
 - I.1. PURPOSE OF BASELINE STUDY & INTENDED AUDIENCE I
 - I.2. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS I
 - I.3. BACKGROUND 2
 - I.4. BASELINE STUDY RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 3
 - SAMPLING..... 4
 - DATA COLLECTION 5
- I. BASELINE FINDINGS 5
 - 2.1. KEY FINDINGS - STUDENT PERFORMANCE..... 5
 - 2.2. KEY FINDINGS - TEACHER COMPETENCY 6
 - 2.3. KEY FINDINGS - LEARNING OUTCOMES..... 8
 - SCHOOL-LEVEL FACTORS 9
 - COMMUNITY-LEVEL FACTORS 10
 - SYLI INDICATOR FINDINGS 11
 - 2.4. KEY FINDINGS - FEMALE STUDENT ENROLLMENT..... 12
 - SCHOOL-LEVEL FACTORS 12
 - COMMUNITY-LEVEL FACTORS 13
 - 2.5. KEY FINDINGS - YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT 17
 - SCHOOL-LEVEL FACTORS 18
 - COMMUNITY-LEVEL FACTORS 19
- 3. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS 19
 - 3.1. CONCLUSIONS..... 19
 - SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT PERFORMANCE 20
 - SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER COMPETENCY..... 20
 - LEARNING OUTCOMES 20
 - GIRLS' ENROLLMENT 20
 - YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT 21
 - FINAL CONCLUSION - VALUE OF EDUCATION..... 21
 - 3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR END-LINE EVALUATION 21
 - 3.3. OBSERVATIONS FOR SYLI 22
 - 3.4. OBSERVATIONS FOR SYLI AMEP TARGETS..... 22

TABLE OF TABLES

- Table 1: Summary Baseline Data Collection Outputs i
- Table 2: Factors Influencing Learning Outcomes..... 9
- Table 3: Factors Influencing Girls' Enrollment in Secondary School (Average %) 12

Table 4: Factors Influencing Youth Civic Engagement.....	17
--	----

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of Somalia.....	2
Figure 2: Student Exam Findings	6
Figure 3: Summary Teacher Profile.....	7
Figure 4: Use of English Language in Instruction.....	8
Figure 5: Questionnaire Response to "An educated girl is..."	13
Figure 6: Composite Civic Engagement Attitudes.....	18

ANNEXES

1. Baseline Study Statement of Objectives
2. Baseline Study Team Qualifications
3. SYLI Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – Indicators and Targets
4. Detailed Research Methodology
5. Baseline Study Tools
6. FGDs, KIs & Stakeholder Participants
7. Tables with Detailed Baseline Findings
8. Resources Consulted
9. Conflict of Interest forms by evaluation team members

APPENDICES

1. Quantitative Frequencies (Microsoft Word)
2. Coded Qualitative Data Outputs (Microsoft Word)
3. Secondary School Student and NFE Learner Exams - Answer Keys and Marking Schemes
4. Student Examination Results (Microsoft Excel)
5. SYLI NFE Baseline/End-Line Data Management Manual
6. Powerpoint “SYLI NFE Baseline Assessment Tool Training”

Tables in Annexes

Annex 4:

- 4.1: SYLI Baseline Study Matrix of Questions, Data Collection, Sampling Approach & Data Analysis Methods
- 4.2: Pilot Testing of SYLI Baseline Study Tools
- 4.3: SYLI Baseline Study Data Collection Outputs & Targets

Annex 7:

- 7.1: Subject and Grade-Level Student Exam Findings
- 7.2: Gender of Students by Grade-Level
- 7.3: Disaggregate Student Examination Findings
- 7.4: Summary of Disaggregated Student Exam Results by Region
- 7.5: Teacher Classroom Observation Results
- 7.6: Teacher Priorities for Improving Teaching Ability
- 7.7: Composite of Community Perceptions on School Organization & Management
- 7.8: Parental Attitudes Toward NFE Programs
- 7.9: Satisfaction with the Quality of Education
- 7.10: Gender Disaggregated Student Household Responsibilities & Studies
- 7.11: Parent Questionnaire Gender Disaggregation of Community Factors Influencing Girls’ Education
- 7.12: Student Questionnaire Gender Disaggregation of Community Factors Influencing Girls’ Education
- 7.13: Parental Educational Expectations of Children

- 7.14: Student Educational Expectations
- 7.15: Cross Tabulations: Parent's Education Level and Student Education Goals
- 7.16: Gender Disaggregation of Family Attitudes Toward Education
- 7.17: Statements Regarding Educated Girls
- 7.18: Cross Tabulation - Parental Education and Attitudes Toward Girls' Education
- 7.19: Composite of Attitudes Toward Youth Civic Engagement
- 7.20: Gender Disaggregated Student Attitudes Toward Youth Civic Engagement
- 7.21: Gender Disaggregated Parental Attitudes Toward Youth Civic Engagement

ACRONYMS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AET	Africa Educational Trust
AMEP	Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CEC	Community Education Committee
CFBT	Center for British Teachers
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DARS	Data and Research Solutions
DEO	District Education Officer
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity Contract
IBTCI	International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc.
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOE	Ministry of Education
NFE	Non-Formal Education
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
REO	Regional Education Officer
SOO	Statement of Objective
SPSS	Somalia Program Support Services
SYLI	Somalia Youth Learners Initiative
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/Somalia	USAID/Kenya and East Africa/Somalia

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Civic engagement: SYLI defines this term as “...an essential element in preparing young people for lives of purpose. It refers to identifying critical issues affecting Somali youth and utilizing youth-driven resolutions to make positive difference through a combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation.” SYLI’s civic engagement activities are intended to promote learning for life-long, engaged citizenship and a more productive role for youth in society. This broadly covers engagement in non-political youth programs through partnership with Somali government and youth networks to work collectively for a more productive role for them through: (1) Engaging students in a curriculum that includes significant in-school and out-of-school voluntary public work preparing them for lives of active and engaged citizenship, and (2) Engaging out-of-school young people in youth networks.¹

Form 1, Form 2, Form 3, and Form 4 Secondary School: Equivalent to grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 of high school in the United States, with an approximate age-range beginning age 14-15 and concluding at age 18-19.

Khat (*Catha Edulis*): Known as "qaad" or "jaad" in Somalia it is a shrub-like plant native to East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula whose leaves and stem tips are widely chewed in Somalia for the stimulating effect.² The chewing of khat produces an amphetamine-like stimulation that induces a sense of euphoria.

Public, community, private schools: According to the MOE a school is public if it is situated in a public space or housed in buildings that belong to the state and students/pupils pay subsidized tuition fees. A community school is defined as one established, organized, and run by a community or clan and students pay subsidized fees.³ In private schools students pay higher fees than in both public and community schools, although the distinction between private and community schools is not always clear. There are a number of large umbrella organizations which manage networks of community/private schools.⁴ According to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education of the Federal Government of Somalia (henceforth referred to as MOE) in Benadir Region in South Central Somalia, only “3.8 percent of the secondary education enrollment is authorized and managed by the government and the rest (96.2 percent) is managed by non-governmental entities like communities, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and the private sector.”⁵

Social vices: Interpreted for purposes of this research as a variety of negative social practices that are generally understood in the Somali context to include violence, extremism, piracy, clan conflicts, illegal immigration, dropping out of school, and use of alcohol, khat, and other recreational drugs.

Urban versus rural schools: MOE categorizes any town which is an administrative center as urban, irrespective of the number of residents. Additionally, the MOE Director General noted that the majority of secondary education institutions are located in urban areas with sufficient population concentration to warrant a secondary school.

¹ Mercy Corps (2015). “Civic Engagement Strategy for In-School and Out-of-School Youth.” Mercy Corps, Somaliland National Youth Umbrella and Mudug Development Association Network. p. 5-7.

² On numerous occasions in the past there have been unsuccessful attempts to ban khat, during the British colonial era, in 1983 by the military regime of Siyad Barre and more recently in 2006 and 2008 in south central by Islamists. Hansen, Peter (2010). “The Ambiguity of Khat in Somaliland.” *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*. p. 591.

³ According to the UNESCO study conducted in the 2007-2008 academic year, it was found that in South Central 94.5 percent of schools charge school fees for students. “Survey of Secondary Education in Somalia 2008.” p. 26.

⁴ There are 11 in South Central according to the “Interim Education Sector Strategic Plan 2013/2014 – 2015/2016 for South Central Zone.” Ministry of Human Development and Public Services Directorate of Education. p. 6.

⁵ MOE, Federal State of Somalia, EMIS 2013-2014.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND BASELINE STUDY QUESTIONS

The purpose of the Somalia Youth Learners Initiative (SYLI) baseline study is to establish pre-intervention (baseline) measurements that can be tracked during the second phase⁶ of the SYLI activity and used to compare end-line measurements via a performance evaluation. This study focuses on five key questions of importance to the USAID/Kenya and East Africa/Somalia Office Assistance Objective: “Somalia’s Stability Increased through Targeted Interventions that Foster Good Governance, Economic Recovery, and Reduce the Appeal of Extremism,” through the activity goal that “Youth contribute more positively and productively to society.” The five study questions seek to measure baseline factors that influence student and teacher competencies in formal secondary education and Non-Formal Education (NFE) basic literacy and numeracy and factors that influence learning outcomes, girls’ enrollment, and civic engagement in SYLI Phase II targeted schools.

The key questions of the baseline study are as follows:

1. What proportion of students, in formal schools and non-formal centers targeted by SYLI in Phase II, demonstrate appropriate knowledge?⁷
2. What proportion of in-service teachers and NFE tutors that will be targeted by SYLI demonstrate effective teaching skills that promote learning?
3. What school-level and community-level factors, in order of the level of influence, affect learning outcomes?
4. What are school-level and community-level factors, in order of the level of influence, that affect enrollment of female students?
5. What are the factors that influence the level of civic engagement among youth in targeted school areas?

BASELINE STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

The SYLI baseline study utilized a mixed methods approach, which included a combination of document review, quantitative surveys, classroom observation, student examinations, focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth key informant interviews (KIIs) and stakeholder meetings. The quantitative methods of the baseline study adopted single difference measures to gauge variance in outcomes of key questions at the eventual end-line. The combination of methods established baseline measures on a number of indicators for SYLI from which to assess changes in outcomes achieved by the activity at end-line. Additionally, the data collected will provide evidence-based findings and analysis of key research questions that will facilitate tracking progress, or lack thereof, in the future.

Data Collection Method	Completed
KII – Regional & District Education Officers (REOs & DEOs) ⁸ , Religious Leaders & Clan Elders	12
FGD with Community Education Committee (CEC) members & Student Leaders	25
Stakeholder Meetings	6
Student Questionnaire	419
Teacher Questionnaire	104
Parents Questionnaire	412
Secondary School Teachers Observed	105
Secondary School Student Examinations	418

⁶ SYLI Phase I: September 2011-September 2014. Phase II: October 2014-September 2016.

⁷ For formal schools, appropriate refers to grade-level knowledge. For non-formal centers, appropriate refers to proficiency in basic literacy and numeracy.

⁸ Decentralized government Ministry of Education representatives.

The data collection process in 15 secondary school communities took place in Somalia from June 4 to 20, 2015 and was rolled out in six regions in 11 districts. SPSS contracted Ipsos, a French-affiliated Kenyan market information and research company, to collect and enter data and carry out preliminary data analysis. Ipsos sub-contracted Data and Research Solutions (DARS), a Somali-based research and consulting company, to carry out the field data collection in targeted schools. A summary of the participants in the field data collection is found in Table I.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FINDINGS

- All three questionnaire respondent groups agreed about the top school-level factors positively influencing learning outcomes – namely “Teachers,” “School Management,” and “Textbooks and educational materials” – and on their level of influence – first, second and third – the only instance of such a consensus in this research.
- From the questionnaires, the highest rated school-level factor negatively influencing learning outcomes for students and teachers was “Inadequate/lack of toilets,” with teachers rating equally high “Weak/absence of education materials,” and for parents it was “Safety & security in the school.”
- Respondents to the three questionnaires were in agreement that among community-level factors negatively impacting learning outcomes “Wide-spread poverty” was the most significant predictive variable (students 70 percent, teachers 82 percent and parents 85 percent).
- Among community-level factors influencing girls’ enrollment students and parents agreed that the most significant negative factor was “Lack of support for education within the family” (67 and 77 percent, respectively marked it as having a Strong Influence), and among teachers this factor was the second most significant negative factor (81 percent).
- Also highly rated among community-level factor negatively affecting girls’ enrollment was “Poverty & family inability to cover education expenses” (students second at 62 percent, teachers first at 82 percent, and parents second at 72 percent).
- In the survey, female students had only slightly lower educational expectations than their male peers. Eighty nine percent of young women and 93 percent of young men aspire to a university education. However, parental educational expectations favor boys. Ninety five percent of fathers aspired to a university-level education for their sons, versus only 89.6 percent for their daughters. Mothers’ hopes for tertiary education were 92.1 percent for their sons and 90.5 for their daughters.
- In the baseline study there was a clear emphasis on factors negatively impacting girls’ enrollment in secondary school. However, FGDs and KIs participants emphasized that the situation has immensely improved in recent years mentioned 121 times in 74 percent of qualitative sources.
- The most important role contributing to youth civic engagement among students and teachers was “Decision making about their own lives” and for parents it was “Student governance and leadership.”
- The most significant factor limiting youth civic engagement for students was “Adult attitudes that young people lack experience,” for teachers it was “Lack of economic opportunities,” while for parents it was “Use of khat.”

CONCLUSIONS

418 secondary school students sat for examinations in English language, biology and mathematics in Forms 1, 2, and 3 in the 15 schools that were included in the baseline study. The average score for questions answered correctly by students in all three subjects was 38 percent, meaning that students performed lower than half as well as expected for their grade level. Girls and boys scored comparably: an average of 40 percent and 38 percent respectively across all three grades and across all three subjects. These findings will serve as the baseline for the eventual end-line evaluation to measure variance.

One hundred and five secondary school teachers (only two female teachers were available during data collection to participate in the study) were observed in the classroom and participated in a self-administered questionnaire. The teacher observation exercise assessed personal skills and competency in classroom management skills, instructional planning, and teaching effectiveness. The tool yielded an average score of 3.66 (out of a total of 5 points, with 5 = excellent) which will serve as the baseline metric to compare against, at the eventual end-line.

There was agreement in both quantitative and qualitative findings that the top factor positively influencing learning outcomes was teachers. The most significant community-level factor positively influencing learning outcomes was parental support and encouragement for their secondary school-age offspring. As parental education levels rise there is an increase in educational expectations for their children. There was an overwhelming consensus that the most significant community-level deterrent to learning outcomes was poverty and a lack of household income for educational expenses. The role of conflict and insecurity was also seen, in both qualitative and quantitative findings, as having a negative impact on learning outcomes. However, participants in FGDs and KIs perceive that the security situation has improved recently and that this has led to increased secondary school enrollment.

The most significant school-level factor hindering girls' enrollment was the lack of female teachers. At the community-level, this baseline study identified parental attitudes as the most critical in negatively impacting girls' enrollment. Girls' enrollment was perceived to be heavily influenced by family income and that when resource limitations dictate choosing which children can attend school, preference is given to sons. One observation emerging from this baseline study is that, while there are significant gender inequalities in education as a result of cultural, economic, and access issues, the situation is steadily improving.

A further conclusion is that the attitudes of teachers and school management are the most important factors that influence the level of youth in civic engagement. This research found that teachers reward discipline and hard work and that students are inspired by older students (both those in secondary school and in higher education) to become active in school and the community. The most significant negative factors that inhibit youth civic engagement were seen by participants to be khat and other social vices.

The commitment and passion for education in the 15 secondary school communities for this baseline study emerged through all data sources. Somalis realize that education is the key to their children's success and to fostering development in their society. In the absence of a central government, Somali parents had only themselves and their communities to teach their children. In the midst of a "failed state," they have created a system which, despite its flaws, works reasonably well. The current federal government, with the support of local communities, the Somali diaspora and international stakeholders, has the opportunity to carry forward this legacy and support this entrepreneurial, educational spirit.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Observations for SYLI include:

- The gender gap among teachers in Somalia general, and in South Central in particular, is a significant challenge for the system of secondary level education and for SYLI. While SYLI is clearly seeking to address this issue through a number of interventions, this gender gap impacts a number of key questions in this baseline study and thus warrants encouraging SYLI to continue focusing efforts on strengthening the recruitment, training and retention of female teachers.
- The remaining 68 teachers observed at baseline who did not participate in the recent in-service training should be included in the upcoming round of training during the break between the two semesters (December 2015-January 2016).

- The SYLI theory of change should more clearly articulate the economic assumptions underlying the intervention, i.e. SYLI investments will have a positive impact on learning outcomes and girls' enrollment; and parents will be able to afford to send more of their children to school or spend offset savings on other essentials.

I. INTRODUCTION

International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI) was awarded the Somalia Program Support Services (SPSS) contract (IDIQ AID-623-I-14-00009) on August 8, 2014. SPSS received a Statement of Objectives on February 26, 2015, to conduct a baseline study of the Somalia Youth Learners Initiative (SYLI) Task Order AID-623-TO-15-00001. Implementation of the baseline study began in early May with a team led by Marta Colburn and including Ahmed Hassan, Daniel Mwero, and Jane Meme (see Annex 2 for team member qualifications).

The USAID/Somalia Office signed Cooperative Agreement No. AID-623-A-11-00034 with Mercy Corps on September 30, 2011, with total activity funding of \$38,000,000. The objective of the activity, initially named Somalia Youth Leaders Initiative, was to empower Somali youth by providing access to basic education, livelihood opportunities, and means for civic participation. SYLI is implemented by a consortium of international and local partners: Mercy Corps (prime), CARE International, and Save the Children as international partners; and Somaliland National Youth Organization and Mudug Development Association Network as local partners. Following a mid-term performance evaluation in September 2014, the implementation period for the activity's Phase II was launched in October 1, 2014, to continue through September 29, 2016. This new phase is marked by a change in the name of the activity to Somalia Youth Learner's Initiative with a modified scope of work based on the findings of the mid-term evaluation. Phase II builds on Phase I's success and increases the focus on both formal and non-formal educational activities in Somaliland, Puntland and the liberated areas in South Central region of Somalia. Specifically, Phase II of SYLI addresses three critical constraints highlighted in the education sector strategic plans of Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia:⁹ (i) inequitable access to quality basic education, (ii) poor quality education and learning, and (iii) weak institutional and technical capacity of the Ministries of Education. See Annex 3 for the SYLI Phase II Indicators and Targets.

I.1. PURPOSE OF BASELINE STUDY & INTENDED AUDIENCE

The purpose of the SYLI baseline study is to establish pre-intervention (baseline) measurements that can be tracked during the second phase of the SYLI activity and used to compare end-line measurements via a performance evaluation. This study focuses on five key questions of importance to USAID/Somalia Office's Assistance Objective: "Somalia's Stability Increased through Targeted Interventions that Foster Good Governance, Economic Recovery, and Reduce the Appeal of Extremism," through the activity goal that "Youth contribute more positively and productively to society." The five key study questions seek to measure baseline factors that influence student and teacher competencies in secondary school education and in NFE programs, as well as identify factors that influence learning outcomes, girls' enrollment and civic engagement in schools that have been targeted by SYLI Phase II activities. The baseline study data collection focused on SYLI-supported secondary schools in South Central Somalia and the baseline team is equipping SYLI to collect baseline and end-line data from NFE programs on a rolling basis.

As per the Task Order, the audience for the SYLI baseline study is the USAID/Kenya and East Africa/Somalia Office, USAID/E3, USAID/Africa Bureau/Sustainable Development, Ministries of Education and Youth, Federal Government of Somalia, Mercy Corps, and other USAID/Somalia Office education partners.

I.2. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key questions of the baseline study are as follows:

⁹ Available at: www.globalpartnership.org/country/somalia.

1. What proportion of students, in formal schools and non-formal centers targeted by SYLI in Phase II, demonstrate appropriate knowledge?¹⁰
2. What proportion of in-service teachers and NFE tutors that will be targeted by SYLI demonstrate effective teaching skills that promote learning?
3. What school-level and community-level factors, in order of the level of influence, affect learning outcomes?
4. What are school-level and community-level factors, in order of the level of influence, that affect enrollment of female students?
5. What are the factors that influence the level of civic engagement among youth in targeted school areas?

1.3. BACKGROUND

Currently, Somalia is undergoing significant political, social and economic transitions with the first central federal government since 1991. The advent of the Somalia Federal Republic in August 2012 has been met with optimism by both the Somali people and the international community.

Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world. The *2012 UNDP Human Development Report* (the latest issue) estimated that per capita Gross Domestic Product was \$284 and an estimated 82 percent were considered poor across multiple dimensions, with 89 percent in south central, ranking higher than Puntland and Somaliland (75 and 72 percent respectively).¹¹

The report also noted that, if internationally comparable data were available, Somalia would rank 165 out of 170 countries in the *2010 Global Human Development Report*.

Rebuilding an education system decimated by two decades of conflict and displacement is a priority for the Federal Government of Somalia and the international community. The two northern zones of Somaliland and Puntland may be starting from a higher base level, but education in all three areas of the country face common challenges. Somalia has one of the world's lowest enrollment rates for school-aged children. Only 42 percent of children are in school and of those, only 36 percent are girls. Only 15 percent of teachers are female and the majority of these lack appropriate credentials. The number of out-of-school and at-risk children and youth aged 6-18 years has been estimated at 4.4 million.¹² In 2006, according to UNESCO, approximately 86 percent of 15-24 year olds had not completed primary-level



¹⁰ For formal schools, appropriate refers to grade-level knowledge. For non-formal centers, appropriate refers to proficiency in basic literacy and numeracy.

¹¹ UNDP (2012), "Somalia Human Development Report 2012: Empowering Youth for Peace and Development." p. xviii. Sample size for the report was 3,573 throughout the country (page 189). The most recent population figures are from UNFPA UNFPA. "Population Estimation Survey 2014 Somalia." October 2014.

¹² Federal Republic of Somalia (2012). "Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 Educating for Resilience." Ministry of Human Development and Public Services, Supporting Education Sectors in the North West, North East and Central Southern Zones of Somalia, with support from UNICEF. p. 1 and 8 (for female teacher figure).

education in Somalia.¹³

Gender dynamics in Somalia are complex and vary between location, social and cultural group, and are affected by education and economic factors. Nevertheless, gender disparities are significant and, according to the UNDP *Gender Inequality Index*, Somalia ranks the fourth lowest position globally if internationally comparable data were available.¹⁴ The gender gap is particularly evident in the education sector where, according to UNICEF, the secondary school participation rate (net attendance ratio 2008-2012) for female students was 8.2 percent, versus 11.5 percent for males.¹⁵ The adult literacy rate among those surveyed for the *2012 UNDP Human Development Report* (aged 15 years and above) was estimated at 31 percent (26 percent for females and 36 percent for males). However, the literacy rate in the youth cohort (14-29) was estimated at 48 percent (53 percent for males and 43 percent for females), though with higher levels among urban youth (55 percent compared to 33 percent among rural youth).¹⁶

The UNFPA 2014 population survey estimated the population of Somalia to be 12.3 million, of whom 45.6 percent are under 15 years of age, and 75 percent under 30, with the youth demographic (14-29 years) comprising 29.4 percent.¹⁷ Young people face one of the highest unemployment rates in the world at 67 percent, within an estimated rate of 54 percent among Somalis aged 15 to 64. Conflict, poverty, joblessness and exclusion often leave youth frustrated. Among youth surveyed for the Human Development Report the overall frustration index (nine socioeconomic and political factors) was 3.96 out of 5. The highest levels are 4.3 in South Central Somalia, followed by 3.7 in Puntland and Somaliland.

I.4. BASELINE STUDY RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The SYLI baseline study team mobilized in May with the in-brief meeting held on May 12, 2015, with the USAID Contracting Officer's Representative for SPSS and Agreement Officer's Representative for SYLI. Data collection took place in Somalia from June 4-20, 2015. In-briefing and out-briefing meetings with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education, Federal Government of Somalia, took place on May 23, 2015 and August 2, 2015, respectively. See Annex 4 for the detailed agreed upon methodology.

The baseline team reviewed a wide-range of documents that provided essential background about SYLI and contextual knowledge on secondary education, and challenges and potentials for the gender dimensions of education and youth. Additionally, the baseline team utilized a number of external resources in developing specific tools including: secondary school student grade level and subject examinations;¹⁸ in-service secondary school teacher competency classroom assessment checklist;¹⁹ NFE learner basic numeracy and literacy tests;²⁰ and NFE tutor assessment tool.²¹ See Annex 9 for the

¹³ Education Policy and Data Center (2014). "Somalia: National Education Profile 2014." FHI360.

¹⁴ UNDP (2012). p. 189.

¹⁵ Available from: www.unicef.org/infobycountry/somalia_statistics.html

¹⁶ UNDP (2012). p. 54.

¹⁷ UNFPA (2014). "Population Estimation Survey 2014 Somalia." p. 42.

¹⁸ Adapted from appropriate subject and grade-level examinations from Somalia from the Alpha Primary and Secondary School, Banadir, Mogadishu. Forwarded to Baseline study team by SYLI.

¹⁹ Adapted from Mecklenburg County Public Schools, Virginia, United States. "Teacher Formal Classroom Observation Form."

²⁰ Learner basic literacy and numeracy examination was adapted from tools including those developed by Africa Educational Trust [Abdi, Ali Hussein and Hicks, Rod (2013). "Somali Pastoralist Education and Training 2008-11 Impact Assessment Study]" and samples of examinations from the Somaliland Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Testing Centre of the National Testing Unit Non-Formal Education.

²¹ Adapted from the Appendix A in United States Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education (2009) "Standards in Action: Innovations For Standards-Based Education."

complete list of resources consulted.

The SYLI baseline study utilized a mixed methods approach, which included document review, quantitative surveys, classroom observation, student examinations, focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth key informant interviews (KIIs) and stakeholder meetings.²² See Table 2 for a summary of data collection methods and the gender of participants. The quantitative methods of the baseline study adopted single difference measures to gauge variance in outcomes of key questions at the eventual end-line. The combination of methods established baseline measures on a number of indicators for SYLI from which to assess changes in outcomes achieved by the activity at end-line. Additionally, the data collected will provide evidence-based findings and analysis of key research questions that will facilitate tracking progress, or lack thereof, in the future.

June 1, 2015, tools were piloted in Mogadishu in four secondary and adjustments to the instruments made based on feedback. All tools were administered in the Somali language except the student examinations which were in English, as it is the language of instruction at the secondary level in Somalia. The examinations were proctored by the baseline field data collection team. Questionnaires were self-administered by students and teachers and for parents by an enumerator using paper-and-pencil method, as was the teacher observation checklist. Study participants are presented by gender in Table 2. See Annex 4 Table 4.1 for the matrix of research methods and Table 4.2 for detailed data collection outputs, Annex 5 for baseline tools and Annex 6 for participants in FGD sessions, KIIs and stakeholder meetings.

Sampling²³

The baseline study design focused only on secondary schools in South Central Somalia and data collection occurred in all operational schools that will be benefiting from SYLI Phase II interventions in the targeted districts.²⁴ Due to a variety of factors data collection occurred after the academic year had concluded so teachers mobilized their students and their parents, with SYLI and MOE assisting in identifying DEOs, REOs, Clan Elders and Religious Leaders. Despite these constraints, the sampling of teachers and students included a sufficient number of formal in-service teachers and students of secondary schools to

Data Collection Method	# Male	# Female
KII - REOs and DEOs (6 Interviews)	6	0
KII - Religious Leaders & Clan Elders (6 Interviews)	6	0
FGD with CEC Members (15 Sessions)	75	25
FGD with Student Leaders (10 Sessions)	50	31
Stakeholder Meetings (6 Meetings)	11	1
Student Questionnaire (Total of 419)	252	167
Teacher Questionnaire (Total of 104)	102	2
Parents Questionnaire (Total of 412)	222	190
Secondary School Teachers Observed (Total of 105)	103	2
Secondary School Student Examinations (Total of 418 ¹)	265	153

make statistically valid conclusions. Sufficient numbers of NFE Tutors and Learners will also be covered by SYLI on a rolling basis to achieve similarly valid conclusions. See Annex 4 section 4.10 for more detailed data limitations covering selection bias, coverage of study targets and generalizability of data.

²² Qualitative findings are presented in this study noting the number of references in NVivo (times that a theme or area of interest) is mentioned and the percentage of sources it was mentioned in (17 FGD sessions and 10 KIIs met quality standards for coding and inclusion included in the analysis). See Annex 4, section 4.7 for details.

²³ See Table 4.1 in Annex 4 for detailed sampling approach, for each key question and baseline target group.

²⁴ With the following gaps: one of the 16 targeted schools where students were sitting exams and thus data was not collected; two schools in Galgadud Region teachers were absent due to training in Mogadishu; two schools did not have a have students enrolled in all three grade levels.

The limited number of women participating in the qualitative tools of the study was offset through a number of ways including: ensuring that FGD session transcripts noted the gender of participant comments; focused interactions with SYLI female team members and female trainees participating in the NFE assessment tool training conducted in Mogadishu (July 28 and 29) under the auspices of the MOE NFE Directorate; and expanding the document/literature review of resources with a strong gender analysis.

Data Collection

The data collection process took place in 15 functional secondary school communities in Somalia between June 4-20, 2015, in six regions (Lower Juba, Lower Shebelle, Bay, Gedo, Mudug, and Galgadud) in nine districts (Baidoa, Balanbale, Belet Hawa, Cabudwaq, Dhusamareeb, Galkayo, Kismayo, Marka, and Wanlawayn). SPSS contracted Ipsos, a French-affiliated Kenyan market information and research company, to collect all data, enter into a database and conduct the preliminary data analysis, who in turn sub-contracted Data and Research Solutions (DARS), a Somali-based research and consulting company, to carry out all field data collection in targeted schools and surrounding communities.

Due to the cooperative relationship between USAID and the MOE, the Ministry in Mogadishu was supportive of the baseline study and facilitated access to schools. The Ministry received a briefing about the methodology before data collection began, and engaged in a briefing and discussion on the preliminary findings at the end of data collection. Instructed by USAID, SPSS contacted the Africa Education Trust, an NGO operating in Somalia that shared its work developing school examinations.

I. BASELINE FINDINGS

This section of the report will present the findings and conclusions of the SYLI baseline study. Annex 7 presents key tables of detailed baseline findings, Appendix I contains the quantitative frequencies and Appendix 2 presents the coded qualitative data from NVivo.

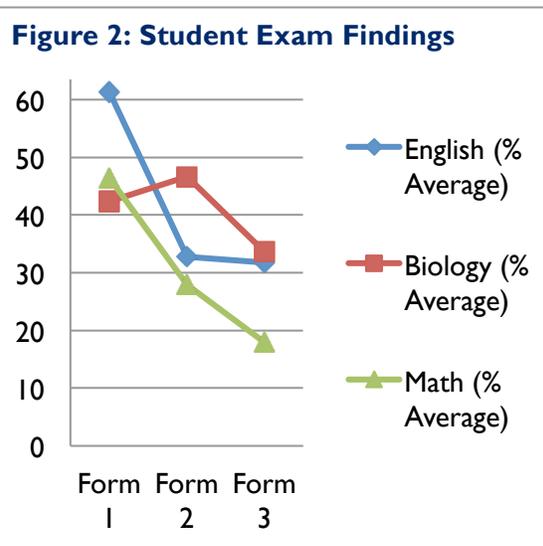
2.1. KEY FINDINGS - STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The key baseline study question related to student competencies is: “*What proportion of students, in formal schools and non-formal centers targeted by SYLI in Phase II, demonstrate appropriate knowledge?*” For formal schools this study establishes baseline data for secondary school student performance through grade-level examinations in three core subjects for Form 1, 2, and 3 level students (equivalent to high school grades 9, 10, and 11). Test content was designed to assess “appropriate knowledge” in the Somalia educational context by measuring student knowledge generally expected to be mastered at specific grade levels. In the absence of a standard curriculum the grade-level tests were adapted from a ‘typical’ secondary school for mathematics, biology and English language.²⁵ See Appendix 3 for test answer keys and marking schemes. For NFE learners, the baseline study team developed a tool to assess competency in basic literacy and numeracy skills²⁶ (see Annex 5 - SYLI Baseline Study Data Collection Tools). The results from these tests will be recorded on a rolling basis by SYLI at the beginning and conclusion of each six-month NFE course and be maintained in a Microsoft Excel database developed by the baseline study team for eventual comparative analysis at end-line.

²⁵ The lack of a standard curriculum is a significant educational challenge in Somalia, highlighted by a 2008 UNESCO study which found that in South Central only 40 percent of schools use a range of locally adapted curricula, with the remaining coming from other countries: 31 percent from Kenya; 15 percent from the United Arab Emirates; and 15 percent from Saudi Arabia. “Survey of Secondary Education in Somalia 2008.” p. 23.

²⁶ Adapted from tools developed by Africa Educational Trust [Abdi, Ali Hussein and Hicks, Rod (2013). “Somali Pastoralist Education and Training 2008-11 Impact Assessment Study”] and examinations from the Somaliland Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Testing Centre of the National Testing Unit Non-Formal Education.

Four hundred and eighteen secondary school students took the examinations, 265 male and 153 female (63 and 37 percent, respectively) in English, biology, and mathematics in Forms 1, 2, and 3²⁷ in the 15 schools included in the baseline study. Figure 2 summarizes the average marks of questions that students answered correctly in each subject and grade level in the three subject areas. The subject level average score for all three grades was 42 percent for English, 41 percent for biology and 31 percent for mathematics. The average for all three subjects in Form 1 was 50 percent, Form 2 was 36 percent, and Form 3 was 28 percent. See Annex 7, Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3 for detailed results and gender disaggregated findings.



The following statements can be made about the results of these examinations:

- The average student scores in the three key subjects – mathematics, biology and English was 38%.
- The only subject where students performed above 50 percent (meaning that students performed more than half as well as expected for their grade level) was in English Form 1 with 61 percent. The lowest subject performance overall was in mathematics with an average of 31 percent for all three Forms.
- As students progressed from lower to higher grades, performance actually decreased, except for biology in Form 2 where there was a slight increase compared to Form 1.
- Of the three subjects, mathematics had the most drastic decline between grade levels, with a 28 percent drop from Form 1 to Form 3.
- Differences between male and female student scores were small in all subjects, no greater than two percentage points.

Although not stellar, these results appear (from the limited secondary sources available) to be within the range of other students (albeit for Form 4). It should be noted that a significant proportion of these teachers (63 percent) did have a basis of comparison with students in other schools, as they self-reported that they had experience teaching in other schools.

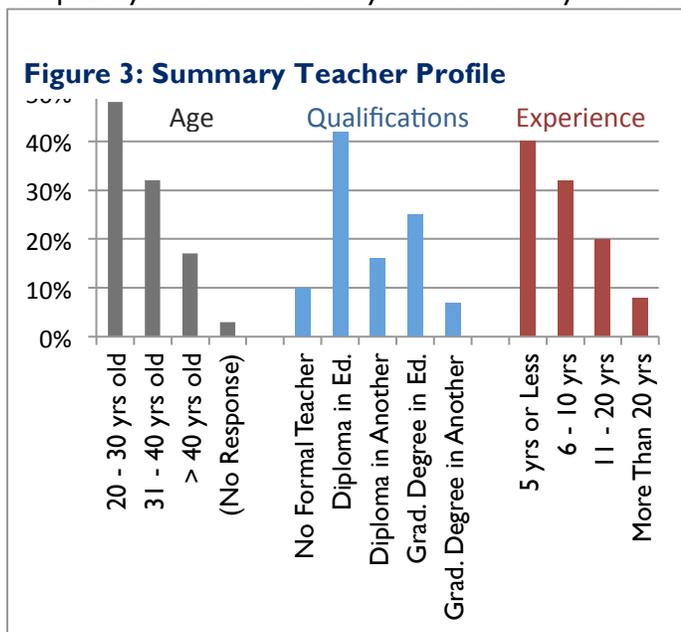
In FGD sessions and KIIs, participants consistently attested to the excellent academic performance of their students. These claims were substantiated with anecdotes such as: when students from their school transfer to other schools they were more advanced and were placed in higher grades; conversely when students transferred into their school the placement examination put them at a lower grade level than where they came from; when students from their schools entered competitions they won; and when graduates of their secondary school went to university they were top performers. However, there was no evidence available to support these assertions. It was frequently asserted in FGDs and KIIs that educated individuals are seen as being of a higher caliber than those who remain uneducated and ignorant. A personal characteristic perceived to be of value in student performance that was emphasized repeatedly was discipline. Students who are disciplined are seen as leaders and as more valuable to society than undisciplined young people.

2.2. KEY FINDINGS - TEACHER COMPETENCY

²⁷ Equivalent to grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 of high school, with an approximate age-range of 14 to 19.

The key evaluation question related to teacher competencies is: “What proportion of in-service teachers and non-formal education (NFE) tutors that will be targeted by SYLI demonstrate effective teaching skills that promote learning?” For formal in-service secondary school teachers, this study establishes baseline data on competency in key areas – classroom management skills, instructional planning, and teaching effectiveness. For NFE tutors, the baseline study team developed a checklist to assess competency (see Annex 5 - SYLI Baseline Study Data Collection Tools). The data from this tool will be collected on a rolling basis by SYLI at the beginning and conclusion of each six-month NFE course and will be maintained in a Microsoft Excel database developed by the baseline study team for analysis at the eventual end-line.

The baseline study observed 105 in-service teachers (only two female teachers were available during data collection to participate in the study).²⁸ This cadre of teachers also participated in a self-administered questionnaire.²⁹ Figure 3 presents a summary profile of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire. In June-July SYLI conducted the first round of in-service teacher training, with 37 of the 105 teachers observed in the baseline participating in the training. Of these 37 teachers, 30 were from Kismayo District, Lower Juba Region, out of the possible six regions included in the baseline.



The teacher observation checklist contained 16 teaching skills and capacities, 12 rated on a scale of 1-5, three were Yes or No observations and one rated English language skill over four possible categories.. The checklist was organized into four observation categories of Personal Skills, Management Skills, Instructional Planning, and Teaching Effectiveness. The tool yielded an average score of 3.66 (out of a total of five points, with 5 = excellent) in the twelve categories that were rated 1 to 5. See Annex 7 Table 7.5 for complete results.

The primary baseline data findings for in-service teachers in secondary schools were generated by the results of observing 105 teachers and completing the assessment checklist form. Additionally, a range of factors that influence the quality of instruction and teacher competencies were identified.³⁰ These included: personality, qualifications and training, as well as school-level factors such as pupil-teacher ratio, instructor compensation, school management, facilities, and teaching aides.³¹

Further insight on teacher competency from the self-administered questionnaire was provided when teachers were asked to rank inputs they felt would improve their teaching ability (outside of salary and compensation). “Improved school infrastructure” at 41 percent was the first in priority, followed by “More in-service teacher training” with 30 percent. See Table 7.6 in Annex 7 for details.

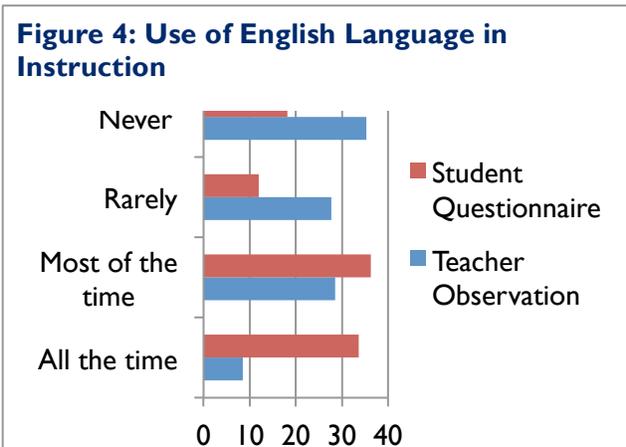
²⁸ According to the Federal Republic of Somalia (2012). “Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 Educating for Resilience” only 15 percent of teachers were female. Due to the limited number of female teachers participating, gender disaggregating findings among this target group are not presented.

²⁹ One teacher observed failed to complete the self-administered questionnaire.

³⁰ Including questionnaires, FGD and KII.

³¹ Teacher motivation was inadvertently left out of the questionnaires.

A specific skill identified as critical to the quality of instruction was English language, as the official language of instruction in secondary education in Somalia is English, except in the subjects of the Somali and Arabic languages and in Islamic studies. Thirty-nine percent of teachers in the questionnaire felt that their English language skills were Excellent, 36 percent felt their skills were Good, 19 percent felt they were Average, and three percent self-assessed their skills in each of the categories of Weak and Very Weak. Figure 4 compares student questionnaire responses on the use of English language for instruction (in subjects other than English) with the teacher observation checklist findings. Interestingly, teacher self-assessed English skills and student responses in the top two categories were not too dissimilar (39 and 36 percent for teachers and 34 and 36 percent for students). However, in the teacher observations, only 8.5 percent of teachers used English consistently during the class being observed.



Unfortunately, there is a paucity of secondary data sources to triangulate study findings related to teacher competencies. Statistics from the MOE in the Benadir Region of Somalia indicate that approximately 23 percent of secondary school teachers are trained.³² In his unpublished Master’s thesis, Abdikadir Nur Mohammed (Director General of the MOE of Federal Government of Somalia) argued that teacher competency in subject delivery was critical to enhance student performance in mathematics.³³ However, he observed that, although most teachers in the study had the requisite qualification in mathematics, subject delivery lacked: 1) a heuristic method of teaching;³⁴ 2) student interactions in the classroom; and 3) supervised mathematics practice.³⁵ That the majority of teachers have formal qualifications in education was substantiated in the SYLI baseline study, with teachers self-reporting at 67 percent – 42 percent with a diploma and 25 percent with a graduate degree. Additionally, teachers targeted in the baseline had significant classroom experience with the majority (60 percent) having over six years of teaching experience.

2.3. KEY FINDINGS - LEARNING OUTCOMES

The baseline study question related to learning outcomes is the following: “What school-level and community-level factors, in order of the level of influence, affect learning outcomes?” (Appendix I contains all quantitative frequencies.) Additionally, the study design included establishing the baseline for two select SYLI indicators related to this key question: “Percentage change in community perception of the quality of secondary education”; and “Percentage change in community perception of schools’ organization and management.” Table 3 below summarizes findings from the questionnaire of the three most significant school and community level factors affecting learning outcomes. Findings from FGD participants (CEC members and student leaders) and from KIIs (REOs, DEOs, Clan Elders, and Religious Leaders) are highlighted following Table 3.

³² According to the MOE, a trained teacher refers to any teacher that had relevant teaching certification.

³³ Conducted in Banadir region of Somalia in 12 private secondary schools with 276 students and 16 teachers.

³⁴ Encouraging teaching with the learner discovering, or solving problems independently by experimenting, evaluating possible answers or solutions, or by trial and error.

³⁵ Mohamed, Abdulkadir Nur (2010). “Factors that Influence Secondary School Students’ Performance in Mathematics in Banadir Region, Somalia.”

Table 2: Factors Influencing Learning Outcomes			
The three highest-rated school-level factors that <u>positively</u> contribute to learning outcomes			
Survey Group	Rated 1	Rated 2	Rated 3
Student	Teachers (90%)	School management (89%)	Textbooks & ed. materials (72%)
Teacher	Teachers (94%)	School management (87%)	Textbooks & ed. materials (76%)
Parent	Teachers (87%)	School management (77%)	Textbooks & ed. materials (74%)
The three highest rated school-level factors that <u>negatively</u> affect learning outcomes			
Student	Lack of toilets (63.5%)	Unavailability of teachers (63%)	Safety & security in school (62%)
Teacher	Lack of toilets & weak ed. materials (77%)	Unavailability of teachers (74%)	School safety & security & School management (73%)
Parent	School safety & security (69%)	Weak school infrastructure (69%)	Weak ed. materials (67.5%)
The three highest rated community-level factors that <u>positively</u> contribute to learning outcomes			
Student	Religious leaders (69%)	Older students (61%)	Elders (50%)
Teacher	Parents (92%)	Religious leaders (60%)	Elders (50%)
Parent	Religious leaders (61%)	Elders (48%)	Older students (43%)
The three highest rated community-level factors that <u>negatively</u> affect learning outcomes			
Student	Wide-spread poverty (70%)	Use of khat (64%)	Conflict & violence (63%)
Teacher	Wide-spread poverty (82%)	Context of insecurity (79%)	Use of khat (75%)
Parent	Wide-spread poverty (85%)	Context of insecurity (73%)	Use of khat (72%)

Gender-disaggregated results of positive factors for parents found the most significant gap in “School infrastructure and facilities” with a seven percent difference between fathers and mothers (fathers with 71 percent Strong Influence and mothers only 64 percent). The smallest gap between fathers and mothers was in “Textbooks and educational materials” with only a 1.31 percentage spread (fathers with 73 percent and mothers 72 percent). The most significant gender disparity among negative factors influencing student academic performance was “School management” with a gap of 14 percent (fathers at 68 percent versus mothers at 54 percent).

School-Level Factors

There were a variety of school-level factors that participants in this baseline study identified as positively contributing to learning outcomes. From the qualitative responses it was clear that, while teachers and physical infrastructure emerged as strong factors influencing learning outcomes, their effect can be either positive or negative.

- From the questionnaires all three respondent groups agreed not only on the top three factors – namely “Teachers,” “School Management,” and “Textbooks and educational materials” – but also on their level of influence, the only instance of such consensus in this research.
- From the qualitative data, teacher quality emerged as the most influential factor contributing to learning outcomes (76 references in 85 percent of the KII and FGD). Participants elaborated that teachers contribute to learning outcomes both negatively and positively depending on whether or not they are well-qualified, experienced, adequately remunerated, and competent in the subjects they teach.
- The second most influential school-level factor contributing to learning outcomes was physical

infrastructure and equipment in schools (71 references, 70 percent of qualitative sources). Participants perceived that the physical school infrastructure (i.e. classrooms, desks, equipment, laboratories, and libraries) promote positive learning outcomes, although most FGD sessions felt these were largely lacking or inadequate in many schools.

- In 51.8% of qualitative sources school management was identified as a positive factor contributing to learning outcomes.
- The positive influence of older students rated second in level of influence among students in the questionnaire and third among teachers. This finding was echoed in the qualitative findings where peer influence was considered important (21 references, 41 percent of sources). CEC and student leaders noted that students who perform well and progress to tertiary studies (i.e. higher education) are viewed as role models.

Participants in this baseline study also identified a range of school-level factors that negatively affect learning outcomes:

- The most significant negative factors from the questionnaires for students and teachers were “Inadequate/lack of toilets” with teachers rating equally high “Weak/absence of education materials.” A common negative factor for all three respondent groups was “Safety & security in the school,” coming in highest among parents and third highest with both teachers and students.
- From the qualitative results the third most influential factor in learning outcomes was the curriculum (59 references, 59 percent of sources). Participants decried the lack of a common curriculum in schools across Somalia. REOs and DEOs were particularly keen for the government to harmonize the curriculum with more Somalia-specific content.
- Another significant negative school-level factor identified, which participants felt affected learning outcomes, was young people becoming entangled with social vices (24 references, 41 percent of sources). Examples given were joining armed militias and extremist groups, using drugs, immoral behavior, and a lack of discipline.

Community-Level Factors³⁶

The baseline study identified a number of community-level factors that positively affect learning outcomes. Salient factors included:

- Positive parental attitudes were identified as the most significant community-level factor affecting learning outcomes, with teachers rating its influence the highest (92 percent). Student questionnaire respondents noted that their parents were Very Encouraging of their secondary education: 93 percent of fathers and 92 percent of mothers. Cross-tabulated parental education levels and student educational expectations found an increase in the expected education level for both sons and daughters as the education level of their parents increased. In other words, the more educated the parents, the higher their aspirations for their children’s education. See Table 7.15 in Annex 7 for detailed results. This was echoed in the qualitative data, with parental attitudes emerging as the most influential factor contributing to learning outcomes (44 references, 74 percent of sources) across FGDs and KIIs. Parents are considered to be a direct influence on whether their children attend school and as seen as key to student performance through encouragement and support.
- Among teacher and parent respondents to the open-ended question about improving community engagement in learning outcomes, the most common statement expressed was the importance of

If a parent is not educated they cannot understand the importance of education. For instance, when you are preparing for an exam but they interrupt saying, ‘Take this donkey and fetch water’.
Male Student Leader, FGD Participant

³⁶ Household-level factors were not separated out in the various tools of the study but were included under the broader category of community-level factors.

involving all stakeholders (35 and 23 percent, respectively). See Appendix I for details.

- Community attitudes towards education were also identified in FGD sessions and KIs as positive factors (59 references, 59 percent of sources). According to participants, how community leaders perceived the value of education affected parental attitudes. Through the qualitative tools a deep sense of commitment to education emerged, with evidence of its importance emphasized in comments from all respondent groups.
- Although insecurity and conflict were identified as significant factors negatively affecting education (see below under negative factors), participants in FGDs and KIs shared the general perception that the security situation has improved recently and that this has led to increased secondary school enrollment.

The Somali conflict was started by elders and politicians, but the ones fighting, and its victims, were youth.

KII Regional Education Officer

Negative factors at the community-level detracting from learning outcomes included the following:

- Respondents to the three questionnaires were in agreement that “Wide-spread poverty” was the most significant predictive variable (students 70 percent, teachers 82 percent and parents 85 percent). This factor was substantiated by participants in FGDs and KIs (41 references, 52 percent of sources) who felt that poor households do not enroll their children or they drop out for a lack of money for fees. Female-headed households were said to be the most vulnerable and, without external support, their children were less likely to attend school.
- The three questionnaire groups noted that “Conflict & Violence” and the “Broader context of insecurity” were community-level factors negatively inhibiting learning outcomes. In the FGD and KIs, insecurity and conflict were a significant factor negatively affecting learning outcomes (41 references, 52 percent of sources).
- All three survey groups felt that khat had a negative influence on student performance. Students rated it second out of nine (64 percent), teachers rated it third (75 percent), and parents also rated it third (72 percent). In FGDs and KIs, khat was not referenced frequently but those who did so noted that it is a serious social vice affecting young people and contributing to school dropout.

I know of a woman whose children don't go to school. She says she cannot afford to take them to school or madrasa. She works as a mason. Would she pay school fees or buy food for her kids with her meager earnings?

Female CEC Member, FGD Participant

You can sometimes observe the situation whereby a certain student is chewing khat and when you ask him who persuaded him to start he points at a former student who taught him.

KII Regional Education Officer

SYLI Indicator Findings

The study purpose included establishing baseline data on two indicators from SYLI's Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (AMEP). The first is: “Percentage change in community perception of the quality of secondary education,” SYLI indicator 1.2.6. The baseline study found that parent and teacher responses in the questionnaire resulted in an average of 78 percent expressing that they are Very Satisfied with the quality of education, thus establishing the SYLI indicator at baseline. See Table 7.9 in Annex 7 for details.

The second indicator related to learning outcomes is: “Percentage change in community perception of schools' organization and management,” SYLI indicator 1.3.4. The baseline team created a composite average of responses among teachers and parents to school-level factors that they felt had a Strong

Influence on secondary student academic performance.³⁷ .³⁸ The mean for nine positive factors for the two groups was 66 percent and for nine negative factors was 63.5 percent. At the eventual end-line the same composite averages will be replicated on questionnaire results to measure change over time. See Table 7.7 in Annex 7 for details.

2.4. KEY FINDINGS - FEMALE STUDENT ENROLLMENT

The key question related to girls' enrollment in secondary school that the baseline study sought to measure is: "What are school-level and community-level factors, in order of the level of influence, that affect enrollment of female students?" Table 4 below presents findings from the three respondent groups for the questionnaire, identifying the top three factors at the school and community levels that impact girls' enrollment in secondary school with both positive and negative influences. Findings from FGD participants (CEC members and student leaders) and from KILs (REOs, DEOs, Clan Elders, and Religious Leaders) are summarized below.

Table 3: Factors Influencing Girls' Enrollment in Secondary School (Average %)			
The three highest rated school-level factors that negatively impacts girls' enrollment are			
Survey Group	Rated 1	Rated 2	Rated 3
Student	Lack of toilets (53%)	Long distance to school (42%)	
Teacher	Low quality of ed. (61%)	Lack of girls' toilets (58.6)	Scarcity of female teachers (47%)
Parent	Lack of girls toilets (67.5%)	Low quality of ed. (64%)	Scarcity of female teachers (47%)
The three highest rated community-level factors that negatively impact girls' enrollment are			
Student	Lack of support for ed. in the family (67%)	Poverty & family inability to cover ed. expenses (62%)	Early marriage (60%)
Teacher	Poverty & family inability to cover ed. expenses (82%)	Lack of support for ed. in the family (81%)	Insecurity & conflict (75%)
Parent	Lack of support for ed. in the family (77%)	Poverty & family inability to cover ed. expenses (72%)	Insecurity & conflict (68%)

School-Level Factors

A number of factors were identified from qualitative data sources as positively contributing to girls' enrollment in secondary school. In the open-ended question seeking opinions on the most effective investment to increase girls' enrollment, the most common suggestion of teachers was to create awareness on the value of girls' education in the community (27 percent) and provide free education to girls at all levels (12 percent). Qualitative data revealed that, among school-level factors affecting female enrollment, the learning environment was the most influential (34 references, 55.5 percent of sources). The lack of female teachers as role models and advisors, poor school facilities, and the lack of female-

³⁷ Only teacher and parent questionnaire responses as community members were included in the composite score. Percentages were calculated by taking the average percent of all positive factors for teachers and parents and dividing by two, with the same for negative factors. A composite score was used to establish the baseline metric of community perceptions of the influence of various factors, rather than relying on responses to a single question. A change of 7 percentage points among positive factors and 5 points in negative factors will produce a one percent change in the combined average.

³⁸ Similar factors were clustered among the nine positive factors (teachers; school management; school infrastructure facilities including those for library, sports and science laboratory; textbooks and educational materials; after-school activities such as sports and student clubs) and a similar process for the nine negative factors (pupil-teacher ratio and overcrowded classroom; weak school infrastructure and lack of toilets; absence of educational materials; gender of teachers; unavailability of teachers; safety and security in school; school management).

friendly sanitation facilities were all felt to contribute to a non-friendly school environment for girls. The second most important factor identified in the qualitative data was peer influence (33 references, 59 percent of sources). This factor was said to work both negatively and positively, with girls who completed secondary school and advanced to university or who secured jobs serving as role models to younger girls still in secondary school. At the same time, negative modeling was also said to be a factor where girls drop out because their peers have married after dropping out of school. Additionally, in two FGD sessions food incentives (specifically cooking oil) were mentioned by participants as a way to increase girls' attendance in secondary schools.

However, in the questionnaires only negative factors (those inhibiting girls' enrollment) were queried, and resulted in the following findings:

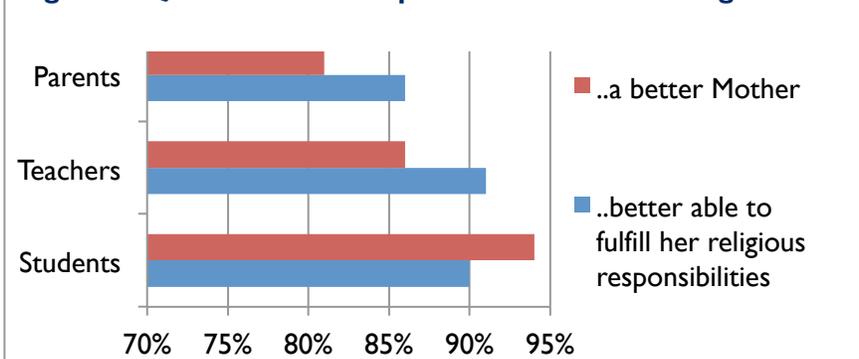
- Among questionnaire respondents, the most significant school-level factor negatively influencing girls' enrollment was "Lack of girls' toilets" for both students and parents, while for teachers it was "Low quality of education."
- Also from the questionnaires, the dearth of female teachers was identified by both teachers and parents as having a negative impact on girls' education, with 47 percent for both noting it had a Strong Influence.

In every school there should be at least one woman from whom girls in the school can model themselves. I believe this woman can assist girls in solving their disputes, family issues, and religious issues.

KII Regional Education Officer

Figure 5 provides percentages of the top two statements that questionnaire respondents Strongly Agree with, related to an educated girl's ability to better fulfill various roles.³⁹ In cross tabulating responses to these statements with the education levels of fathers and mothers, the least significant gender gap between parents was to the statement "I feel that an educated girl is better able to fulfill her religious responsibilities"

Figure 5: Questionnaire Response to "An educated girl is..."



able to fulfill her religious responsibilities" (6 percent difference between illiterate parents and 2 percent difference for those with a bachelor's degree). The most significant difference between uneducated and educated parents was to the statement "I feel that an educated girl is better able to fulfill her responsibilities as a daughter and sister" 22 percent gap between those who were illiterate and those with a bachelor's degree. See Tables 7.17 and 7.18 Annex 7 for details.

Community-Level Factors

In the baseline study there was a clear emphasis on factors negatively affecting girls' enrollment in secondary school (see below). However, FGDs and KIIs participants emphasized that the situation has immensely improved in recent years. A total of 121 positive references (74 percent of sources) were noted, as opposed to 30 negative attitudes (66 percent of sources) of community attitudes toward girls' enrollment. Evidence cited included:

If you teach a girl she will be of use to you. Lack of knowledge is darkness... If there are two rooms, one is dark while the other has light, you go to the light.
Female Student Leader, FGD Participant

³⁹ Other statements included perceptions on an educated girl's ability to fulfill her responsibilities as a daughter/sister, wife and her ability to positively contribute to her community and nation.

increased girls' enrollment (in some schools there were more girls than boys); improved awareness among parents and community members on the importance of educating girls; and a shift in parental attitudes due to examples of girls who completed school and secured good jobs or positions in government.

Attitudes of Parents and the Broader Community

- Among community-level factors, students and parents agreed that the most significant negative factor affecting girls' enrollment was "Lack of support for education within the family" (67 and 77 percent, respectively marked it as having a Strong Influence), and among teachers this factor was the second most significant negative factor (81 percent). The most common response (21 percent) given by parents to the open-ended question about the most effective investment to increase girls' secondary school enrollment and retention was "Parents to encourage and support girls' education."

Parents...think that the kitchen is the right place for a girl to be. That is why they do not advance girls' education after completing primary school.
Male Student Leader, FGD Participant
- In the student questionnaire respondents were asked about the attitudes of various family members toward their secondary education with fathers slightly more supportive than mothers (93 versus 92 percent Very Encouraging). However, in the gender disaggregated results it is clear that fathers are more supportive of education for sons than for daughters (95 versus 90 percent) and mothers were slightly more supportive of education for daughters than sons (92 versus 91 percent). See Table 7.16 and 7.13 in Annex 7 for details.
- In the survey, female students had only slightly lower educational expectations than their male peers. Eighty nine percent of young women and 93 percent of young men aspire to a university education. However, parental educational expectations favor boys. Ninety five percent of fathers aspired to a university-level education for their sons, versus only 89.6 percent for their daughters. Mothers' hopes for tertiary education were 92.1 percent for their sons and 90.5 for their daughters. See Annex 7 Table 7.14 and 7.15 for details.
- From the qualitative findings, parental attitudes were also identified as having a significant impact on female student enrollment, with negative attitudes mentioned more often than positive attitudes (70 negative references, 67 percent of sources, compared to 18 positive, 22 percent of sources). Participants reiterated that parents value boys' education more than that of girls. Also, mentioned were that uneducated parents do not value girls' education and that there is a lack of awareness in the community of the importance of educating girls.
- Cultural beliefs and gender biases held by community, parents, and family members were also said to impact learning outcomes (49 references, 70 percent of sources). Cultural beliefs that girls are seen as future mothers and wives, who do not need an education to perform these roles, are a barrier to girls' enrollment. In response to statements of various roles regarding an educated girl, students rated "I feel an educated girl is a better mother" the highest (94 percent), with teachers and parents rating this role second highest (86 and 81 percent respectively) and rating first "I feel that an educated girl is better able to fulfil her religious responsibilities" (91 and 86 percent respectively). For details see Annex 7, Table 7.17.

I met with a man and he told me that girls should either be kept in a hole or in a house.
KII Regional Education Officer

Household Chores

- Students rated “Household chores & responsibilities” fourth out of 10, as negatively influencing girls’ enrollment (53 percent marking Strong Influence). Interestingly, teachers did not rate such influences as highly as their students did, seventh out of 12 (56 percent) and parents rated them eighth out of 12 (55 percent).
- Students felt that “Household responsibilities (cooking & cleaning)” interfered with their studies and was conducted on a Daily Basis by 43 percent of respondents (rated first out of 8 factors). The gender gap on this question was significant between male and female students (33 percent versus 65 percent). Girls rated all tasks that they did on a daily basis in the home higher than male respondents. However, fetching cooking fuel and water, and fetching fodder for animals was rated equally by both genders (at 21 percent). One interesting gender disparity was for work outside the home to contribute to family income, which found 44 percent of female students responded in the questionnaire that they did so on a Daily Basis versus only 28 percent of male students. See Table 7.10 in Annex 7 for detailed results.
- Results from the FGDs and KIIs rated household chores as negatively contributing to low female student enrollment (33 references, 67 percent of sources). Mothers were said to keep girls at home to help in household chores in the belief that they did not need an education because they would get married.

There is a Somali proverb which says, “Every learned girl will finally end up a house wife.” Therefore, the first barrier is cultural beliefs that a girl should do the house work which boys do not share.
KII District Education Officer

Early Marriage

- Somalia has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world – one out of two girls marry before their 18th birthday – with South Central having the highest incidence (56 percent).⁴⁰ In the baseline questionnaire, students rated early marriage third out of 10 negative factors influencing girls’ education (60 percent marking Strong Influence), while for parents it was sixth out of 12 (63 percent) and teachers it was fourth out of 12, though yielding the highest percentage among all three groups (74 percent). Noteworthy was the gender gap in both student and parent questionnaires, with more fathers and male students feeling it had a significant role (65 and 62 percent) than mothers of female students (62 and 58 percent).
- In the baseline’s qualitative findings early marriage was also rated highly as negatively influencing female student enrollment in school (40 references, 70 percent of sources). Furthermore, it was repeatedly mentioned that once a girl marries, she drops out of school.

It is not uncommon for girls to marry when they are in Form 1 (14-15 years old). Once she marries she cannot continue her education.
KII Regional Education Officer

Family Income for Education Expenses

- In the questionnaires the highest rated community-level factor negatively affecting girls’ enrollment was “Poverty & family inability to cover education expenses” (students second at 62 percent, teachers first at 82 percent, and parents second at 72 percent). Interestingly, this factor had the narrowest gender gap between parents from among the 12 factors in the questionnaire, with 72.5 percent of men and 72.1 percent of women noting a Strong Influence.

⁴⁰ Currently, 194 countries are party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including all member states of the UN except Somalia, the United States and South Sudan. In early 2015, Somalia completed ratification but has not yet deposited the instrument with the UN. Somalia is not party to either the *Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* nor the *Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages*, both addressing the issue of forced and early marriage.

- From the 28 percent of parent survey respondents who said they had a child in an NFE program, 49 percent identified “Affordability” as the reason for enrollment.
- Qualitative findings identified household income as the third most influential factor in girls’ enrollment in school (41 references, 56 percent of sources). Poor parents, or those with limited income to educate their children, were said to favor educating boys. The general perception expressed was that people have become poorer over time and parents have been forced to choose which of their children go to school. When they have to choose between their sons and daughters, they keep girls at home.

The father believes that his daughter will marry a man at the end of the day, so there is no need to enroll her in school and waste money.

KII Clan Elder

Insecurity, Conflict and War

- “Insecurity & conflict” rated third out of 12 community-level factors negatively influencing girls’ enrollment for teachers and parents (75 and 68 percent, respectively). For students it was fourth out of 10 factors (57 percent). Interestingly, among student respondents there was no gender gap, with 58 percent of both young men and women noting that it had a Strong Influence. However, among parents there was a gap of nine percent between fathers and mothers (72 percent versus 63 percent) who felt it had a Strong Influence.

If there is peace, the school thrives but if security deteriorates, the school suffers. If the society loves education, the school grows but if not, there is decrease in the growth of the school.

Male CEC Member, FGD Participant

2.5. KEY FINDINGS - YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The key question of the baseline study related to youth civic engagement is: “What are the factors that influence the level of civic engagement among youth in targeted school areas?” Table 5 below presents findings from the questionnaires identifying factors which positively and negatively influence youth civic engagement in the SYLI targeted schools.

Table 4: Factors Influencing Youth Civic Engagement			
The three highest-rated roles that positively contribute to youth civic engagement			
Survey Group	Rated 1	Rated 2	Rated 3
Student	Decision making about their own lives (78%)	Student governance & leadership (63%)	Participating in student clubs (62%)
Teacher	Decision making about their own lives (82%)	Participating in student clubs (62.5%)	Volunteering in community to address social issues (59%)
Parent	Student governance & leadership (65.5%)	A voice in educational choices (65%)	Voting (58%)
The three highest rated factors that <u>limit</u> the leadership of young people are			
Student	Adult attitudes that youth lack experience (61%)	Social vices (58%)	Use of khat (57%)
Teacher	Lack of economic opportunities (78%)	Social vices (67%)	Use of khat (65%)
Parent	Use of khat (70%)	Adult attitudes that youth lack experience & Social vices (64%)	Lack of economic opportunities (63%)

This study gathered baseline data for two indicators related to SYLI’s AMEP on civic engagement; specifically the attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions regarding civic engagement among youth and among non-youth community members. The baseline team created a composite mean percentage of questionnaire responses to six positive and seven negative community-level factors which respondents felt had a Very Important Role in supporting or limiting youth civic engagement.⁴¹ The mean positive percent among students will measure change over time at the eventual endline for SYLI AMEP indicator 3.3.3. *Percentage of youth who feel they have a voice in community and local government decision making.*

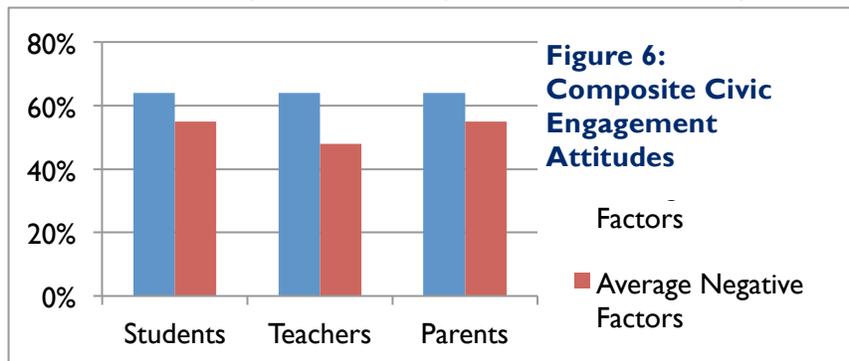


Figure 6 presents a summary of the findings for all three target groups. The baseline mean among students was 63 percent positive and 55 percent negative. The combined average among parents and teachers was 59 percent positive and 60 percent negative. Female students were slightly more positive than their male peers (65 versus 63 percent, respectively). See Annex 7, Table 7.20 and 7.21 for gender disaggregated findings for students and parents.

School-Level Factors

- Sixty two percent of the 419 students who completed the questionnaire said there were student clubs in their school, although only 37 percent said they were involved in them. When asked if “After school activities such as sports & student clubs” contributed positively to the academic performance of students and their friends, only 53 percent of student noted a Strong Influence.
- In the student questionnaires, 63 percent felt that participation in “School student governance & leadership” positively contributed to youth leadership. Fifty-four percent of teachers and 66 percent of parents felt similarly.
- From the qualitative findings, school management was said to have the highest influence on youth engagement in school governance (73 references, 93 percent of sources). When the school management gives students roles and responsibilities, such as prefects,⁴² this influences their level of civic engagement. In FGD sessions with CEC and student leaders, it was noted that school management incorporated students who are disciplined and hardworking. Cooperation among school administrators, teachers, and students was also said to influence student engagement, with some students saying their school did not involve them.
- From FGDs and KIIs, another important factor identified was the attitudes and behaviors of young people themselves (49 references, 70 percent of sources), as teachers and school management

Students will start working at school and then move to community service. Those who have such ambitions... will start as class prefect and then... later on join civil society groups in the area.

Male Student Leader, FGD Participant

⁴¹ See footnote 38 above for the rationale on using a composite score and the procedure for arriving at percentages. Positive factors included perceptions about the role of youth in the following areas: decision-making about their own lives; student governance and leadership; participating in student clubs; volunteering to address social issues; civil society or charitable organizations; and voting. Negative factors included factors that limit youth leadership: adult attitudes that youth lack experience; attitudes that youth can’t contribute to decisions; dropping out of school; lack of youth-friendly space; social vices; use of khat; and lack of economic opportunities.

⁴² Student leaders selected to assist teachers and school management in discipline, attendance and organizing extra-curricular activities.

appoint student leaders (e.g. class prefects or chairs of clubs) who are disciplined and engaged in school activities. It was generally agreed that young people start to develop leadership qualities while in school and those active in school are more likely to participate in community activities.

Community-Level Factors

Positive community-level factors influencing youth civic engagement included:

- Respondents mostly felt that secondary school students can become change agents in their society. Those responding yes were: 85 percent of teachers, 73 percent of fathers, 68 percent of mothers, and 78 percent of students (72 percent male and 79 female).
- Among positive factors contributing to youth civic engagement, survey respondents felt that the most important role contributing to youth civic engagement was “Decision making about their own lives.” For parents it was “Student governance and leadership.”
- FGD and KII participants expressed appreciation for the role of young people in community activities, citing their contribution to security and conflict resolution, environmental cleanliness (sanitation improvement, garbage collection, tree planting, etc.), community awareness, and sports (92 references, 89 percent of sources).
- Among FGD and KII participants, civil society organizations were considered a factor in encouraging youth activities at the community level (31 references, 63 percent of sources).
- FGD and KII participants felt that society generally supports youth engagement and that, given the opportunity, young people will contribute to improve their communities (46 positive references, 44 percent of sources). However, there were also those who felt youth were not well-supported or were not mature enough to bear community responsibilities (14 references, 26 percent of sources). CEC members, student leaders and KII informants felt that young people can become agents for positive change in the community, if given the opportunity and requisite support. However, among survey respondents “Attitudes of adults that youth lack experience,” was number one with students (61 percent) and second among parents (64 percent).

You sometimes hear talk that youth are the leaders of tomorrow. No politicians say we can be the leaders of today. Youth are only given instructions and told to obey.

Female Student Leader, FGD Participant

Negative factors:

- Questionnaire respondents among all three target groups identified economic factors as a barrier to youth leadership with “Lack of economic opportunities” high among students fourth (56 percent), teachers first (78 percent), and parents third (63 percent).
- Among questionnaire respondents, what was among the top three factors identified by all three target groups as a limitation on the leadership of young people. Among students it was third out of seven factors (57 percent), teachers third (65 percent), and parents first (70 percent).
- “Social vices” were recognized as limiting young people, coming in second with both students and parents (58 and 67 percent respectively).

3. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

3.1. CONCLUSIONS

The following section presents conclusions which synthesize and interpret findings and seek to identify salient trends in the various sources of information generated by the baseline study in relation to the five key research questions.

Secondary School Student Performance

Four hundred and eighteen secondary school students sat for examinations in English, biology, and mathematics in Forms 1, 2, and 3 in the 15 schools included in the baseline study. Performance in all three subjects was lower than 50 percent – English 42 percent, biology 41 percent, and mathematics 31 percent (for an overall average score of 38 percent for questions answered correctly, meaning that students performed less than half as well as expected for their grade level). These findings will serve as the baseline for the eventual end-line evaluation to measure variance. For purposes of this baseline study, although student scores in the baseline study were low, they are not outside the range found in secondary sources on education in Somalia. The baseline study team recognizes that a myriad of school-level and community-level factors contribute to student performance as per this study's findings above (further detailed in the annexes and appendices to this report) and summarized in conclusions related to learning outcomes and girls' enrollment.

Secondary School Teacher Competency

One hundred and five secondary school teachers (only two female teachers were available during data collection to participate in the study) were observed in the classroom and participated in a self-administered questionnaire. The teacher observation checklist contained 16 teaching skills and capacities in three areas – classroom management skills, instructional planning, and teaching effectiveness. This tool yielded an average of 44 percent Excellent, which will serve as the baseline metric for comparison at the eventual end-line. Findings from other aspects of this study identified a range of factors that influence the quality of instruction and teacher competencies. These factors include personality, qualifications and training, as well as school-level factors such as pupil-teacher ratio, instructor compensation, school management, facilities and teaching aides.

Learning Outcomes

A variety of school-level factors were identified by participants in this baseline study, although many factors were mentioned as having a positive affect if present or strong, and having the reverse if weak or absent. There was agreement in both the quantitative and qualitative findings that teachers are the top factor positively influencing learning outcomes. Older students, particularly those who have gone on to succeed in higher education, were seen as important role models for secondary-level students. Both quantitative and qualitative findings on negative school-level factors influencing learning outcomes found that safety and security in the school was the most significant factor.

The most significant community-level factor positively impacting learning outcomes was parental support and encouragement for their secondary school-age offspring. As parental education levels rise there is an increase educational expectations for their children. There was an overwhelming consensus that the most significant community-level deterrent to learning outcomes was poverty and a lack of household income for educational expenses. Poverty and lack of family income also affected how students felt in school and impacted student performance if they could not afford textbooks, stationary and uniforms. The role of conflict and insecurity was also seen in both qualitative and quantitative findings as having a negative impact on learning outcomes. However, it was also emphasized by participants in FGDs and KIs that the security situation has improved recently and that this improvement has led to increased secondary school enrollment.

Girls' Enrollment

The most significant school-level factor negatively influencing girls' enrollment was the lack of female teachers. In FGD sessions and KIs comments repeatedly noted that the presence of more female teachers could serve as a pull factor for the enrollment and retention of female secondary school students. There was consensus in both the quantitative and qualitative findings that the lack of adequate girls' toilets was the most significant school infrastructure issue negatively impacting girls' enrollment.

At the community-level, this baseline study identified parental attitudes as the most critical factor impacting girls' enrollment. For girls' enrollment, the negative impact was more commonly mentioned. This included attitudes that girls will eventually marry so there is no need to educate them, and a preference for sending sons rather than daughters to school (particularly in poorer families). Girls' enrollment was clearly perceived by all study participants to be influenced by family income.

One observation emerging from this baseline study is that, while there are significant gender inequalities in education as a result of cultural, economic and access issues, the situation is rapidly evolving and steadily improving. Qualitative data points to positive changes in parental attitudes toward girls' educational participation rates and performance in South Central Somalia.

Youth Civic Engagement

A further conclusion of this baseline study is that the attitudes of teachers and school management are the most important factors influencing the level of youth in civic engagement. This research found that teachers reward discipline and hard work and that students are inspired by older students (both those in secondary school and higher education) to become active in school and the community. Students were seen as positively contributing to school through student clubs and as prefects. While some participants opined that young people are respected by society, primarily for their hard work, other disagreed and felt that youth are excluded from most aspects of community life. The most significant perceived negative factors that inhibit youth civic engagement were khat, and other social vices. However, the consensus among both young people and adults was that the role of youth is essential to community life and for the future of the country. Investing in their capacities and skills holds the potential to transform the years of war and suffering into a brighter future.

Final Conclusion - Value of Education

The commitment and passion for education in the 15 secondary school communities included in this baseline study emerged through all data sources. Education engenders respect in society. Conversely, the uneducated are less valued and considered to be of lower moral quality. This attitude may result from the decades of war and conflict through which Somalis have come. Somalis realize that education is the key to their children's success and to fostering development in their society. In the absence of a central government, Somali parents had only themselves and their communities to teach their children. In the midst of a "failed state" they created a system which, despite its flaws, works reasonably well. The current federal government, with the support of local communities, the Somali diaspora and international stakeholders, has the opportunity to carry forward this legacy and support this entrepreneurial, educational spirit.

3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR END-LINE EVALUATION

In order to minimize variance between the baseline and the end-line processes the baseline team recommends the following:

- Consider scheduling the end-line to straddle the end of the academic year in targeted schools so that data can be collected in 15 schools in a similar manner as used in this baseline (i.e. outside the normal studies using a modest transportation fee to mobilize teachers and students). To estimate the existence or significance of teacher and student selection bias, it is advisable to select a few schools and conduct data collection during and after schooling and then analyze variances. An alternative approach could be utilization of a Propensity Score Matching (PSM) method (along with regression analysis) and select a few schools to design a comparison group. One key variable should be an adequate number of teachers having benefited from SYLI-supported in-service training sessions during June-July 2015. The PSM method has two limitations: (i) availability of complete administrative data and its reliability; and (ii) PSM can capture observable parameters only.
- Utilize the same paper-and-pencil method in administering tools that require an interviewer (i.e.

parent's questionnaire and teacher observation checklist).

3.3. OBSERVATIONS FOR SYLI

- The gender gap among teachers in Somalia general, and in South Central in particular, represents a significant challenge for the system of secondary level education and for SYLI. While SYLI is clearly seeking to address this issue through a number of interventions, this gender gap impacts a number of key questions in this baseline study and thus warrants encouraging SYLI to continue focusing efforts on strengthening the recruitment, training and retention of female teachers.
- When comparing the names of teachers observed at baseline with the list of 692 teachers who participated in the in-service training conducted by SYLI in June-July, 2015 it was found that, out of 105 teachers observed, only 37 had benefited from this opportunity. Based on subsequent discussions between SPSS and SYLI Monitoring & Evaluation Specialists about the low participation rate (i.e. only 35 percent of observed teachers), the baseline study team recommends that the remaining 68 teachers observed at baseline participate in the upcoming training of in-service teachers during the break between the two semesters (December 2015-January 2016).
- It is recommended that SYLI maintain complete lists in Microsoft Excel of in-service trainees that include the name of the school and subjects they teach, to facilitate easily tracking and avoiding duplication of outputs at the eventual end-line.
- When the results from the Form 4 examinations for the schools included in this study are announced, SYLI will maintain these records for the selected three subjects to be incorporated into the end-line evaluation.
- In the SYLI theory of change, it is suggested to more clearly articulate the economic assumption underlying the intervention: stating that SYLI investments will have a positive effect on both learning outcomes and girls' enrollment and that parents can afford to send more of their children to school or spend offset savings through subsidized education on other essentials. Another assumption to be articulated is that a young person with a quality secondary education will have more skills and an enhanced ability to successfully compete in the labor market and thus be able to contribute to family income and the education of younger siblings, as well as become a more productive member of society.

3.4. OBSERVATIONS FOR SYLI AMEP TARGETS

The following are baseline measures for specific indicators in the SYLI AMEP:

- *1.2.4. Percentage of teachers officially observed who demonstrated core teaching competencies.* The baseline teacher observation finding was an average of 3.66.
- *1.2.6. Percentage change in community perception of the quality of secondary education.* The baseline study found an average of 78 percent of parent and teacher questionnaire respondents were Very Satisfied.
- *1.3.4. Percentage change in community perception of schools' organization and management.* The mean for school-level factors that parent and teacher questionnaire respondents perceived affected student academic performance for positive factors was 66 percent and for negative factors was 63.5 percent.
- *3.3.3. Percentage of youth who feel they have a voice in community & local government decision making.* The average of student questionnaire responses to six civic engagement factors was 63 percent who felt that young people had a Very Important Role.