

Negotiation Booklet

BESO II/SCOPE Project



Family Dialogue Guide for PTA and GEAC Members

I. How to Use this Guide

This guide has been developed to help Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Girls Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) members discuss common concerns and challenges faced by families when sending their children, especially girls, to school. PTA and GEAC members can use this guide during home visits or other private discussions with families to negotiate with them and help them find solutions to challenges they may face.

Home visits and private discussion are one way to help more families send their girls and boys to school, and support their children to succeed in school.

Each page covers one topic that may be of concern to families. The key messages that PTA or GEAC members can use to raise ideas with families are listed on the back, while an overall message and image of the topic is on the front.

II. Using Good Communication Skills When Talking with Families

This guide is not meant to be a lecture too. The most important thing when visiting a family in their house is to respect them. They have good reasons for doing what they are currently doing. This guide is to help them discuss their concerns and explore other ways of doing things. PTA and GEAC members should use home visits as an opportunity to help families think about education, especially of girls, in a different way, and to help them develop strategies that will allow them to send their children to school.



Two way communication is very important in using this guide. PTA members should not just read the guide to family members from front to back. Rather, they should listen to the family's concerns and challenges, and then pick the parts of the guide that apply to each family's concerns. Each relevant topic should be discussed, with family members sharing their opinions and asking questions.

III. Before you finish a discussion using this guide

As you are finishing up a discussion with a family based on this guide, ask them to agree to try some new behavior. It could be agreeing to send girls to school, or it could be allowing their children more time to study at home, or asking other family members to help girls finish their house work so they can go to school, finally the visiting team, sign learning contract (agreement) with the parents that outlined the different roles and responsibilities of the parents and teachers' in the learning process. However, if the family does not agree to try any new behavior, thank them for their time, and ask them to keep discussing the issues you have raised with them.

Before you end the discussion, be sure to inform them of any school related meetings coming up in the community, whether it is a PTA meeting, or a Parents Day or other even at school. Invite them to participate, and to bring their children (if appropriate), whether or not they are in school.

Dialogue Topic 1 The short and long term benefits of education

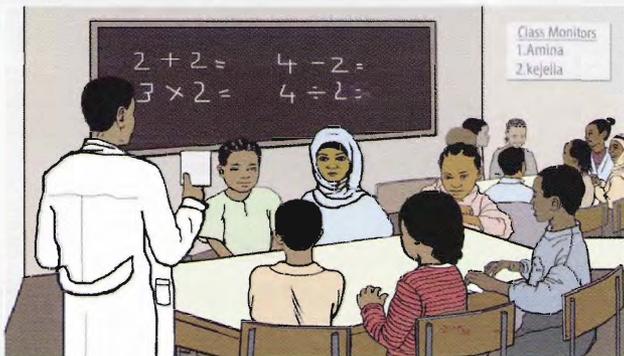
A. What are the benefits of school for students?

What are the benefits for their families?

B. Are the benefits different for girls and boys?

How so? Why is that?

C. Families in Afar, Somali and Oromiya regions have said that they get short term as well as long term benefits from sending their girls and boys to school.



These benefits include both a **brighter future** and a **better life now**. For example parents said that when their girls and boys attend school, they:

- Are more responsible and more helpful around the house,
- Are able to help parents read and write,
- Have better personal hygiene,
- Are better at solving problems and thinking about every day challenges.

The future benefits of sending girls and boys to school are:

- The children will **“Be somebody”**, with a plan for their life, whether it is as a mother or father, or as a worker,
- They will be able to “sell their knowledge” to get a good job,
- They will be able to stand up for their rights, and avoid being cheated,
- They will be a stronger member of the community,
- They will be better able to serve God.

D. What do you think of what these families have said?

E. Do you think these benefits would be true for your family? Why or why not?

Dialogue Topic 2 Challenges Families Face to Send Their Children to School

A. Sharing the workload

Making a living and managing a household takes a lot of work, and every family member's contribution is needed.

- How does household work or daily wage labor affect girls who are in school?
- What about boys? Is it the same for both?
- How is it in your family?
- Do you notice that your boys may have more time to study than your girls?
- Can you think of ways that the household could be shared differently so that both your girls and boys can have time for school work?



We have heard from families in Oromiya, Afar and Somali that they use different **strategies** to make sure that the house work is done and all of their children who are in school have time to study. These strategies include:

1. Distribution work equally among family members, especially giving boys an equal share with girls. "50 lemons for one person are a burden, but for 50 people they are a decoration."
2. Helping children plan their work so that household tasks that take longer can be done on the weekend or when school is on break. Doing housework before or after school.
3. Older siblings helping younger siblings to manage their time and with their school work

What do you think of these ideas?

B. Buying school supplies, clothing, and hygiene supplies

It can be difficult to purchase school supplies, especially if you have several children in school. How do you know what your children need for school?

Families in Afar, Oromiya and Somali have told us that different children have different needs for school. Some children may be okay sharing a book or pencils, but need clothing or lotion to avoid bullying by other children. These families talk to their children about what they need, and discuss whether it is possible to get those things.

Do you know of any programs in your community to support children to get school supplies?

If you are having trouble getting school supplies for your children, why not talk with the local PTA and GEAC to see if they can give any ideas or support?

Dialogue Topic 3 The importance of Educating Girls

A. Benefits to Girls and Their Families.

Is it important to educate girls? Why? Families in Afar, Oromiya and Somali told us that they see many benefits to educating their daughters.

These include:

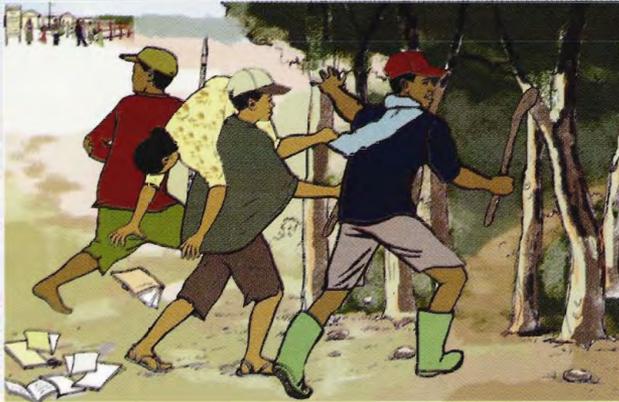
- Better character (see Dialogue Topic #1)
- They will be better wives and mothers which means healthier children/grandchildren, and stronger communities
- They can support themselves and their family better in the future
- They will be more efficient managers of family resources
- They can assert their rights and protect themselves now and in the future

What do you think of these ideas? Do they apply to you and your family?

B. Safety

Are there problems related to educating girls that are different from educating boys? What are they?

Are parents in this community worried about the safety of their girls when they go to school? What are they worried about?



Do you know if any groups in the community are taking action to help with these problems?

- PTA and GEAC?
- Community and Religious Leaders?
- Police and kebele or woreda officials?

What solutions do you think could help keep girls, and all children, safe on the way to and from school, and while in the schoolyard as well?

- Traveling in groups
- Avoiding “trouble spots”
- Telling adults when they face problems (two

way communication-parents could ask and not wait to be told)

- Monthly “Safety Forum” discussion for students and teachers to share problems and find solutions



C. Early marriage

Some girls in this community marry early. What are the benefits for marrying early? Are there any problems that come with early marriage?



What do you think about these ideas?

Summary

Thanks for taking the time to talk with us today. I hope you have found the discussion interesting. Would you mind us to come again to discuss anything further?

Would you like to attend our next PTA or GEAC meeting? If you can come it is at _____ (location) at _____ (time). You would be most welcome.

(If the parent(s) have agreed to try something new, review their agreement” with them, and congratulate them for being willing to try. And ask them to seal their contract or agreement by signing the following outline of responsibilities. If possible leave a copy with the parents for future reference. The contract can also be used to communicate with other parents in the sensitization campaign. Ask them to get in touch with you if they are having any trouble with the new behavior.

Learning Process Contract between Parents, Teacher and Children

Sr.	New Behavior	Parents Responsibilities	Teacher responsibilities	Child responsibilities
1.	Allowing their children more time to study at home			
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Give Her a Pen and She will Change the World!