

## Quality Education, Ethics and Knowledge Management of Somalia

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### **Abstract**

*Global evidence demonstrates that the type and quality of education can either fuel marginalization, alienation, poverty, and vulnerabilities of children and young people or strengthen societal resilience. Quality education services that utilize multiple pathways to increase access to education equip future generations with the skills and knowledge to positively contribute to the social, political and economic development of their communities and support the realization of multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

*UNICEF's focus areas enable UNICEF and its partners to provide education services for even the hardest to reach and/or marginalized children. The completion of the first ESSP 2012-2016, and the commitment of funding by GPE and the international community is an important vote of confidence for the Federal Government of Somalia's, Education Strategic Plan.*

*The Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2018- 2020) is guided by the National Development Plan, The Education Act, and key education documents.*

*Quality education is the foundation on which a country's development is constructed. It is also described as a tool that facilitates better living conditions for the educated individual. The idea of giving more importance to education is vital for poverty reduction. This perspective endures in the educational circles of most developing countries, with their focus on educating the masses at those lower levels. However, it is worthwhile mentioning that without an effective policy and implementation of sustainable higher education programs, the acquisition of advanced skills for national growth, technological development, and competitiveness in the global economy will remain poor. The underdevelopment in this sector becomes more of a concern to developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, which is rated the lowest in higher education enrollments in the world (Bloom, Canning,*

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*and Chan 2006,3).Contextualizing Somalia within the background of the higher education debate is complicated by many factors, including lack of effective government, prolonged devastation, irregular education systems that are various but also unaligned, and the lack of an effective regulating body that caters not only to higher education but to the entire national education program, which has been left for a long time in the hands of the private sector and some international agencies. The absence of official government sources related to national education data also contributes to the general conundrums facing Somali education, where inconsistencies exist in government capacity to cope with the effective streamlining of the education sector (Eno et al. 2014).*

## **Objectives**

To conduct a qualitative study of perceptions of experiences of quality education ethics and knowledge management Of Somalia Depending on the region/zone, Somalia is considered either a failed or fragile state. Decades of civil war, chronic food and water shortages and economic mismanagement have taken a serious toll on the education system. The decline of educational quality and standards began in the early 1980s and culminated in the disintegration of the state and subsequent breakout of civil war in 1991. Throughout the 1980s the number of primary schools and pupil enrolment dropped dramatically, textbooks and supplies disappeared, teacher attrition soared, classrooms deteriorated, and the overall quality of education declined. Public allocations for education declined from 2.2% of GDP in 1975 to 0.3% in 1989. Today, Somalia has one the lowest student enrollment rates in the world with an estimated 20-30 percent gross enrollment and among the lowest public financing of any country. Girls continue to be underrepresented at all levels of education, especially in rural areas. Girls' enrollment rates have remained consistently low over the past five years at approximately 35%. By the 8th grade, girls make up a mere 25 percent of all students and their numbers continue to decrease thereafter. Yasin et al 1 Journal of Education for International Development 4:1 April 2009 The situation is exacerbated by the quality of the teaching pool. There is a limited supply of qualified primary school teachers in Somalia. Of the 11,000 practicing primary school teachers in the country, only 30 percent have had pre-service training, and only 11 percent have a teacher training diploma. Furthermore, only 14 percent of the teachers are women. Administratively, the division of the country into three zones after 1991 gave rise to three separate ministries of education that have operated independently with little coordination and planning among themselves. The Ministries of Education (MoE) in Somaliland and Puntland are responsible for the management and administration of primary, secondary, vocational, technical, and non-formal education as well as

teacher training. The Ministries have a central staff, Regional Education Officers, District Education Officers, and school principals and teachers. The third administrative region, South Central Somalia, is the region with the least institutional and administrative capacity and, as such, is most in need. In the absence of a central government and strong institutions to support education, parents, communities, NGOs and international development agencies have stepped in to provide basic education services. International organizations such as UNICEF and UNESCO, working through the Somalia Aid Coordination Body, have provided substantial support for revising the curriculum, printing and distributing textbooks, and training teachers. Parents and communities recognize the value of education and, where possible, have stepped in to pay school fees and/or formed community education committees. Unfortunately, the vast majority of poor Somalis cannot afford to privately fund education. Religious organizations also play a significant role in providing education throughout Somalia. Reliable statistics on the number and types of religious schools in Somalia are difficult to come by. There are a growing number of religious schools that focus on Islamic education. Religious schools are privately run and often receive support from local or international Islamic organizations. Another distinguishing characteristic of religious schools in Somalia is that they often use Arabic rather than Somali as the language of instruction, and substantial numbers of these are supported by religious institutions often deemed radical in the west. The emergence of the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia (TFG) gave hope and an opportunity to resuscitate the education system, particularly in South Central Somalia. Unfortunately, the TFG became mired in political infighting and has failed to bring in institutions that produce tangible results, particularly after it sought the help of neighboring Ethiopia, which resulted in a twoyear Ethiopian invasion. As the TFG is gradually sidelined by an alliance of Islamic groups, there is once again hope that there will be a credible political reconciliation in Somalia, which will lead to the rebuilding of educational institutions. Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) as an Intervention With a grant from USAID in 2006, the Education Development Center (EDC) introduced radio as an intervention to provide quality primary level education and teacher training. When EDC introduced the Somali Interactive Radio Instruction Program (SIRIP), the challenge was to quickly reach a large number of school age children who are in and outside the formal education system. The SIRIP program tapped into EDC's experience in reaching children in countries such as Zambia, Guinea, India, and Sudan where quality instruction via radio combined with facilitators or mentors has provided basic education. IRI programs for Somali speaking children had also been developed and tested in Ethiopia. Thus, the Somali

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Interactive Radio Instruction (SIRIP) was built on the experience in Ethiopia and other projects. Yasin et al 2 Journal of Education for International Development 4:1 April 2009 Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) has a proven record of high impact on teaching and learning while reaching large numbers of students. IRI is a methodology that uses radio to provide a multi-channel learning experience for children and teachers. Multi-channel learning refers to the theory that all learners have their own learning styles – some learn by singing songs, others may be visual learners and still others may learn best through physical activity. Most learners benefit from a variety of channels as opposed to one, such as the traditional “chalk and talk” teaching method of copying and memorizing what is written on the board. Each IRI program includes a variety of segments that are based on objectives from the national or local curriculum. For example, the Somali curriculum may ask students to learn four consonants and use them when spelling a word. This objective may be reached via a drama segment, a song, a poem, an activity, or a question and answer segment. Thus, the radio can literally transform a classroom in which an untrained teacher will lead a “chalk and talk” lesson with little or no materials, to an interactive learning experience in which both the children and teacher are engaged in the process.

### **Methodology**

This study employs different aspects and tools of the qualitative research paradigm. In order to portray it as a unique complex within itself, the study adheres to the case-study method, which is suitable for producing “data of a richness and detail that are difficult to obtain from more representative research designs” (Abercrombie et al. 2000, 41). This is supported by other descriptions of the case study as “a piece of research that records details of how a situation develops over a period of time” (Macmillan English Dictionary 2002, 208–9).

Therefore, to achieve the goal of discussing the matter in detail, the current study observes data from different sources in adherence to Punch’s suggestions of using numerous data collection methods with the objective of accessing data from diverse sources such as books, journal articles, archival materials, and discussions with people with knowledge of the topic (2005). In the context of this particular country (Somalia), specifically regarding the trends of its quality, knowledge management and education sector.

### **Research Design**

The study was conducted through survey research design. Survey described as a research design that used to present methodology use to investigate population by selecting samples to analyze and discover occurrences (Oso & Onen, 2005).

### Reliability and Validity of the study

Defined reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered reliable. Needless to say, validity and reliability are very indispensable for this research to be accurate. Obviously, the researcher of this study wants to use pilot test by running Cronbach al- platest that more than 0.6 indicates high reliability.

Validity refers to the extent to which data collection method accurately measures what it was intended to measure or to the extent to which research findings are about what they are claimed to be about (Oso & onen,2008).

### Results

From January to May bi-weekly technical meetings were held with a MOECHE technical working group to review ESA findings, validate preliminary analysis and to identify key priorities for the ESSP. A total of 8 technical working groups were conducted over a period of three months, lasting, between 1-2 days each. Initial working groups were facilitated by AET-hired consultants and later by UNICEF personnel who provided more direct support over the process.

Ministry officials conducted further outreach and consultation with stakeholders at federal government level and with education stakeholders in the five regional states of Central South Somalia. State consultations were completed by ministry teams during mid-May that helped to validate ESA findings and identify priorities specific to each state aligned the overarching objectives of the incoming ESSP.

In total, some 257 persons participated in these different consultative forums to validate ESA findings as well as shape key priority areas for the next ESSP. Of these, 197 (77%) were male and 60 (23%) were female.

Sl. No	Location	Event	Total	M	%	F	%
1	Mogadishu	State consultation	39	30	77%	9	23%
2	Jubbaland	State consultation	40	33	83%	7	18%
3	SWS	State consultation	40	27	68%	13	33%
4	Hirshabelle	State consultation	40	37	93%	3	8%

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5	Galmudug	State consultation	38	27	71%	11	29%
	Sub Total		<b>197</b>	<b>154</b>	78%	<b>43</b>	22%
	Mogadishu	Validation	60	43	72%	17	28%
	Sub Total		<b>60</b>	<b>43</b>	72%	<b>17</b>	28%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>257</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>23%</b>

*Source:* MOECHE ESA/ESSP working groups

### Educational Stages

There are two distinct systems of educational cycles in the country. The 9-3 system which is mainly used by private Arabic medium institutions and the 8-4 system currently practiced in public schools. The Table below is taken from the PLE; however, it should be pointed out that at present many post-secondary institutions offer 4-year degree courses.

### Education systems in FGS Somalia

The 9-3 system		The 8-4 system	
Early Childhood Care and Education (including/pre-school)	1-2 Years	Kindergarten Schools:	1-2 Years
Primary Schools	9 Years	Primary Schools	8 Years
Secondary Schools	3 Years	Secondary Schools	4 Years
Post-secondary institutes	2-4 Years	Post-secondary institutes	2-4 Years

*Source:* Federal Government of Somalia Draft National Policy of Education. 2015-2030

**Transparency and Accountability.** The MoECHE has focused on strengthening key dimensions of good governance. Key dimensions of good governance as listed in MOECHE policy documents are;

1. Public Sector Management
2. Transparency
3. Accountability
4. Regulatory reform and,
5. Public sector skill and Management

### ESSP Structure

- Context of the Education Sector
- Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- Primary Education subsector

- Secondary Education subsector
- Accelerated Basic Education (ABE) subsector
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) subsector
- Higher Education subsector
- Cross-cutting themes
- Risks and hazards (EiE), and
- Cost and financing for the education sector

The lack of reliable data on children's learning outcomes presents a major challenge to assessing the effectiveness of education at primary school level. The ESP seeks to address this gap through the introduction of early grade assessments and low-stakes assessments for monitoring learning outcomes. It also aims to strengthen and unify the examination system across Somalia

The implementation of Somalia's much-vaunted Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2020 (ESSP) is in danger of being derailed because of a failure to engage education actors, weak leadership and a general lack of commitment, Somali higher education experts warn. While the ESSP report was written in November 2017, Somalia's Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education publicly released the plan as a policy blueprint in October 2018. It outlines what ails the sector and what needs to be done to turn it around within three years. The plan covers higher education, quality and ethics, technical and vocational education, as well as early childhood, primary, secondary and alternative basic education.

When the plan was announced, international NGO Global Partnership for Education (GPE) granted the Somali government US\$17.9 million to facilitate delivery of its goals. GPE had identified several factors that were impeding the development of Somali education, among which were a lack of research and publishing, a shortage of tutors and lecturers, and insufficient educational infrastructure.

### **Literacy**

The quality of education is ultimately judged by learning outcomes of children in school and literacy rates. The overall adult literacy rate, which according to the 1975 population census was 54 per cent, dropped to 40 per cent. According to Population Estimate Survey for Somalia (PESS 2014), main reasons for this decline were civil war and conflict. Literacy rates are also identified as lowest among Nomadic communities (only 12 per cent) and for those in rural areas (only 27 per cent). However,

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literacy rates are higher for younger Somalis, which demonstrate that there have been improvements in educational quality for younger Somalis. This is particularly true for those in the age cohort of 15-19 years old (52 per cent) demonstrating that, for at least a small proportion, the quality of education may be returning to pre-civil war levels. At the same time, these gains highlight significant inequities between different groups within the country that can undermine stability and achievement of PSGs suggested under Pillar 5 of the broader New Deal Compact for Somalia and reflected in the new National Development Plan (NDP).

## **Discussion**

Given the high number of Somalis dependent on agriculture and nomadic/pastoralist lifestyles, the country is highly vulnerable to weather events and climate change. Somalia has experienced scores of crises including drought, flooding and cyclones. In this context, government capacities to respond to these events have remained low.

Over the past three years, Somalia has experienced consecutive failures of rainy seasons related to the El Niño and El Nina weather patterns. The related loss of livestock and depletion of household and community resources has led to the potential of another famine in Somalia of equal or worse severity than 2011.

Education continues to struggle to secure funds and maintain its programming in conflict and famine/drought-affected communities. Scale up and contingency plans are often hampered by a lack of funds for education supplies, teachers' incentives and rehabilitation of learning spaces and WASH facilities. Child recruitment, compulsory military training, segregation of boys and girls' class and concerns over attacks on education institutions are key challenges in Central South.

The MoECHE has yet to address the data management, monitoring and quality assurance needs of the ECE subsector, there is insufficient data to conduct a robust analysis on quality issues for ECE. However, it is widely assumed that the quality of ECE services varies greatly for a range of reasons including: lack of a standardized ECE curriculum, untrained teachers, outdated teaching/learning approaches, lack of learning materials, inadequate use of play and age-appropriate teaching and learning strategies as well as the strong focus on religious teaching in Quranic schools over other important competencies to support the holistic development of early year children.

**Administration of the education system:** The Education system in Federal Government of Somalia is managed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MOECHE) at the federal level and is responsible for the overall guidance and administration of education in Somalia. Its mandate is to ensure that a viable system is in

place to promote quality education and training for all citizens in order to optimize individual and national development. Currently, the ministry is led by a Minister under which is a Permanent Secretary followed by two Director Generals (who report to the Permanent Secretary). The MOECHE has a structure that is based on its pre-civil war size and capacity when there were over 50,000 personnel within the ministry, which at that time included ministry staff and teachers. Currently the ministry has six departments and 16 sub-departments in charge of the various functions in the sector. These are; Departments of Administration and Finance, Public Schools, Policy and Planning, Quality Assurance, Umbrella and Private education, and Examination and Certification.

**Education Quality** Unlike industrial definitions where quality is defined in terms of product, defect free, exceptional and value for money, (Coombs 1985) defines education quality as pertaining to relevance of what is taught and learned in the classrooms and how well what is taught contextually fits the present and future needs of the particular learners in question, given their particular circumstances and prospects. Preferably, education quality should indeed address what is learned and how it is learned; that is, the learner should learn the right things and learn them well. That is, in fact, why there is a concern and emphasis on quality education everywhere, even in countries where all children are enrolled in basic education. Leu and Price-Rom (2005) remarked that despite the prominence of “quality” as the motivating factor for educational planning and success, “quality” is used in a detached way, leaving the vision of quality in education embedded within country policies and interests.

In addition, the education provision is of low quality, mainly due to the high number of unqualified and untrained teachers, multiple curricula, poor education infrastructure and weak capacity for service delivery. A decentralized education system is currently being operationalized, however, newly formed states, regional and district-level offices have limited technical and financial resources. Challenges confronting the education sector are the direct consequence of protracted emergencies over the past two decades stemming from conflict, drought and flooding. Together the multi-pronged emergencies have had a significant impact on the education systems and on the lives of children and youth. The challenges facing the sector are daunting, including lack of access and widespread inequity.

**Education in Emergencies:** The protracted nature of fragility and emergencies across Somalia has led to donor fatigue with supporting education in emergencies and as a result underfunding for this sub-sector. This in part is due to the nature of EiE programming over the years, which has remained focused on supply-side issues and payment

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of teacher incentives that has failed to address root causes underpinning emergencies and shortfalls in the design and delivery of EiE programming. Future EiE programming will need to focus on more innovative strategies to support durable solutions for children and adolescents. Moreover, future programming will need to focus in strengthening government ownership over EiE programming and integrating displaced communities, which thus far have remained largely excluded from government education service delivery. As a means to increase knowledge generation by universities, it proposes better support for university personnel who engage in research activities and produce innovative knowledge that could contribute to the economic and social development of Somalia as it recovers from its lengthy civil war.

## **Conclusion**

After more than two decades of conflict, a generation of Somali children lost the opportunity for formal education and other benefits of a stable childhood. To address these critical issues facing access to education, UNICEF Somalia works across 5 thematic areas as part of a broad system of support to strengthen systems and provide service delivery. These include: Formal Basic Education, Alternative Basic Education, Youth Education and Skills Development, Institutional Strengthening – human resources and capacity development, and Education in Emergencies. Low rates of primary school enrolment and attendance, as well as high gender, geographic and minority disparities continue to pose huge challenges to development in Somalia.

HEIs across Somalia face great challenges, ranging from insecurity, institutional weakness, poor capacity of staff and infrastructure, limited resources, and a lack of teaching materials. Perhaps the greatest challenge is the quality of their education. That nearly 50 higher education institutions operate in a country the size of Somalia is a matter of concern. The majority of the surveyed institutions lack sufficient financial resources and 96% experience a shortage of teaching and learning materials with 89% having insufficient basic infrastructure and teaching and learning equipment, have a shortage of qualified academic staff and limited capacity of administrative staff, which 73% do not have university owned buildings. The lack of curricula development capacity was also reported by 18% of the institutions surveyed.

The thematic areas on Fragility and Education in Emergency; Early Childhood Care and Education (ECE); Primary Education; Secondary Education; Alternative Basic Education (ABE); Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); Cross-cutting issues - Enhance the organizational capacity of the MOECHE to manage/regulate the

education sector, Develop learning materials based on approved national curriculum framework; Attain equity and parity in educational system for girls, Strengthen in-service teacher training systems for all subsectors, Establish a system-wide monitoring and supervision system, establish system-wide use of EMIS data, Support decentralization of education service delivery, and Higher Education, and Financial Plan and Domestic Financing; the Monitoring Plan, and the Risks and Mitigation Measures.

The Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) is the main output of the Ministry of Education Culture and Higher Education (MOECHE) of Somalia and it's Cooperating Partners (GPE, UNICEF, AET, USAID, and EU). The production of the ESSP was made possible through consultations with a number of bodies including the civil society and stakeholders in education.

The development of this plan was funded by Global Partnership for Education (GPE) under the administrative responsibility of UNICEF with additional funding and technical support provided by UNICEF.

MOECHE is needed to fulfil the right of every Somali to education and build an adequate, well educated, better skilled and competent workforce that contributes to the spiritual, economic and human development of the nation.

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