



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF

ENDLINE EVALUATION FOR PROVISION OF QUALITY EDUCATION, LIFE-SAVING AND INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY DROUGHT PROJECT IN SOMALILAND

September 2023





Girls in the catch up classes in Togdheer Region.
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Mubaarik and Marva with their empty plates, Somalia/Somaliland.
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INTRODUCTION

The project 'Provision of Quality Education, Life-Saving and Integrated Child Protection Services for Children Affected by Drought in Togdhere Region' was 12 months and jointly implemented by Plan International, Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) and a local NGO - YOVENCO. It responded to the education needs of the drought affected boys and girls in Togdheer region of Somaliland, and the protection needs arising as a result of exposure of the children to prolonged shocks including climate disasters, health pandemic and conflicts in the target region. There was therefore need to embrace an integrated design to enable meet

the education and protection needs for access to quality and inclusive education in a protective environment for the affected boys and girls in the region. The region was selected jointly with the Ministry of Education due to the area having been severely impacted by the drought, had limited humanitarian education assistance, limited access for teaching force, and gender-related barriers.

Overall Project Goal

To provide access, quality education and protection services to children affected by the drought crisis in Togdheer region.

Project Outcomes & Indicators

Outcome 1: Increased access to a safe learning environment and quality education for boys and girls affected by drought.

Key Outcome Indicator: Number of girls and boys with increased access to safe, inclusive, and protected quality education services.

Outcome 2: Strengthened resilience and capacity of education personnel and children on DRR to mitigate the risks of future natural hazards that affect education delivery.

Key Outcome Indicator: Improved knowledge and resilience of teachers, children, and community on climate change adaptation and hazards.

Outcome 3: Improved protection and well-being of children, teachers, and community members through the provision of integrated child protection services.

Key Outcome Indicator: Number of children, teachers, and community members who have received the integrated child protection support.

Outcome 4: The government is engaged and supported in increasing access to quality education through the development guidelines and awareness meetings.

Key Outcome Indicator: The government develop new guidelines and local educational officials participate in the awareness meetings to improve access to quality education.



Purpose of the project end-line evaluation

To assess the performance of the project against the project goal, outcome and output indicators. This also included the impact of the project activities on both the project direct and indirect beneficiaries, challenges, best practices and recommendations for future use. The evaluation findings will inform learning and accountability to Plan International Japan National Office (JNO) as the donor, and to the other project stakeholders.

Evaluation criteria

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and lessons learnt was applied in assessing the performance of the project outcomes, and the impacts created as a result.

Scope of the evaluation

The end-line evaluation covered 12 months from the project start on July 1st 2022 until 30th June 2023 (end of project). It covered five project schools: Gatiitaley, Harasheikh, Odweyne, Kalasharka, and Unuunley in Togdheer region. It covered the main areas of intervention and evaluated the main results concerning the indicators of the project, considering the impact of access to quality education, gender, inclusion and protection mainstreaming of the project. The main areas included.

- Impact of education service provision including catch up classes and provision of scholastic materials.
- Impact/effect of mobile cash transfers and extent to which basic needs were covered, and how these improved girls' access to education.
- Impact of the improved protection and well-being of children, teachers, and community members.
- Response to the immediate needs of drought-affected population.
- Establishment of gender-segregated and disability-friendly latrines.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Respondents Profile

A total of 307 respondents participated in the final evaluation. These included 163 males and 144 females. By age, they included 174 adults (85males, 89females) and 133 children (78boys, 55girls). By school, the learners came from Haragwafi (48), Gatiitaley (36), Unuunley (26) and Karasharka (23). Due to security restrictions, learners in Harashiik primary were not accessible.

TABLE 1 RESPONDENTS DISTRIBUTION BY INTERVIEW TYPE, AGE & GENDER

	Males	Females	Total
Survey-Child	78	55	133
Survey-Caregivers	62	82	144
HTs	5		5
KII	7		7
FGD-CEC	3	6	9
FGD-Teachers	8	1	9
Total	163	144	307

Evaluation design

Survey research design complemented by mixed methods for data collection was applied to assess the intended and unintended outcomes of the project. Quantitative and qualitative data was generated from different sources to enable triangulation and comparison of views and facts. Qualitative data was gathered using key informant interviews and focus group discussions from the various project stakeholders, while quantitative data was collected electronically using Open Data Kit (ODK) software.



Household Survey (HHS)

HHS involved 277 adults and child respondents distributed as follows.

TABLE 2 SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY SCHOOL, AGE AND GENDER

	Child			Adult		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	133	78	55	144	62	82
Haragwaafi	36%	33%	40%	27%	32%	23%
Gatitaley	27%	33%	18%	24%	19%	27%
Unuunley	20%	17%	24%	25%	29%	22%
Karasharka	17%	17%	18%	24%	19%	28%

Key informant interview (KIIs)

Seven (7) KIIs were conducted with purposively selected stakeholders. These included 2 government officials from MOES, 3 local leaders (Gatitaley, Karasharka and Harashiikh) and 2 project team members (Program & finance).

Focus group discussion (FGD)

In total, 4 FGDs were conducted (2 with Community Education Committees and 2 with teachers). Three FGDs involved mixed groups and one involved male only. The FGD teacher and CEC participants were drawn from Unuunley and Haragwafi schools.

Child Safeguarding

Informed Consent Forms were signed and submitted to Plan Country Office. Child Safeguarding was emphasized during the enumerator training. The objective of the evaluation was clarified to the respondents before start of the interviews. Only those that freely consented to participate were interviewed. Head Teachers signed of consent for their learners to participate in the evaluation.



Najah, 11, stokes fire for cooking with.
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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

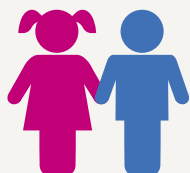
Project Relevance

Findings indicate that the project was relevant to the beneficiaries or the education sector in the following ways.

- It **met the most pressing education needs** of the girls and boys affected by drought in Togdheer region including teaching, learning, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), protection and safeguarding; and influenced the negative social norms that propagated education and protection inequalities.
- The **integrated project design** contributed to improved enrollment, retention, attendance and performance of the drought affected learners in the five project schools by enabling the project to meet multiple education and protection needs of the affected learners.
- **Distribution of hygiene kits** to the girls kept them in school. They contributed to improved enrollment, retention and performance of the female learners. They also led to reduced absenteeism unlike in the past.
- The hygiene kits helped **to restore the dignity of the girls**, rebuilt their comfort and confidence, and enabled them to participate with others including in physical activities. Furthermore, they contributed to improved menstrual hygiene and sanitation in the schools.
- **Support for children with disabilities** (CwD) enabled to keep them in school, their attendance was consistent and their performance improved. All interventions applied a disability lens. Their inclusion and support were given equal importance throughout the project's implementation.
- The project was **relevant to the educational needs** of the target schools. In this regard, the project provided comprehensive support to the targeted schools, including teachers, Head Teachers (HTs), Community Education Committees (CECs), learners, and parents. Support included training programs for both teachers and CECs to enhance their skills and knowledge to effectively contribute to the success of the project and its goals. The skills contributed to school's systems strengthening that led to enhanced skills in documentation and effective school data management.
- The project was **relevant in improving the quality of teaching and learning**. Findings indicate that teacher incentives served as a good motivation to acquire and retain qualified teachers. The supply of teaching and learning materials helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and positively impacted the performance of the learners hence the learning outcomes.
- **Catch-up classes** enabled the learners to make up for the missed schooling time. They gave a second chance to the out of school children (OOSC) and other overage children
- **Cash transfers** improved learning outcomes of the drought affected learners. They enabled the most vulnerable families to afford the most pressing family basic needs, supplemented purchase of learning materials for their children, contributed to improved food security and livelihoods at the family level – with children from the beneficiary families reporting consistency in school attendance. Families afforded water for domestic use and met basic health costs – with positive effects on their school going children. Recipient families were also motivated to enroll their school age girls in school.
- The **integrated child protection services** including case management support, MHPSS, SRHR were relevant to the protection needs of the drought affected girls and boys, teachers and the school community. Installation and training of protection focal points strengthened child protection preventive and response interventions in the target schools and created a structure for reporting protection violations at school. Other protection and safeguarding services including MHPSS, and referrals enabled the schools to provide trauma management support to the children affected by severe drought for extended duration. The integrated support contributed to enhancing protective learning environments in the respective project schools.
- **Construction/rehabilitation of gender segregated latrines** restored privacy and dignity of the girls, enhanced the safety of the girls, and improved menstrual hygiene management among the adolescent girls.
- The **intervention was relevant to the Somaliland education policies**. During the project designing stage, relevant documents were consulted including the Humanitarian Response Plan, the Education Sector Strategic Plan, and other education policies, all of which promote access, quality, advocacy and system strengthening in the education sector.

EFFECTIVENESS

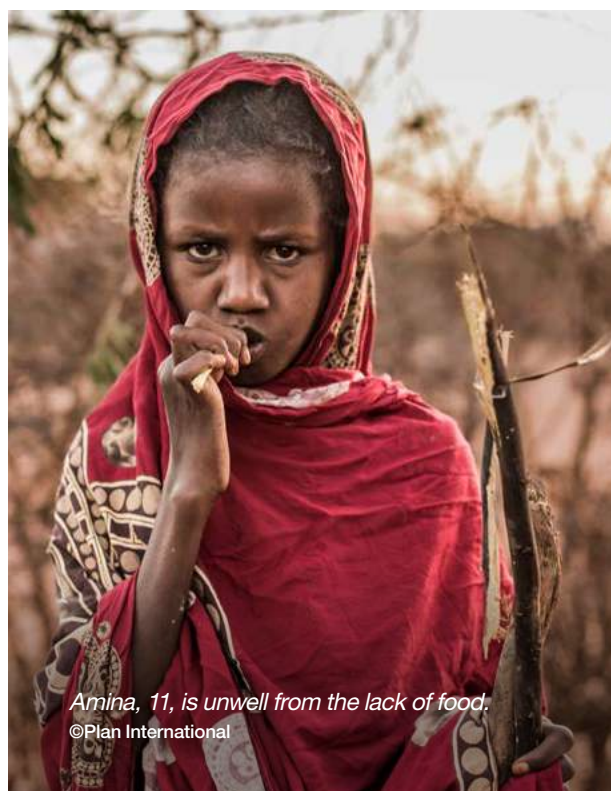
Overall goal indicator



Overall, **1,350** learners (636 girls and 714 boys) enrolled in five project schools in 12 months project period.



1,233 was the target



Amina, 11, is unwell from the lack of food.
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TABLE 3 SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY SCHOOL, AGE AND GENDER

	Formal Education			Catch-Up Classes		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Harashiik	132	5	137	24	74	98
Unuunley	100	37	137	9	42	51
Karasharka	134	7	141	1	72	73
Gatitaley	131	36	167	44	58	102
Haragwaafi	297	77	374	18	52	70
Sub Totals	794	162	956	96	298	394
Aggregate	1,350					

Overall, findings indicate that the integrated education and protection interventions improved learner's retention and consistency in attendance (80%), hygiene kits restored girl's dignity and confidence and improved girl's enrolment (60%); scholastic materials contributed to improved learning outcomes (20%) while trainings in protection, safeguarding and basic MHPSS helped to improve child protection indicators (20%).

Outcome 1: Increased access to a safe learning environment and quality education for boys and girls affected by drought.

Key Outcome Indicator: Number of girls and boys with increased access to safe, inclusive, and protected quality education services.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.1: 1,350 learners (636 girls, 714 boys) enrolled in formal education.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.2: 1,250 learners (636 girls and 714 boys) against 1,233 received scholastic materials.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.3: 394 learners (92 boys, 302 girls) enrolled in catch-up classes.

Dropouts: 106 learners dropped out of school during the 12-month project period including 76 (47boys, 29girls) in formal education and 30(29boys, 9girls) in catch-up program. No CwD

dropped out of school during the same period. Poverty accounted for 80% of the girls' dropouts followed by early pregnancies (60%). Poverty was also responsible for boy's dropouts (80%) and child labour (80%).

Absenteeism: On average some learners missed school for between 5-15 days (about 2 weeks) in the last 12 months. Poverty accounted for 60% of the girl's absenteeism followed by early pregnancies (40%); while child labour was the main cause for boys' absenteeism (80%) followed by poverty (40%). For the CwD, limited motivation was the main cause cited by 40%.

Retention: 1,274 (94.4%) of the learners enrolled were retained until the end of the project.

Completion rate at grade 8: Three of the project schools had registered 78 candidates (55boys, 23girls) to sit for national examination in 2022/2023 academic year. Harashiik, Haragwaafi and Unuunley recorded positive improvement in the number of learners that registered to participate in the national examinations in 2023 compared to the previous years.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.4: 5 water supply systems (tanks) – one per project school were constructed/rehabilitated.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.5: 20 teachers (3 females) were trained in teaching methodology (teaching large, multi-grade, and multi-age classes, catch-up classes), to address the needs of catch-up learners. Out of the trained teachers, 18(90%) measured above average in post-test and the remaining 2(10%) were supported on peer-to-peer basis.

150 caregivers benefited from mobile cash transfers of USD 50 for 6 months.

Outcome 2: Strengthened resilience and capacity of education personnel and children on DRR to mitigate the risks of future natural hazards that affect education delivery.

INDICATOR 2.1: 1,350 learners compared to a target of 1, 233 received messages with class-based climate adaptation lessons by trained teachers through cascaded model in class and child-led clubs.

INDICATOR 2.2: 25 teachers and CEC members were trained on DRR to mitigate the risks of future natural hazards that affect education delivery. DRR training increased the knowledge levels of the education personnel in disaster risk reduction as cited by all (100%) HTs; supported the teachers to integrate climate change into the local curriculum (80%), enabled development of school-based preparedness plans (80%), and improved resilience of teachers in climate change adaptation and hazards (40%).

INDICATOR 2.3: Five school based DRR preparedness plans were developed – one in each project school. They helped to guide DRR activities at the school's level including hazards mapping and mitigation to avert negative effects on the education program; and provided a structured framework upon which to plan and execute disaster risk reduction and mitigation interventions.

Outcome 3: Improved protection and well-being of children, teachers, and community members through the provision of integrated child protection services.

Key Outcome Indicator: 130 (90%) caregivers and 123(92%) children benefitted from the integrated child protection services. Services contributed to improvement of child protection outcomes as cited by all (100%) HTs, 79% caregivers and 69% children surveyed.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 3.1: Trainings were provided in child protection, basic mental health and psychosocial support, case management and referral pathways. As a result,

- 80% of the attendees showed an above average knowledge increase.
- 111(77%) caregivers and 82 (62%) children can identify cases of protection violations in their school and community.
- CEC FGD participants highly understand basic child protection concepts and how to identify CP violations at school and in the community.
- 134(93%) caregivers and 115(86%) children and CECs knew where to report cases of protection violations in their schools or at the community level.
- Most caregivers (96%) and children (80%) know how to report protection violations in their school or at the community.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 3.2: 10 gender segregated latrines were constructed/renovated. They provided a dignified and protective environment for the female learners. They reduced the risk of interaction with male learners reducing the likelihood of exposing girls to protection violations.

INDICATOR 3.3: 400 girls received menstrual hygiene kits that consisted of menstrual pads, bath soap, multiple pairs of underwear, detergent powder, sanitary napkins, a flashlight, toothpaste, a toothbrush, and a comb. Hygiene kits reduced absenteeism among girls as reported by 57% child survey respondents; restored girl's dignity (44%), enabled girls to participate in physical exercises (23%), contributed to improved hygiene

management and to comfort and concentration in class (12%).

INDICATOR 3.4: 119 FGM girl survivors received child protection services.

OUTPUT INDICATOR 3.5: Five (5) child-led school clubs with a total of 125 members (25 each) were established and member’s knowledge strengthened in child rights, referral pathways and climate cards’ reading and life skills.

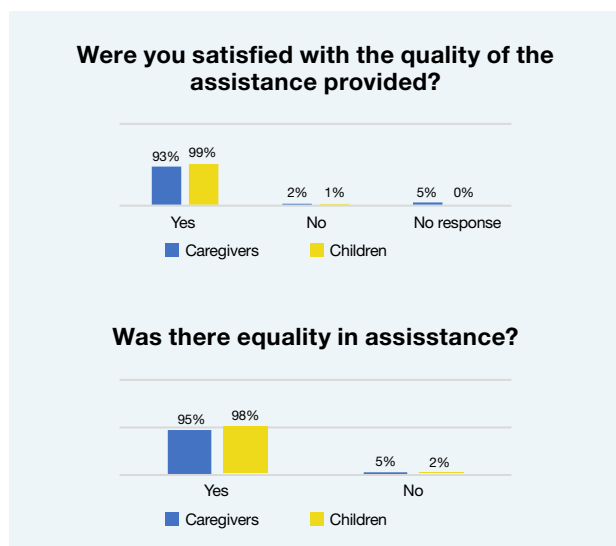
Outcome 4: The government is engaged and supported in increasing access to quality education through advocacy and implementation of existing guidelines

INDICATOR 4.1: The project contributed in the review of 4 guidelines and policies including the Education Sector Strategic Plan, Education Policy, Non-Formal Education Policy and the Education Management Information System (EMIS) Guidelines.

- Implementation of all the guidelines was rolled out during the project period.
- The project contributed in the dissemination of these guidelines at regional and district levels.
- The guidelines provided the required guidance to the education stakeholders in the respective areas that they covered.

INDICATOR 4.2: Two awareness meetings were held with local leaders and educational officials at regional and district levels. In addition, two coordination meetings were held with the support of the regional education office to review and guide project implementation.

An assessment of caregivers and children satisfaction with quality and equality of assistance led to the following feedback:



Challenges



Delayed liquidation by the partners initially affected timely reporting. This was resolved through close monthly monitoring of liquidations.

Coordination, Collaboration & Communication

- Project facilitated formation of Community Education committees (CECs) for coordination and collaboration on project activities including beneficiary selection.
- CECs, teachers & education officials were involved in the beneficiary selection for the cash transfers, dignity kits and scholastic materials, and in decision on water supply to the schools.
- CECs also supported with the school's administration.
- MOES provided oversight on the project implementation.
- CEC members confirmed that feedback and complaint mechanisms were established in their respective project schools. They termed the mechanism(s) as effective.
- Project successfully established strong relationships with the regional education office, teachers, CECs and the parents. These relationships were essential in achieving the project objectives and in ensuring its success.
- Relationships with the CECs was crucial in fostering community involvement and ownership of the project.



Hamda, One of the EIE beneficiaries, now goes to school when she has her period.

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Factors that influenced achievement of the project goals

- Good collaboration and coordination among the CEC and other education stakeholders
- Deliberate decision to mobilize for and increase enrollment of the girls.
- Continuous awareness, communication, cooperation and coordination of the beneficiaries
- The structured support provided by the project team to the project schools
- Information sharing
- Oversight
- Teacher engagement
- Teacher incentives
- Availability of WASH & dignity kits for girls



One of the schools that Plan International constructed gender segregated and disability friendly latrines under JNO EIE project.

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IMPACT

- The project impacted the education sector through support for review of 4 guidelines and policies including the Education Sector Strategic Plan, Education Policy, Non-Formal Education Policy and the Education Management Information System (EMIS) Guidelines.
- It contributed to improved enrolment, learner performance, teacher engagement, community involvement, and overall school infrastructure improvement.
- According to the surveyed caregivers, access to education was the most significant change caused by the project (89% children & 79% caregivers), inclusivity of the education (50% learners & 42% caregivers), learning in a protective environment (44% caregivers & 25% learners).
- It contributed to enhanced resilience of the learners, teachers and the CECs who are now more knowledgeable and aware about droughts, climate change, global warming, floods, and the mitigation measures that can reduce their impacts on their lives and on the education sector.
- Catch-up classes made a significant impact in terms of the number of learners that re-entered school. They offered a second chance to the out of school and overage children to access education.
- Cash transfers (\$50) provided to 150 households for 6 months, increased the capacity of the households to cover their most pressing needs including payment of water bills, medical bills and to purchase uniforms for their children; Improved coping mechanism and cushioned the beneficiary families from using negative coping strategies like disposal of family assets, keeping girls at home than in school, or initiating child early and forced marriages to cope with the severe effects of drought.
- There was improved quality of teaching and learning as a result of teacher training and distribution of scholastic materials.
- By implementing effective teaching strategies, providing quality resources, and offering supportive learning environment, learners demonstrated improved academic achievement, increased knowledge retention, higher levels of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and a greater ability to apply learned concepts in real-life situations (Deputy Regional Education Officer).
- There was general improvement among the education stakeholders in the levels of knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding, safety and wellbeing of the learners.
- The project contributed to the sustainable development goal 4 and 5 through access to quality education and education system strengthening.

Lessons Learnt

- The cash transfer of USD50 per recipient household improved life and livelihoods of the households by cushioning them against the negative effects of drought.
- CECs utilized the lessons learnt through sustained awareness raising and community mobilization to enroll all willing OOSC in the project schools.
- The benefits/importance of integrated design:

The project's success in providing comprehensive support highlighted the significance of integrating different services for optimal impact and outcomes.

- Inadequate or ineffective teaching methods, a lack of resources or educational materials, and unfavorable learning environment can lead to negative impacts on education outcomes.
- Religious leaders and parents played a key role in influencing girls' education. Their support and influence were instrumental in promoting the importance of education for girls and overcoming cultural barriers or biases that could hinder their access to education.
- Building strong relationships with stakeholders contributed to the smooth implementation of the project.



Students in education in emergency catch up classes.

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Sustainability of Achieved Results

- 1 The high level of community engagement and involvement created community ownership of the project interventions. This will enable the community to continue to sustain the project outcomes beyond Plan support.
- 2 Establishment and strengthening of CECs will ensure they remain supportive of the school's post Plan exit. The CECs also provided the link between the schools and the community.
- 3 Installation and training of protection focal points will ensure the protection outcomes achieved will continue post Plan exit. The focal points are also teachers in the respective schools hence will continue to deliver their support to the learners after the project end.
- 4 Distribution of reusable sanitary towels to the adolescent girls will ensure they continue to use them post project exit. This will continue to positively impact their retention and consistency in attendance beyond the project.
- 5 The skills acquired by the various school education stakeholders including teachers and CECs will continue being used in the project schools beyond the project end. Furthermore, the school based DRR preparedness Plans established in every project school will continue guiding the schools on DRR and resilience building beyond the project.
- 6 The child led clubs will continue to operate beyond the project end. The clubs will continue providing the avenue for child participation and engagement.
- 7 The school infrastructure renovated/restored including the gender segregated latrines and the water storage systems will remain in use beyond the project period.
- 8 According to the project team, the country office worked very closely with MOES and entered a memorandum of understanding. Subsequently, the country office has handed over the project schools to the government for continuity. According to the Regional Education Officer, the government support and payment of the project teachers that are not on the payroll will continue.
- 9 The Deputy Regional Education Officer envisages additional resource mobilization from community contributions to enable MOES to continue meeting the hardware support (supplies) for the schools.
- 10 Capacity building of the regional education office and school head teachers, and CECs on schools' administration. These skills will remain relevant to the effective operation of the schools.

Recommended

- 1 Longer-term education interventions or repeated education in emergency interventions are recommended to avert disruption of the learning cycle of the boys and girls affected by emergencies. The protracted nature of the crises should be a key consideration in the design and determination of the duration and the frequency of the education and other interventions.
- 2 There is need to extend the project for another 12 months to avert reversal of gains accrued especially those of ensuring the enrolled children do not dropout and those interested to enroll in the project schools can still do so.
- 3 A strategy to support the most vulnerable households should be devised and implemented to ensure as many children as possible are retained in school after enrolment. Conditional cash assistance should be scaled up in the project, or partnerships established with relevant actors to do so in order to cushion the most vulnerable. To ensure sustainability of the livelihoods of the cash assisted households, future cash transfers should be designed as conditional business support assistance particularly targeted at the female caregivers/parents, through which, one of the conditions is to start an income generating activity. The grant can be increased to make it adequate for the intended business but given once or maximum twice with close support supervision.
- 4 Installation of more water systems in the project schools could help to scale up water storage for the dry seasons. It is recommended that the future project designs integrate a component on water harvesting technologies to ensure sustainable access to clean drinking water in the project schools. This should be considered alongside transfer of relevant skills to those assigned the responsibility, supply of adequate water storage tanks (either underground or plastic tanks) with ample capacity to store more water; and water sterilization agents to ensure water safety. Partnerships can be explored with the private sector whose corporate social responsibility involves water projects.
- 5 The project should continue to build on the strategies that were described as most effective and which had significant contribution to the project's success. This included community mobilization to enroll OOSC and other school-age children, support for establishment and strengthening of the school's governance structures, capacity strengthening of the teachers including provision of teacher incentives, support for gender segregated and gender friendly school infrastructure, strengthening the child protection and safeguarding approaches and support for scholastic materials, dignity kits for girls and school uniforms, and effective coordination and collaboration with the education stakeholders at the district, regional and national levels. These approaches proved to have a very direct correlation to the enrolment, retention, completion and performance of the learners in the project schools.
- 6 As part of the exit strategy, the country office should continue to work with MOES and retain adhoc monitoring support to assist the schools with the transition to self-support/sustainability. The duration for this support should be agreed with MOES.
- 7 Future projects should embrace integrated design to enable delivering support at scale for the target beneficiaries. Such designs should be informed by comprehensive beneficiary needs assessments and prioritization in order to design demand driven interventions with higher chance of achieving multiple outcomes for the beneficiaries.
- 8 Refresher sensitizations/trainings are provided to the caregivers on how to report child protection violations and the existing referral pathways, to improve reporting and referrals of child protection cases in the project locations.
- 9 CECs in Haragwafi primary recommended a refresher on the school Code of Conduct.



Cover photograph: Juweriya and Hibbaq's education has been affected by the drought in Somalia/Somaliland.

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About Plan International

Founded in 1937, Plan International is a development and humanitarian organisation that advances children's rights and equality for girls in 83 countries. In 2022, Plan International's income was **€1.1 billion** including €390m of grants income reaching 50.2 million children and partnering with 31,865 organisations.

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