

High-quality Research Support (HQRS) Programme

Education System in the Doomeey Internally Displaced Camp in Beletweyne: Challenges & Opportunities

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AGRONYMS

AMISOM: Africa Union Mission in Somalia

IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council

UNOCHA: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund Somalia Population Estimation Survey, 2014

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

WFP: World Food Program

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Introduction:

This study will reveal IDPs experience of challenges and opportunities in Doomey IDP education. It also contributes fresh information and will help aid agencies and donors to have background information for their intervention. Besides that, study findings can be used by future researchers in such topics. This paper is partial fulfilment of a research course and will be used for research and educational purposes.

This paper consists of five parts: Introduction; this is the first part of the paper and gives readers an overview on the overall aim of the research, its sections and the structure of the paper. The second part of the paper is the background or literature review. This part, as the name indicates, relates to the existing knowledge of the topic and what was said before. Analysis is third and largest part of the paper and analyses respondents' answers and their experiences. The fourth part of the essay is the conclusion and recommendation. This is the most important part of the research, as it answers directly the research question and summarises findings. Lastly appendixes and references; here we demonstrate annexes we used and acknowledge documents we used for a literature review. This also guides readers on any required further reading.

Background and Literature Review:

Somalia education is facing complex and multidimensional challenges in the areas of curriculum, teacher training, school infrastructure, lack of public education, unregulated private education,

school finance and untrained educational professionals (Abdullahi Sh. Adan Hussein, Phd, 2015). Due to the collapse of the central government over two decades ago, Hiran region, especially Beletweyne, like any other region and town in southern Somalia, lacks a centralized education authority and continues to suffer from recurrent floods and clan conflicts (Somalia Education Cluster, *March 2011*). These natural and manmade disasters forced more families to flee from their homes. Some then escaped and crossed the border and became refugees, while others live in camps in the country territory as an Internally Displaced Persons, (NRC, 2015). According to UNFPA, Hiran region hosts approximately **51,160** IDPs. Doomeey is one of Beletweyne IDP camps. This study plans to examine education challenges and opportunities in this camp (UNFPA, 2014).

The main aim of this study was to examine Somalia's educational challenges, especially schools in Internally Displaced Persons' camps. The study was conducted in Beletweyne district, Hiran region and the case study was Doomeey IDP camp school. In camp schools children of different ages and abilities are mixed together in single classrooms without proper adaptation of teaching methods to improve learning and to induce school engagement. Such schooling circumstances, together with personal and family level factors such as ill-health, malnutrition and poverty, jeopardize meaningful access to education for many children. There are many factors associated with drop out, some of which belong to the individual, such as poor health or malnutrition and motivation (UNNESCO, 2000).

Education implementing agencies in Beletweyne IDP schools

There are regional education authorities which oversee education management with the help of International NGOs whose mandate includes education implementation in Beletweyne district. These include: Save the children International 2. Care international and 3. United Nations Childrens’ Fund (Unicef). World Food Program (WFP) is there also, providing a school feeding program to some schools. These NGOs facilitate in different ways including: rehabilitation of school infrastructure, investment of curriculum development, distribution of text books, teacher training and payment. All these are project based; as the project ends, schools stop services.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) is defined as persons forced to flee from their homes in a country but who did not cross the border.

IDP schools in Beletweyne town

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Doomeey | 7. Dhaxyaal |
| 2. Qalaafe | 8. Junbur |
| 3. Burcadde | 9. Iricadde |
| 4. Rasmi | 10. Tawkal B |
| 5. Nasiib | 11. Israac |
| 6. Ex-airport | 12. Daryeel |

Curriculum Management

Doomeey IDP school uses the Somali National Curriculum, developed by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), textbooks and other learning resources were available although, there are gaps. Doomeey, as do other IDP schools, provides standards from one to five and teaches seven subjects, namely: Religion, Arabic language, Mathematics, Science, Social study, Somali language and English language. This IDP school serves 292 vulnerable pupils.

A Brief Explanation of the Project

This research was conducted between May 30 and August 25, 2016, in Beletweyne, especially at Doomeey IDP camp school. The overall aim of the study was to examine Beletweyne emergency education processes in Internally Displaced Persons' camps. Schools in IDP camps are established and fund their operations through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) both local and international. After a literature review, with the help and guidance of the mentor, I prepared a qualitative questionnaire. Using open-ended questions I conducted a semi-structure interview to allow participants to explain their experiences. Data was collected from three Key Informant Interviews (KII) and one Focus Group Discussion (FGD), consisting of four members.

FGD involved or was participated in by: head teacher, female teacher, two Community Education Committee members, one female and male, while KII members were: member of Hiran Regional Education Committee (HREC), an IDP teacher and former humanitarian worker (education project officer). I did not interview parents and students, because:

- A. This is a small project with time constrains; we cannot look at all stakeholders
- B. It will be easier to access teachers (some of them are IDPs) and education managers
- C. To avoid ethical issue of talking with children and vulnerable adults.

I used physical camp visits, observation and informal interviews to fill the gap and obtain IDP voices.

Analysis:

This research aims to find out about challenges in Internally Displaced Persons schools and opportunities they have. Camp(s) have been established as a last resort to provide temporary

assistance and protection for people forced to leave their homes due to conflict or natural disaster.

We used semi-structured interview, to find out deep information and views of IDPs in Doomeey, especially educational challenges they deal with. We decided to conduct face-to-face interviews at the school and the target groups were one focus group discussion, and three key informant interviews. I used same questionnaire for both the FGD and KII. Questions were based on the overall management, such as existence of school management; community education committee; teachers and their qualifications; students; and what they teach. We also asked about challenges they face and their recommendations.

Participants, both the FGD and KII, agreed on the existence of a functioning school management. They confirmed that they have functioning school management consisting of a head teacher and his vice, both of them are male and the vice came from the IDPs, while the head teacher came from the host community. They also have a Community education Committee (CEC). They revealed that they have **7** CEC members, three female and four male members, who all came from the IDP community. I asked if there is a hierarchy/chain of command in CEC members; the head teacher said that the “Hierarchy of CEC members are: Chair, vice, treasurer, secretary and three ordinary members.”

Regards the students’ aggregated data; respondents agreed that there are **292** students, 158 girls and 134 boys. The good news is that girls’ enrolment is high in Doomeey IDP School; **54.1%** of the pupils are girls while the rest, **49.9%**, are boys. My expectation was that school girls would number less than the boys, but I found different information from my expectation. They mentioned that the WFP feeding program is running in the school and they feel that this project

encourages pupils' retention to school and also noted that enrolment increased as this project started. This project was intended for students only, not teachers and even clearance staff:

“Project staff monitor that the feeding project is used only by the pupils, as teachers also are in need but they are not allowed; sometimes we eat secretly” a laughing female teacher said.

The respondents told us that they have 10 teachers, four female and six male teachers. All of them are secondary level, but there are two female teachers who have more teaching experience. They served as Somali national teachers, before the collapse of the central government and got good teacher training. Although respondents agreed Doomeey School has 10 teachers, four female and six male teachers, all of them secondary level, one KII opposed that and told me that there are two primary level teachers.

Respondents expressed that they have classes from standard one to five and coming year they are planning to start standard six. They teach six subjects, Math, Science, Somali language, Arabic language, English language and Social Studies. They use the Somali curriculum, prepared by education technical persons including Somalis and expatriates funded by UNICEF. They have School days from Saturday to Wednesday, with a period of **45** minutes per session. Also they have two shifts morning and afternoon.

Discussion participants listed more challenges that they have to deal with. They mentioned that lack of teachers' payment is the most remarkable one. *“As we mentioned earlier, we have ten teachers, but only four teachers receive some incentives”* the Head teacher said, He added that it is also project based; as project ends it ends also. Respondents agreed that school dropout and

early marriage of school girls was remarkable challenge. I also found this from informal interview and camp observation visit.

There are not enough teachers training. On the other hand they also mentioned lack of school fencing from other IDP fields and shortage of latrines as well. I asked them, there is the Save the Children three-phase model of education, which phase do they think are you in? (I explained them first): *“We don’t know these models, they did not tell us any model regarding school management and teaching methods as well”* the head teacher responded. One KII participant, who is a former education officer, expressed that this three- model is only written on project papers, but it is not practical and IDPs even are not aware of it.

On the opportunity side, respondents revealed that the only opportunity is to get a new project: *“The opportunity we hope is to have more funds from the federal government, aid agencies and the cost community to manage teachers’ payment and construct additional class rooms”* a female CEC member said.

The last research question was to have their recommendations and suggestions. The FGD and KII participants gave me general recommendations. We recommend *“we need helping on education facilities and rehabilitating school infrastructure; also improvement of school sanitation and hygiene”* the Head teacher replied during FGD. A Female teacher agreed with the head teacher, but added that they *“need teacher training”*; a female CEC member added that the other thing she felt important is that the *“school has no fencing from the camp and that disturbs smooth running of classes”*.

“These are vulnerable people, so I would suggest that the host community should allocate them voluntary teachers to continue classes, during gap times” a KII former education officer commented.

Conclusion:

Respondents revealed similarly that Somalia education is facing complex and multidimensional challenges. They emphasized in the areas of curriculum, teacher training, school infrastructure, lack of public education, unregulated private education, school finance and brain-drain of educational professionals. Especially they emphasized the challenges of educating displaced children, summarized as follows:

- ✓ Lack of functioning school management and community education committee as well,
- ✓ Camps often face a shortage of qualified teachers and must recruit among the camp population.
- ✓ Less teacher payment, which reduces their motivation and preparation, management cannot control teachers’ attendance and performance.
- ✓ Lack of equivalent curriculum and text books
- ✓ Camp education mostly is project based, as project ends, education stops, till approval of another project. This may take several months or sometimes years, especially nowadays where ‘fund gap’ has become a familiar phrase in aid agencies.
- ✓ The majority of teachers do not have the skills or time to provide the psychological support children need.
- ✓ There is scarcity of classes, large class sizes (up to 150 children per class in some camps).

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- ✓ Displaced families often do not have money for school fees or other costs including text books, clothes and shoes.
- ✓ Security fears often deter many parents from sending their children to school, especially girls.
- ✓ Children who lack educational opportunities are at increased risk for recruitment as child soldiers, criminal activity, forced labor and exploitation.

From the discussions with both Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interview, and my observations and physical visits to the Doomeey internally displaced school, I found that there are good number of students, 292 who are trying to achieve some level of education with the help of their parents, school management and teachers. Some good news is that 54.1% of them were girls. Classes range from standard one to standard five, with a plan to standard six, in the coming school year - September, 2016.

On the other hand, there are more challenges, which they deal with every day. Most remarkable are the fund gaps to manage teachers' payment, scarcity of classes, less teachers and teacher training. School dropout and early marriage was revealed also as a tangible hindrance to school's smooth running. As with other IDP school, Doomeey School has only one fund source; aid agencies. Nowadays as crises increased around world such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, new terminology emerged in refugee and internally displaced persons. 'Fund gap' became most a fear term for the humanitarian workers and all dependents of aid funds. This hinders education running in IDPs schools. Education projects were based on emergency and ends in a short term; six months to one year is the average duration of the projects. As the project ends, no education

activities can continue, because teachers do not continue voluntarily in the long term and IDP parents cannot afford education expenses.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

- Due to time and resource restrictions, this study targeted only one IDP school (**8.3%**) as a sample out of the twelve functioning IDP schools, from regional education authorities' list.
- Data availability and related statistics is scarce
- Floods affected almost all sections of Beletweyne and most schools were closed, that hindered the physical access of the researcher.

Future researches have the opportunity to examine other Beletweyne IDP schools and find out what challenges they face and what opportunities they have.

Appendix Research questions

Research questions and consent message

My name is Abdifatah Osman Sheik Adan. I live in Beletweyne & as you may know I implemented at your camp different humanitarian projects. Now I am doing a research project at Doomey IDP camp, especially its education system and challenges.

This research is a fulfillment of research training co-implemented by OCVF, TS and University of Bristol. Your information will be used anonymously and for research purpose only. Target participants are: Head teacher, teachers and members of education & committee.

I request you to help me to answer my questions voluntarily and you are free to withdraw the interview any time. Your answers help me to understand education system here and also I could share findings after the publication with your stakeholders if you agree, so they know real situation.

1. Do you have functional:
 - A) School management
 - B) Community Education Committee (CEC),
2. Do you know number of students (Male and Female)
3. Number of teachers & their qualifications
4. What do you teach? How do you teach it?
5. What challenges you deal with? What do you think needs improvement?
6. There are Save the Children three-phase model of education, do you think which phase are you in (I will explain them first)
7. Is there any opportunity
8. What do you recommend/suggest?

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