

# Independent Evaluation of the Girls' Education Challenge Phase II – Effects of Covid-19 on Access and Learning

## Annexes

February 2022



# Annex 1 - Research Instruments and Consent Forms

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## Qualitative Research Instruments

### Mercy Corps (Nepal)

#### 1. KIIs with IP Team

**Aim:** Understand the initial response from the IP to Covid-19 and what the organisation's priorities were. Understand how the programme responded after the submission of the Mid-Term Response Plans (MTRP). Understand how they identified the most at-risk girls and supported their access. Understand how the project is now working to re-enrol girls. Understand how the project team sought to support girls transitioning into higher secondary education or vocational training, and what the project did to encourage girls in grades 10 to transition and not drop out of school.

**Participants:** Two-three KIIs with members of the IP Team.

#### **Introduction:**

Name, roles, etc.

As part of the evaluation of the GEC II, we are carrying out a study on girls' access to education and changes in learning outcome during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is **not** an evaluation of the MC project, but feeds into our learning on how girls' education has been affected by Covid-19 and the school closures which resulted.

This interview will aim to further explore some emerging findings from our review of project documentation, as well as identify areas for further exploration in our primary research with girls, Girl Champions, caregivers and teachers.

#### **Background questions**

1. What is your role on the project team? How long have you been working on the Mercy Corps (MC) STEM project?
2. What was your involvement in the Covid-19 response activities implemented as part of the STEM project?
  - a. **Probe:** How did your role change during Covid-19? Were you asked to do anything differently from your normal duties? Please provide examples.

#### **Covid-19 response and access to education**

3. Which girls in the community did you consider as most educationally marginalised before Covid-19 in STEM project schools and communities? What additional or specific efforts were made to reach these groups before Covid-19, if any?
  - a. **Probe for:** What did you consider to be the main differences between IS and OOS girls? How were OOS girls identified and what support did they receive (i.e. TVET courses, transition into formal education...?).
  - b. **Probe for:** What sub-groups of girls were considered particularly marginalised and why? (probe for – between in-school and out-of-school girls).
  - c. **Probe:** For the more marginalised girls, what was done by the project to support their transition into higher secondary or vocational training? What were the main challenges in supporting this transition?
4. How did this change during Covid-19? What did you change in your strategy as a result?
  - a. **Probe for:** In what ways were girls from the IS and OOS programmes affected differently by Covid-19 and school closures? In what way did the project respond?
  - b. **Probe for:** What sub-groups were particularly affected and how? Is there anything which was surprising or unexpected?
  - c. **Probe:** What activities did you stop, and what were you able to continue and why? (probe for: Girls' Clubs, self-defence classes, other...?)
5. Probe: How did the government respond when schools closed? Did schools receive any support from the government? How was this similar/ different to what STEM project schools received?
  - a. **Probe:** Were teachers able to follow up with students in this time, and how? What tools/ technology did they use to follow up? Were there any in person follow ups? How often did they engage?
  - b. **Probe:** How did field monitors follow up with STEM girls when schools were closed, if at all? What tools/ technology did they use to follow up? Were there any in person follow ups? How often did they engage?
  - c. **Probe:** Was there any particular attention paid to certain grades or groups to support their education? What about the grade 10 transition group? Were there any groups that were hard to follow up with and why?

6. How were your overarching plans been affected when Covid-19 broke out? What parts of the programme were able to continue as planned? What interventions were most affected? Did Covid-19 affect your closing-out plans in any way? What did you change as a result?
  - a. **Probe:** What was the impact on in-school activities?
  - b. **Probe:** What was the impact on vocational training activities?
  - c. **Probe:** What was the impact on transition cohorts?
  - d. **Probe:** How did it affect the establishment of the STEM Young Women Entrepreneurs Association?
  - e. Anything else?
7. We know that Covid-19 has placed a substantial burden on all MC communities. Did the project introduce any economic or financial support for children's families as part of Covid-19 response?
  - a. **Probe for:** Was there any support for the girls in loans and savings groups? If yes, what support was it?
  - b. **Probe for:** Was there in-kind support such as hygiene kits? If yes, what support was it?
  - c. **Probe for:** Was there any financial support to families who were struggling even before Covid-19? If so what or how much support?
  - d. Anything else to highlight?
8. What results did these have on girls and their families, if any?
  - a. **Probe:** On their mental health/ wellbeing?
  - b. **Probe:** On girls' ability to engage in educational materials?
  - c. **Probe:** On girls' ability to return to school when they reopened?
  - d. **Probe:** Anything else?
9. In preparation for school re-openings, did the project do anything to work with girls who may have dropped out? What specifically did the project do? If addressed by the project:
  - a. **Probe:** How did you identify girls who dropped out? Were there more or less than you expected – why do you think this is?
  - b. **Probe:** What were the differences in drop-out between the IS and OOS participants in the project? In what ways were the challenges they faced similar? How were they different?
  - c. **Probe:** Were the drop-out rates among girls in the transition groups (grade 10 to 11) what you expected? Were they similar to previous years? What do you think the reason is for this?
  - d. **Probe:** Have there been any unexpected trends e.g. girls you thought would drop-out actually returning to school, and vice versa? Why do you think that is?

### Learning

10. Overall, how do you expect girls' learning to have been affected by Covid-19 and the school closures? Is this something you have looked into or are planning on analysing further?
  - a. **Probe:** Are there any groups which have been more affected in their learning? Why? (e.g. ability to access learning materials when schools were closed)
  - b. **Probe:** Did you observe any difference across regions or types of schools (urban, semi-urban, and rural)? What about different sub-groups of girls (poorer, larger families, other...?)
  - c. **Probe:** Have school closures affected traditional education (numeracy and literacy) in different ways to alternative education (e.g. financial literacy)? In what way?
  - d. **Probe:** What has been the impact on girls who were undertaking or planning on undertaking vocational training? Were girls able to continue with these activities? How were they supported?

### Results and sustainability

11. Now that the STEM project is coming to a close, what would you highlight as the project's most important results?
  - a. **Probe:** How have you been able to communicate these results?
    - i. To the schools
    - ii. To communities
    - iii. To other stakeholders?
  - b. **Probe:** Is there anything you might do differently, if the project was not coming to a close?
12. What are the plans going forward now that the project is closing?
  - a. **Probe for:** To what extent do you think the activities will continue, and how? (e.g. is there anything being taken up by the communities or schools?)

- b. **Probe for:** To what extent do you think the project's results will continue past the lifetime of the project? Do you anticipate any sustainability challenges and why?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you feel any of the changes or innovations you introduced to the project in the Covid-19 period will be sustained? Which ones and why?
13. Was there anyone else from the MC Nepal project or local NGO partners involved in Covid-19 response who you think we should speak to as part of this research?
14. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 2. Focus Group Discussion With Girls Attending Mercy Corps Schools (Who Continued to Higher Secondary School)

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. Understand what girls felt the biggest barriers/ challenges were to access learning at home. Find out how girls feel their learning has been impacted because of Covid-19. How has this impacted on what they would like to do after finishing school – namely, transition into employment. Understand what was beneficial in helping girls transition into higher education.

**Participants:** FGDs of up to ten participants in each – in-school (IS) girls grade 11. This is specifically focused on IS girls who transitioned into higher secondary education or had previously transitioned and did not drop out.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Ice-breaker questions (10 mins)

1. Please tell the group your favourite activity you like doing. Facilitator begins by introducing herself and sharing a favourite activity.
  - a. *Comment on if girls have something in common (e.g. if two girls like dancing, do they like the same music, who do they like dancing with, do they also like singing etc.)*
2. Tell the group what you most like about being at school, and if there is anything you were most excited about when you went back to school.
  - a. *Can give prompts e.g. seeing friends, seeing teachers, favourite subject etc...*

### Learning about girls in the community (45 minutes)

We are going to start by doing drawing exercise about a typical girl in your community. Remember that you don't need to share anything about yourself you don't feel comfortable with.

As you draw the girl, think about who she is and what she wants to do, as well as some of the problems she faced before and during Covid-19. You will tell the others in your group about the girl you have drawn.

*(girls draw for 15 minutes)*

*Interviewers split the girls in two smaller groups (of about five girls each) and ask participants questions about girls' education before and during Covid-19 while they draw.*

- Draw out a girl in your community. What's her name? How old is she? Where does she live? Did she go to school before Covid-19? What about now that schools have re-opened?
- What was it like for her while schools were closed because of Covid-19? Did she continue to study and how? What kinds of problems did she face when trying to study? What kinds of other problems did she face at home and in her community?
- Is she going to go back to school now that it's open? Is she going every day? Does she have enough time to study? Why or why not?
- Now draw out her household. Who does she live with? Is she married? Does she have any brothers? Did they continue to study? Does she have any sisters? Are her brothers and sisters going back to school? Why or why not?
- Are her brothers in the same school as the girl you drew? What about her sisters? What was it like for her brothers and sisters when schools were closed? Was anything different between boys and girls? Did they have different challenges or the same?
- What does your girl want to do after she finishes school? (Does she want to work, study, get married...?)

*Girls discuss in small groups and introduce the girls they have drawn to each other.*

1. Did any of the girls you drew have something in common? What were the differences between them?
2. What were some of the main challenges the girls you drew were facing before Covid-19? How did these change with Covid-19 and schools closing?
  - a. **Probe:** Did they have to do housework? Did they have enough time to study?
  - b. **Probe:** Did anything else happen to them? Did any of them get married or pregnant?
3. What were the different challenges faced by girls and the boys in the community before Covid-19? What about during Covid-19? Were the challenges different between boys and girls, or were they the same? Why or why not? What about girls still in school and girls not in school? Why or why not? What changed for girls during Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe for:** girls' mental health, physical health...
  - b. **Probe for:** any problems in the home...?
  - c. **Probe for:** anything else?
4. *Any other specific follow-up questions emerging from the drawings.*

### Group discussion Questions (30 mins)

*Facilitator thanks the girls for their drawings and moves on to group discussion.*

Now that we have talked about what it's been like for girls in this community while schools were closed because of Covid-19, we have a few questions about your education in this time:

5. What has been the main way girls have kept in touch with your school while schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** What sort of communication did you have with your school? Was there a field monitor reaching out to you? Did you speak to them in person or on the phone?
  - b. **Probe:** Were girls able to talk to teachers on the phone? What about in person?
  - c. **Probe:** Did girls receive any feedback or support from teachers on their homework? Were girls able to ask questions?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls receive any learning materials at home? Did others in the house use those learning materials too? Who else used them?
  - e. Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so what did they use?
  - f. **Probe:** Were there any challenges in using these different types of materials? Why?
6. Is there anything you missed the most about being at school while you were at home, and why? How did this affect your learning?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you stay in touch with the other girls or your mentor while schools were closed?
  - b. **Probe:** How did the other girls keep in touch with each other while schools were closed?
    - In person? On social media? Through Girls' Clubs or self-defence classes?
7. In your community, are there any particular challenges for girls returning to school?
  - a. **Probe:** Do you know of any girls who will not be returning to school now that they have re-opened?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you think some girls in your community might find it more difficult to return to school? Why?  
**Probe:** Have new students been able to enrol into school?
8. In your community, what was most useful in helping girls to go back to school or start 11<sup>th</sup> grade?
  - a. **Probe:** Did the school help to encourage girls to go back to school? Did teachers help in any way? How?
  - b. **Probe:** What was the role of the community or households in helping girls return to school?
  - c. **Probe:** Anything else?
  - d. **Probe:** Do you know any girls who did not continue to year 11? Why not? (Probe for: cost of school, distance, marriage, other reasons...?) Do you know what they are doing now?
9. Is there anything else anyone would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

### 3. Focus Group Discussion with girls attending Mercy Corps schools (who continued to vocational training)

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education and transition into vocational training. Understand what girls felt the biggest barriers/ challenges were to access learning or training at home. Understand what the biggest barriers/ challenges were to returning to or starting training. Find out how girls feel their learning and skills training has been impacted because of Covid-19. How has this impacted on what they would like to do after finishing school training e.g. transition into employment.

**Participants:** FGDs of up to ten participants in each – girls in year 11 equivalent for vocational training. This is specifically focused on girls who transitioned into vocational training or had previously transitioned and did not drop out.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

#### Ice-breaker questions (10 mins)

1. Tell the group your favourite activity you like doing. Facilitator begins by introducing herself and sharing a favourite activity.
  - a. *Comment on if girls have something in common (e.g. if two girls like dancing, do they like the same music, who do they like dancing with, do they also like singing etc.)*
2. Tell the group what you most like about the vocational training, and if there is anything you were most excited about when you went back to school.
  - a. *Can give prompts e.g. seeing friends, seeing teachers, favourite subject etc...*

#### Learning about girls in the community (45 minutes)

We are going to start by doing drawing exercise about a typical girl in your community. Remember that you don't need to share anything about yourself you don't feel comfortable with.

As you draw the girl, think about who she is and what she wants to do, as well as some of the problems she faced before and during Covid-19. You will tell the others in your group about the girl you have drawn.

*(girls draw for 15 minutes)*

*Interviewers split the girls in two smaller groups (of about five girls each) and ask participants questions about girls' education before and during Covid-19 while they draw.*

- Draw out a girl in your community. What's her name? How old is she? Where does she live? Did she go to school before Covid-19? What about now that schools have re-opened?
- What was it like for her while schools were closed because of Covid-19? Did she continue to study and how? What kinds of problems did she face when trying to study? What kinds of other problems did she face at home and in her community?
- Is she going to go back to school or her vocational classes now that they're open? Is she going every day? Does she have enough time to study? Why or why not?
- Now draw out her household. Who does she live with? Is she married? Does she have any brothers? Did they continue to study? Does she have any sisters? Are her brothers and sisters going back to school? Why or why not?
- Are her brothers in the same school as the girl you drew? What about her sisters? What was it like for her brothers and sisters when schools were closed? Was anything different between boys and girls? Did they have different challenges or the same?
- What does your girl want to do after she finishes school? (Does she want to work, study, get married...?)

*Girls discuss in small groups and introduce the girls they have drawn to each other.*

3. Did any of the girls you drew have something in common? What were the differences between them?
4. What were some of the main challenges the girls you drew were facing before Covid-19? How did these change with Covid-19 and schools closing?
  - a. **Probe:** Did they have to do housework? Did they have enough time to study?
  - b. **Probe:** Did anything else happen to them? Did any of them get married or pregnant?
5. What were the different challenges faced by girls and the boys in the community before Covid-19? What about during Covid-19? Were the challenges different between boys and girls, or were they the same? Why or why not? What about girls still in school and girls not in school? Why or why not? What changed for girls during Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe for:** girls' mental health, physical health...
  - b. **Probe for:** any problems in the home...?
  - c. **Probe for:** anything else?
6. *Any other specific follow-up questions emerging from the drawings.*

### **Group discussion Questions (30 mins)**

*Facilitator thanks the girls for their drawings and moves on to group discussion.*

Now that we have talked about what it's been like for girls in this community while schools were closed because of Covid-19, we have a few questions about your education and vocational skills training in this time:

7. What has been the main way girls have kept in touch with your school while schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** What sort of communication did girls have with the school? Was there a field monitor reaching out to girls? Did you speak to them in person or on the phone?
  - b. **Probe:** Were girls able to talk to teachers on the phone? What about in person?
  - c. **Probe:** Did girls receive any feedback or support from teachers on their homework? Were girls able to ask questions?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls receive any learning materials at home? Did others in the house use those learning materials too? Who else used them?
  - e. Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so what did they use?
  - f. **Probe:** Were there any challenges in using these different types of materials? Why?
  - g. **Probe:** If you had already started training, did you stay in touch with the training centre and teachers? How? Did you continue any of the activities you had started?
8. Is there anything you missed the most about being at school or at the training centre while you were at home, and why? How did this affect your learning?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you stay in touch with the other girls or your mentor while schools and training centres were closed?
  - b. **Probe:** How did the other girls keep in touch with each other while schools were closed?
    - i. In person? On social media? Through the Young Women Entrepreneurs Association or self-defence classes?
9. In your community, are there any particular challenges for girls returning to school or starting vocational training?
  - a. **Probe:** Do you know of any girls who will not be returning to school or training now that they have re-opened?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you think some girls in your community might find it more difficult to return to school or training? Why?
10. In your community, what was the most helpful in encouraging girls to return to school or vocational training, or in girls transitioning into vocational training?
  - a. **Probe:** What was the role of the school? What did they do? Did teachers help in any way? How?
  - b. **Probe:** What happened at community or household level?
  - c. **Probe:** Anything else that was helpful?
11. Is there anything else anyone would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

#### 4. Focus Group Discussion with girls attending Mercy Corps schools (who decided to leave school/ education)

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. Understand what girls felt were the biggest barriers/ challenges were to access learning at home. Understand what the biggest barriers/ challenges were to returning to school (this group has dropped out). Find out how girls feel their learning was been impacted because of Covid-19. How has this impacted on what they would like to do after finishing school – transition into employment. Understand what the main reasons were that the girls dropped out.

There may be some girls who dropped out prior to the Covid-19 outbreak. Try to understand the reasons for dropping out before Covid-19, and also how Covid-19 impacted on girls OOS.

**Participants:** FGDs of up to ten participants in each – who should be in year 10 but dropped out. This is specifically focused on girls who have dropped out of school or vocational training altogether but were enrolled before the pandemic.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

##### Ice-breaker questions (10 mins)

1. Tell the group your favourite activity you like doing. Facilitator begins by introducing herself and sharing a favourite activity.
  - a. *Comment on if girls have something in common (e.g. if two girls like dancing, do they like the same music, who do they like dancing with, do they also like singing etc.)*

##### Learning about girls in the community (45 minutes)

We are going to start by doing drawing exercise about a typical girl in your community. Remember that you don't need to share anything about yourself you don't feel comfortable with.

As you draw the girl, think about who she is and what she wants to do, as well as some of the problems she faced before and during Covid-19. You will tell the others in your group about the girl you have drawn.

*(girls draw for 15 minutes)*

*Interviewers split the girls in two smaller groups and ask participants questions about girls' education before and during Covid-19 while they draw.*

- Draw out a girl in your community. What's her name? How old is she? Where does she live? Did she go to school before Covid-19? What about now that schools have re-opened?
- What was it like for her while schools were closed because of Covid-19? Did she continue to study and how? What kinds of problems did she face to study? What kinds of other problems did she face at home and in her community?
- Is she going to go back to school or her vocational classes now that they're open? Is she going every day? Does she have enough time to study? Why or why not?
- Now draw out her household. Who does she live with? Is she married? Does she have any brothers? Did they continue to study? Does she have any sisters? Are her brothers and sisters going back to school? Why or why not?
- What does your girl want to do after the finishes school? (Does she want to work, study, get married...?)

*Girls discuss in small groups and introduce the girls they have drawn to each other.*

1. Did any of the girls you drew have something in common? What were the differences between them?
2. What were some of the main challenges the girls you drew were facing before Covid-19? How did these change with Covid-19 and schools closing?
  - a. **Probe:** Did they have to do housework? Did they have enough time to study?

- b. **Probe:** Did anything else change for them? Did any of them get married or pregnant?
  - c. **Probe:** Were the girls all in school before Covid-19? If not, what were they doing? Were they able to continue learning? Why or why not?
3. What were the different challenges faced by girls and the boys in the community before Covid-19? What about during Covid-19? Were the challenges different between boys and girls, or were they the same? Why or why not? What about girls still in school and girls not in school? Why or why not? What changed for girls during Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe for:** girls' mental health, physical health...
  - b. **Probe for:** any problems in the home...?
  - c. **Probe for:** anything else?
4. *Any other specific follow-up questions emerging from the drawings.*

### Group discussion Questions (30 mins)

*Facilitator thanks the girls for their drawings and moves on to group discussion.*

Now that we have talked about what it's been like for girls in this community while schools were closed because of Covid-19, we have a few questions about your education in this time:

5. Had you stopped going to school regularly before the Covid-19 school closures? When was the last time you went to school? Did you stay in touch with your teachers while schools were closed or since you stopped going? What about with other girls and boys?

For the girls who were still in school when schools closed down:

- a. **Probe:** What sort of communication did you and other girls have with the field monitor? Did girls speak to them in person or on the phone?
  - b. **Probe:** Were girls able to talk to teachers on the phone? What about in person?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you know if girls received any feedback or support from teachers on their homework? Were they able to ask questions?
  - d. **Probe:** Do you know if girls received any learning materials at home? Did others in the house use those learning materials too? Who else used them?
  - e. Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so what did they use?
  - f. **Probe:** Were there any challenges in using these different types of materials? Why?
    - **Probe:** Who could you or other girls able to talk to if you were facing issues or challenges?
6. In your community, what were the particular challenges for girls returning to school after Covid-19? Is this different from before?
  - a. **Probe:** Do you know of any other girls who will not be returning to school or vocational training now that they have re-opened?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you think some girls in your community might be finding it more difficult to return to school or vocational training? Why?
  - c. **Probe:** Are schools or Girl Champions giving support to girls who have stopped going to school to help them return?
    - What sort of support are they providing? Are you engaging with them? If yes, how and how often?
7. Is there anything else anyone would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 5. IDs with five girls (who continued to higher education)

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. To understand if the MC interventions were helpful in them accessing education during Covid-19. To understand if there were any particular challenges or barriers from distance learning. Understand what the barriers to returning to school. Understand how learning has been impacted. Understand how Covid-19 impacted their future aspirations. Understand how there may have been different impacts for IS and OOS girls, and how this may have affected the transition outcomes for both groups. Understand what factors were important in them being able to transition into the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Participants:** IDs with girls in Grade 11 (higher secondary) Introduction: Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Introduction questions

1. *Facilitator introduces herself and asks participant to do the same.* Can you please tell me your age and your favourite thing you like doing?
2. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. Which community are you from? What grade are you in? Can you please tell us about your family? Who are the people in your household? How do you spend your free time if you have any?
3. How many siblings do you have? Are they boys or girls? Are they also in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
4. Before Covid-19 and school closures, which extra circular programmes were you taking part in? Which was your favourite and why?
  - a. Girls' Clubs
  - b. Tutoring/ homework club
  - c. Vocational training (business skills financial literacy)
  - d. Self-defence classes
  - e. Life Skills classes (e.g. SRHR)
  - f. Any others?

### Covid-19/ Access & Learning focused questions

5. When schools were closed and girls in your community were at home, how did they spend their time? How much time was spent on each activity? Did girls spend more or less time on these things, compared to before schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** What are the main things you did in your free time? Please provide examples.
  - b. **Probe:** How much time did girls spend helping around the house? How much time did girls have for homework and reading?
  - c. **Probe:** What about you? How did you spend most of your time before and during Covid-19? What were the main changes?
  - d. **Probe:** Do you know any girls who have to spend time taking care of children? How did this change during Covid-19?
6. How did your school keep in contact with you while you were at home?
  - a. **Probe:** On the phone, in person?
  - b. **Probe:** Were the field monitors and Girl Champions keeping in contact with you? How? Were your teachers staying in touch with you? How?
  - c. **Probe:** What sort of things did you talk about with them or with your teacher? Were you able to ask questions about your studies? Did you talk about anything else?
  - d. **Probe:** Is there anything else you would have needed support with? If yes, what?
7. Did you receive learning materials to study at home? How did you find working on the study materials at home? Did you find some things more difficult than others?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you find reading and writing? What about math? Did you have enough time to study? Anything else?
  - b. **Probe:** Was there anyone else using your study materials at home? Did you study together with anyone else? (e.g. your siblings...)
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to listen to the lessons on the radio? If yes, how often?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so, what did they use?

- e. **Probe:** Was there anything that was challenging? If you found any of the homework challenging, what would you usually do? Who did you ask for help and how?
- f. **Probe:** Did these materials help you when starting year 11? What could have helped make this easier for you and other girls in the community?
8. Think back to when schools were closed, a few months ago. What were you most looking forward to about coming back to school?
  - a. **Probe:** Extra-curricular activities, seeing friends, learning, others...?
  - b. **Probe:** What were you looking forward to most about starting year 11?
9. Do you know of any girls in your community or class who did not come back to school?
  - a. **Probe:** What are some of the reasons why girls did not come back? Were there any girls who got married? Were there any who got pregnant?
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any families not able to send the girls back? What challenges did they face?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you know any girls who did not continue to year 11? Why not? (Probe for: cost of school, distance, marriage, other reasons...?) Do you know what they are doing now?
10. Can you tell us if anything is different about school now that you are back?
  - a. **Probe:** Is there anything different in how you are getting to school? In the class size? Topics covered in your lessons? In the hygiene facilities? Are there extra classes? Are you finding school easier or harder? And if so why?
  - b. Anything else?
11. Are you able to take part in any of the same lessons and extra-curricular activities you were doing before? Why or why not?
  - a. **Probe:** Are you doing any new activities? Which ones? What have you been learning so far? Which ones are your favourites?
12. Thinking back to a year ago, can you remember what you wanted to do after school? And now, do you still want to do those things? How has that changed?
  - a. **Probe:** Continue studying, working, get married...?
  - b. **Probe:** Learn vocational skills?
  - c. **Probe:** How are you feeling about the future? Excited, nervous, scared..?
    - i. Are you feeling like you are able to plan for the future? Why or why not?
    - ii. What could help you feel better or help you plan more?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 6. IDs with Five Girls (Who Continued into Vocational Training)

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their access to continued training and training materials. To understand if the MC interventions were helpful in them accessing training during Covid-19. To understand if there were any particular challenges or barriers from distance vocational. Understand what the barriers to returning to training or employment. Understand how the skills and training opportunities have been impacted. Understand how Covid-19 impacted their future aspirations. Understand how there may have been different impacts for IS and OOS girls, and how this may have affected the transition outcomes for both groups. Understand if there were any particular financial constraints on the girls receiving vocational training.

**Participants:** Girls in TVET grade 11 equivalent (looking for the girls who are in the transition group into vocational training)

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Introduction questions

1. *Facilitator introduces herself and asks participant to do the same.* Can you please ? tell us about your family? Who are the people in your household? How do you spend your free time if you have any?
2. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. Which community are you from? Which vocational training programme are you part of?
3. How many siblings do you have? Are they boys or girls? Are they also in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
4. Before Covid-19 and school closures, did you take part in any extra circular programmes as well as your vocational training?
  - a. Girls' Clubs
  - b. Self-defence classes
  - c. Life Skills classes (e.g. SRHR)
  - d. Any others?

### Covid-19 / Access & Learning focused questions

5. When schools were closed and girls in your community were at home, how did they spend their time? How much time was spent on each activity? Did girls spend more or less time on these things, compared to before schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** How much time did girls spend helping around the house? How much time did girls have for homework and reading?
  - b. **Probe:** What about you? How did you spend most of your time before and during Covid-19? What were the main changes?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you know any girls who have to spend time taking care of children? How did this change during Covid-19?
  - d. **Probe:** Were you able to continue any of your vocational activities or skills training when schools were closed? Or any of the entrepreneurship work?
6. How did your school or vocational training centre keep in contact with you while you were at home?
  - a. **Probe:** On the phone, in person?
  - b. **Probe:** Were the field monitors and Girl Champions keeping in contact with you? How? Were your teachers staying in touch with you? How?
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to talk to anyone from the vocational training centres? How did you communicate with them?
  - d. **Probe:** What sort of things did you talk about with the teachers or project staff who contacted you? Were you able to ask questions about your studies or training? Did you talk about anything else?
  - e. **Probe:** If you are part of the Young Women Entrepreneurs Association, how were you able to keep in contact with them? What did you discuss with them?
  - f. **Probe:** Is there anything else you would have needed support with? If yes, what?

7. Did you receive learning materials to study or train at home? How did you find working on these materials at home? Did you find some things more difficult than others?
  - a. **Probe:** What materials did you receive to help you continue with your training? How did you find them?
  - b. **Probe:** Was there anyone else using your study materials at home? Did you study together with anyone else? (e.g. your siblings...)
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to listen to the lessons on the radio? If yes, how often?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so, what did they use?
  - e. **Probe:** Was there anything that was challenging? Who did you ask for help and how?
  - f. **Probe:** Were you able to access information on how to continue the vocational training work? How was this communicated?
8. Think back to when schools were closed, a few months ago. What were you most looking forward to about coming back to school?
  - a. **Probe:** Extra-curricular activities, seeing friends, learning, others...?
  - b. **Probe:** Starting your vocational training programme? Learning new skills?
  - c. **Probe:** Completing the vocational skills programme and starting to work?
9. Do you know of any girls in your community or class who did not come back to school or to the vocational training centres?
  - a. **Probe:** What are some of the reasons why girls did not come back? Were there any girls who got married? Were there any who got pregnant?
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any families not able to send the girls back? What challenges did they face?
10. Can you tell us if anything is different about the vocational training programme now that you are back?
  - a. **Probe:** Is there anything different in how you are getting to the centre? In the class size? The types of training you are receiving? In the hygiene facilities? Are there extra classes? Are you finding this easier or harder? And if so why?
  - b. Anything else?
11. Are you able to take part in any of the same extra-curricular activities you were doing before? Why or why not?
  - a. **Probe:** Are you doing any new activities? Which ones? What have you been learning so far? What have been your favourite activities?
12. Thinking back to a year ago, can you remember what you wanted to do after school? And now, do you still want to do those things? How has that changed?
  - a. **Probe:** Continue with vocational skills?
  - b. **Probe:** Work, start a business, continue education, married, etc...?
  - c. **Probe:** How are you feeling about the future? Excited, nervous, scared..?
    - i. Are you feeling like you are able to plan for the future? Why or why not?
    - ii. What could help you feel better or help you plan more?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 7. IDs with Five Girls (Who Decided to Leave School/ Education)

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. To understand if the MC interventions were helpful in them accessing education during Covid-19. To understand if there were any particular challenges or barriers from distance learning. Understand what the barriers to returning to school. Understand how learning has been impacted. Understand how Covid-19 impacted their future aspirations. Understand how there may have been different impacts for IS and OOS girls, and how this may have affected the transition outcomes for both groups.

**Note to interviewee:** There will be two interview routes – one for girls who dropped out as a result of Covid-19 to try to understand the reasons for drop-out and the impacts of Covid-19 on learning and girls' future aspirations. The other will be for girls who dropped out prior to Covid-19, to understand the reasons for this more broadly.

**Participants:** IDs with girls who should be in grade 11 but dropped out (looking for the girls who are in the transition group)

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Introduction questions

1. *Facilitator introduces herself and asks participant to do the same.* Can you please tell me your age and your favourite thing you like doing
2. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. Which community are you from? What grade are you in? Can you please tell us about your family? Who are the people in your household? How do you spend your free time if you have any?
3. How many siblings do you have? Are they boys or girls? Are they also in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
4. Before Covid-19 and school closures, were you going to school regularly? How often were you going to school? What are you doing now? When did you stop attending school or stop doing schoolwork at home?

### FOLLOW UP

- If the girls dropped out before Covid-19, please skip questions 5-10, and go directly to question 11.
- If the girls dropped out after the Covid-19 outbreak, please follow the questions 5-10 and skip questions 11-15.

### Girls who left school or vocational training during Covid-19

5. When schools were closed and girls in your community were at home, how did they spend their time? How much time was spent on each activity? Did girls spend more or less time on these things, compared to before schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** How do you normally like to spend your free time?
  - b. **Probe:** How did you spend most of your time before and during Covid-19? What were the main changes?
  - c. **Probe:** How much time did girls spend helping around the house? How much time did girls have for homework and reading?
  - d. **Probe:** Do you know any girls who have to spend time taking care of children? How did this change during Covid-19?
  - e. **Probe:** Were you able to carry on with any of your vocational activities or skills while schools were closed? Or any of the entrepreneurship work?
6. How did your school or vocational training centre keep in contact with you while you were at home? Are you still in touch with them now?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you speak to anyone on the phone, in person? Did you speak to field monitors, Girl Champions or teachers? How did you speak to them and how often?
  - b. **Probe:** What sort of things did you talk about with them? Were you able to ask questions about your studies? Did you talk about anything else?
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to talk to anyone about potential challenges to returning to school or the vocational training?
  - d. **Probe:** Is there anything else you would have needed support with? If yes, what?

7. Did you receive learning materials to study at home while your school was closed? How did you find working on the study materials at home? Did you find some things more difficult than others?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you find literacy and numeracy materials? Did you have enough time to study? Anything else?
  - b. **Probe:** Did anyone else use the learning materials too? Did you study alone or with others in your family? (e.g. siblings...)
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to listen to the lessons on the radio? How often?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so, what did they use?
  - e. **Probe:** Was there anything that was challenging? If you found any of the classwork challenging, what would you usually do? Who did you ask for help and how?
8. Do you know of any other girls in your community or class who did not come back to school?
  - a. **Probe:** What are some of the reasons why girls did not come back? Were there any girls who got married? Were there any who got pregnant?
  - b. **Probe:** When did you decide to not return to school, and why?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any families not able to send the girls back? What challenges did they face? What do you think were the most important challenges (e.g.: school fees, distance, marriage, others...?)
9. Thinking back to a year ago, can you remember what you wanted to do after you finished Grade 10? And now, do you still want to do those things? How has that changed?
  - a. **Probe:** Continue studying, working, get married...?
  - b. **Probe:** Continue with vocational skills?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Girls who left school or vocational training before Covid-19**

11. What grade were you in when you decide to leave school?
  - a. **Probe:** Was this after you finished grade 10?
  - b. **Probe:** If no, what grade were you in? Had you already started higher secondary or VT?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you talk to your school before you decided to leave school?
  - d. **Probe:** Did you speak to any of the Girl Champions or Girl's Clubs?
  - e. **Probe:** If yes, what sort of advice did they give you?
12. When you decided to leave school or the VT option, did other girls in your community decide to do the same?
  - a. **Probe:** Did many stay in school or VT?
  - b. **Probe:** What were some of the main reasons that other girls in the community decided to leave school?
13. What are you doing now that you have left school?
  - a. **Probe:** Are you working, do you take part in any of the women's entrepreneurial activities in the community? What work are you doing?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you still live with your parents?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you get married? Are you planning to?
  - d. **Probe:** Have you been able to carry on with any studies?
  - e. **Probe: How are you feeling about the future? Excited, nervous, scared...?**
    - i. Are you feeling like you are able to plan for the future? Why or why not?
    - ii. What could help you feel better or help you plan more?
14. Could you describe some of the ways you think Covid-19 had an impact on your community?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you notice more girls leaving school?
  - b. **Probe:** Has it changed the type of work people are doing?
  - c. **Probe:** Are more girls working?
  - d. **Probe:** Are more girls getting married?
15. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 8. Focus Group Discussion with Parents/ Caregivers (In-school Girls)

**Aim:** To understand the household experience of Covid-19 and how it impacted more broadly on home life as well as on girls' access to education. How girls were able to access education at home and how parents were able to support with this. To understand how parents interacted with the school or school representatives during the period of remote learning. To know more about the attitudes of parents with regard to children (boys and girls) returning to school. To understand how the parents of older girls (grade 10-12) felt about the transition into higher secondary or vocational training and if they were able to support this.

**Participants:** Four FGDs with 6 participants each – rural, urban and semi-urban. Have a mix of parents/ caregivers of girls in vocational training and school-based learning. Please note that groups of mothers and fathers should be separate.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific consent protocol for caregivers sampled for qualitative research.

### Ice Breaker (10 mins):

- Everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves, and how many children they have in the STEM school or Vocational Training (VT) programme.
  - a. Tell us a bit about your daughter in the MC school or VT programme – which grade is she in, how old is she? How long has your daughter been in this school? Do you have any other children in the school? Are all of your other children in school?

### Questions (1 hour)

2. When it was announced that schools would be closed and that girls would need to stay at home, how well informed did you feel?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you feel about the government decision to close schools?
    - i. Did you feel like Covid-19 was a threat in your community?
    - ii. Did you think that some girls should remain in school in the circumstances?
      1. Why? Why not?
  - b. **Probe:** How did you hear about school closures? What kind of support and information did you get from your kids' school?
  - c. **Probe:** What was communication with the school like at the time? And what about during Covid-19?
  - d. **Probe:** What was the communication like from the VT programme or training classes? Were there consistent messages?
3. How have people in your community been able to cope with the economic effects of Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe:** How were livelihoods in the community affected? What types of livelihoods were the most affected? What did this mean for people in your community?
  - b. **Probe:** How have community members been able to do to cope with the situation? What coping mechanisms or strategies have most people been using?
  - c. In your view, how has the Covid-19 pandemic affected children in the community? (**Probe for:** more support needed at home, school fees, working outside the house, early marriage or pregnancy...)
  - d. **Probe:** Have many children dropped out of school in your community? Did most of them return to school? Why? What about girls who finished grade 10? Did most of them continue to grade 11 or vocational training? Why or why not?
  - e. **Probe:** Did you notice any difference compared to before Covid-19? Are more girls stopping school after grade 10? Why?
4. What technology do most people in your community have access to at home (i.e. TV, telephone, radio)?
  - a. **Probe:** How were most people using this technology before Covid-19? Did girls have access to this before?
  - b. **Probe:** During Covid-19, how was this technology used at home? Who was using it the most and how?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you notice any changes in the radio programming or messages during Covid-19? Was there anything on the radio related to education?
  - d. **Probe:** Did most children have access to learning materials through technology in your community? What about in your home?
  - e. **Probe:** Were there any children who did not have access to this technology? What groups had limited access and why?

## Annex 1 – Research Instruments and Consent Forms

5. What learning support did the schools or vocational training programmes provide to help continue girls' education at home?
  - a. **Probe:** Did the field monitors or teachers follow up with girls? How and how often?
  - b. **Probe:** Did the vocational training institutions follow up with girls?
  - c. **Probe:** Was there support in delivering learning material to the homes or community spaces for girls to use? Did others in the household use these too (e.g. other children..)?
  - d. **Probe:** What additional support or materials do you think could have also been helpful for girls?
6. In your experience, what were some of the challenges or barriers to supporting girls' learning at home?
  - a. **Probe for:** Type of learning materials children had access to?
  - b. **Probe for:** Contact with the school or teacher while schools were closed?
  - c. **Probe for:** Other responsibilities girls had during this time to support the household?
  - d. **Probe for:** Lack of time or resources to study?
  - e. Other?
7. How do you feel about girls' safety in school after Covid-19? Are there any specific issues you're worried about?
  - a. **Probe:** hygiene, class size, travel to school, economic opportunities...
  - b. **Probe:** is there anything else you're worried about?
8. In your experience, did the schools or vocational training institutions support girls to re-enrol or transition into higher secondary or a VT programme when they re-opened? What were the results?
  - a. **Probe:** How did the school or VT programme contact the girls or your household?
  - b. **Probe:** What were some of the barriers to girls being able to re-enrol or join a VT programme?
  - c. **Probe:** What do you think some of the benefits are of the girls continuing to grade 11 or vocational training?
  - d. **Probe:** Was there anything which girls found hard in continuing to grade 11? What about for your daughter?
  - e. **Probe:** Who usually makes decisions about girls' education in this community? (Mothers, fathers, girls...?)
9. After Covid-19 and school closures, has anything changed in your views on education, both higher secondary and VT? What about among other people in your community?
  - a. **Probe for:** In the way people view the importance of education for boys and girls?
  - b. **Probe for:** In the importance of education for job opportunities or future plans?
10. Is there anything else you would like to speak about with us? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 9. Focus Group Discussion with Parents/ Caregivers (Out-of-school Girls)

**Aim:** To understand the household experience of Covid-19 and how it impacted more broadly on home life as well as on girls' access to education, including decision to not re-enrol. How girls were able to access education at home and how parents were able to support with this. To understand how parents interacted with the school or school representatives during the period of remote learning. To know more about the attitudes of parents with regard to children (boys and girls) returning to school. To understand how the parents of older girls (grade 10-12) felt about the transition into higher secondary or vocational training and if they were able to support this.

**Participants:** Four FGDs with 6 participants each – rural, urban and semi-urban. Please note girls may have dropped out before or after the Covid-19 outbreak.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific consent protocol for caregivers sampled for qualitative research.

### Ice Breaker (10 mins):

- Everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves, and how many children they have.
  - a. Tell us a bit about your daughter who was part of the STEM programme. How old is she? When did she stop going to school and what were the main reasons for it? Was this before or after the Covid-19 outbreak?
  - b. Do you have any other children? How old are they? Are they still in school?

### Questions (1 hour)

1. How have people in your community been able to cope with the economic effects of Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe:** How were livelihoods in the community affected? What types of livelihoods were the most affected? What did this mean for people in your community?
  - b. **Probe:** How have community members been able to do to cope with the situation? What coping mechanisms or strategies have most people been using?
2. In your view, how has the Covid-19 pandemic affected children in the community?
  - a. **Probe for:** more support needed at home, school fees, working outside the house, early marriage or pregnancy...
  - b. **Probe:** Have more children dropped out of school? Are most of them returning to school now that it has re-opened? Why or why not?
  - c. **Probe:** What about girls who finished grade 10 – did many of them drop out? Was there a change before and after Covid-19? What were the main changes and why?
  - d. **Probe:** What do girls usually do when they stop going to school? (work, get married, move...?) Has this changed in any way during Covid-19? How?
3. What technology do most people in your community have access to (i.e. TV, telephone, radio)?
  - a. **Probe:** How were most people using this technology before Covid-19? Did girls have access to this before?
  - b. **Probe:** During Covid-19, how was this technology used at home? Who was using it the most and how?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you notice any changes in the radio programming or messages during Covid-19? Was there anything on the radio related to education?
  - d. **Probe:** Did most children have access to learning materials through technology in your community? What about in your home?
  - e. **Probe:** Were there any children who did not have access to this technology? What groups were most affected?
4. In your view, what could be some of the challenges or barriers to supporting girls' learning at home?
  - a. **Probe:** Type of learning materials children have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** Contact with the school or teacher while schools were closed?
  - c. **Probe:** Other responsibilities girls had during this time to support the household?
  - d. **Probe:** Lack of time or resources to study?
  - e. Other?
5. In your experience, did the schools or vocational training institutions support girls to re-enrol or transition into higher secondary or a VT programme when they re-opened? What were the results?

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- a. **Probe:** How did the school or VT programme contact the girls or your household?
  - b. **Probe:** What were some of the barriers to girls being able to re-enrol or join a VT programme?
  - c. **Probe:** What do you think some of the benefits are of the girls continuing to grade 11 or vocational training?
  - d. **Probe:** Was there anything which girls found hard in continuing to grade 11? What about for your daughter?
  - e. **Probe:** Who usually makes decisions about girls' education in this community? (Mothers, fathers, girls...?)
  - f. Anything else?
6. Is there anything else you would like to speak about with us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 10. KIIs with Parents/ Caregivers

**Aim:** To understand the household experience of Covid-19 and how it impacted more broadly on home life as well as on girls' access to education. How both girls and boys were able to access education at home and how parents were able to support with this. To understand how parents interacted with the school during the period of remote learning. To know more about the attitudes of parents with regard to girls returning to school. To understand what parents regard as the main reason girls did not return to school.

**Participants:** Parents of in-school and out-of-school girls (girls identified through the predictive model, as well as replacement if insufficient take-up of FGDs).

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific consent protocol for caregivers sampled for qualitative research.

### Introduction

1. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. What is your name and what community are you from? How many people are in your household? How many children do you have? Are they in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
  - a. **Probe:** Tell us about your daughter: how old is she, what grade is she in?
  - b. **Probe:** Did she go back to school now that they have re-opened? If yes, when did she go back to school? If not, when did you decide she would not go back?

### Learning during school closures

2. When it was announced that schools would be closed and that children would need to stay at home, how informed did you feel?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you hear about school closures? What kind of support and information did you get from your kids' school?
  - b. **Probe:** How did you feel about the government decision to close schools?
    - i. Did you feel like Covid-19 was a threat in your community?
    - ii. Did you think that some girls should remain in school in the circumstances?
      - Why? Why not?
  - c. **Probe:** What was communication with the school like at the time? And what about during Covid-19? Is there anything that could have been improved?
3. What technology do most people in your community have access to (i.e. TV, telephone, radio)?
  - a. **Probe:** How were most people using this technology before Covid-19? Did girls have access to this before?
  - b. **Probe:** During Covid-19, how was this technology used at home? Who was using it the most and how?
  - c. **Probe:** What about in your household? What technology do you have access to, and how is it typically used?
4. Did your daughter have access to distance learning materials? How? What about your other children?
  - a. **Probe:** What sort of radio or online teaching did children in the community have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** Did most children have access to learning materials through TV or radio in your community? What about in your home?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any children who did not have access to this technology? What groups were most affected?
5. In your community, what worked well in supporting children to learn while schools were closed? What were some of the challenges to supporting girls' and boys' learning at home?
  - a. **Probe:** What type of learning materials did children have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** How much contact did you or your children have with the school or teacher while schools were closed?
  - c. **Probe:** Is there any more support you or other families would have needed from your children's schools and why?
  - d. **Probe:** What other activities did children need to be engaged in (e.g. helping around the house, working...)?
  - e. **Probe:** In your view, were there any different challenges for girls and boys? If yes, what were these? Was there anything that was especially hard for girls' education?

### Re-enrolment and dropout

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6. How have people in your community been able to cope with the economic effects of Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe:** How were livelihoods in the community affected? What types of livelihoods were the most affected? What did this mean for people in your community?
  - b. **Probe:** How have community members been able to do to cope with the situation? What coping mechanisms or strategies have most people been using?
  - c. **Probe:** In your view, how has the Covid-19 pandemic affected children in the community? (**Probe for:** more support needed at home, school fees, working outside the house, early marriage or pregnancy...)
7. Do you know of any girls in the community who did not go back to school? What were some of the reasons why families decided that girls should not go back to school when they reopened? Can you please provide some examples?
  - a. **Probe:** Was the number of girls stopping school higher than before Covid-19? What about among boys? Were there any differences between girls and boys? Why do you think that is?
  - b. **Probe:** E.g. financial reasons, safety (in school because of Covid-19 or other reasons, travelling to school etc), marriage or pregnancy?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you think it will be possible for girls to return to school at a later date, when it is easier for families? Why or why not?
  - d. **If daughter not in school:** When did your daughter decide to stop going to school, and why? How is she spending her time now? Does she plan on returning later on? Why or why not?
8. After Covid-19 and school closures, has anything changed in your views on education and access to learning? If yes, what? What about among other people in your community?
  - a. **Probe for:** In the way people view the importance of education for boys and girls?
  - b. **Probe for:** In the importance of education for job opportunities or future plans?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you notice any changes in girls' views on their education? What about your daughter?
9. Is there anything else you would like to talk about with us? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## EDT (Kenya)

### 11. KIIs with IP Team

**Aim:** Understand the initial response from the IP to Covid-19 and what the organisation's priorities were. Understand how the programme responded after the submission of the Mid-Term Response Plans (MTRP). Understand how they identified the most at-risk girls and supported their access. Understand how the project is now working to re-enrol girls.

**Participants:** Two-three IDIs with members of the IP Team.

#### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- As part of the evaluation of the GEC II, we are carrying out a study on girls' access to education and changes in learning outcome during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is **not** an evaluation of the EDT project, but feeds into our learning on how girls' education has been affected by Covid-19 and the school closures which resulted.
- This interview will aim to further explore some emerging findings from our review of project documentation, as well as identify areas for further exploration in our primary research with girls, CHVs, coaches/ mentors, caregivers and teachers.

#### Background questions

1. Can you please remind us of your role on the EDT team? What about for the 'Let our Girls Learn' project specifically? How long have you been working on the GEC project?
2. What was your involvement in the Covid-19 response activities implemented by EDT?
  - a. **Probe: Did your role change in any way during the Covid-19 pandemic? If YES, please explain how.**
  - b. **Probe:** Were you asked to do anything outside of your usual responsibilities? Could you please provide some examples?

#### Covid-19 specific questions

3. Who did you consider as most educationally marginalised before Covid-19 in EDT schools and communities? What additional or specific efforts were made to reach these groups, if any?
  - d. **Probe for:** What were the main differences between Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) and Urban slums in terms of access to and performance in school before Covid-19?
  - e. **Probe for:** What sub-groups of girls were considered particularly marginalised and why?
4. How did girls' marginalisation levels change during Covid-19? Were the same groups considered to be the most marginalised? Why or why not? What did you change in your strategy as a result?
  - a. **Probe for:** What sub-groups were particularly affected by Covid-19 and how?
  - b. **Probe:** Was there anything which was unexpected or surprising?
  - c. **Probe:** How did the government respond when schools shut? Did schools receive any support from the government? How was this similar/different to what the EDT school received?
  - d. **Probe:** Were groups identified most at risk/ most marginalised supported in any specific way? If yes, what were the most important interventions in your view?
5. How have your overarching plans been affected by Covid-19? What parts of the programme have been able to continue as planned? What interventions or parts of the interventions have been most affected and why?
  - f. **Probe:** What has been the impact on the Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET) schools?
  - g. **Probe:** Have the remedial classes resumed? If yes, what has been the impact of this on girls in EDT schools?
  - h. **Probe:** What has been the role of Community Health Volunteers in this time? What about the coaches and mentors? Did you continue engaging with them and how?
  - i. Is there anything else which was affected or changed?

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6. Did the project support children's families to face the economic or financial difficulties due to Covid-19? If yes, how and with what effects?
  - e. **Probe for:** The MTRP mentioned additional cash transfers to CWD (as discussed above) and teen mothers. Were any other groups reached by economic interventions? What effect did these have?
  - f. **Probe for:** There was mention of the provision of dignity kits for girls. What did these include, and what effect did they have? Were there any other in-kind contributions for girls?
  - g. **Probe for:** What has been the effect in supporting girls' education? Is there anything which was more or less effective and why?
  - h. **Probe:** Was there anything which was challenging in these interventions, and why?
7. We understand that EDT works with girls with special needs and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). Could you provide further information on how these girls are defined and identified? What kinds of challenges do these girls face? How does EDT support them? Did this change during Covid-19 and how?
  - a. **Probe:** The MTRP suggested that additional cash-transfers would be provided to children living with disability (CWD). How did this work in practice and how did it support the children?
  - b. **Probe:** In hindsight, do you think there is anything which could have been done differently and why?
8. Now that schools have re-opened, what is the project doing to work with girls who may have dropped out? Could you please tell me more about that?
  - a. **Probe:** How are you identifying girls who have dropped out? Are there more or less than you expected – why do you think this is so?
  - a. **Probe:** Are the observed drop-out rates what you expected? Why or why not?
  - b. **Probe:** Is there anything which surprised you in the drop-out rates and trends (e.g. in groups of girls who are dropping out and reason for drop-out)? Have there been any unexpected trends (e.g. girls you thought would drop-out actually returning to school, and vice versa)? Why do you think that is?
9. Overall, how do you expect girls' learning to have been affected by Covid-19 and the resulting school closures? Is this something you are planning on analysing, and if yes how?
  - e. **Probe:** Are there any groups which are more affected in their learning?
  - f. **Probe:** Is there any difference across schools or regions?
  - g. **Probe:** Is there any difference between boys and girls?
  - h. **Probe:** Are schools collecting or reporting any trends? if ye
10. Is there anyone else from the EDT project involved in Covid-19 response who we should speak to as part of this research? [Probe accordingly]
11. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 12. Focus Group Discussion with girls attending EDT schools

**Aim:** Understand girls' experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. Understand what girls felt the biggest barriers/ challenges were to access learning at home. Understand what the biggest barriers/ challenges were to returning to school (dropouts). Find out how girls feel their learning has been impacted because of Covid-19. How has this impacted on what they would like to do after finishing school – transition into employment.

**Participants:** Four FGDs with ten participants each – aged 10-16 (secondary school)

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Ice-breaker questions (10 mins)

1. Tell the group your favourite activity you like doing. Facilitator begins by introducing herself and sharing a favourite activity.
  - a. *Comment on if girls have something in common (e.g. if two girls like dancing, do they like the same music, who do they like dancing with, do they also like singing etc.)*
2. Tell the group what you most like about being at the EDT school, and if there is anything you are most excited about when they went back to school.
  - a. *Can give prompts e.g. seeing friends, seeing teachers, favourite subject etc...*

### Learning about girls in the community (45 minutes)

We are going to start by doing drawing exercise about a typical girl in your community. Remember that you don't need to share anything about yourself you don't feel comfortable with.

*(girls draw for 15 minutes)*

*Interviewers split the girls in two smaller groups and ask participants questions about girls' education before and during Covid-19 while they draw.*

As you draw the girl, think about who she is and what she wants to do, as well as some of the problems she faced before and during Covid-19. You will tell the others in your group about the girl you have drawn.

- Draw out a girl in your community. How old is she? Where does she live? Did she go to school before Covid-19? What about now that schools have re-opened?
- What was it like for her while schools were closed because of Covid-19? Did she continue to study and how? What kinds of problems did she face to study? What kinds of other problems did she face at home and in her community?
- Is she going to go back to school now that it's open? Is she going every day? Does she have enough time to study? Why or why not?
- Now draw out her household. Who does she live with? Is she married? Does she have any brothers? Did they continue to study? Does she have any sisters? Are her brothers and sisters going back to school? Why or why not?
- What does your girl want to do after she finishes school? (Does she want to work, study, get married...?)

*Girls discuss in small groups and introduce the girls they have drawn to each other.*

3. What are some of the things that the girls you drew have in common? What were the differences between them?
4. What were some of the main challenges the girls you drew were facing before Covid-19? How did these change with Covid-19 and schools closing?

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- a. **Probe:** Did they have to do housework? Did they have enough time to study?
  - b. **Probe:** Did anything else happen to them? Did any of them get married or pregnant?
  - c. **Probe:** Were they able to listen to lessons on the radio or the TV? Did any of them have any challenges in accessing those?
5. What about boys in your community – what challenges do you think they faced before Covid-19? And what about during Covid-19? Were the challenges different between boys and girls, or were they the same? Why?
  6. *Any other specific follow-up questions emerging from the drawings.*

### Group discussion Questions (30 mins)

*Facilitator thanks the girls for their drawings and moves on to group discussion.*

Now that we have talked about what it's been like for girls in your school while schools were closed because of Covid-19, we have a few questions about your education in this time:

7. What has been the main way girls kept in touch with your school while schools were closed? How did this help them?
  - a. **Probe:** Were girls able to talk to teachers? How did girls do this?
  - b. **Probe:** Did the coaches/ mentors provide schoolwork support, and how?
  - c. **Probe:** Did girls mostly do their schoolwork with help from the Community health volunteers?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls receive any feedback or support from teachers on their homework? Were girls able to ask questions?
8. What opportunities or material did girls in your school receive to help them carry on learning while schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** Did girls receive any learning materials at home? What materials did they receive?
  - b. **Probe:** Were girls able to listen to the radio for lessons, and how often?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any challenges faced by girls in using these materials or accessing the radio/ TV?
  - d. **Probe:** Before schools re-opened, were girls able to meet and attend classes in the community? How did the classes work? (how often, where...)? Have the classes restarted?
9. Is there anything you missed the most about being at school while you were at home, and why? How did this affect your learning?
  - a. **Probe:** What about the Clubs or remedial classes? Did you stay in touch with the other girls or your mentor while schools were closed? How?
10. In your community, what are the particular challenges for girls returning to school?
  - a. **Probe:** Do you know of any girls who have not returned to school now that they have re-opened? Do you know why they have not returned?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you think some girls in your community are finding it more difficult to return to school? Why?
11. Is there anything else anyone would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

### 13. KIIs with in-school girls (as identified through the prediction model)

*Please note this could potentially include interviews with girls with a disability – we need to see if they would require any additional support.*

**Aim:** Understand girls' individual experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. To understand if the EDT interventions were helpful in them accessing education during Covid-19. To understand if there were any particular challenges or barriers from distance learning. Understand what the barriers to returning to school. Understand how learning has been impacted. Understand how Covid-19 impacted their future aspirations. To understand what factors may have been most helpful for girls to return to school.

**Participants:** Eight one-hour IDIs with girls in school – aged 10-16 (secondary school) – mix of Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and urban slums (two in each school location). Girls identified as most at risk were; teen mothers, CWD, the poorest and orphans – potentially try to speak to some girls within these sub-groups (but will depend on the prediction model).

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

#### Introduction questions

1. *Facilitator introduces herself and asks participant to do the same.* Can you please tell me your age and your favourite thing you like doing?
2. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. Which community are you from? What grade are you in?
3. How many siblings do you have? Are they boys or girls? Are they also in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
4. Before Covid-19 and school closures, what after-school activities did you take part in? Which was your favourite and why?
  - a. Remedial classes
  - b. Girls' Clubs
  - c. Dancing or socialising
  - d. Support from mentors or coaches
  - e. Anything else?

#### Covid-19/ Access & Learning focused questions

5. When schools were closed and girls in your community were at home, how did they spend their time? How much time was spent on each activity? Did girls spend more or less time on these things, compared to before schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** Did girls have to help more around the house? Did girls have time for homework and reading?
  - b. **Probe:** What about you? How did you spend most of your time before and during Covid-19? What were the main changes?
  - c. **Probe:** Was this the same for boys in the community? And how and what did the boys spend most of their time doing?
6. How did your school keep in contact with you while you were at home? What was the most helpful to you?
  - a. **Probe:** On the phone, in person, through your family, neighbours, others in the community? Were there any notice boards or announcements? Others?
  - b. **Probe:** What support did you get from the coaches, mentors and Community Health Volunteers (CHVs)?
  - c. **Probe:** What sort of things did you talk about with the CHVs? Were you able to ask questions about your studies? Did you talk about anything else?
  - d. **Probe:** Is there anything else you would have needed support with? If yes, what?
7. Did you receive learning materials from your school to study at home? How did you find working on the study materials at home? Did you find some things more difficult than others? If yes, what did you find more difficult?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you find reading and writing? What about maths? Did you have enough time to study?
  - b. **Probe:** Were you able to listen to the lessons on the radio, and how often?
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to access any types of computer programme or digital learning material (for example, through ENEZA)?

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- d. **Probe:** Was there anything that was challenging? If you had any challenges with schoolwork, what would you usually do? Who did you ask for help and how?
8. Before schools re-opened, were you able to meet up with other people to talk about your schoolwork? If yes, who did you meet up with (other students, CHVs, teachers, coaches or mentors, others...?)
  - a. **Probe:** Where were you able to meet?
  - b. **Probe:** What sort of subjects did you work on? (e.g. reading, numeracy, literacy?)
  - c. **Probe:** Did you talk about anything else in these meetings? If yes, what?
  - d. **Probe:** Were there any girls in the community who were not able to access these meetings?
9. Apart from learning materials, do you know if the school, CHVs or mentors provided additional support to any girls? If yes, how did this help girls? Is there anything else you think girls would have needed?
10. Do you know of any girls in your community or class who did not come back to school?
  - a. **Probe: In your opinion**, what are the main reasons why girls did not come back? Were there any girls who got married? Were there any who got pregnant?
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any families not able to send the girls back? What challenges did they face?
11. Can you tell us if anything is different about school now that you are back?
  - a. **Probe:** Is there anything different in how you are getting to school? What about class size? In the topics covered in your lessons? In the hygiene facilities? Are there extra classes? Anything else?
  - b. **Probe:** Are you able to participate in any of the same lessons and extra-curricular activities you were doing before? Why or why not?
  - c. **Probe:** Are you finding school easier or harder than before? Why? Is there anything which is especially hard?
12. Thinking back to a year ago, can you remember what you wanted to do after school? And now, do you still want to do those things? How has that changed?
  - a. **Probe:** Continue studying, working, get married...?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 14. KIIIs with six girls who have left school (dropped out) (as identified by prediction model)

*Please note this could potentially include interviews with girls with a disability – we need to see if they would require any additional support.*

**Aim:** Understand girls' individual experiences during Covid-19 and how this has impacted on their education. To understand if the EDT interventions were helpful in them accessing education during Covid-19. To understand if there were any particular challenges or barriers from distance learning. Understand what the barriers to returning to school, and why they decided not to return to school. Understand how Covid-19 impacted their future aspirations.

**Participants:** Eight IDIs with girls who did not return to school (as identified by the prediction model) – aged 10-16 (secondary school) – mix of Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and urban slums. Girls identified as most at risk were; teen mothers, CWD, the poorest and orphans – potentially try to speak to some girls within these sub-groups.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girls sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Introduction questions

1. *Facilitator introduces herself and asks participant to do the same.* Can you please tell me your age and your favourite thing you like doing?
2. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. Which community are you from?
3. How many siblings do you have? Are they boys or girls? Are they in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
4. When was the last time you went to school? When you were still in school, did you take part in any activities after school? Which ones did you like the most and why?
  - a. Remedial classes
  - b. Girls' Clubs
  - c. Dancing or socialising
  - d. Support from mentors or coaches
  - e. Anything else?

### Covid-19/ Access & Learning focused questions

5. When schools were closed and girls in your community were at home, how did they spend their time? How much time was spent on each activity? Did girls spend more or less time on these things, compared to before schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** Did girls need to help more around the house? Did girls have time for homework and reading?
  - b. **Probe:** What about you? How did you spend most of your time before and during Covid-19? What were the main changes?
  - c. **Probe:** How do you spend most of your time now?
  - d. **Probe:** Was this the same for boys in the community? What did the boys spend most of their time doing, before and during Covid-19?
6. How did your school keep in contact with you while you were at home? Are you still in contact with your school?
  - a. **Probe:** On the phone, in person, through your family, neighbours, others in the community? Were there any notice boards or announcements? Others?
  - a.
  - b. **Probe:** Did you get any support from the coaches, mentors and Community Health Volunteers (CHVs)? Are you still in contact with them?
  - c. **Probe:** What sort of things did you talk about with the CHVs? Were you able to ask questions about your studies? Did you talk about anything else?
  - d. **Probe:** Is there anything else you would have needed support with? If yes, what?
7. Did you receive learning materials from your school to study at home? How did you find working on the study materials at home? Did you find some things more difficult than others?

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- a. **Probe:** How did you find reading and writing? What about maths? Did you have enough time to study?
  - b. **Probe:** Were you able to listen to the lessons on the radio, and how often?
  - c. **Probe:** Were you able to access any types of computer programme or digital learning material (for example, through ENEZA)?
  - d. **Probe:** Was there anything that was challenging? If you had any challenges with schoolwork, what would you usually do? Who did you ask for help and how?
8. Before schools re-opened, were you able to meet up with other people to talk about your schoolwork? If yes, who did you meet up with (other students, CHVs, teachers, coaches or mentors, others...?)
- a. **Probe:** Where were you able to meet?
  - b. **Probe:** Did you attend any of these meetings?
    - i. **IF YES - Probe:** What sort of subjects did you work on? (e.g. reading, maths, writing?)
    - ii. **IF NO – Probe:** What are some of the reasons you did not go to these meetings? (e.g. not having the time, could not travel there, did not want to etc...)
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any other girls in the community who were not able to go to these meetings?
    - i. **Probe:** Do you know some of the reasons why they did not go?
  - d. **ONLY IF THEY ATTENDED -Probe:** Did you talk about anything else in these meetings? If yes, what did you talk about?
9. Apart from learning materials, do you know if the school, CHVs or mentors provided additional support to any girls? If yes, how did this help girls? Is there anything else you think girls would have needed?
10. When did you find out that schools had reopened, and how?
- a. **Probe:** Did the school contact you directly?
  - b. **Probe:** Did you hear messages on the radio?
  - c. **Probe:** Did the CHVs, mentors or any of your friends tell you?
  - d. Anything else?
11. Do you know of any other girls in your community or class who did not go back to school? Why?
- a. **Probe:** What are some of the reasons why girls did not go back? Were there any girls who got married? Were there any who got pregnant?
  - b. **Probe:** When did you decide not to go back to school, and why? Do you plan on returning later on? Why or why not?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any families not able to send the girls back? What challenges did they face? What do you think were the most important challenges (e.g.: school fees, distance, marriage, others...?)
12. Thinking back to a year ago, can you remember what you wanted to do after school? And now, do you still want to do those things? How has that changed?
- b. **Probe:** Continue studying, working, get married...?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 15. Focus Group Discussion with Parents/ caregivers

**Aim:** To understand the household experience of Covid-19 and how it impacted more broadly on home life as well as on girls' access to education. How both girls and boys were able to access education at home and how parents were able to support with this. To understand how parents interacted with the school or CHVs during the period of remote learning. To know more about the attitudes of parents with regard to girls returning to school. To understand what parents regard as the main reason girls did not return to school.

**Participants:** Four FGDs with 6 participants each – two FGDs in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and two focus groups in Urban Slums.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific consent protocol for caregivers sampled for qualitative research.

### Ice Breaker (10 mins):

- Everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves, and how many children they have.
  - c. Tell us a bit about your daughter in the EDT school – which grade is she in, how old is she? How long has your daughter been in this school? Do you have any other children in the school?
  - d. Is your daughter in a standard school or part of the Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET) schools?
  - e. Is anyone here a member of the Parental Engagement Working Group?
    - i. If yes, what is your role in it?
    - ii. Do other parents know of this group and how do they interact with it?

### Questions (1 hour)

1. When it was announced that schools would be closed and that children would need to stay at home, how informed did you feel?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you hear about school closures? What kind of support and information did you get from your kids' school?
  - b. **Probe:** What was communication with the school like at the time? And what about during Covid-19?
2. How have people in your community been able to cope with the economic effects of Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe:** How were livelihoods in the community affected? What types of livelihoods were the most affected? What did this mean for people in your community?
  - b. **Probe:** How have community members been able to do to cope with the situation? What coping mechanisms or strategies have most people been using?
  - c. **Probe:** In your view, how has the Covid-19 pandemic affected children in the community? (**Probe for:** more support needed at home, school fees, working outside the house, early marriage or pregnancy...)
3. What technology do most people in your community have access to (i.e. TV, telephone, radio)?
  - a. **Probe:** How were most people using this technology before Covid-19? Did girls have access to this before?
  - b. **Probe:** During Covid-19, how was this technology used at home? Who was using it the most and how?
4. Did your daughter and other children have access to distance learning materials? If yes, which ones?
  - a. **Probe:** What sort of radio or online teaching did children in the community have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** Did most children have access to learning materials through TV or radio in your community? What about in your home?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any children who did not have access to this technology? What groups were most affected?
5. In your community, what worked well in ensuring children could continue learning while schools were closed? What were some of the challenges for girls and boys to learn at home?
  - a. **Probe:** What type of learning materials did children have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** How much contact did you or your children have with the school or teacher while schools were closed?
  - c. **Probe:** What other activities did children need to be engaged in (e.g. helping around the house, working...)?

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- d. **Probe:** Is there any more support you or other families would have needed from your children's schools and why?
6. Do you know of any girls in the community who did not go back to school? What were some of the reasons why families decided that girls should not go back to school when they reopened? Can you please provide some examples?
  - a. **Probe:** E.g. financial reasons, safety (in school because of Covid-19 or other reasons, travelling to school etc), marriage or pregnancy?
  - b. **Probe:** Is it possible for girls to return to school at a later date, when it is easier for families? Why or why not?
7. Is there anything else you would like to talk about with us? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 16. KIIs with Parents/ caregivers

**Aim:** To understand the household experience of Covid-19 and how it impacted more broadly on home life as well as on girls' access to education. How both girls and boys were able to access education at home and how parents were able to support with this. To understand how parents interacted with the school or CHVs during the period of remote learning. To know more about the attitudes of parents with regard to girls returning to school. To understand what parents regard as the main reason girls did not return to school.

**Participants:** Parents of in-school and out-of-school girls (girls identified through the predictive model, as well as replacement if insufficient take-up of FGDs).

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific consent protocol for caregivers sampled for qualitative research.

### Introduction

10. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. What is your name and what community are you from? How many people are in your household? How many children do you have? Are they in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
  - a. **Probe:** Tell us about your daughter: how old is she, what grade is she in?
  - b. **Probe:** Did she go back to school now that they have re-opened? If yes, when did she go back to school? If not, when did you decide she would not go back?

### Learning during school closures

1. When it was announced that schools would be closed and that children would need to stay at home, how informed did you feel?
  - a. **Probe:** How did you hear about school closures? What kind of support and information did you get from your kids' school?
  - b. **Probe:** What was communication with the school like at the time? And what about during Covid-19? Is there anything that could have been improved?
2. What technology do most people in your community have access to (i.e. TV, telephone, radio)?
  - a. **Probe:** How were most people using this technology before Covid-19? Did girls have access to this before?
  - b. **Probe:** During Covid-19, how was this technology used at home? Who was using it the most and how?
  - c. **Probe:** What about in your household? What technology do you have access to, and how is it typically used?
3. Did your daughter have access to distance learning materials? How? What about your other children?
  - a. **Probe:** What sort of radio or online teaching did children in the community have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** Did most children have access to learning materials through TV or radio in your community? What about in your home?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any children who did not have access to this technology? What groups were most affected?
4. In your community, what worked well in supporting children to learn while schools were closed? What were some of the challenges to supporting girls' and boys' learning at home?
  - a. **Probe:** What type of learning materials did children have access to?
  - b. **Probe:** How much contact did you or your children have with the school or teacher while schools were closed?
  - c. **Probe:** Is there any more support you or other families would have needed from your children's schools and why?
  - d. **Probe:** What other activities did children need to be engaged in (e.g. helping around the house, working...)?
  - e. **Probe:** In your view, were there any different challenges for girls and boys? If yes, what were these? Was there anything that was especially hard for girls' education?

### Re-enrolment and dropout

5. How have people in your community been able to cope with the economic effects of Covid-19?

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- a. **Probe:** How were livelihoods in the community affected? What types of livelihoods were the most affected? What did this mean for people in your community?
  - b. **Probe:** How have community members been able to do to cope with the situation? What coping mechanisms or strategies have most people been using?
  - c. **Probe:** In your view, how has the Covid-19 pandemic affected children in the community? (**Probe for:** more support needed at home, school fees, working outside the house, early marriage or pregnancy...)
6. Do you know of any girls in the community who did not go back to school? What were some of the reasons why families decided that girls should not go back to school when they reopened? Can you please provide some examples?
- a. **Probe:** Was the number of girls stopping school higher than before Covid-19? What about among boys? Were there any differences between girls and boys? Why do you think that is?
  - b. **Probe:** E.g. financial reasons, safety (in school because of Covid-19 or other reasons, travelling to school etc), marriage or pregnancy?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you think it will be possible for girls to return to school at a later date, when it is easier for families? Why or why not?
  - d. **If daughter not in school:** When did your daughter decide to stop going to school, and why? How is she spending her time now? Does she plan on returning later on? Why or why not?
7. After Covid-19 and school closures, has anything changed in your views on education and access to learning? If yes, what? What about among other people in your community?
- a. **Probe for:** In the way people view the importance of education for boys and girls?
  - b. **Probe for:** In the importance of education for job opportunities or future plans?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you notice any changes in girls' views on their education? What about your daughter?
8. Is there anything else you would like to talk about with us? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 17. FGD with Community Health Volunteers

**Aim:** To understand the role of CHVs in engaging with the girls while schools were closed. To understand which girls the CHVs saw facing the most challenges and barriers during school closure, and the different methods used to identify this. To understand what support was provided to the most marginalised girls and the girls facing the most challenges. What impact has Covid-19 had on the girls learning and access to school after Covid-19?

**Participants:** FGDs with CHVs in the four sampled school areas

### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.
- This is as part of our research on the EDT project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.
- Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction Questions

1. Everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves, what community they are from, and how long they have been working as Community Health Volunteers (CHV).

### Covid-19 Response Questions

2. How were you involved in the Covid-19 response activities implemented by EDT? How was this different from your previous responsibilities as a CHV? Please provide examples.
  - a. **Probe for:** Support to remote learning, in person follow-ups with girls, other...?
  - b. **Probe for:** Are you continuing to support the project now that schools have reopened? If yes, how?
3. Which girls are seen as most marginalised in terms of their education in this community? How did this change during Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe for:** CWD, mothers, the poorest, orphans etc...
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any changes in who was considered most marginalised before and during Covid-19, and how they were supported?
  - c. **Probe:** How were you able to contact the girls and collect data on them? Are you continuing to follow-up with the girls?
4. From your experience, what were some of the biggest challenges faced by girls in accessing education during Covid-19 school closures? How were these overcome?
  - a. **Probe:** What were different challenges for different sub-groups of girls?
5. What were you or the schools able to do to support these girls? Who did you communicate with to support girls' education while schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you communicate directly with girls, or was it more at household level?
  - b. **Probe:** Did you communicate with parents, and what information did you share with them?
  - c. **Probe:** Looking back now, is there anything else that could have been done? Is there any more support parents or communities would have needed? Please provide examples.
6. What remote learning options were used while schools were closed, and how successful were they with different groups of girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Were all girls able to access radio lessons? What about online resources?
  - b. **Probe:** Did all girls receive learning packs of physical resources to do schoolwork from home? Which girls did not have access to these resources and why?
  - c. **Probe:** When outside/ community learning spaces opened, did all girls have access to these? Why or why not?

7. Now that schools have reopened, would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? Why or why not? How is this different from before Covid-19?
  - a. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (probe: any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? What about girls who you thought would re-enrol but dropped out?)
  - b. **Probe:** Are you or the school following up with girls who have not re-enrolled yet? Are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future?
  - c. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol? What are some of the other factors which helped? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others...?)
8. In your communities, what were some of the reasons for families to decide that girls should not go back to school once they re-opened?
  - a. **Probe:** E.g. financial reasons, safety (in school because of Covid-19 or other reasons, travelling to school etc), marriage or pregnancy?
  - b. **Probe:** Have schools or the CHVs been able to contact these families to support re-enrolment? If yes, how? What have been the results?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you think any girls might re-enrol at a later date? Why or why not?
9. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 18. KIIs with Community Health Volunteers

**Aim:** To understand the role of CHVs in engaging with the girls while schools were closed. To understand which girls the CHVs saw facing the most challenges and barriers during school closure, and the different methods used to identify this. To understand what support was provided to the most marginalised girls and the girls facing the most challenges. To understand the impact of Covid-19 had on girls' access to learning and school re-enrolment.

**Participants:** KIIs with CHVs in the four sampled school areas

### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.
- This is as part of our research on the EDT project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.
- Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction Questions

1. Please tell me your name and what community you are from. What are the main duties in your role as a CHV? How long have you been working with the EDT schools or with GEC girls?

### Covid-19 Response Questions

2. What was your involvement in the Covid-19 response activities implemented by EDT?
  - a. **Probe:** How did the EDT team first get in touch with new plans for remote learning?
  - b. **Probe:** How did your role change during Covid-19?
  - c. **Probe:** Were you asked to do anything differently from your normal duties? Can you please provide some examples?
3. The MTRP indicated that the CHVs supported in collecting data on girls' access to education. Please could you give us more information on the different sub-groups of girls you collected data on?
  - a. **Probe:** Which girls were identified as most at risk or marginalised? (i.e.: CWD, mothers, the poorest, orphans etc...)
  - b. **Probe:** Did these categories change before and during Covid-19?
  - c. **Probe:** How were you able to contact the girls and collect data on them?
4. From your experience, what were some of the biggest barriers or challenges faced by girls to access education during Covid-19 school closures?
  - a. **Probe:** What were different challenges for different sub-groups?
  - b. **Probe:** How were some of these barriers overcome?
  - c. **Probe:** What were you or the schools able to do to support these girls? Looking back now, is there anything else that could have been done?
5. How did the schools interact with parents while schools were closed? Did you interact with parents, and how?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you communicate directly with girls, or was it more at household level?
  - b. **Probe:** What information did share on girls' education? What about on girls' health and safety?
  - c. **Probe:** What additional support do you think parents or communities would have needed to be able to help girls? Who could have provided this support?
6. What remote learning options were used by the project while schools were closed? Was this different from the government of Kenya's support? How successful do you think these were with different groups of girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Were all girls able to access radio lessons? What about online resources?
  - b. **Probe:** Did all girls receive learning packs of physical resources to do school work from home?
  - c. **Probe:** Which girls did not have access to these resources and why?
  - d. **Probe:** Were the girls able to get feedback on their work? How did this work in practice?
  - e. **Probe:** When the outside/ community learning spaces opened, did all girls have access to these?

7. Now that schools have reopened, roughly what share of girls has re-enrolled? Why do you think that is?
  - a. **Probe:** Would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? How are issues of drop-out being monitored by the school? What about pregnancy and marriage?
  - b. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (probe: any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? What about girls who you thought would re-enrol but dropped out?)
  - c. **Probe:** Are you or the school following up with girls who have not re-enrolled yet? If yes, how? Are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future?
  - d. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol? What are some of the other factors which helped? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others...?)
  
9. In the communities you work in, what could be some of the reasons for families to decide that girls should not go back to school once they re-opened?
  - a. **Probe:** E.g. financial reasons, safety (in school because of Covid-19 or other reasons, travelling to school etc), marriage or pregnancy?
  - b. **Probe:** How have schools or the CHVs been able to contact these families with regard to girls' re-enrolment?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you think any girls might re-enrol at a later date? Why or why not?
10. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 19. FGD with Teachers/ Remedial Teachers

**Aim:** Understand the initial response from the school and how the teachers prioritized actions. Who did the teachers see as most at risk when the lockdown started? How were teachers able to support continued distance learning. What engagement did parents have with communities and families? What has been the impact of Covid-19 on access and learning?

**Participants:** Four FGDs with teachers in the same four areas as the girls in the FGDs

### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.
- This is as part of our research on the EDT project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.
- Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction

1. Everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves, what subject they teach, and how long they have been working at the EDT school.

### Covid-19-related questions:

2. During school closures, were you asked to do anything differently from your normal duties? How did you engage with girls? How did you engage with girls' parents?
  - a. **Probe:** Were there any challenges in engaging with the girls, and how did you address them?  
**Probe:** How engaged were the parents in speaking with the school or those promoting education? Were there any challenges communicating with them?
3. What worked well when supporting girls to continue accessing education while schools were closed? What worked less well?
  - a. **Probe for:** remote learning, in-person follow-ups, others...?
4. When engaging with girls, what were the main challenges and issues they spoke about? How were these related to their education? Did the school also speak to parents or caregivers or others in the community? What were some of the challenges relating to education they told you about?
  - a. **Probe:** Were there different challenges or barriers faced by different groups of girls? (e.g. older, younger girls? Girls in specific grades? What about children living with disabilities, mothers, orphans, the very poor...)
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any differences between boys and girls? What specific challenges did girls face?
5. How did Covid-19 affect your ability to continue teaching? Did expectations about your role change?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you receive any support from the project to help you follow up with girls and parents in this time? If yes, what support did you get? What was most helpful?
  - b. **Probe:** Is there any other support you would have needed to better help girls during this time? if yes, what?

### Re-enrolment and attendance

6. What have been the trends in attendance in the school where you teach since it re-opened? Are any differences between older and younger children?
  - a. **Probe on:** boys' and girls' attendance, factors facilitating or limiting attendance, changes since last year...?
  - b. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (e.g. any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? How about girls you thought would re-enrol, but dropped out?)

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- c. **Probe:** What has the school being doing to support the girls most at risk of dropping out? How are issues such as pregnancy or marriage being monitored by the school? Did you notice any differences by age or grade?
7. When the girls were re-enrolling after the Covid-19 school closure, how did the school decide which grade the girls would re-enter into?
  - a. **Probe:** Was there guidance on this at the district or county level? If so, what guidance did you receive?
  - b. **Probe:** Were you able to make decisions on this at the school level? How did you make those decisions?
  - c. **Probe:** Were the girls consulted or asked which grade they would re-enter at? Or was there any type of exam? Please tell us more.
  - d. **Probe:** Do you think what grade girls re-enter into will have any impact on how the girls have been engaging in the lessons? Why or why not?
  - e. **Probe:** Do you think this will have any impacts on different groups of girls? Why or why not?
8. How has the general academic performance in this school changed since school closures?
  - a. **Probe for:** performance in Mathematics, English and Sciences in their class, any trends in girls'/boys' performance in the last one year, reasons good or poor performance, how learning in English, Sciences and Mathematics can further be supported.
  - b. **Probe:** Did you notice any difference according to age or grade?
9. What have you as a teacher planned to support children's learning as they return back to school?
  - a. **Probe for** remedial teaching, catch-up classes, individual tutoring, gender equitable and supportive learning practices...
10. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close**

## 20. KIIs with Teachers/ Remedial Teachers

**Aim:** Understand the initial response from the school and how the teachers prioritized actions. Who did the teachers see as most at risk when the lockdown started? How were teachers able to support continued distance learning. What engagement did parents have with communities and families? What has been the impact of Covid-19 on access and learning?

**Participants:** Four IDIs with teachers in the same four areas as the girls in the FGDs

### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.
- This is as part of our research on the EDT project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.
- Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction:

1. What subjects do you teach? How long have you been teaching at this school? What was your involvement in the Covid-19 response activities implemented by EDT?
  - a. **Probe:** How did your role change during Covid-19? Were you asked to do anything differently from your normal duties? Could you please give me an example?

### Covid-19-related questions:

2. During school closures, how did you engage with girls? How did you engage with girls' parents? How did you keep in contact with parents and girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Were there any challenges in engaging with the girls, and how did you address them?
  - b. **Probe:** How engaged were the parents in speaking with the school or those promoting education?
3. What worked well when supporting girls to continue accessing education while schools were closed? What worked less well?
  - b. **Probe for:** remote learning, in-person follow-ups, others...?
4. When engaging with girls, what were the main challenges and issues they spoke about? How were these related to their education? Did the school also speak to parents or caregivers or others in the community? What were some of the challenges relating to education they told you about?
  - a. **Probe for:** Housework, working outside the home, pregnancy or marriage, little support from parents, others...?**Probe:** Were there different challenges or barriers faced by different groups of girls? (e.g. older, younger girls? Girls in specific grades? What about children living with disabilities, mothers, orphans, the very poor...?)
5. How did Covid-19 affect your ability to continue teaching? Did expectations about your role change? Did your ability to fulfil your role change? How?
  - a. **Probe for:** On caretaking responsibilities, economic challenges in the community
  - b. **Probe:** Is there any other support you would have needed to better help girls during this time? if yes, what?

### Re-enrolment and attendance

6. What have been the trends in attendance since your school re-opened? ?
  - a. **Probe on:** boys' and girls' attendance, factors facilitating or limiting attendance, have there been changes since last year and how it can be improved.
  - b. **Probe:** Would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? How are issues such as pregnancy or marriage being monitored by the school? Did you notice any differences by age or grade?

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- c. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (e.g. any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? How about girls you thought would re-enrol, but dropped out?)
7. How is the school following up with girls (and boys) who aren't re-enrolling? If not, are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future? Are any differences between older and younger children?
  - a. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol? What are some of the other factors which helped them re-enrol? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others...?)
  - b. **Probe:** What has the school been doing to support the girls most at risk of dropping out?
  - c. **Probe:** What are the main reasons why families and/ or girls have decided to not return to school?
8. When the girls were re-enrolling after the Covid-19 school closure, how did the school decide which grade the girls would re-enter into?
  - a. **Probe:** Was there guidance on this at the district or county level? If so, what guidance did you receive?
  - b. **Probe:** Were you able to make decisions on this at the school level? How did you make those decisions?
  - c. **Probe:** Were the girls consulted or asked which grade they would re-enter at? Or was there any type of exam? Please tell us more.
  - d. **Probe:** Do you think what grade girls re-enter into will have any impact on how the girls have been engaging in the lessons? Why or why not?
  - e. **Probe:** Do you think this will have any impacts on different groups of girls? Why or why not?

### Learning

9. How has children's performance in this school changed since school closures? Did you notice any difference between boys and girls?
  - a. **Probe for:** performance in Mathematics, English and Sciences in their class, any trends in girls'/boys' performance in the last one year, reasons good or poor performance...? Any difference by age or grade?
  - b. **Probe:** how can learning in English, Sciences and Mathematics further be supported?
  - c. **Probe:** Has there been any support from the school for your lesson plans and teaching delivery (e.g. remedial lessons, night lessons, rewards and recognition...?) boarders, individual lessons to struggling learners, rewards and recognition...
10. Tell me about use of ICT in teaching learning process in this school.
  - a. **Probe on:** own ICT skills, use ICT for lesson delivery...? have you attended any ICT training by the project in the last year? How have applied this new ICT knowledge?
  - b. **Probe:** We know that schools were going to try out different remote learning options such as radio lessons or on-line learning while schools were closed. How did this work in practice?
  - c. **Probe:** Did all the girls have access to technology needed, such as radios? Were there any groups who faced more challenges?
  - d. **Probe:** Did you find some methods to be more effective than others? Why?
11. How have the girls in your school benefited from health club activities supported by the project? What plans does the health club has for the next one or two years?
  - a. **Probe for:** club activities and its contribution to reproductive health knowledge, self-esteem, shaping career and education aspirations for the last/next 12 months.
12. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the project activities in this community/ school as the school re-opens?
  - a. **Probe on:** recommendations to accelerating learning, improving attendance, knowledge on transition pathways, economic empowerment...

### Thank the participants and close.

## 21. FGD with Coaches/ Mentors

**Aim:** To understand the role of coaches/ mentors in engaging with the girls while schools were closed. To understand which girls the coaches/ mentors saw facing the most challenges and barriers during school closure, and the different methods used to identify this. To understand what support was provided to the most marginalised girls and the girls facing the most challenges. What impact has Covid-19 had on the girls learning and access to school after Covid-19?

**Participants:** Total of five IDIs with coaches/ mentors in the same areas as the girls in FGDs

### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.
- This is as part of our research on the EDT project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.
- Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction Questions

1. Everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves, what subject they teach, and how long they have been working at the EDT school. Since Covid-19, how has your role as coach/ mentor changed? Please provide some examples.

### Covid-19 response questions

2. When schools closed, how did you engage with girls? How did you engage with parents? How did you manage to contact both parents and girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Were coaches/ mentors and CHVs able to speak to girls directly? What did you mostly speak to them about?
  - b. **Probe:** How engaged were the parents in speaking with the school or those promoting education? What did you mostly speak to them about?
3. From your experience of interacting with the girls, what were some of the biggest barriers or challenges girls faced to accessing education during Covid-19 school closures?
  - a. **Probe:** What were different challenges faced by different sub-groups?
  - b. **Probe:** What were the main concerns of the girls during this time (learning, health, issues at home...?)
  - c. **Probe:** What were you or the schools able to do to support these girls?
4. What, if any, was your interaction with the community during the school closure?
  - a. **Probe:** What was the purpose of engaging with the communities during this time?
    - Support education, safeguarding, GBV prevention
    - Information on additional services for families
    - Engagement with men and boys
    - Anything else?
  - b. **Probe:** How were you able to communicate with communities? (i.e.: radio, community meetings (socially distanced), flyers, door to door?) Did any engagement take place during lockdown?
5. Now that schools have reopened, roughly what share of girls has been re-enrolling? Why do you think that is?
  - a. **Probe:** What are some of the main reasons leading to girls not returning to school (for both girls and families)? **Probe:** Would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? How is the school monitoring re-enrolment?
  - b. **Probe:** How are issues such as pregnancy or marriage being monitored by the school?
  - c. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (probe: any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? Anyone you would have expected to re-enrol, but dropped out?)

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6. How you or the school following up with girls who aren't re-enrolling? Are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future?
  - a. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol? What are some of the other factors which helped? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others..?)
7. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 22. IDs with Coaches/ Mentors

**Aim:** To understand the role of coaches/ mentors in engaging with the girls while schools were closed. To understand which girls the coaches/ mentors saw facing the most challenges and barriers during school closure, and the different methods used to identify this. To understand what support was provided to the most marginalised girls and the girls facing the most challenges. What impact has Covid-19 had on the girls learning and access to school after Covid-19?

**Participants:** Total of five IDs with coaches/ mentors in the same areas as the girls in FGDs

### Introduction:

- Name, roles, etc.
- We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.
- This is as part of our research on the EDT project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.
- Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction Questions

1. What are the main duties in your role as a coach/ mentor? How long have you been working with the EDT schools or with GEC girls?
2. Since Covid-19, how has your role as coach/ mentor changed? Please can you give some examples of: the ways in which you support girls, the different groups you engage with, the ways you engage with families and the messages you help to spread in communities.
  - a. **Probe for:** Any other changes to report?

### Covid-19 Response Questions

3. When schools closed, how did you engage with girls? How did you engage with parents? How did you manage to contact both parents and girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Were coaches/ mentors and CHVs able to speak to girls directly?
  - b. **Probe:** How engaged were the parents in speaking with the school or those promoting education?
  - c. **Probe:** What did you mainly speak to girls about at first?
  - d. **Probe:** How did this change throughout the period of school closure?
4. From your experience of interacting with the girls, what were some of the biggest barriers or challenges girls faced to accessing education during Covid-19 school closures?
  - a. **Probe:** What were different challenges faced by different sub-groups?
  - b. **Probe:** What were the main concerns of the girls during this time (learning, health, issues at home...?)
  - c. **Probe:** What were you or the schools able to do to support these girls?
5. How did the schools interact with parents during the school closure? What was your role in interacting with parents?
  - a. **Probe** What information was being given to parents on girls' education?
  - b. **Probe** What information was being given to parents on girls' safety and health?
  - c. **Probe** What more do you think parents or communities would have needed, to be able to support girls in this time?
6. What, if any, was your interaction with the community during the school closure?
  - a. **Probe:** What was the purpose of engaging with the communities during this time?
    - Support education, safeguarding, GBV prevention
    - Information on additional services for families
    - Engagement with men and boys
    - Anything else?

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- b. **Probe:** How were you able to communicate with communities? (i.e.: radio, community meetings (socially distanced), flyers, door to door?) Did any engagement take place during lockdown?
7. Now that schools have reopened, roughly what share of girls has been re-enrolling? Why do you think that is?
  - a. **Probe:** What are some of the main reasons leading to girls not returning to school (for both girls and families)? **Probe:** Would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? How is the school monitoring re-enrolment?
  - b. **Probe:** How are issues such as pregnancy or marriage being monitored by the school?
  - c. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (probe: any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? Anyone you would have expected to re-enrol, but dropped out?)
8. How you or the school following up with girls who aren't re-enrolling? Are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future?
  - a. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol? What are some of the other factors which helped? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others..?)
9. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 23. Focus Group Discussion with Girl Champions

**Aim:** To understand the main barriers that different girls in the community faced to accessing education. What did girls discuss with their peers during this time, and how can this be used to help identify the key challenges faced by girls. What was the effect of Covid-19 on different sub-groups of girls. What were the main safeguarding risks faced by girls, and how did this impact on access and learning? What have been some of the barriers in girls transitioning into higher secondary or VT programmes? What have been some enabling factors for girls to transition?

**Participants:** A total of five FGDs of seven participants in each – in same locations as the FDGs with girls. Girl Champions are girls who have also participated in or completed GEC I and support girls in the community.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girl champions sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Ice-breaker questions (10 mins)

1. Please tell the group your favourite activity you like doing. Facilitator begins by introducing herself and sharing a favourite activity.
  - a. *Comment on if girls have something in common (e.g. if two girls like dancing, do they like the same music, who do they like dancing with, do they also like singing etc.)*
2. Tell the group what you most like about being a Girl Champion for the STEM project schools, and if there is anything you are most excited about when some restrictions were lifted.
  - a. *Can give prompts e.g. seeing friends, economic activities, going to the self-defence classes, going to the Friday Study clubs*

### Learning about girls in the community (45 minutes)

We are going to start by doing drawing exercise about a typical girl in your community. Remember that you don't need to share anything about yourself or other girls that you don't feel comfortable with.

As you draw the girl, think about who she is and what she wants to do, as well as some of the problems she faced before and during Covid-19. You will tell the others in your group about the girl you have drawn.

*(girls draw for 15 minutes)*

*Interviewers split the girls in two smaller groups and ask participants questions about girls' education before and during Covid-19 while they draw.*

- Draw out a girl in your community. What's her name? How old is she? Where does she live? Did she go to school before Covid-19? Was she part of the STEM project? What is she doing now that schools have re-opened?
- What was it like for her while schools were closed because of Covid-19? Did she continue to study and how? What kinds of problems did she face when trying to study? What kinds of other problems did she face at home and in her community?
- Is she going to go back to school now that it's open? Is she going every day? Does she have enough time to study? Why or why not? If she was going to start grade 11 or vocational training, was she able to do so?
- **If vocational training group:** Was the girl able to continue with her vocational training classes? Did she still have access to training materials? Has she been able to start working on her business? Why or why not?
- Now draw out her household. Who does she live with? Is she married? Does she have any brothers? Did they continue to study? Does she have any sisters? Are her brothers and sisters going back to school? Why or why not?
- What does your girl want to do after she finishes school? (Does she want to work, study, get married...?)

*Girls discuss in small groups and introduce the girls they have drawn to each other.*

3. Did any of the girls you drew have something in common? What were the differences between them?
4. What were some of the main challenges the girls you drew were facing before Covid-19? How did these change with Covid-19 and schools closing?
  - a. **Probe:** Did they have to do housework? Did they have enough time to study?
  - b. **Probe:** Did anything else happen to them? Did any of them get married or pregnant?
  - c. **Probe:** Were they able to spend time on their skills training or business development?
5. What were the different challenges faced by girls and the boys in the community before Covid-19? What about during Covid-19? Were the challenges different between boys and girls, or were they the same? Why?
6. *Any other specific follow-up questions emerging from the drawings.*

### **Group discussion on Covid-19 context (30 mins)**

*Facilitator thanks the girls for their drawings and moves on to group discussion.*

Now that we have talked about what it's been like for girls in this community while schools were closed because of Covid-19, we have a few questions about your education, and the education of the girls you spoke to in this time:

7. What has been the main way girls have kept in touch with their school or VT programme while the schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you help girls stay in touch with the school in any way? How and how often?
  - b. **Probe:** What sort of communication did girls have with the field monitors? Did girls speak to them in person or on the phone?
  - c. **Probe:** Were girls able to talk to teachers on the phone? What about in person?
  - d. **Probe:** Did girls receive any feedback or support from teachers on their homework? Were girls able to ask questions?
  - e. **Probe:** Did girls receive any learning materials at home?
  - f. **Probe:** How were the girl in the vocational training programme contacted? Were they able to carry on with any of their skills training activities? Did they receive any materials to study at home?
  - g. **Probe:** Were there any challenges faced by girls in using these materials?
8. When you were speaking with the girls, what sorts of topics did they want to talk to you about? How often did you interact with the girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Did they talk to you about school, health, safety? Other topics?
  - b. **Probe:** Going back to school, or other school activities? What about the Girls' Clubs or Friday Study Clubs?
  - c. **Probe:** Were the girls able to stay in touch with each other, or just with you?
  - d. **Probe:** How did the other girls keep in touch with each other while schools were closed?
    - In person? On social media? Through the self-defence classes?
9. In your community, are there any particular challenges for girls returning to school?
  - a. **Probe:** Do you know of any girls who will not be returning to school now that they have re-opened?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you think some girls in your community might find it harder to come back to school? Why?
  - c. **Probe:** What about the girls who were not in formal school before Covid-19? Have new students been able to enrol?
  - d. **Probe:** What have been some of the main challenges for girls in grade 10 to continue to higher secondary or vocational training programmes?
  - e. **Probe:** What do you think were the main things that helped girls in grade 11 to enrol in higher secondary or vocational training programmes?
10. Is there anything else anyone would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 24. IDs with Girl Champion

**Aim:** To understand the main barriers that different girls in the community faced to accessing education. What did girls discuss with their peers during this time, and how can this be used to help identify the key challenges faced by girls. What was the effect of Covid-19 on different sub-groups of girls. What were the main safeguarding risks faced by girls, and how did this impact on access and learning? What have been some of the barriers in girls transitioning into higher secondary or VT programmes? What have been some enabling factors for girls to transition?

**Participants:** To replace FDG with Girl Champions if insufficient number available for participatory activity.

**Introduction:** Interviewer to read specific assent protocol for girl champions sampled for qualitative research (after consent has been granted by parent/caregivers).

### Introduction questions

1. *Facilitator introduces herself and asks participant to do the same.* Can you please tell me your age and your favourite thing you like doing?
2. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself. Which community are you from? What grade are you in? Can you please tell us about your family? Who are the people in your household? How do you spend your free time if you have any?
3. How many siblings do you have? Are they boys or girls? Are they also in school? If not, what are they doing? (Working, married... etc).
4. When did you first become a Girl Champion? What are the main activities you do? Which are your favourites and why?

### Covid-19/ Access & Learning focused questions

5. When schools were closed and girls in your community were at home, how did most girls spend their time? How much time was spent on each activity? Did girls spend more or less time on these things, compared to before schools were closed?
  - a. **Probe:** What are the main things girls did in their free time? Please provide examples.
  - b. **Probe:** How much time did girls spend helping around the house? How much time did girls have for homework and reading?
  - c. **Probe:** What about you? How did you spend most of your time before and during Covid-19? What were the main changes?
6. How did you and other Girl Champions keep in touch with girls while they were at home?
  - a. **Probe:** On the phone, in person? How often did you speak to other girls?
  - b. **Probe:** What sort of things did you talk about with the girls? Were the girls able to ask questions about their studies? Did you talk about anything else?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you think you had enough support to be able to help the girls? Would you have needed anything else? If yes, what?
  - d. **Probe:** Were there any challenges staying in touch with the girls? If yes, what were the most important?
7. When you were speaking with the girls, what sorts of topics did they want to talk to you about? How often did you interact with the girls?
  - a. **Probe:** Did they talk to you about school, health, safety? Other topics?
  - b. **Probe:** Did girls tell you anything about how they were feeling? Were girls mostly anxious about the future? Excited to come back to school? Other...?
  - c. **Probe:** Going back to school, or other school activities? What about the Girls' Clubs or Friday Study Clubs?
  - d. **Probe:** Were the girls able to stay in touch with each other, or just with you?
  - e. **Probe:** How did the other girls keep in touch with each other while schools were closed?
    - In person? On social media? Through the self-defence classes?
8. Did girls receive learning materials to study at home? How did most girls find working on the study materials at home? Did they find some things more difficult than others?
  - a. **Probe:** How did girls find reading and writing? What about math? Did they have enough time to study? Anything else?

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- b. **Probe:** Do you know if others used the study materials at home? Did girls study together with anyone else? (e.g. your siblings...)
  - c. **Probe:** Did girls use any form of technology to communicate or learn? If so, what did they use?
  - d. **Probe:** Was there anything that was challenging? Did any girls ask you for help with their homework? Were you able to help them? Why or why not?
9. In your community, are there any particular challenges for girls returning to school? What about to continue to grade 11?
  - a. **Probe:** Do you know of any girls who will not be coming back to school now that they have re-opened?
  - b. **Probe:** Do you think some girls in your community might find it harder to come back to school? Why?
  - c. **Probe:** What about the girls who were not in formal school before Covid-19? Have new students been able to enrol?
  - d. **Probe:** What have been some of the main challenges for girls in grade 10 to continue to higher secondary or vocational training programmes?
  - e. **Probe:** What do you think were the main things that helped girls in grade 11 to enrol in higher secondary or vocational training programmes?
10. Do you know of any girls in your community or class who did not come back to school?
  - a. **Probe:** What are some of the reasons why girls did not come back? Were there any girls who got married? Were there any who got pregnant?
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any families not able to send the girls back? What challenges did they face?
  - c. **Probe:** Do you know any girls who did not continue to year 11? Why not? (Probe for: cost of school, distance, marriage, other reasons...?) Do you know what they are doing now?
  - d. **Probe:** Are you following up with girls who are no longer in school in any way? If yes, how?
11. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participant and close.**

## 25. FGDs with Teachers

**Aim:** Understand the initial response from the school and how the teachers prioritised actions. Who did the teachers see as most at risk when lockdown started? How were teachers able to support continued distance learning? What engagement did parents have with communities and families? What has been the impact of Covid-19 on access and learning? What have been the differences between IS and OOS girls? How has Covid-19 affected OOS girls who were supposed to be transitioning to IS? How were teachers able to support girls in the transition grades enrol in higher secondary or vocational training programmes? What factors might have led to girls in the transition grades to drop out?

**Participants:** One FGD in each school (both higher secondary and vocational training).

### Introduction:

Name, roles, etc.

We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.

This is as part of our research on the STEM project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.

Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction (10 mins):

1. Everyone to go around the room and say what classes and grades they teach, and how long they have been teaching at the STEM project school. Or if they are a Vocational Training (VT) partner, what sort of technical skills they teach.
2. What is your involvement with the STEM project? Do you teach any extra-curricular activities, and if so, which ones?
  - a. **Probe for:** Girls' Clubs, Life Skills, financial literacy, training mentors or girl champions?

### Covid-19-related questions (1 hour):

3. When schools were closed, how did you engage with girls? How did you engage with communities? Was there a difference in how you engaged with the two?
  - a. **Probe for:** Were you able to contact families directly, or was all communication indirect and through field monitors?
  - b. **Probe:** Did you follow up with girls through phone calls or house visits? What was the main topic of conversation when you or field staff talked to girls? For example, safeguarding challenges, learning and explaining materials, others...?
  - c. **Probe:** What sort of learning materials did girls receive while schools were closed? Were others in the family able to use these as well (for example, siblings, other children...)?
4. From speaking to the girls, what were the main challenges and issues they told you about? How were these related to their education?
  - a. **Probe:** Did all the girls have access to technology needed, such as radios? Were there any groups which faced more challenges?
  - b. **Probe:** When girls did not have access to technology, how were they contacted and how was their learning supported?
  - c. **Probe:** What other challenges did girls speak about? (e.g.: housework, working outside the home, gender-based violence...).
  - d. **Probe:** Were there any differences in the challenges faced by girls in different grades? What were the main challenges for girls going from grade 10 to grade 11? What were the main challenges for girls who had recently transitioned into higher secondary or vocational training programmes?
  - e. **Probe:** How were teachers or vocational trainers able to support the girls who were graduating from grade 10?

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5. Did you also speak to parents or caregivers or others in the community? What were some of the challenges relating to education they told you about?
  - a. **Probe:** Did you feel there was enough support for students from parents? What more support would have students needed?
  - b. **Probe:** Were there any other challenges mentioned by parents?
  - c. **Probe:** Did you notice any difference in the families of in school and out of school girls?
  - d. **Probe:** Did you notice any differences in families with girls in higher grades (10-12)? What challenges to education did the families say were more common for the girls going into grade 11?
  - e. **Probe:** What were the different challenges between girls in school and girls in vocational training?
6. How did Covid-19 affect your ability to continue teaching? Did expectations about your role change? Did your ability to fulfil your role change? Why?
  - a. **Probe for:** own caretaking responsibilities, economic challenges in the community, having enough time for talking to field staff or vocational training providers?
  - b. **Probe for:** How much time would you say you spent on teaching during this period? Was it more during or before Covid-19?
  - c. **Probe:** What additional support would you have needed to follow up with your students in this time?
  - d. **Probe:** Are there any other challenges you'd like to mention?
7. Now that schools have reopened, roughly what share of girls have re-enrolled? Why do you think that is?
  - a. **Probe:** Would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? Why or why not? How are issues such as pregnancy or marriage been monitored by the school?
  - b. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (probe: any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? And the other way around?).
  - c. **Probe:** What about girls in grade 10 going into higher secondary or vocational training programmes? Were the drop-out rates as you would have expected? How do these rates compare to previous years?
  - d. **Probe:** Did you notice any difference in the number of girls who enrolled in higher secondary or vocational training programmes compared to previous years? Did the number of girls enrolling in these programmes change?
  - e. **Probe:** What about girls who were transitioning from OOS to IS? Were these rates as expected?
8. How is the school following up with girls who have not re-enrolled yet? Are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future?
  - a. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol?
  - b. **Probe:** What are some of the other factors which supported girls to re-enrol? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others..?)
  - c. **Probe:** How does the school support the enrolment of different grades? What is being done for the girls who are in the grade 10 transition cohort?
9. For the OOS girls taking part in vocational training activities or who were supposed to be transitioning into formal school, what are the specific barriers they have faced?
  - a. **Probe:** How has Covid-19 impacted on their ability to engage in economic activities?
  - b. **Probe:** Roughly what share of the girls have been able to transition into formal education?
  - c. **Probe:** What have been their challenges in transitioning? How are these different to challenges faced before Covid-19?
10. How did the children react when they came back to school?
  - a. **Probe for:** Nervous, excited, happy to learn?
  - b. **Probe for:** Any additional challenges they are now facing?
  - c. **Probe for:** Any changes in attitude since before Covid-19?
11. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

## 26. KIIs with Teachers/ Head Teachers

**Aim:** Understand the initial response from the school and how the teachers prioritised actions. Who did the teachers see as most at risk when lockdown started? How were teachers able to support continued distance learning? What engagement did parents have with communities and families? What has been the impact of Covid-19 on access and learning? What have been the differences between IS and OOS girls? How has Covid-19 affected OOS girls who were supposed to be transitioning to IS? How were teachers able to support girls in the transition grades enrol in higher secondary or vocational training programmes? What factors might have led to girls in the transition grades to drop out?

**Participants:** Interviews with Head Teachers (if available to speak with us); potential replacement interviews if not enough participants for an FGD

### Introduction:

Name, roles, etc.

We want to learn about what have been the effects of Covid-19 on households in your community, and how this has impacted boys' and girls' education.

This is as part of our research on the STEM project and girls' education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please remember all our research is anonymous and what you say will not be traced back to you. Please don't feel like there is anything you need to share which you don't feel comfortable with.

Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable with. You can leave the interview or exercise at any time.

### Introduction (10 mins):

1. Please tell us your name and what subjects you teach. How long have you been teaching at this school? What was your involvement in the Covid-19 response activities implemented by this school.
  - a. **Probe:** How did your role change during Covid-19? Were you asked to do anything differently from your normal duties? Could you please give me an example?

### Covid-19-related questions (1 hour):

2. When schools were closed, how did you engage with girls? How did you engage with communities? Was there a difference in how you engaged with the two?
  - a. **Probe for:** Were you able to contact families directly, or was all communication indirect and through field monitors?
  - b. **Probe:** Did you follow up with girls through phone calls or house visits? What was the main topic of conversation when you or field staff talked to girls? For example, safeguarding challenges, learning and explaining materials, others...?
  - c. **Probe:** What sort of learning materials did girls receive while schools were closed? Were others in the family able to use these as well (for example, siblings, other children...)?
3. From speaking to the girls, what were the main challenges and issues they told you about? How were these related to their education?
  - a. **Probe:** Did all the girls have access to technology needed, such as radios? Were there any groups which faced more challenges?
  - b. **Probe:** When girls did not have access to technology, how were they contacted and how was their learning supported?
  - c. **Probe:** What other challenges did girls speak about? (e.g.: housework, working outside the home, gender-based violence...).
  - d. **Probe:** Were there any differences in the challenges faced by girls in different grades? What were the main challenges for girls going from grade 10 to grade 11? What were the main challenges for girls who had recently transitioned into higher secondary or vocational training programmes?
  - e. **Probe:** How were teachers or vocational trainers able to support the girls who were graduating from grade 10?

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4. Did you also speak to parents or caregivers or others in the community? What were some of the challenges relating to education they told you about?
  - a. **Probe:** In your view, what was the impact of radio messages that were broadcast to the families and communities? Do you think there have been any changes?
  - b. **Probe:** Did you feel there was enough support for students from parents? What more support would have students needed?
  - c. **Probe:** Were there any other challenges mentioned by parents?
  - d. **Probe:** Did you notice any difference in the families of in school and out of school girls?
  - e. **Probe:** Did you notice any differences in families with girls in higher grades (10-12)? What challenges to education did the families say were more common for the girls going into grade 11?
  - f. **Probe:** What were the different challenges between girls in school and girls in vocational training?
5. How did Covid-19 affect your ability to continue teaching? Did expectations about your role change? Did your ability to fulfil your role change? Why?
  - a. **Probe for:** own caretaking responsibilities, economic challenges in the community, having enough time for talking to field staff or vocational training providers?
  - b. **Probe for:** How much time would you say you spent on teaching during this period? Was it more during or before Covid-19?
  - c. **Probe:** What additional support would you have needed to follow up with your students in this time?
  - d. **Probe:** Are there any other challenges you'd like to mention?
6. What types of support were teachers or VT providers given during the school closures and when they reopened?
  - a. **Probe:** Did teachers have any financial support?
  - b. **Probe:** Did the school provide any incentives to continue teaching or return to school during the Covid-19 period?
  - c. **Probe:** Were teachers provided with any guidance or support on the assessment or examination for this year?
    - i. How did they ascertain students would progress onto next grade?
    - ii. Are they comfortable with the process?
  - d. **Probe:** What, if anything, could have been provided to make the school closure and re-opening more manageable?
7. Now that schools have reopened, roughly what share of girls have re-enrolled? Why do you think that is?
  - a. **Probe:** Would you say most girls have re-enrolled in school? Why or why not? How are issues such as pregnancy or marriage been monitored by the school?
  - b. **Probe:** Are there any groups of girls who were less likely to re-enrol and why? Was there anything which was surprising (probe: any girls who you thought would drop out, but didn't? And the other way around?).
  - c. **Probe:** What about girls in grade 10 going into higher secondary or vocational training programmes? Were the drop-out rates as you would have expected? How do these rates compare to previous years?
  - d. **Probe:** Did you notice any difference in the number of girls who enrolled in higher secondary or vocational training programmes compared to previous years? Did the number of girls enrolling in these programmes change?
  - e. **Probe:** What about girls who were transitioning from OOS to IS? Were these rates as expected?
8. How is the school following up with girls who have not re-enrolled yet? Are there any plans to follow-up with them in the future?
  - a. **Probe:** What has been the role of the project in helping girls re-enrol?
  - b. **Probe:** What are some of the other factors which supported girls to re-enrol? (e.g. girls' own interest, family support, government intervention, others..?)
  - c. **Probe:** How does the school support the enrolment of different grades? What is being done for the girls who are in the grade 10 transition cohort?
9. For the OOS girls taking part in vocational training activities or who were supposed to be transitioning into formal school, what are the specific barriers they have faced?
  - a. **Probe:** How has Covid-19 impacted on their ability to engage in economic activities?
  - b. **Probe:** Roughly what share of the girls have been able to transition into formal education?
  - c. **Probe:** What have been their challenges in transitioning? How are these different to challenges faced before Covid-19?

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10. Are the STEM schools now doing anything additional to support learning now that schools have re-opened?
  - a. **Probe:** In your view, what has been the impact of school closing so far on learning? In your experience, have kids faced particular challenges (e.g. math, reading... Others?)
  - b. **Probe:** What is the focus of catch-up classes? What are the most important subjects being taught? (e.g. academic, life skills, sexual and reproductive health...?)
  - c. **Probe:** Will all girls be able to access additionally support now schools have re-opened?
11. How did the children react when they came back to school?
  - a. **Probe for:** Nervous, excited, happy to learn?
  - b. **Probe for:** Any additional challenges they are now facing?
  - c. **Probe for:** Any changes in attitude since before Covid-19?
12. Is there anything you'd like to add? Do you have any questions for us?

**Thank the participants and close.**

# Plain Language Statement (for Kenya and Nepal)

**To be read by interviewers to the selected respondent before starting the survey or qualitative discussion and handed over to the respondent once signed.**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for agreeing to hear more about this study. You are being invited to participate in our study because you attended a \_\_\_\_\_ school. \_\_\_\_\_ is supported by a project that wants to improve girls' education in \_\_\_\_\_. Our study is doing research to find out how the school has supported you and other girls with their education and learning. Before agreeing to take part in this (SURVEY / DISCUSSION), you should know all about what is involved so you can decide if you would like to participate or not.

We want to learn more about the educational experiences of girls during Covid-19 in \_\_\_\_\_. I will ask you about your views on girls' education during Covid-19 and will also ask about some of your experiences in life and at school. Some of these questions may be sensitive and difficult to talk about, but your answers will help us learn more about the education of girls in Nepal. The survey / qualitative discussion will each take around one hour to complete.

You can decide to stop participating in the survey / qualitative discussion at any time, now or in the future. You can also refuse to answer a question if you don't feel comfortable. It is OK to say 'Yes' and change your mind later. You can stop answering questions at any time. If you want to stop, please tell me and I will not be upset. We will discard all of the answers you've already given if you want to stop.

There are no direct benefits for taking part in our study. This means that you will not get any money or gifts for taking part in this study.

There are no right or wrong answers and everything you tell us will be kept confidential. That means that your answers will never be connected to your name or any other personal information. We would like to interview you in a private place so no one else can hear what you say. We will not tell anyone what you said in response to our questions. I will record the answers that you give me, but I have not recorded your name or the location of where you live on the survey questionnaire. The survey data or qualitative data will be kept separate from the form where your personal information, school and household location are recorded. So, your answers could never be connected to your personal information. Although we will be very careful with your personal information, you can choose to have this information deleted at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns about our study, or about your rights and the procedures I am following, please feel free to contact (NAME OF SUPERVISOR AT RESEARCH PARTNER) on (PHONE NUMBER). This person can address your concerns or refer you to somebody who can.

## **Do you have any questions?**

**Respondent's Statement:** (Ask the respondent to read the following statement before giving consent, or read out the statement for those people who are illiterate)

The interviewer has told me about the (SURVEY / DISCUSSION). I had a chance to ask questions. I know that participating in the (SURVEY / DISCUSSION) is my choice. No one will be upset if I don't want to participate in the survey or if I change my mind later. I know I can ask questions any time. I know that my answers will be kept confidential. I want to participate in the survey.

## **DOES THE RESPONDENT AGREE TO THIS STATEMENT?**

- YES, AGREES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY / DISCUSSION
- NO, DOES NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY / DISCUSSION

**Name of Interviewer Obtaining Consent:**

---

**Signature of Interviewer Obtaining Consent:**

---

**Name of Participant Giving Consent:**

---

**Signature or thumbprint of Participant Giving Consent**

---

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Consent form (for Kenya and Nepal)

## Caregiver consent form (example)

### To be read by interviewers to the selected respondent before starting the research activities

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for agreeing to hear more about this research. You are being invited to participate in the research because your daughter is attending a \_\_\_\_\_ school. \_\_\_\_\_ is supported by a project that wants to improve girls' education in \_\_\_\_\_. Before agreeing to take part in this research, you should know all about what is involved so you can decide if you would like to participate or not. If you agree to participate, you will spend about one to one a half hours talking about girls' education in your community.

### There are a few things you should know about this survey:

- You get to decide if you want to be in the research, and whatever you decide is OK.
- It is also OK to say 'Yes' and change your mind later. You can stop being in the research at any time. If you want to stop, please tell me and I will not be upset.
- You can agree to participate in the research and, as I ask you questions, you can say 'No' to any question that you do not want to answer.
- Your answers will be kept strictly confidential. That means that your answers will never be connected to your name or any other personal information.
- Sometimes you might not know the answer to a question. In these cases, please say you don't know. Sometimes you might not want to answer a question and you are free to refuse to answer any question I ask.
- There are no right or wrong answers and everything you tell us will be kept secret.

### I wanted to give you some additional information on the type of questions I will ask you in this research.

We want to learn more about the education and life experiences of girls and boys in \_\_\_\_\_. I will ask you about your children's experiences in school and your situation at home. I will also ask some questions about your family, your community and how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected girls' education in particular.

Some of these questions may be difficult to talk about, but your answers will help us learn more about girls' education in Nepal, especially during Covid-19. Remember that you can refuse to answer a question if you don't feel comfortable.

### You might be wondering who else in your community has been chosen to be in this research.

We will be carrying out interviews with girls, teachers and parents in the community.

All responses will be kept secret and nobody's names will appear on what we will write about our research. The research findings will be reported with all of the caregivers' answers together, so you will not be identified from the answers you give. I would like to ask that you not to talk to people in the community about the sensitive topics in this research to protect your privacy, and the privacy of the other caregivers who have been selected.

**You might be wondering if bad things could happen to you or your family if you participate in this research.**

There is little to no possibility that bad things will happen as a result of answering these questions. As I told you, some of the questions are sensitive and answering questions like this can be difficult, but you can choose not to answer questions that are difficult at any time.

**You might also be wondering if good things could happen to you if you participate in the research.**

There are no direct benefits for being in the research. This means that you will not get any money or gifts for being in this research.

**Do I have to participate?**

No. It is completely your choice. No one will be upset or disappointed with you if you do not take part in this research. You may decide you do not want to answer more questions and if so, no one will be upset with you. However, if you do answer the questions you can help us better understand more about girls' education in this community, as well as more about other areas of girls' lives.

**You might be wondering what I will do with the answers that you give me:**

- I will record the answers that you give me, but I have not recorded your name or the location of where you live. Your answers will not be connected to your personal information.
- The only people in the community who know about the content of the research are the caregivers selected to participate and the interviewers asking the questions.

**Do you have any questions? Y/N**

**Respondent's Statement:**

(Ask the respondent to read the following statement before giving assent, or read out the statement for those people who are illiterate)

The interviewer has told me about the research. I had a chance to ask questions. I know that being in this research is my choice. No one will be upset if I don't want to take part in the research or if I change my mind later. I know I can ask questions any time. I know that my answers will be kept confidential. I want to take part in the research.

**DOES THE RESPONDENT AGREE TO THIS STATEMENT?**

**YES, AGREES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH**

**NO, DOES NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH**

**Name of Participant giving consent:**

---

**Signature of Participant giving consent:**

---

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Girl Consent Form (example)

### To be read by interviewers to the selected respondent before starting the research activities

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for agreeing to hear more about this research. You are being invited to participate in the research because you are attending a \_\_\_\_\_ school. \_\_\_\_\_ is supported by a project that wants to improve girls' education in \_\_\_\_\_. Before agreeing to take part in this research, you should know all about what is involved so you can decide if you would like to participate or not.

#### **IF GIRL SAMPLED TO TAKE PART IN SURVEY:**

If you agree to participate, you will spend about one hour answering some questions about your life and your family, some maths questions and some reading questions.

#### **IF GIRL SAMPLED TO TAKE PART IN SEGRA/ SEGMA TEST:**

You will spend around half an hour answering some maths questions and some reading questions.

#### **IF GIRL SAMPLED TO TAKE PART IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH:**

You will also spend about one and a half hours talking about girls' education in your community, together with some other girls or just with an interviewer.

#### **There are a few things you should know about this survey:**

- You get to decide if you want to be in the research, and whatever you decide is OK.
- It is also OK to say 'Yes' and change your mind later. You can stop being in the research at any time. If you want to stop, please tell me and I will not be upset.
- You can agree to participate in the research and, as I ask you questions, you can say 'No' to any question that you do not want to answer.
- Your answers will be kept strictly confidential. That means that your answers will never be connected to your name or any other personal information.
- Sometimes you might not know the answer to a question. In these cases, please say you don't know. Sometimes you might not want to answer a question and you are free to refuse to answer any question I ask.
- There are no right or wrong answers and everything you tell us will be kept secret.

#### **I'd like to give you some additional information on the type of questions I will ask you in this survey.**

We want to learn more about the education and life experiences of girls in \_\_\_\_\_. I will ask you about your experiences in school and your situation at home. I will also ask about some questions about your family, your community and how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected your education. I will also ask you to complete some math and reading exercises. Your performance in these tests will not affect your grades in school. Results will not be shared with your school.

Some of these questions may be difficult to talk about, but your answers will help us learn more about girls' education in Nepal, especially during Covid-19. Remember that you can refuse to answer a question if you don't feel comfortable.

**You might be wondering who else in your community has been chosen to be in this research.**

We will be carrying out interviews with girls, teachers and parents in the community.

All responses will be kept secret and nobody's names will appear on what we will write about our research. The research findings will be reported with all of the girls and young women's answers together, so you will not be identified from the answers you give. I would like to ask that you not to talk to people in the community about the sensitive topics in this research to protect your privacy, and the privacy of the other girls and young women who have been selected.

**You might be wondering if bad things could happen to you or your family if you participate in this research.**

There is little to no possibility that bad things will happen as a result of answering these questions. As I told you, some of the questions are sensitive and answering questions like this can be difficult, but you can choose not to answer questions that are difficult at any time.

**You might also be wondering if good things could happen to you if you participate in the research.**

There are no direct benefits for being in the research. This means that you will not get any money or gifts for being in this research.

**Do I have to participate?**

No. It is completely your choice. No one will be upset or disappointed with you if you do not take part in this research. You may decide you do not want to answer more questions and if so, no one will be upset with you. However, if you do answer the questions you can help us better understand more about girls' education in this community, as well as more about other areas of girls' lives.

**You might be wondering what I will do with the answers that you give me:**

- The questionnaire will be kept separate from the form where your name and other personal information is recorded. So, your answers could never be connected to your personal information. Although we will be very careful with your personal information, you can choose to have this information deleted at any time.
- The only people in the community who know about the content of the research are those girls and young women selected to participate and the interviewers asking the questions.

**Do you have any questions? Y/N**

**Respondent's Statement:**

(Ask the respondent to read the following statement before giving assent, or read out the statement for those people who are illiterate)

Annex 1 – Research Instruments and Consent Forms

The interviewer has told me about the different aspects of the research. I had a chance to ask questions. I know that being in this research is my choice. No one will be upset if I don't want to take part in the research or if I change my mind later. I know I can ask questions any time. I know that my answers will be kept confidential. I want to take part in the research.

**IF GIRL SAMPLED TO TAKE PART IN SURVEY:**

Yes, agrees to take part in the survey

No, does not agree to take part in the survey

**IF GIRL SAMPLED TO TAKE PART IN SEGRA/ SEGMA TEST:**

**IF GIRL SAMPLED TO TAKE PART IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH:**

**Name of Participant giving consent:**

---

**Signature of Participant giving consent:**

---

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Quantitative Research Instruments

These are provided as attachments and can be accessed by double-clicking on the object.

### Mercy Corps (Nepal)

#### Girls' Survey

##### Girls' survey, Nepal

Contact Information			
<i>Interviewer: Please enter the following information.</i>			
1.	enum	Enumerator Name	
2.	province	Province	[pre-filled]
3.	district	District	[pre-filled]
4.	municipality	Municipality	[pre-filled]
5.	ward	Ward	[pre-filled]
6.	schname	School name	[pre-filled]
	SCHOOLID	School ID	[generated automatically]
7.	girlserial	Girl Serial Number	[ ____ ] #1-12
	GIRLID	Girl Identifier	[generated automatically]
8.	Girl Name	Girl Name [PRE-FILLED FROM LIST IF IDENTIFIER IS FROM MERCY CORPS]	[ _____ ] [ _____ ] Name Surname
9.		Is this the girl you are interviewing?	1. Yes 2. No → re-enter or verify Girl ID
		[Confirm name entered is the same as name pre-filled]	1. Yes 2. No

Consent to take part			
<i>Interviewer: we want to ask you questions about you and questions related to the Covid-19 /Coronavirus, the quarantine, and its effects on your health, wellbeing, education, economy and work and your household. The entire survey takes approximately 30 minutes</i>			
10.	consent	<i>Interviewer: Read out: Are you happy to take part?</i>	1. Yes 2. No [skip to goodbye page]
11.	link	Are you happy for the answers that you give to be linked to information collected about your school?  <i>Interviewer: If participant says no, explain that they are still able to take part in the survey.</i>	1. Yes 2. No

A. Background and socio-economic information			
	age	How old are you?	[ ____ ] years old
	lang	What language do you mainly speak at home?	1. Nepali 2. Tharu 3. Doteli 4. Achhami 5. Magar 6. Hindi

# Annex 1 – Research Instruments and Consent Forms

## Schools Survey

### School Survey, Nepal

Contact page			
<i>Interviewer: Please enter the following information before the interview</i>			
1.	enum	Enumerators name / ID	
2.	SCHLID	School identifier	XXX
3.	province	Province	[pre-filled]
4.	district	District	[pre-filled]
5.	municipality	Municipality	[pre-filled]
6.	ward	Ward	[pre-filled]

Consent of Head Teacher to take part			
<i>Interviewer: This is the survey about how the COVID-19 situation is affecting schools in Nepal. Do you have any questions you want to ask me?</i>			
<i>Interviewer: Do not continue until all questions are addressed.</i>			
7.	consent	<i>Interviewer: Read out: Are you happy to take part?</i>	1. Yes 2. No [skip to goodbye page]

School Information			
8.	schltype	What type of school is this?	1. Community aided schools (public), government funded (at least one approved position of teacher) 2. Community managed schools (public), government-subsidized (teachers' salaries paid by government) 3. Partially aided community schools, with no approved teacher but one rahat teacher paid by government 4. Unaided community schools 4. Institutional (private) 5. Other, specify
9.	langinst langinst_other	Please specify the official language/s of instruction of this school:	1. Nepali 2. English 3. Other, specify _____
10.	shiftsch	Is this school operating/running in shifts?	1. Yes → skip to Q11 2. No
10.1	startsch	...what time does the school start?	[__ : __] hh:mm
10.2	endsch	...what time does the school end?	[__ : __] hh:mm → skip to Q15
11.	shiftschn	How many shifts is the school running?	[__] #2,3
12.	startsch_s1	<b>First shift</b> ...what time does the first school-shift start?	[__ : __] hh:mm
	endsch_s1	<b>First shift</b> ...what time does the first school-shift end?	[__ : __] hh:mm

Annex 1 – Research Instruments and Consent Forms

Learning Assessments (conducted by IE team in Nepali. English translation attached) and Mark Keys  
*SEGMA (English translation)*

SeGMA, Nepal

**Secondary Education Mathematical Skill Survey 2074**

Name of Student:	
Name of School	
Grade:	

**Not to be filled by student:**

School type:	Treatment..... Control.....
Unique ID:	

Task1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Score										
Task 2	1	2	3	4	5	6				
Score										
Task 3	1	2	3							
Score										

Annex 1 – Research Instruments and Consent Forms

*SeGRA (Nepali and English translation)*

**Midline | SEGRA**

मासिक शिक्षा रणनीति कार्यक्रम २०१९ (सेट ब)

विद्यार्थीको नाम :	
प्रेम :	
विद्यार्थीको नाम :	
प्रेम :	
वर्ग :	

.....  
 शिक्षकको हस्ताक्षर

कक्षाकै तालिका

प्रेम नं	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E	1F	1G
विद्यार्थी	1	1	2	1	2		
कुल	1	1	2	1	2	1	5

विद्यार्थीको हस्ताक्षर : .....  
 प्रमुख शिक्षकको हस्ताक्षर : .....

Secondary Education Reading Skill Survey 2019 (Set A)

Name of school:	
Address:	
Name of Student:	
Age:	
Grade:	

.....  
 Supervisor's signature

Score Table:

Question1	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E		
Score	1	1	2	1	2		
Question2	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E	2F	3
Score	1	1	2	1	2	1	5
Total 30							

Examiner's Signature: .....  
 Signature: .....  
 Co-Examiner's



Learning Assessments (Conducted by IE Team and Translated into English)

SeGMA

**Wasichana Wetu Wafaulu**  
**Student Stimuli Booklet**  
**Rapid Survey**  
**SeGMA Test**

Instructions:  
 1. Read each passage and answer the questions that follow  
 2. Time allocation: 15 Minutes per sub-task (Total 45 minutes)

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2021

**Bio Data**

Name of the Student/Pupil (FULL NAMES) : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unique ID : \_\_\_\_\_  
 School : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Class /Form : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country : \_\_\_\_\_ Sub Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (FULL NAMES): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Relationship [ ] 1 Father [ ] 2 Mother [ ] 3 Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

1 | Page

**MARKING SCHEME**

**Task 1**

1. (a) 268	(1mark)
(b) 17353	(1mark)
(c) 9	(1mark)
2. 1411÷17	(1 mark)
Correct answer = 83	(1 mark)
3. (a) $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{3} - \frac{3+4}{12} - \frac{7}{12}$	(1mark)
(b) $2\frac{1}{2} - 2\frac{2}{3} = 2 + \frac{3-4}{6}$	(1mark)
$= \frac{12}{6} - \frac{4}{6}$	(1mark)
4. $2\frac{1}{2} \times 11 = \frac{5}{2} \times 11$	(1mark)
$= \frac{77}{2} = 25\frac{1}{2} m$	(1mark)

SeGRA

**Wasichana Wetu Wafaulu**  
**Rapid Survey**  
**Student Stimuli Booklet**  
**SeGRA Test**  
**(Test 2)**

Instructions:  
 1. Read each passage and answer the questions that follow  
 2. Time allocation: 30minutes

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2021

**Bio Data**

Name of the Student/Pupil (FULL NAMES) : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unique ID : \_\_\_\_\_  
 School : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Class /Form : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country : \_\_\_\_\_ Sub Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (FULL NAMES): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Relationship [ ] 1 Father [ ] 2 Mother [ ] 3 Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

1 | Page

**SEGRA Marking Scheme**

Sub Task 1	Correct answer	Possible answer	Wrong Answer
(1)	Ocean		Sea
(2)	Coral reefs		plolops
(3)	Up and down	regularly	in and across
(4)	Calm	stagnant/not moving	noisy
(5)	(a) Birds can be seen, (b) water goes down		Birds get covered up, water across up the beach
(6)	(a) Making high tide, (b) to prevent the ships and boats from opening if it is dangerous	It is because the ships and boats can overturn	to prevent the ships and boats from sinking
(7)	(a) many animals live there (b) because of marine life	Fishermen do fishing/ necessary for water transport	water

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>ACASI</b>	Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing
<b>COI</b>	Conflict of Interest
<b>CVA [Committee]</b>	Child and Vulnerable Adult
<b>DNH</b>	Do No Harm
<b>ESWG</b>	Evaluation Studies Working Group
<b>FCDO</b>	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>FM</b>	Fund Manager
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based Violence
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation
<b>GEC</b>	Girls' Education Challenge
<b>GESI</b>	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>ID</b>	Identification
<b>IE</b>	Independent Evaluation
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>MEL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
<b>PLS</b>	Plain Language Statement
<b>RRLF</b>	Rapid Research and Learning Fund
<b>SEAH</b>	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
<b>STD/STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Disease/ Infection
<b>UNCRPD</b>	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>VAWG</b>	Violence Against Women and Girls
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

# 1. Introduction to this framework

These ethical research and safeguarding guidelines apply to the design, implementation and reporting of all research and evaluation activities conducted as part of the independent evaluation (IE) of the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) Phase II programme. This will cover all research conducted under this contract, including the delivery of discrete research and evaluation studies. In addition, all subcontractors providing research services under the Rapid Research and Learning Fund (RRLF) will be expected to adhere to the principles set out in this document.<sup>1</sup>

This ethical research and safeguarding framework is fully compliant with the guiding concepts and principles set out in the FCDO's Evaluation Policy (2013) and the FCDO's Research Ethics Guidance (2011); the DFID Ethical Guidance for Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Activities (2019); and the UK Data Protection Act (2018). A full set of documents referenced is provided in Annex A.

## Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to taking reasonable steps to prevent harm, exploitation or abuse occurring, and to protect people from that harm, particularly beneficiaries of programmes, and especially children and vulnerable adults, survivors of violence and people with disabilities. According to the FCDO's (2020) Guidance on Child Safeguarding (Due Diligence for External Partners)<sup>2</sup>, child safeguarding encompasses all forms of harm, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, online abuse, child sexual exploitation, neglect and negligent treatment, emotional abuse and commercial exploitation.

In the context of this independent evaluation, safeguarding concerns include any occasion where anybody working on the IE, including: staff, partners, consultants, suppliers, data collectors etc., takes advantage of his or her position to harm someone they work with, including: beneficiaries, stakeholders, community members, GEC project Implementing Partners (IPs) and Fund Manager (FM) staff, or other IE or staff members, or learns in the course of his or her work of a safeguarding concern elsewhere (e.g. among the study community). All research, monitoring and evaluation staff and volunteers, including enumerators, researchers and supervisors, must be appropriately vetted during recruitment and trained on safeguarding requirements and protocols.

## 1.1. Framework scope

### Who has responsibility for applying these guidelines?

Anyone who is undertaking activity in any capacity under the IE contract, including those collecting data from programme stakeholders or beneficiaries for research and evaluation purposes, i.e. the IE team, consortium partners, subcontracted providers of data collection and research services (including survey enumerators) and organisations subcontracted to provide services under the Rapid Research and Learning Fund (RRLF) – all referred to as “researchers” in this document. All researchers will be provided with appropriate information and/or training on the ethical research and safeguarding principles and expectations set out in this document.

Specific arrangements for the lines of reporting for safeguarding concerns are set out in Section 8.2.

As the IE of the GEC II programme is led by Tetra Tech International Development, the consortium must comply with Tetra Tech's corporate Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Anti-bribery and Corruption Policy. However, to ensure consistency between the IE team's different consortium partners, the programme has developed this ethical research and safeguarding framework to draw together the main elements of the programme's commitment and approach to safeguarding. The framework will also practically set out roles and responsibilities in implementing different aspects of the policy.

Tetra Tech's contracts with subcontractors (including organisations contracted to deliver studies under the RRLF) will specify expectations on ethical research and safeguarding.

These guidelines are intended to apply to all research and evaluation activities under the independent evaluation of the Girls' Education Challenge Phase II contract, including studies commissioned under the RRLF. Activities undertaken by the Fund Manager (FM) and Implementing Partners (IPs), including any monitoring, research and

<sup>1</sup> See the Rapid Research and Learning Fund Handbook for further details.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-enhanced-due-diligence-safeguarding-for-external-partners/child-safeguarding-due-diligence-for-external-partners>

evaluation activities, are governed by separate contracts with the FCDO and so are not covered by the guidelines set out below.

## 1.2. Development of the framework

This draft ethical research and safeguarding framework has been developed by the IE in consultation and in coordination with the FM (on behalf of the IPs) and the IE team's ethical research and safeguarding expert. The development of this framework has been informed by several resources, guidelines and documents (see Annex A), including:

- National and international guidelines on ethical research, including on research with children;
- FCDO guidance and frameworks on the ethical implementation of monitoring, research and evaluation; and
- Similar frameworks used on other FCDO programmes.

## 1.3. Purpose and objectives of the framework

These guidelines are designed to ensure that all primary research and related data collection involving individuals, communities and other programme stakeholders is conducted in an ethical, safe manner that prioritises the rights and dignity of all research participants and protects them from harm.

The guidelines are intended to ensure that researchers:

- Carry out a comprehensive assessment of the possible positive and negative effects of the research on the diverse individuals and communities where research is conducted – adjusting the research accordingly to minimise risks to participants;
- Apply ethical principles and best practices when conducting research including informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, and protecting research participants and researchers from harm;
- Comply with the FCDO's principles and standards for the conduct of safe and ethical monitoring, research and evaluation (2019), which aim to maximise benefit and minimise harm, respect people's rights and dignity, act with honesty, competence and accountability, and deliver work of integrity and merit and
- Complement Tetra Tech's safeguarding policy by providing strategic guidance to support team members with its implementation.

The guidelines provide an overarching framework to support researchers to make informed decisions about the design and implementation of research as well as their own behaviour and involvement. They are intended to underpin and complement risk mitigation strategies identified in the overarching risk assessment framework for the IE in addition to those identified for individual evaluation and research studies.

Although this document provides detailed guidance on important steps to follow in ensuring all research and evaluation activities under this contract are designed and implemented in an ethical manner, these guidelines should be fully operationalised in research and fieldwork protocols for each study that clearly articulate how ethical research risks will be managed for specific pieces of research in each phase of implementation, including design, sampling, pre-testing tools, data collection, data storage, analysis and dissemination.

These guidelines will be reviewed by the FM and revised accordingly to ensure alignment with their own safeguarding processes and protocols.

## 1.4. How should the framework be applied in practice?

This document is intended to provide a series of guidelines to support IE researchers to implement research, evaluation and other data collection activities in an ethical and safe manner, and should be treated as a living document that should adapt to accommodate the monitoring, research and evaluation needs of the GEC II programme.

This document will be reviewed periodically, every quarter, to ensure continued relevance and efficacy of the framework and reflect on the implementation of the guidelines in light of ongoing research and evaluation activities under this contract. This review will be led by the IE Team Leader/Deputy Team Leader.

In addition, the guidelines may also be updated on an ad hoc basis in light of relevant changes in the contract or study context. This may include, for example:

- Prior to any research or evaluation activities where a new context, type of beneficiary or location may impact on the ethical approach to research or evaluation. This may include significant changes in the COVID-19 context (for example, subsequent peaks and local outbreaks) that may pose new challenges or risks;
- Following feedback gathered through the complaints mechanism to reflect any challenges and lessons learned that should be incorporated into future ethical conduct of research activities;
- Following any significant change (e.g. change in the FCDO or IE consortium research ethics protocols) to ensure that this document reflects at all times ethics procedures and protocols mandated by participating organisations.

The IE Programme Director (working in conjunction with the IE Team Leader/Deputy Team Leader) will be responsible for overseeing the periodic review and updating of this framework (as set out in Section 1.5). Any significant changes will be discussed and agreed with the FCDO and a revised version of the framework circulated to all relevant staff.

## 1.5. Monitoring and review of this framework and risks

The IE Programme Director (supported by the IE Team Leader/Deputy Team Leader/Programme Manager on a day-to-day basis) is ultimately accountable for ensuring these processes are adhered to across all contract activities.

For individual studies, the Study PI (working in conjunction with the IE Programme Manager) will be responsible for ensuring that the principles and processes set out in this document are being applied in the course of individual research and evaluation studies, including by all subcontractors. In accordance with Tetra Tech Safeguarding Policy, the Programme Manager is the Safeguarding 'Focal Point' for the IE team.

The IE Programme Manager (working in conjunction with the RRLF Manager and Tetra Tech Security and Compliance Team) will be responsible for ensuring that organisations contracted to deliver activities under the RRLF are adhering to agreed ethical research and safeguarding principles set out in their contract.

We expect that ethical research and safeguarding risks to be specific to context, and so will be identified and managed on a study-specific basis.<sup>3</sup> These include (but not exclusively): risks specific to the research context; risks specific to the methodology or tools used; risks of bias and/or undue pressure; risks associated with the capacity and capabilities of the IE team's local research partners and their researchers and enumerators; and risks of misconduct on the part of IE researchers or organisations or external stakeholders. All these risks will be assessed during the detailed planning and preparations for each study, and mitigating actions set out in detail in the Desk Review Reports. It is important to note that the IE team's local research partners are an integral part of our planning process to ensure that our detailed preparations and risk mitigation strategies are appropriately tailored, relevant and specific to local contexts, cultural sensitivities and institutional requirements. The FCDO, the FM and IPs involved in each study will be able to review and comment on the IE team's detailed research plans, research instruments and risk mitigation strategies with aim of seeking FCDO approval prior to the start of any fieldwork

Whilst ethical research and safeguarding policies aim to protect, there may be instances whereby these policies can also maximise benefits to the participants. For example, this may be through the research and evaluation activity highlighting areas of specific need such that resources are targeted more effectively to beneficiaries; highlighting specific issues that may not otherwise be apparent, thereby similarly improving the chances of programmes benefitting individuals further; and strengthening existing activities and frameworks in a manner that means that programmes are more effective in producing outcomes. The IE team will continually seek opportunities to maximise benefits in this manner throughout the research and evaluation activity.

## 1.6. Definitions

The following definitions are provided by Tetra Tech's Safeguarding Policy that has been informed by international best practice. Tetra Tech is a 'Key Supplier' to FCDO and as such Tetra Tech was required to submit its Safeguarding Policy for review in 2019.

**Child:** Any person below 18 years of age, irrespective of the age of consent or majority in national law or local custom.

**Young person:** Adolescents and youth aged 18 – 24 years.

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<sup>3</sup> See also the overarching project risk table in the Inception Report.

**Vulnerable adult:** People aged 18 and over may be vulnerable adults, temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons and in different situations. An adult may be vulnerable if they have a learning or physical disability; have a physical or mental illness; are reliant upon humanitarian assistance for basic needs and protection; are detained or imprisoned by state authorities; are living in a shelter or residential care home; or are unable, for any other reason, to protect themselves against significant harm.

**Sexual exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Note that *all* sex with sex workers is sexual exploitation.

**Sexual abuse:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential or trust for sexual purposes, including but not limited to actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

- Note that *all* sexual acts with children are sexual abuse. The local age of consent or mistaken belief as to age are irrelevant.
- Profiting monetarily, socially, materially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another (including through forced marriage) is a form of sexual abuse.

**Sexual harassment:** Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, or any other behaviours of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to degrade, cause offence or cause humiliation to another.

**Physical abuse:** The physical mistreatment, harm and injury. This may include hitting, shaking, caning, ear pulling, being forced to kneel for long periods.

**Emotional abuse:** Sometimes also called 'psychological abuse' or 'verbal abuse', this is the persistent emotional ill-treatment such as to cause severe effects on emotional development. It may involve humiliating punishment or being publicly shamed.

**Neglect:** The intentional or unintentional failure of a caregiver (including a teacher, school, or other learning institution) with clear responsibility by custom or law for the well-being of the child or vulnerable adult to protect them from actual or potential harm to their safety, wellbeing, dignity, and development or to fulfil that person's rights to survival, development, and wellbeing. It is classified as neglect by a caregiver when:

- The caregiver(s) have the required abilities, financial capacities, and knowledge, and choose not to protect or provide for the child (intentional), or
- In the absence of such abilities, financial capacities, and knowledge, they intentionally fail to take all reasonable steps to seek the assistance that would enable them to protect or provide for the child (intentional), or
- In the absence of abilities, financial capacities, and knowledge of caregivers to protect or provide for the child, other duty bearers fail and/or are unwilling to provide the necessary services and assistance (unintentional).

Within this definition, the term 'ability' includes the existence, non-discriminatory availability, and accessibility of essential goods and services. Harm may be visible or invisible. An act may be categorised as neglectful whether or not the caregiver intends to cause harm.

## 2. Ethical research framework

This Section sets out the overarching principles which will guide the IE team's approach to all research and evaluation activities.

- **Do no harm:** Every care will be taken to ensure that the children, their parents / guardians and other stakeholders who participate in the research are not exposed to harm, stigmatised or further marginalised or discriminated against during, or as a result of, their participation in the research.
- **Informed consent:** All attempts will be made to give respondents – both children and adults – an opportunity to express themselves in their chosen environment, using research methods that they feel comfortable with and on the basis of clear and informed consent/assent (as set out in Section 3).
- **Stakeholder participation:** Mechanisms to seek input from IPs and beneficiaries on research methods and topics will be established, and where feasible findings shared in an accessible and appropriate manner with research participants, as set out in the Stakeholder Engagement, Management and Communications Plan.<sup>4</sup>
- **Inclusive research:** We will seek where possible to ensure that marginalised groups, including adults and children with functioning impairments, are not excluded from participating in research and evaluation activities, and that IE team activities are undertaken in a way that respects their rights and autonomy, as set out in this document and in the IE GESI Approach Paper.<sup>5</sup> In doing so, we will also take into account local power relations and ensure representation of groups with less power.
- **Capacity building:** Our research and evaluation activities will be conducted in collaboration with Southern partners and local research partners and stakeholders on the ground. The IE team will build and strengthen ethical research and safeguarding practices through: the training and development we provide our local research partners, which includes a highly collaborative approach to reviewing and refining research instruments; fieldwork and research management protocols and the application of the guidance in this framework.
- **Transparent and independent research:** Our research methods will be clearly set out in reports and managed in line with the Conflict of Interest Policy (see Section 9). Research conclusions will be developed in a way that is free from bias and external pressure.<sup>6</sup>
- **Useful and necessary data collection:** Our process of study selection (as set out in the FM Memorandum of Understanding and Inception Report), which involves in-depth consultation with the FCDO and FM stakeholders, will ensure that our research is meeting identified needs and considered useful and necessary by stakeholders. Similarly, RRLF study topics will be selected based on input from IPs on their learning needs and in consultation with FM and FCDO stakeholders. An important part of our ethical research board approval process will be to demonstrate that the benefits from conducting the research sufficiently outweigh the associated risks.
- **Fit for purpose:** we will ensure that the design of any research or evaluation activity is fit for purpose and appropriate to context. Evaluation findings will be shared with FCDO and where appropriate the wider research community, as set out in the accompanying Stakeholder Engagement, Management and Communications Plan and GESI Approach Paper.

### 2.1. Anticipating and minimising harm

Researchers should undertake a detailed assessment of the possible consequences of their work prior to conducting any research or evaluation activity as part of the IE. This assessment should consider the risks for the diverse individuals and communities participating in any research and evaluation activities or who may be directly or indirectly affected by these activities. This should form part of the risk assessments carried out for individual or discrete studies or pieces of the work undertaken by the IE. Ethical aspects pertaining to the selection of methods and/or participants will be considered and will influence each Evaluation Study. Therefore, each study will have an ethics framework that outlines the ethics and safeguarding elements pertaining specifically to that study. This framework will guide that process, however, given the differing nature of each study, its context, and the different research questions, each of the Evaluation Studies will need to be framed by their own ethical and safeguarding frameworks. Researchers should proactively use this assessment (and any subsequent assessments) to adapt their research appropriately and put in

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<sup>4</sup> Currently under development as part of the IE's inception report.

<sup>5</sup> Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Approach Paper

<sup>6</sup> Further detail on the relationship between the FM, FCDO and IE to preserve the IE independence is set out in the Memorandum of Understanding between the FM and IE.

place measures to protect those affected from harm. Particular attention should be given to vulnerable groups including but not limited to: survivors of violence and people marginalised on the grounds of gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, age, race, ethnicity, religion, caste or HIV status.

This assessment should include, but is not limited to, considering the questions set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Indicative questions to assess risk of harm**

<b>Ensuring the research is useful, necessary and feasible</b>	
-	Will the research provide evidence and learning to different audiences and stakeholders? In considering the usefulness of the research to different stakeholders, have the potential benefits been weighed up against potential risks and harms to individuals and communities?
-	Are there better ways of obtaining evidence? Has the research team ensured that there is no duplication in efforts?
-	Has an evaluability assessment been made? Are the scope and expectations of the research feasible considering the resources and timeframe available?
-	Have stakeholders been adequately involved in design and feedback processes? Have local power relations and issues, and their impact on the research approach, been assessed?
<b>Protecting research participants from harm (see also Section 4)</b>	
-	Could the research trigger distress or trauma for any research participants? How can this be avoided or minimised? What procedures can be put in place to provide an effective response in cases of distress or trauma?
-	Is the research placing unreasonable demands on research participants (e.g. time, travel, physical or economic impact)? How can disturbance and intrusion into their lives be minimised?
<b>Negotiating informed consent (see also Section 3)</b>	
-	How will participants' informed consent be negotiated? What information needs to be given to them to ensure consent is informed? Will this be written or verbal consent and why? Under what circumstances may consent need to be renegotiated again?
-	What extra permissions need to be requested? e.g. consent for audio or video recording?
<b>Rights to confidentiality and anonymity (see also Section 7)</b>	
-	How will confidentiality be ensured? Will anonymity also be granted or offered? What measures need to be taken prior to, during and after data collection to ensure this is ensured? Are there any limits to confidentiality (e.g. if a research participant is at risk of immediate harm?)

## 2.2. Ethical research clearance

Adhering to the principles in this Ethical Research and Safeguarding Framework does not constitute research permissions or ethical research clearance, which must be sought by the IE where necessary for each specific research study.

All research and evaluation activities for this contract will be implemented following the necessary approvals. We expect this to include ethical clearance from the University of Cambridge (Faculty of Education Ethics Committee) for all research and evaluation studies, in addition to relevant research permissions from relevant authorities in the countries in which research is conducted. The nature of the research permissions that are required varies across GEC implementing countries and may involve obtaining permissions from authorities at national, regional or local levels. During the study design phase, necessary approvals will be identified and sought based on the countries/districts involved in the research.

This must be done well in advance of fieldwork taking place given that obtaining approvals can be very time consuming. Applications for ethical research approvals must be compliant with requirements and standards from the FCDO.

## 2.3. Ethical research and the COVID-19 pandemic

At the time of preparing this framework for research, the COVID-19 global pandemic has led to response measures imposed by national and local authorities to reduce the impact of the pandemic. These include lockdowns,

quarantines and restrictions on social contact (i.e. social distancing). This situation and the resulting socio-economic impact may result in additional hardships or a humanitarian emergency in some countries and has a number of implications for the ethical implementation of research activities and ensuring do no harm and other principles are upheld. Importantly, it should be recognised that the dynamics of the pandemic and response may differ across countries, within countries, and across time, and may have effects that outlast the pandemic itself.

Some key questions and guidelines for ethical research and safeguarding during this global pandemic are outlined below.

- **Should the research be conducted during an emergency?** Although the lack of evidence on education in humanitarian emergencies and during health epidemics might suggest that research on this topic should be encouraged, this should be weighed up according to the benefits to respondents or communities versus the possible risks. Risks to individuals might include putting participants or researchers at risk of illness, or other potential dangers or insecurities, or diverting human and financial resources away from emergency response in order to conduct the research. Methodological risks may include difficulties in answering the research questions, for example if changes in the research context mean that data collection plans are no longer feasible. Benefits might include filling gaps in knowledge about education in emergency and pandemic settings, particularly among marginalised populations, which will assist in developing response mechanisms to provide support to survivors. In addition, given that some pandemic control measures (including possible school closures) are likely to continue for the medium-term future, research may be able to provide valuable learning to inform the continuing COVID-19 response and education planning. A fundamental question that should be asked is whether the research must be done during the humanitarian emergency or whether it can be done in a non-emergency time.
- **How should the research be conducted during an emergency?** If it is deemed that the research should be done during an emergency time as the benefits would outweigh the risks, then a key issue becomes how the research should be conducted to minimise risk. This requires assessing a number of questions including those outlined below:
  - What are the appropriate methods that will avoid putting participants, communities and researchers at risk? Given requirements for social distancing, remote data collection methods may need to be implemented, or mandatory physical distancing protocols put in place during data collection to protect both interviewers and participants.
  - How will implementing new kinds of methods impact on consent procedures and ensuring confidentiality and privacy? If remote methods are used (e.g. via telephone), in a situation where households are in lockdown or quarantine how will privacy be ensured if asking sensitive questions? How will distress or interruptions during interviews be handled?
  - How will vulnerable populations be included in the research if new methods such as remote data collection preclude their participation (e.g. people with certain types of disabilities or without access to electronic communication devices)?
  - How should safeguarding processes change or adapt to take into account the new context and increased reliance on remote data collection? Safeguarding concerns may affect the selection of data collection methods, particularly if sensitive topics may be discussed as part of the research.

The questions above will be considered during study design and inception phases to identify and accommodate any ethical research considerations specific to the pandemic and in addition to the general principles set out in this document. This will include an assessment of the vulnerability of different groups within the study population and how this may have been affected by the pandemic (drawing on evidence from past emergency settings, such as Ebola outbreaks, where relevant), and the implications for sampling and research.

At the time of writing, we anticipate that the majority of data collection for the foreseeable future will be conducted remotely, and all protocols below will be adapted where necessary to accommodate remote data collection and other considerations relating to COVID-19. We have included a note on specific adaptations at the beginning of each Section; these will be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis as set out in Section 1.5.

### 3. Informed consent and assent protocols

#### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team.*

*We set out processes for informed consent/assent during remote data collection in Section 3.3 below. Where remote data collection is used, an assessment will be undertaken to decide on appropriate consent methods and procedures in light of the study topic, population, context and tools at hand.*

*We will consider these limitations in relation to remote data collection when finalising the study methods, in order to ensure we are able to answer the research questions set.*

*For data collection conducted face-to-face by local data collection providers, the IE team will liaise remotely with the provider to ensure that staff are aware of procedures as set out below and conduct remote trainings where necessary.*

*Informed consent* – research should only be conducted with individuals who have freely given their consent to participate. Negotiating informed consent entails communicating information likely to affect a person’s willingness to participate.

*Age of consent* – in line with international and national ethical research standards, only adults aged 18 years and over can provide informed consent to participate in research. Children under the age of 18 should provide assent, and their parents or guardians are required to provide consent on their behalf. There may be situations in which children under the age of 18 do not require parental consent; for instance, in cases where children are classified as emancipated minors as they are married. However, waiving parental consent in these cases should be justified in applications for ethical research approval and have a clear rationale (e.g. the study focuses on the experiences of adolescent girls who are married).

*Assent protocols* – assent protocols and age thresholds may differ across partner countries. All consent and assent protocols should follow guidance and requirements outlined by the relevant national-level research ethics authorities.

We will adopt the following protocols in order to create a safe research environment and ensure we obtain informed consent from all research participants. Protocols are set out below for both in-person data collection (Sections 3.1 and 3.2) and remote data collection (Section 3.3).

#### 3.1. In-person surveys, interviews and focus groups with participants aged 18 years or older

All participants will be asked if they fully and meaningfully consent prior to an interview or other research activity taking place. The process by which this happens is listed below:

- Interviewer greets participant and makes high-level introduction to put the participant at ease. Wherever possible, male participants will be interviewed by men, and women participants will be interviewed by women.
- Interviewer ensures that they have located a private space for the interview prior to speaking to the research participant, which the participant feels comfortable with, preferably the participant’s suggestion.
- Interviewer shares a copy of a Plain Language Statement (PLS) for the research with participants. A PLS should be written in accessible language, should be translated into the spoken language of participants and should contain information about the content and purpose of the interview, possible benefits and risks of participation, the anticipated uses of the data, how data will be stored and kept secure, and how participants can remove their data at a later stage. When describing the content and purpose of the interview, it is important to use an accurate description of the research but one that does not put participants at risk of stigma or violence. For instance, a PLS for a study focusing on the experiences of GEC beneficiaries with disabilities could describe a study as exploring “the experience of girls in your community with their school”, but may avoid referring specifically to disability or related terminology if it is considered that in the specific community this designation may put the participant at risk of stigma.

- Interviewer reads out the content of the PLS for participants. This step is particularly important for participants who are not literate and who cannot read the PLS. However, reading out the content of the PLS for all participants, regardless of their literacy, can help with comprehension and to establish rapport and trust.
- As part of the introduction, interviewers should seek to minimise ‘therapeutic misconception’ – or the belief among participants that participation in the research will improve their circumstances – by ensuring that the benefits and risks of participation are clearly explained. For example, if discussing issues relating to school drop-out, it should be clear that participating in the interview will not directly lead to circumstances in which the participant can overcome barriers to attendance. Interviewers should be careful to not overstate the benefits of taking part in the research and to minimise any false expectations held by the participant or (in the case of children) the parent/guardian.
- Interviewer asks the participant if they have any questions and answers these questions accordingly. Interviewer then asks the participant to repeat what they have understood and if this is correct, asks them if they consent to the interview and then to sign a consent form. It is important that the participant understands that it is okay to accept or decline to take part and that they can stop the interview and withdraw their consent at any point during or after the interview. Research protocols for specific research activities should provide guidance in terms of how this should be done. For example, participants with limited literacy or who feel uncomfortable signing a written document, a thumbprint or verbal consent (clearly recorded by the interviewer) could be provided. However, the exact protocols for consent may depend on local standards, and will be reviewed and adapted for each study depending on the specific context at hand.
- The interviewer reminds the participant that they can ask to terminate the interview at any point and have their data withdrawn, or decline to answer a specific question, and then logs this on the survey script or makes a note of this for qualitative interviews.
- Consent forms are scanned and stored in duplicate in two separate safe storage sites.

This process of obtaining consent may differ across specific research or evaluation activities and methods and should be adjusted accordingly. In particular, when conducting focus group discussions (FGDs) or other group-based methods, the procedures listed above will need to change to accommodate multiple participants. For example:

- All participants need to provide informed consent. This can happen in a number of ways depending on whether verbal or written consent is being obtained. For instance, facilitators can read out the content of the PLS to the group and then obtain verbal consent within the group or, in the case of written consent, go through the procedure of obtaining written consent with each participant individually.
- If a FGD participant wants to terminate their participation during a FGD and have their data withdrawn, this poses a number of challenges, some of which are outlined below. The research team will need to pre-empt these challenges and ensure there is a clear protocol for what to do and that this is communicated clearly to participants in PLSs and when obtaining consent.
  - The withdrawal of data for one individual requires a decision about how data will be withdrawn. If FGDs are being audio recorded, will the audio recording be deleted immediately (which will mean losing data for all participants)? Or will data be removed for the participant at the time of transcription, with the audio recording then being deleted?

Regardless of whether FGDs are audio recorded or whether notes are taken, a question arises about how the removal of data for one participant may impact on the broader analysis given that data analysis should be based on a dialogue between participants rather than simply on what individuals say. Removing data for one participant may make it difficult to interpret subsequent dialogue.<sup>7</sup> The research team may thus decide that data will be removed after analysis; however, this will need to be clear in PLS documents and the consent procedures

### 3.1.1. Adults with a cognitive impairment

In some cases, adults with a cognitive impairment may be considered unable to provide consent as set out above. These cases will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis (in consultation with the Disability Expert, IP, and/or local disabled persons’ organisations and other stakeholders as appropriate) to assess whether it will be possible to include the individual in the research in an ethical and safe way, and agreement reached on an appropriate process for consent/assent in light of the specific circumstances. This may involve invoking an assent process (as set out in Section 3.2 for participants under the age of 18) with consent sought from the person’s relevant carer or guardian.

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<sup>7</sup> Sim, J. & Waterfield, J. (2019) Focus group methodology: some ethical challenges. *Quality & Quantity*, 53: 3003-3022.

## 3.2. In-person surveys, interviews and focus groups with participants aged younger than 18 years of age

Interviews with participants under 18 years of age (children) usually require consent from the individual's parent or guardian prior to the start of the interview, as well as assent from the child themselves (refer to Section 3.2.2.). It is important to ensure that children do not feel obliged to participate in any research, including from pressure from parents or guardians. Parents or guardians should be given enough information about the study to make an informed decision. In practice this means:

- Offering translated hard copies of study information materials, including PLSs, or making adaptations for people without a high level of literacy (as set out in Section 3.2.1);
- Creating clear and concise materials for parents or guardians that outline the purpose of the study and how the findings will be used; and
- Encouraging parents or guardians to ask questions.

### 3.2.1. The process by which consent is negotiated

The process by which consent is negotiated is listed below. The process will differ depending on a number of possible scenarios and methods being used, and on research ethics protocols set at country-level. In cases where an interviewer approaches parents/guardians and children in person (e.g. through random household sampling) to invite children to participate in a survey or individual interview:

- Interviewer will greet the parent/guardian and make a high-level introduction to put them at ease. Interviewer reads out the PLS for parents/guardians and shares information about the purpose of the survey, including how data will be used and stored and to what end. Parents or guardians are given enough information to understand the purpose of the research and interview. Interviewer asks the parent/guardian to repeat what they have understood and if this is correct, asks them if they consent to the child's interview and then to sign a parental consent form. In cases in which parents or guardians with limited literacy or feel uncomfortable signing a written document, this may include alternative forms of consent such as thumbprints or verbal consent, as set out in Section 3.1.
- Interviewer engages with the child participant and reads out the PLS for children, providing information about the survey or interview for the child participant to make an informed decision about participation and then asks for his or her assent, which should be recorded by the interviewer. The interviewer should ensure that the child understands that it is okay to accept or decline to take part. If the interviewer is confident that the child participant has understood, then the interviewer can proceed with the interview. If the child participant assents, the interviewer will ensure that they locate a space for the interview which the participant feels comfortable with, preferably the participant's suggestion. For interviews that will touch upon sensitive topics or for which the child may be influenced by the presence of an adult, the interviewer should ensure a private space is available to conduct the interview. This space should enable confidentiality but not be out of sight or calling distance of others (i.e. not behind closed doors), for example in an adjacent or nearby room to the parent or guardian but not within earshot, or sitting on the other side of a yard in clear view of the parent or guardian.. The interviewer reminds the child participant that they can willingly terminate the interview at any point, or decline to answer a specific question, and then logs this on the survey script or makes a note of this on interview notes.

In cases where an interviewer approaches parents/guardians and children in person to invite children to participate in an FGD, the consent process outlined above would change slightly.

- Procedures for obtaining consent from parents/guardians would be the same as outlined above, but will differ for children. If the consent procedure is occurring at the household level, then children will, by definition of a FGD, relocate to somewhere where children will convene to participate in the FGD.
- Children will be provided with information about the FGD and go through the assent procedure as outlined further above for individual surveys and interviews. However, children should also be asked to provide assent a second time, when convening for the FGD as a group. This is because some children may not feel comfortable with the nature and dynamic of the FGD and should be given the opportunity to withdraw once they have convened in a group with other children.
- For safeguarding reasons, it is important that interviewers do not accompany children from households to other locations where FGDs will take place without the presence of parents/guardians or other trusted adults (e.g. local teachers if parents/guardians agree to this).

There may be situations where interviewers do not come into personal contact with parents or guardians; for instance, if sampling will take place in school settings or other settings outside of the household. Consent procedures need to be carefully planned in these cases, with clear roles laid out for those ensuring parental consent is obtained. An example of a possible procedure to follow in a school-based sample is outlined below; however, any procedures would need to be adapted to the project and setting:

- Children who are eligible to participate in the research are convened in a classroom or other school setting and are provided with information about the study (by researchers, programme staff, teachers or other focal points who have been fully briefed about the content and purpose of the study). Children are given parental PLSs and consent forms and are asked to take these home, give them to parents/guardians and return the signed consent forms if parents or guardians consent for children to take part in the research. When children return signed parental consent forms to school, the names of children whose parents or guardians have NOT consented will be removed from any sampling lists.
- Interviewers visit schools to interview children and obtain assent from children (as outlined further above for individual surveys and interviews, or for FGDs). Interviewers only interview children whose parents or guardians have consented and who have assented themselves.
- In some cases, in accordance with national research permissions, consent by teachers and schools may be considered sufficient.

This process can be challenging for a number of reasons. Parents or guardians may not be literate and thus may not understand what is written in PLSs. Further, sending written PLSs and consent forms to households precludes parents/guardians from being able to ask questions from an interviewer or other focal point for the study. It may also be challenging to ensure that children return consent forms to the school. These sorts of challenges should be pre-empted and mitigation plans developed, or more appropriate consent procedures developed based on the setting. For instance, if conducting data collection in a community with high levels of illiteracy, instead of sending printed PLSs and consent forms to households it may be necessary to ask parents/guardians to attend a community briefing where they will find out about the study and have the opportunity to ask questions, or ask interviewers to talk through PLSs with the parents/guardians before any surveys/interviews are conducted. If written PLSs and consent forms are sent to households, it may be necessary for in-person follow up by interviewers or other study focal points to collect signed consent forms or provide additional information so that parents/guardians can give informed consent.

### 3.2.2. Protection concerns associated with seeking parental consent

There may be some cases in which it is not appropriate to obtain informed consent from a child's parent or guardian and researchers should be prepared to consider whether parental or guardian permission and consent should be waived; for instance, if parental knowledge about the research or evaluation could put children at risk of violence or abuse. In some cases, children (such as unaccompanied minors) may not have an adult guardian who can provide consent. Prior to implementing research, staff should consider and assess whether there are specific circumstances in which it is appropriate to interview children without parental consent as long as this can be done safely. For instance, this may occur in cases among separated or street children, or when parents or guardians knowing about the research would increase the risk of abuse.

In the case of children who are married, consent will be sought from the child themselves, rather than the spouse. If an alternative adult guardian can be found (for example, the child's teacher), they may be asked to provide consent alongside the child.

This may require considerations about sampling approaches. For instance, if a household sampling approach is deemed to place children at risk of violence or abuse (i.e. if parents/guardians or other household members could be perpetrators of violence and children may be at risk of further violence) then alternative sampling procedures may be selected. These could include sampling children in schools, safe spaces, youth centres or other places where children and adolescents may convene for participation in programme activities. In such cases, other adults may be identified as appropriate guardians who will provide consent for children's participation and it may be appropriate to consult children about which trusted adult can provide consent.

In any situation where it is deemed that parental consent will not be obtained, research teams must develop clear justifications for why parental consent is not appropriate in such scenarios.

Research teams must also develop clear protocols for how interviews will be conducted safely. Safety in these contexts means ensuring that other protocols outlined in the accompanying safeguarding framework are being followed, including ensuring: auditory privacy but where children can be seen; protection and safeguarding protocols are maintained; providing referrals to services or access to counsellors; and providing training to data collectors and other staff on how to handle sensitive disclosures (see further guidance below).

### 3.3. Obtaining informed consent/assent during remote data collection

There may be some situations in which surveys, interviews and/or focus groups are conducted remotely, for example over video link or telephone or through online surveys. In these situations, research teams must develop clear protocols for taking consent and assent and implementing the processes set out above remotely.

The exact protocols for consent for remote collection will depend on local standards and will be reviewed and adapted for each study depending on the specific context at hand. This will include the available modes of communication, such as participants' access to telephone, radio and email.

Protocols for consent will also depend on the ability of the research team to contact participants directly, as the team may not have the necessary permissions or access to necessary data (for example, telephone numbers) to liaise approach programme stakeholders or beneficiaries directly. In some cases, this may require the research team to rely on other sampling methods, for example self-selection by using broadcast channels in a community to ask for volunteer participants. In cases for which the research team are aiming to sample a specific population (for example, residents of a particular village), consent procedures may need to be carefully planned. This may involve a two-step process, in order to first obtain consent and necessary details from prospective participants to be contacted, before the research team is able to make contact and undertake full consent/assent process (as set out above). This may for example require the involvement of community leaders, teachers and/or IPs to source prospective participants and collect contact details on behalf of the research team (in line with clear data protection principles set out in Section 7) or to connect participants directly with the research team.

Example adaptation measures may include:

- **For telephone/video interviews or surveys with participants aged over 18:** interviewers may talk participants through PLS and consent forms clearly over the telephone/video link and audio-recorded consent. PLS and consent forms may also be delivered to participants in advance by email, post, fax or hand-delivery, where this is feasible.
- **For online or telephone focus groups with participants aged over 18:** interviewers may provide links to email or online versions of PLS and consent forms in advance or read out the content of the PLS to the group and then obtain verbal consent within the group.
- **For online surveys for participants aged over 18:** the PLS and consent form text can be included alongside introductory text for participants to read, and participants can be asked to indicate their consent to participate by clicking a button in order to access the survey.
- **For telephone/video interviews or surveys with participants aged below 18:** parents/guardians can be asked to join the call at the start in order for the researcher to introduce them to the interview before gaining assent from the child (as set out in Section 3.2). The interviewer may ask the child to move to a private space as appropriate; however as the interviewer cannot verify that the child is out of earshot of parents/guardians and others, this method of data collection may not be appropriate for sensitive topics.
- **For online or telephone focus groups with participants aged below 18:** consent from parents/guardians and assent from children may be sought in advance as set out in Section 3.2, for example by delivering PLS and consent forms to them in advance by email, post, fax, dissemination through school settings (where schools are open), hand-delivery, or telephoning households to discuss the study and gain verbal consent directly. However, children should also be asked to provide assent a second time, when convening for the FGD as a remote group.
- **For online surveys for participants aged under 18:** survey links can be directed to parents/guardians with clear instructions for them to access the PLS and consent form and indicate their consent for their ward to participate. Verification measures may be built into the survey, for example by asking the parent/guardian to confirm a piece of information in order to confirm they have accessed and read the material. A child-friendly version of the PLS and consent form can be included as a secondary step to allow children to indicate assent before beginning the survey.

***Example: taking consent for telephone surveys in Ethiopia***

*Members of the IE team have been involved in a study on the impact of coronavirus on education in Ethiopia. As travel was restricted due to the virus, research interviews were conducted by telephone.*

*The researcher first read out key information about the research and asked the participant to verbally consent to participation over the telephone. The researcher then asked whether they would like to proceed with the interview*

*immediately, or for the researcher to call back at a specific later time to conduct the interview (with a text message reminder in advance).*

*After the call, participants were later texted the contact details for the Study PI for any follow-up questions, and a set amount of phone credit was sent to their mobile to compensate for the credit used during the call.*

### 3.4. Ongoing informed consent in longitudinal studies

Consent procedures should be repeated when tracking and following up participants in longitudinal studies. With the passing of time, participants may forget information about the study or about their rights (for instance, to withdraw their participation or refuse to answer particular questions). Further, risks and benefits of participation may change over time. For instance, if information about the topic of a study related to disability has spread throughout a community in the time since the first round of data collection, people may feel more at risk of stigma by participating in the study. It is important that research participants are provided with multiple opportunities to provide or withdraw informed consent over the period of the longitudinal study.

### 3.5. Plain Language Statements and Consent Forms

The PLS for adults will be in line with best practice and any specific country-level guidance or protocols for research ethics. Language used in the PLS and consent forms need to be written at an appropriate reading level for the study population; in at least the most commonly spoken language of the area, and additional languages as considered appropriate in light of resources and local language demographics; and without technical jargon to ensure participants fully comprehend the content.

- **Research purpose and procedures:** a statement that the study involves research, an explanation of the purposes of the research and the expected duration of participation, a description of procedures to be followed (for example, the confidential use, storage, processing and protection of study data), how participants will be selected and how many will be selected, and identification of any procedures that are experimental.
- **Re-contacting procedures:** In longitudinal studies, participants need to consent to be re-contacted in follow up waves of data collection and the period of time between these waves should be made clear.
- **Risks and discomforts of the research study:** a description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the research participants.
- **Potential benefit of the research study:** a description of any benefits to the research subjects or to others or to the country as a whole that may reasonably be expected from the research. If the benefit is expected to be primarily for others, the PLS may note that the researchers cannot and do not guarantee or promise that participants will receive any benefits from this study.
- **Compensation or reimbursement:** a description of any compensation or reimbursement for participation in the study. This should include the nature of the compensation or reimbursement and the amount. In line with ethical standards in research, monetary or other types of reimbursement should NOT be used as an inducement to assume risks. However, compensation or reimbursement for transportation costs, mobile phone/internet credit, or other expenses as a result of participation in the study, or provision of refreshments when data collection occurs outside of the household, are reasonable.
- **Provisions for confidentiality:** a statement describing the extent to which confidentiality of records identifying the research participant will be maintained. Typically, the only exception to this confidentiality is if we consider that the participant or someone close to them is at immediate risk of serious harm, in which case measures may be taken to ensure the safety of the participant or other person.
- **The limits of confidentiality:** In FGDs or other group-based methods, participants need to be informed about the limits of confidentiality before consenting to participate.
- **Voluntariness in participation and the right to discontinue participation without penalty:** a statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled, and the participant may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled.
- **Contacts for additional information:** an explanation of whom to contact (and how) for answers to pertinent questions about the research and research participants' rights, and whom to contact in the event of a concern about the content, process or consequences of the research, or if they wish to withdraw consent.

- **Audio, video recording and photography:** if the study includes audio recording, video recording or photography, information about these should be included in the PLS and a specific statement of consent for these activities must be included in the PLS and consent form.

An adapted PLS should be made available for guardians of child participants and this should contain the same information as outlined above but adjusted for the perspective of the parent/guardian. A separate PLS and assent form should also be developed for children. Language used in the PLS for children needs to be appropriate for the target age group to ensure that children fully comprehend the content and can provide informed consent. The PLS should contain the information listed above but in a shorter, simplified version. Protocols relating to children providing either verbal or written assent may differ across study countries, and tools and processes will be adapted accordingly.

For cases in which data is being collected remotely, the PLS and consent form may be delivered electronically, for example through email, as part of an online survey, or as a webpage. In these cases, measures should be put in place to make the information accessible to participants after the end of the data collection activity (for example, the end of the survey) so that participants have continued access to the information above, including how to withdraw consent.

### 3.6. Consent for audio, image and video recording

Express permission from all participants, including adults, children and children's parents or guardians, must be gained before taking images or making an audio or video recording of an interview, group discussion or workshop. This is in addition to consent to take part in the research. As far and as simply as possible, interviewers must explain what the photographs, recordings or videos will be used for, how they may be used, and who may use them, as well as an indication of when they may be used. Interviewers should respect an individual's decision to say no to an image, audio recording or video being taken.

Any images taken of children must be respectful and preserve the dignity of the child and family. If photographs are taken for presentation or publicity purposes, explicit prior consent should be recorded. If photographs are taken for the purposes of supporting re-contact, they should be stored securely and not released for other purposes. Participants should be reminded that they have the absolute right to change their mind about the photographs or videos being taken at any point during or after the research has taken place up to a specified date. Interviewers must therefore provide participants with full contact information at the time of taking the photograph or video to enable participants to do this. Should participants submit a request to withdraw their consent to the photograph or video, the request must be complied with, and photographs or videos must be securely destroyed, and this must be confirmed in writing to the participant.

### 3.7. Processing of secondary data

The IE expects to conduct analyses of secondary data provided by the FM. This data will have been collected by External Evaluation teams, who were contracted to Implementing Partners and responsible for collecting informed consent from research participants. This may include both quantitative and qualitative data, and may be in an anonymous or identifiable format.

The IE will process secondary research data in line with all requirements set out in the IP agreements with the FCDO/FM and the IE contract with the FCDO, and in line with all applicable data protection legislation (see Section 7.2). The IE will work with the FM to understand the ways in which the IE are permitted to process the data based on the consent provided by research participants. Any secondary data reported by the IE in study deliverables will be anonymous by default and any identifying context removed.

If the IE team has cause to believe that informed consent/ethical procedures were inadequate or not adhered to by EEs in the gathering of data, the processing of secondary data will halt until this matter has been discussed and resolved with the FCDO.

## 4. Protecting research participants from harm

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context - as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team.*

*All principles set out in this Section will apply to remote data collection. For all research and evaluation activities the IE team will take care to assess the extent to which risks of harm – for example, who should be considered a vulnerable participant, or possible sources of distress – may be affected by the dynamics of the pandemic. In light of this, additional harm minimisation protocols may be implemented for studies (depending on the context at hand), such as how researchers should respond to participant distress during remote data collection.*

*Necessary trainings for face-to-face researchers may be conducted remotely, or by local providers under remote direction by the IE research team.*

The following general principles will be adhered to in order to protect research participants from harm:

- **Same-sex interviewing should take place for both face-to-face and remote data collection where possible**, including surveys, qualitative interviews or FGDs. Additional measures may be implemented for studies which focus on sensitive topics such as violence against girls, such as mandating female interviewers. Cases in which this should be adapted – for example, cultural norms which mean that a participant may feel more comfortable engaging with an interviewer of the opposite sex – will be considered on a case by case basis.
- **If a participant states that they feel uncomfortable with a question or prefers not to respond, no pressure should be applied by the interviewer to force them to respond.** If the participant makes any communication that they feel uncomfortable with the interview or with a question at any point, the interviewer should pause the interview, ask the participant if they would like to take a break or stop, and wait for them to signal that they are ready for the interview to continue or that they are finished with the interview, and proceed accordingly. If a participant states at any point that they wish to end the interview, the interviewer should stop the interview accordingly (as discussed further in Section 4.3).
- **Each interviewer will receive specific training on ethical research and sensitivity**, including when interviewing children and vulnerable adults, so that they understand, have practised, and are familiar with the ethical research protocols (as set out in Section 5). Field supervisors will also assess adherence to these protocols periodically throughout the data collection period, to ensure that they are followed. These trainings will also be adapted to cover any remote data collection.
- Special care will be taken to ensure that measures set out below are applicable during remote data collection, or additional protection or risk mitigation measures put in place. For research on highly sensitive topics or with vulnerable groups, remote data collection methods may not be appropriate if adequate protection measures cannot be put in place, monitored and enforced.

### 4.1. Vulnerable participants

This framework takes an expanded definition of vulnerable participants to include anyone marginalised or discriminated against, or at higher risk of violence, due to their gender, sexuality, age, (dis)ability, economic status, education, HIV status or any other aspect of their identity or situation.

Examples of vulnerable populations include pregnant women, prisoners, orphans, people living with HIV and AIDS, refugees, people with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities, people with limited literacy, and women and men who, in some settings, may have to ask their spouses or caregivers before consenting to participate in the research.

In these instances, special measures will be considered to ensure their safety and inclusion, including:

- Providing alternative ways to participate, arranging for a follow-up interview in a different location, or venue, or time, depending on their preference and convenience.
- Providing, where appropriate, options to conduct interviews without directly discussing sensitive topics (such as violence against girls) with an interviewer. For instance, this might include the use of Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (ACASI), which can enhance feelings of confidentiality and safety among participants.
- Offering 'easy read' versions of background information on the project where possible – such as survey materials or show cards, with images and symbols to enable people to take part. This will be considered in

cases where it is not feasible or useful to have the enumerator reading out questions from the survey or tablet, or where the enumerator may not be understood in this way.

- During remote data collection it may be difficult to identify vulnerable participants directly, or to ensure their safety (for example, by ensuring a private space is available to discuss sensitive topics, or adequately assessing the risk of duress from others in the household). In these cases, care should be taken during study planning to assess risks to vulnerable participants in light of the sensitivity of the study topic, and mitigation measures put in place as necessary. In some cases, it may be inappropriate to use remote data collection methods if the safety and wellbeing of participants cannot be guaranteed.
- Seeking consent from an individual's carer or guardian or collecting data by proxy (i.e. for example, asking a parent/guardian to answer interview or survey on behalf of an individual to the best of their knowledge) where individuals lack capacity to give their informed consent, or in circumstances where people have severe communication impairments and cannot take part regardless of how accessible the interview is.

When conducting research and evaluation with people with disabilities, specific measures will need to be considered.<sup>8</sup>

- Procedures for collecting data should be sensitive to the types of disabilities that participants may have. For instance, tools may need to be adjusted for people with cognitive disabilities to increase comprehension. The mode of delivery may also need to be adjusted, particularly for people with sensory disabilities, for instance, providing verbal or audio versions of the PLS and consent forms for participants who have a visual impairment. Any research design aiming to be inclusive of people with disabilities should take these issues into account and plan accordingly.
- Past ethical research guidance on obtaining consent from people with disabilities has encouraged seeking consent from the individual's carer or guardian.<sup>9</sup> However, this assumes that people with disabilities have a carer or guardian. More recently, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), supported decision-making (rather than substituted decision-making) is considered to be best practice. This involves supporting a person to advocate on their own behalf according to their own will and preferences rather than delegating their decision-making to another person. Some adaptations may be made to enable caregivers to respond on behalf of a project beneficiary if the beneficiary is unable to answer or provide informed assent/consent themselves. However, to the extent possible, we will facilitate supported decision-making rather than substituted decision-making, in line with the UNCRPD. Consent from children with disabilities may involve seeking consent from the carer or guardian as per the protocols set out in 3.2.
- In some cases, people with disabilities may require assistance from an intermediary (e.g. family member, friend, interpreter and other trusted person) in order to meaningfully consent and participate in an interview, including when they have severe communication impairments. In some cases, the participant may not feel comfortable engaging with the research team without the presence of an intermediary. However, it should be noted that the use of an intermediary severely limits the principle of confidentiality, and so the appropriateness of an intermediary should be considered in light of the study topic in order to assess potential risks (for example, a participant may feel uncomfortable to discuss topics such as safety, violence and early marriage in the presence of intermediaries). To minimise harm and prioritise the safety of people with disabilities, in cases where an intermediary is required, the participant with a disability should identify a trusted intermediary or assistant in discussion with the research or programme team. If a trusted intermediary cannot be identified, other options may be to approach a local disabled persons' organisation to secure assistance from an interpreter or intermediary who has been trained in confidential and safe support and assistance. However, in such cases the research participant should consent and agree to the involvement of the intermediary.<sup>10</sup>
- The risk of furthering stigma against people with disabilities should be carefully considered during study planning and tools and processes adapted accordingly. This may include, for example, taking care if purposively sampling people with disabilities to prevent the perception in the wider community that people with disabilities are being 'singled out', and avoiding presenting a study as one focusing specifically on disability (even if this is the case).

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<sup>8</sup> See also the IE GESI Approach Paper for further detail on the approach to engaging vulnerable participants in research activities.

<sup>9</sup> For cases and examples of individuals lacking capacity to give informed consent, see further HM Government (2011) Involving Disabled People in Social Research: Guidance by the Office for Disability Issues

<sup>10</sup> van der Heijden, I., Harries, J. & Abrahams, N. (2018) Ethical considerations for disability-inclusive gender-based violence research: Reflections from a South African qualitative case study. *Global Public Health, African qualitative case study, Global Public Health*, DOI: 10.1080/17441692.2018.1542015.

## 4.2. Responding to distress

We do not expect the research conducted for the majority of studies under this evaluation contract to be a source of distress for participants. However, there is a possibility that participants may become upset or distressed in response to certain topics, for example discussing reasons for school drop-out or perceptions of safety at school.

In cases where participants are visibly upset during an interview, interviewers should:

- Be willing to take the time to talk with sensitivity, kindness and patience – taking care to ensure that their behaviour always remains appropriate and professional.
- Be patient and composed – recognising that participants sometimes find it helpful to express their feelings.
- Express sympathy and non-judgment – for example, “I appreciate your help with these questions”, “I am so sorry to hear this”, “that sounds incredibly difficult”.
- Interviewers should not assume that the interview should terminate if the participant is visibly upset or distressed. In some cases, a participant may become distressed, cry, and still be willing and able to continue with the interview. In such cases, the interviewer must express sympathy, and ask the participant whether they would like to take a break or pause the recording; whether they would like the interviewer to return at another time; or whether they would like to stop the interview altogether.

Should a study focus on specific topics (such as violence against girls) which may be a source of greater distress for participants, enhanced procedures may be put in place for preserving participants’ psychosocial wellbeing, including recognising the risk of and preventing re-traumatisation and signposting participants to sources of support.

Where data is being collected remotely, clear protocols should be put in place for researchers with regard to recognising and responding to distress. Depending on the sensitivity of the study topic, measures may include, for example, enforcing a lower threshold for distress deemed to be sufficient to terminate the interview; conducting an interview with an adult parent/guardian available; and providing questions in advance so participants are aware which topics will be discussed.

## 4.3. Cases where an interview should be terminated

Interviewers should terminate an interview only in cases where the participant or interviewer’s well-being or safety might be in jeopardy by continuing with the interview, or where the interviewer is unsure whether it is safe to continue with the interview or where the participant requests the interview be terminated. This includes:

- The participant states that they do not wish to continue.
- A partner, family member or other individual interrupts the interview, and insists that the interviewer leave.
- The interviewer feels that the interview is having a negative impact on the participant, or themselves, and that it would be highly detrimental to continue with the interview.
- It has been decided that the interviews should be conducted privately, however a private space is unavailable, and the participant cannot or does not wish to reschedule or relocate the interview.

Cases where the interview is terminated, and the reasons for termination, should be noted by the interviewer and flagged to a research supervisor.

Where data is being collected remotely, clear protocols should be put in place for researchers with regard to additional reasons for potentially terminating an interview. In addition to the points above, this may include, for example: the participant states that another person has moved within earshot; the interviewer can hear the presence of another individual within earshot; or the interviewer has other reason to believe that another person is within earshot. In these cases, the interviewer may ask if the participant is able to move to another location to continue the data collection. If this is not possible, the interview may be terminated. At the start of remote interviews, the interviewer will ask the participant to describe the space and context in which they are speaking (for example, whether the space is a shared area or an area that may be considered reasonably free of interruptions) in order to assess the risk of interruption.

In cases in which the interviewer believes that the participant is not under any duress, the interviewer may arrange a time to call back to resume the interview. For example, one scenario for this might be that the participant describes a clear and reasonable reason for the interruption (e.g. the telephone is in a shared space and a parent/guardian has received a visitor or begun cooking a family meal); the participant has not attempted to mislead the interviewer in any way about the presence of the other individual (which may otherwise be a sign of duress); and the study topic is not a sensitive one.

## 5. The Research Team

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team.*

*During this time, the onboarding of new staff may be primarily conducted remotely. However, all training, onboarding and due diligence procedures set out below and in the Safeguarding Framework will continue to be implemented, with remote trainings and meetings set up as required.*

*Guiding principles for selection of data collection teams (for example, maintaining a gender balance and reflecting the diversity of study populations) will be maintained as far as possible during remote data collection. Where this is not possible, alternative arrangements will be discussed with the FCDO.*

When a new staff member joins the core research team, they will receive full induction training into the project. All team members will be provided with copies of relevant policies and approach papers by the IE Programme Manager and expected to read and confirm they understand these before participating in research and evaluation activity. Consultants working on a limited basis will be provided with a copy of this Framework, and other policies and approach papers relevant to their specific role. All consultants and consortium members involved in the research will be subject to full due diligence checks (in accordance with Tetra Tech's corporate compliance protocols) including background checks by Tetra Tech (in the case of consultants) or their organisation (in the case of partners and subcontracting organisations).

A set of important guiding principles will also be considered when selecting and training the interviewing team. Responsibility for ensuring that these processes are carried out will sit with the Study PI, IE Programme Manager and IE Field Research Manager:

- Ensure the team includes interviewers from appropriate age groups. For example, rapport may be stronger when engaging with younger populations if interviewers are younger (e.g. aged 18-30). However, older women may feel more comfortable speaking with interviewers closer to their age.
- The team should reflect a gender balance and participants must be paired with same sex interviewers where appropriate.
- Safeguarding background checks will be conducted on all national researchers involved in this assessment as part of routine recruitment procedures (see also Section 8.3). Additionally, national researchers will be required to sign and adhere to a code of conduct and safeguarding policy in the appropriate local language. A feedback, concerns and reporting mechanism will be facilitated by providing all research participants, including children and their parents/caregivers, with a mechanism to raise complaints or concerns as set out in Section 10.
- The team should where possible reflect the appropriate demographic, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the sample population in the selected districts where data collection will take place, and be able to communicate in local languages, although it is unlikely to be feasible for the team to be directly representative of the sample population.
- All team members will be provided with copies of relevant policies and approach papers and expected to read these before research commences. All interviewers, supervisors and field staff should receive full training prior to research being carried out and will be required to agree to adhering to the principles outlined in this document. The objective of the training is to equip researchers with: study background; field protocols; roles and responsibilities; interviewing techniques; data processing; safeguarding, complaint and whistleblowing procedures; and quality controls and checks. These protocols should be developed in a separate document that clearly outlines the sampling, methodological and ethical procedures for carrying out the research. This will be the case for both face-to-face and remote data collection methods. These materials can be shared with the FCDO on request.
- Training should cover consent protocols, safeguarding policy, framework and escalation mechanisms, and role-play to simulate scenarios with different participant types / with different needs, with opportunities for feedback and discussion, adapted to the (face-to-face or remote) data collection methods to be used. Training should also cover:
  - **Sampling considerations / accommodating participant needs:** how to engage with certain situations that may arise during data collection and apply protocols set out above; for example, what to do if in conducting household surveys the enumerator encounters a girl who is married (and therefore without

parents/guardians), or a person with disabilities (and therefore in need of reasonable adjustments to facilitate their participation).

- **Gender-sensitive interviewing techniques:** how gender norms affect vulnerability to different types of violence; consequences of violence victimisation; cultural and social norms related to gender and potential impacts on an interviewer’s neutrality, and how to exercise reflexivity.<sup>11</sup>
- **Disability-sensitive interviewing techniques:** how to respond to the needs of research participants; avoiding terminology and behaviour that may reinforce stigma; and respectful behaviour when engaging with participants with disabilities (e.g. avoiding offensive terminology; addressing questions to the person directly, rather than carers; positioning themselves in a way to enable lip reading).
- **Research instrument design, tools and approach:** familiarity with the participant eligibility criteria, sampling design, the research instrument(s), including what each question(s) is intended to achieve and protocols around any sensitive questions.
- **Ethical research:** all research team members should be given and trained in this detailed protocol, which governs the ethical considerations on this project. In addition to meaningful, informed consent, ethical considerations during fieldwork include:
  - How to safely and respectfully enter a target community to avoid backlash or retribution;
  - How to speak to participants safely and in a Do No Harm (DNH) way;
  - How to detect participant distress and respond appropriately; and
  - Safeguarding protocols – how and when to report a case to IPs and, when appropriate (i.e. in the best interests of the child, and in line with DNH principles) do no harm, etc to the authorities in line with safeguarding policies.

## 6. Interviewer safety and well-being

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team.*

*During this time, Duty of Care arrangements remain relevant. Importantly, new risks to staff wellbeing and safety may be posed by the pandemic. This includes the direct health risk posed by the virus; possible additional risks caused by mitigation measures taken by authorities (for example, unexpected travel disruption or quarantine obligations for travelling staff as a result of lockdown measures imposed at short notice); and other risks arising from social and economic disruption (for example, civil unrest).*

*The risk posed to staff health and wellbeing will be factored into initial study planning and assessed on an ongoing basis, and mitigating actions taken accordingly. If significant new risks arise that may affect the planned delivery of a study (for example, delays to data collection), the appropriate course of action will be discussed with the FCDO.*

### 6.1. Duty of care

Tetra Tech has a Duty of Care (DoC) responsibility to our travellers and partners who deploy under our projects. As part of our DoC Tetra Tech provides appropriate insurances, including public liability & professional indemnity; travel insurance & medical cover; repatriation & life insurance; emergency medical assistance; access to medical and psychological assessment providers where required; access to additional in-country security provision where required; and 24/7 access to Tetra Tech Risk Management and Compliance (RM&C) team. The RM&C team monitors and reports on the security situation in all of our countries of operation and ensures individuals have access to information regarding threats and events that may affect them. The RM&C team is able to initiate an immediate crisis management response.

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<sup>11</sup> Reflexivity is how a researcher’s background and position affects what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for their investigation, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions. See Malterud, K. (2001). Qualitative research: standards, challenges, and guidelines. *The Lancet*, 358(9280), 483-488.

We expect our partners to be able to demonstrate that their travellers are fit to deploy and that they can manage DoC for their travellers. This is to be a commensurate level to the DoC that Tetra Tech provide. Tetra Tech will measure partners' capability to ensure that all aspects of DoC are covered, that they have adequate policies in place to manage DoC for their travellers. Where a partner is not able to manage a level of DoC that is commensurate with Tetra Tech's, or when we are requested to assist, Tetra Tech will engage in discussion which aims to bring the DoC provision up to the required standard, which may provide access to all Tetra Tech risk management procedures, crisis response and insurance provision as set out above.

## 6.2. Support for interviewers

Support for and the safety of interviewers is very important and is considered an aspect of safeguarding. The protocols below set out how to ensure interviewer safety and well-being:

- Tetra Tech has effectively and safely delivered and managed research in many fragile and conflict-affected states including in GEC countries – e.g. Afghanistan, DRC and Somalia. All Tetra Tech suppliers are responsible for all Duty of Care arrangements for their own staff and subcontractors. All subcontractors are required to submit their Duty of Care policies and protocols to Tetra Tech's Compliance Team for review to ensure the health and safety of all researchers in the field are maintained at all times. Prior to the start of any research in the field, context-specific risk assessment and management protocols will be developed and agreed with Tetra Tech's Risk Team and the IE Programme Manager who will also be responsible for ensuring that the local research partner is routinely monitoring and reporting on progress and associated risks. Typically, local research partners will conduct risks assessments prior to the start of fieldwork on a daily/weekly/monthly basis depending on the specific nature of the risks involved in a particular location as set out in the approved risk management and fieldwork protocols. Tetra Tech provides 24-hour health, safety and security support to all its subcontractors in the field to ensure robust duty of care arrangements are maintained at all times.
- The health risks to researchers posed by the COVID-19 pandemic will be assessed by the IE team during the study development phase and on an ongoing basis, and adaptations to the research process or methods made accordingly. This may include imposing additional safety or risk mitigation measures on research staff over and above that mandated by national guidelines, or ceasing research activity should the risk worsen significantly.
- Interviewers should avoid travelling alone in the evening or in the dark, or in neighbourhoods where they feel unsafe. In such circumstances they should alert their supervisor, or colleague, to their location and request that they are escorted by another team member to and from the location.
- As a matter of best practice, interviewers should be paired with a buddy (usually a man and a woman) and log details of where and when they are going for their interviews so that supervisors or team members are aware of their whereabouts.
- Interviewers should refrain from disclosing their full names, addresses or other contact information to participants. They should present their identification if asked to do so and provide participants with more general contact information / further information about the project if they are asked to. In the case of remote data collection, interviewers should not use their personal phone numbers or email addresses to engage with participants.
- Interviewers should not offer help or aid in any way that they are not able to fulfil or deliver and should not give money or gifts to anyone in the research communities during the entire research period.
- Should a study focus on a topic that may be highly sensitive, for example violence against girls, additional procedures may be set out in the Study ToRs to ensure the wellbeing of interviewers who may be asked to discuss sensitive or upsetting topics with girls.

## 7. Confidentiality, privacy and data protection

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team. This may require a greater reliance on digital tools than under normal conditions.*

*Importantly, the confidentiality of interviews conducted by telephone may be harder to ensure during remote data collection. This may affect the topics and research questions which can be studied in the current context; for example, it may not be appropriate to conduct research on sensitive topics until face-to-face*

*data collection can reliably resume. In addition, clear protocols will need to be implemented for setting up remote data collection calls, as set out in Sections 4.3 and 7.1. This will be assessed by the IE team for each study and on an ongoing basis, to inform study planning and implementation.*

## 7.1. Anonymisation and confidentiality of participant data

Information gathered through research activities may be personal and/or touch upon sensitive topics, such as the experience of participants with disabilities. Ensuring confidentiality of the data collected and anonymity of the research participant(s) is of paramount importance. This will include the following measures:

- Interviewers must not share any information collected through the study with anyone outside of the research team, including family, friends, or other participants. Interviewers should be asked to read and sign confidentiality agreements to clarify and emphasise their responsibilities prior to engaging in any data collection.
- Interviews will be done in a private location where possible. In cases where physical privacy is difficult to obtain, auditory privacy is acceptable (i.e. the interview can be seen but not heard). In the case of conducting interviews with children, interviewers should ensure that the interview is conducted with auditory privacy but where the interview can be seen by adults, including parents, guardians or other responsible adults.
  - In the case of remote data collection, protocols may need to be established to request that the participant move to a private space and confirm their comfort, and a decision taken on whether the interview should go ahead if the private space is not available. Depending on the study topic, this may include termination of the interview if the interviewer becomes aware that the space is no longer private, as set out in Section 4.3. For topics deemed sensitive, remote data collection methods will not be appropriate if auditory privacy cannot be verified by the researcher.
- No personal identifiers (name, address, telephone number, age, gender) will be written on any research materials, including questionnaires, topic guides or interview transcripts. In cases where longitudinal data is being collected and individuals or households need to be tracked, participants will be provided with a unique ID number. This unique ID number will be linked to questionnaires or interview transcripts. Separate documents linking unique IDs to names, addresses, telephone numbers etc) will be created and stored in separate locations/password protected folders to files containing data (e.g. any questionnaire or interview data linked to unique IDs).
- When interviewers leave a household or research location, they should always check to ensure that no research materials have been left behind.
- All research findings are to be presented anonymously and care will be taken during the presentation of research findings to ensure that they do not disclose any details which will make it possible to identify particular research participants (for example through unusual combinations of occupation and location or reporting something they said which could only be known by them) in a manner proportional to the risk of identification and sensitivity of context.

## 7.2. Data protection principles

All data collected and processed for this contract will be collected, stored and processed in line with regulations set out in the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) (GDPR). We will store data securely and will ensure that all consultants and subcontractors also do so. We will comply with GDPR clauses of the FCDO head contract and these are mirrored in our consultancy and subcontractor contracts.

- **Lawfulness, fairness and transparency:** Personal data will be collected over the course of this research and will be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to those to who it relates.
- **Purpose limitation:** We will only collect personal data for the specified, explicit and legitimate purpose for which it is intended. It shall not be processed in a manner that is incompatible with these purposes. It may be anonymised for further research purposes.
- **Data minimisation:** We will collect personal data that is adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary for the above purposes.
- **Accuracy:** We will endeavour to only retain accurate personal data (which shall be updated if necessary). Inaccurate personal data shall be updated or erased as soon as possible following identification of the inaccuracy.

- **Storage limitation:** The personal data shall be kept in a form which permits identification of the data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed. See Section 7.3 below for more details on data storage.
- **Integrity and confidentiality:** Personal data will be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures. See Section 7.3 below for more details.

For the purposes of this contract the IE team shall be both the controller and processor of personal data collected as part of primary data collection. In line with the Tetra Tech/ FCDO contract, the Independent Evaluation team shall provide only anonymised data sets for the purposes of reporting on this project and so the FCDO shall not be a Processor in respect of anonymised data as it does not constitute Personal Data.

Where the IE is provided with secondary data from the Fund Manager that is not fully anonymised, this will be anonymised for the reporting stage.

All research conducted by Tetra Tech is fully compliant with the ESOMAR International Code of Conduct on Market, Opinion and Social Research and Data Analytics.<sup>12</sup>

### 7.3. Data storage protocols

Data protection – as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 – involves secure handling of data and associated data, and the correct level of anonymisation of data sources. In line with this, all data will be stored securely in a manner proportionate to the type of participant groups and the volume and the sensitivity of records involved. Typically, data protection measures for studies will include measures such as the following:

- Paper-based surveys will be kept in a secure place. All hardcopy forms will be stored in a safe storage site with access limited to relevant IE project staff.
- Once the data is keyed, all personally identifying information should be removed from the file and replaced by a unique ID. A separate file mapping the ID to the original identification information will be stored separately in a password-protected format, with access limited to authorised project staff.
- All identifiers (address, telephone and names) will be stored separately and linked by a project key. They will be archived and released for use only for data linkage that has been approved by the participant and relevant ethical bodies, and for re-contact, where permission has been given.
- All identifiers will be removed from internal analytical products.
- All identifiers and potentially disclosive information (such as unusual combinations of occupation and location) will be removed from external products in a manner proportional to the risk of identification and sensitivity of context;
- Data which cannot be extricated from identifying context – such as audio recordings – will be stored securely in password-protected folders with access limited to authorised project staff.
- Where vulnerable groups are identified in the population (for example, households without adult presence), supervisors should take appropriate steps to ensure that all recording and transmission of information is managed correctly and that any verbatim notes or open-coded information in the relevant records are not transmitted or stored incorrectly – in other words to enforce normal best practice.
- Measures will be taken to secure any data during transit between collection locations, for example storage on encrypted devices or immediate synchronisation to a secure server.
- If researchers are working from home (for example as a result of COVID-19 measures), protocols will be put in place to ensure the safety and integrity of data collected, for example by prohibiting the use of personal devices and putting in place additional data protection protocols if secure internet connections cannot be guaranteed.

Personal data relating to children, their parents / guardians and other stakeholders will also be subject to standard data protection and confidentiality procedures as outlined above. Child data will be subject to standard survey data protection and confidentiality procedures as outlined above. All hardcopy forms should be stored in a safe storage site with access limited to authorised project staff. Once the data is keyed, all personally identifying information should be removed from the file and replaced by a unique ID. A separate file mapping the ID to the original identification

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<sup>12</sup> ESOMAR (formerly the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research) standards are available here: [https://www.esomar.org/uploads/pdf/professional-standards/ICCESOMAR\\_Code\\_English\\_.pdf](https://www.esomar.org/uploads/pdf/professional-standards/ICCESOMAR_Code_English_.pdf)

information will be kept separately in the safe storage site. Transmission between project parties will involve only de-identified data.

At the end of the contract, all hardcopy and electronic files will be archived in a secure site for a time-limited period proportional to the sensitivity of the data and likelihood of needing to un-anonymise the data at a later date. After this time, any identifying data will be securely deleted, and only fully anonymised data retained.

Tetra Tech is also cyber-secure and has achieved IASME “Cyber Essentials Plus” certification.<sup>13</sup>

## 7.4. Use of digital research tools

Where digital research tools are used (e.g. online survey platforms) these will be used under a licensing agreement with Tetra Tech or subcontracted organisations to ensure that IE confidentiality and data protection processes are adhered to.

Any digital tools developed by the IE will adhere to the FCDO’s Principles for Digital Development where relevant.<sup>14</sup>

# 8. Safeguarding framework

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team.*

*We would expect all safeguarding procedures below to be followed for both face-to-face and remote data collection, even if the researcher is not in the same country as the survivor/victim. In these cases, the Tetra Tech safeguarding teams (see below) will carefully consider how the pandemic context should affect the safeguarding response. This may involve engaging remotely with relevant local authorities or health services, and engaging with partners or support services on the ground to facilitate this engagement,*

*Training for subcontractor and partner organisations will take place remotely or by local delivery partners as appropriate.*

This Section sets out the safeguarding processes as they will apply throughout the research and evaluation activities. The processes set out below are intended to complement Tetra Tech’s Safeguarding Policy<sup>15</sup> by: providing additional general guidance and context-specific guidance to the IE team; providing strategic guidance to outline the IE team’s commitment to safeguarding across the independent evaluation and its management, including the roles and responsibilities of different staff members; and ensure compliance with the safeguarding standards and requirements set by the FCDO.

## 8.1. Scope

For the purposes of this framework, and as outlined in the definitions in Section 1.6, safeguarding includes all actions that are taken to prevent, mitigate and respond to harm to children or adults at-risk, including:

- **Child Protection violations:** Violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect of children;
- **Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH):** Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment of community members, including project beneficiaries, research participants and IE personnel;
- **Negligence, carelessness, or other deliberate or accidental harm** to community members, including project beneficiaries and research participants.

This definition encompasses both real and perceived improprieties, as well as harm, which is caused intentionally or unintentionally, and directly or indirectly, by IE personnel (including subcontractors) and community members.

<sup>13</sup> See IASME (formerly Information Assurance for Small and Medium Enterprises Consortium) website for further information: <https://iasme.co.uk/cyber-essentials/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-digital-strategy-2018-to-2020-doing-development-in-a-digital-world/dfid-digital-strategy-2018-to-2020-doing-development-in-a-digital-world>

<sup>15</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetratecheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Safeguarding-Policy.pdf>

## 8.2. Implementation of the GEC II IE Safeguarding Policy

All IE staff, consultants and subcontractors delivering services in relation to the main research and evaluation studies will be expected to follow the processes set out below.

The safeguarding reporting process will be coordinated by a nominated Safeguarding Focal Point for each study. It is expected that the Safeguarding Focal Point will be the Programme Manager to provide consistency across studies. However, this will be reviewed by the Programme Director and the study team in question on a study-by-study basis to ensure this is appropriate for the context, and the study team allowed to nominate an alternative Safeguarding Focal Point if preferred to ensure they are comfortable reporting to the person in question.

Subcontracted organisations delivering services would be expected to have an internal escalation process which is linked to the Tetra Tech safeguarding process. This may include a nominated Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point for each organisation, who will be responsible for reporting incidents to the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point (and so triggering the investigation and escalation process set out in Section 8.8). Safeguarding reporting arrangements will be tailored for each organisation depending on their involvement in the research, and clearly set out in subcontractor agreements and operational documentation (and communicated to researchers accordingly).

Organisations delivering services for the RRLF would be expected to have their own safeguarding policies in place, which will be evaluated as part of the tender evaluation and due diligence processes. If this is not realistically possible (for example, for micro organisations) in which case organisations may instead be linked to Tetra Tech processes on a case by case basis. However, in all cases Tetra Tech will be notified of all complaints during the reporting process. Further information will be set out in RRLF tender documentation and agreements with contractors.

Roles and responsibilities of different parties in implementing the Safeguarding Policy are summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2: Safeguarding and ethical research roles and responsibilities of the IE team**

Position / team member	Responsibility
IE Programme Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holds the ultimate accountability over the programme, including application and adherence to safeguarding and ethical research protocols, to the FCDO.</li> <li>• Available to receive reports of breaches or suspected breaches of the policy if individuals do not feel comfortable reporting concerns to Safeguarding Focal Point.</li> </ul>
Team Leader / Deputy Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountable for safeguarding processes being implemented across the team on a day-to-day basis.</li> <li>• Coordinates review of the safeguarding strategy every quarter and as defined by the terms under Section 1.5.</li> <li>• Responsible for overseeing integration of safeguarding risks into the IE team’s risk register and ensuring their mitigation (with support of the Safeguarding Expert).</li> <li>• Available to receive reports of breaches or suspected breaches of the policy if individuals do not feel comfortable reporting concerns to Safeguarding Focal Point.</li> </ul>
IE Ethical Research and Safeguarding Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for designing relevant safeguarding processes across the whole of the project and ensuring consistency with FM’s processes.</li> <li>• Provides input into reviews of the safeguarding strategy every quarter and as defined by the terms under Section 1.5.</li> <li>• Responsible for designing safeguarding training for all researchers and staff on the IE team for GEC II.</li> </ul>
Programme Manager and Safeguarding Focal Point <sup>16</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for implementation of and adherence to safeguarding processes in line with this framework and Tetra Tech corporate policies, including through completion of Tetra Tech Safeguarding checklist (Annex B).</li> <li>• Responsible for being the first port of call to receive all concerns and allegations of abuse or breach of the policies (<b>Safeguarding Focal Point</b>).</li> <li>• Responsible for escalating any concerns or risks to the IE Programme Director and the FCDO as appropriate and in line with the reporting process.</li> <li>• Responsible for the integration of safeguarding risks and mitigation strategies into the IE team’s risk register.</li> <li>• Acts as a conduit between various GEC stakeholders (FCDO, FM, ESWG) to gain consensus for the programme safeguarding framework and strategy.</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> This is referred to in Tetra Tech’s internal policy as Safeguarding Officer.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for cascading training on these guidelines and safeguarding processes to all relevant staff.</li> </ul>
Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for being the first port of call to receive all concerns and allegations of abuse or breach of the policies from their employees/staff, in line with processes and procedures agreed with Tetra Tech.</li> <li>• Responsible for escalating all such reports to the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point in line with agreed reporting procedures at the earliest possible opportunity and within 24 hours.</li> </ul>
All staff, consultants, suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with code of conduct<sup>17</sup>, safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and the safeguarding framework.</li> <li>• Escalate all concerns as per procedures in line with the reporting process.</li> <li>• Act as safeguarding ambassadors for the programme, proactively promoting safeguarding principles.</li> </ul>

### 8.3. Due diligence and background checks

Standard due diligence is conducted on all organisations and subcontractors contracted by Tetra Tech. This includes the review of key policies, including safeguarding, modern slavery, duty of care, anti-bribery, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies; staff working conditions, safety, and wellbeing, and HR policies; information security processes; whistleblowing procedures; and the contracting organisation’s own use of subcontractors and consequent due diligence.

Tetra Tech requires background checks for all employees and consultants, and mandates that contracted supplier organisations have similar standards of vetting. This will include organisations and subcontractors contracted to deliver RRLF services.

### 8.4. Raising awareness on safeguarding

One of the greatest barriers to reporting SEAH is the lack of community awareness about what SEAH is. In some cases, few community members may have been informed about what acts constitute SEAH and that SEAH is forbidden under humanitarian agencies’ and research organisations’ Codes of Conduct. Community members may be unaware of their rights to hold humanitarian actors and researchers to account, or how to do so.

To mitigate this, the GEC II IE team will:

1. Raise awareness when engaging with research participants about the IE GEC II programme commitment to safeguarding and duty of the staff, researchers and consultants.
2. Inform research participants, in an easily accessible manner, what SEAH is, the strict prohibition against such conduct, and how to report any suspicions or incidents safely, and, in a way that does not breach their anonymity. This information would be included in written materials (or discussed verbally as required) and introduced by the main researcher at any introduction to the data collection process, and before any data is collected.
3. Conduct training with research teams, including staff, consultants and suppliers, on safeguarding and the code of conduct to ensure they are confident about safeguarding, their duties, roles and responsibilities, and how and what to report and to whom.

### 8.5. Reporting mechanism: how to escalate a safeguarding concern

All concerns and allegations of abuse or breach of the Safeguarding or related Tetra Tech policies, whether internal to the research team or external (see Section 8.6.1 and 8.6.2) should be reported to the IE Programme Manager in the first instance who will act as the designated Safeguarding Focal Point<sup>18</sup> (or Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Points for subcontracting organisations, to be subsequently passed on by the Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point to the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point as soon as possible and within 24 hours).

This should be reported in a formal Safeguarding Incident Form as far as possible (see Annex C for the indicative form; this may be adapted as needed to suit the study context).

<sup>17</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetratech.europa.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Supplier-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> This is referred to in Tetra Tech’s internal policy as Safeguarding Officer.

The IE Programme Manager (henceforth Safeguarding Focal Point) will liaise with the Ethical Research and Safeguarding Expert in the second instance and discuss an appropriate response as necessary, in addition to undertaking the steps set out in Section 8.8.

The first priority will be for the Safeguarding Focal Point to ensure that the child, youth or vulnerable adult or the person affected by abuse is at no risk of further harm. Depending on the context, this may include for example immediately reporting the incident to the appropriate authorities, or if the alleged perpetrator is a research team member, immediately removing them from their position while the incident is investigated.

If for any reason, a staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to the Tetra Tech or Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point, they should report their concern directly to the Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader or the Programme Director, or follow the whistleblowing reporting procedures<sup>19</sup> within a 24-hour reporting period.

This process is detailed in the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Policy<sup>20</sup> and Whistleblowing Policy<sup>21</sup>.

## 8.6. Safeguarding and how reports come to light

### 8.6.1. Reports received by researchers

If a researcher receives or becomes aware of an allegation, suspicion or concern relating to a potential or actual SEAH incident through a local reporting mechanism, they should **not** seek further information about the incident, or the persons involved. Instead, they should pass the information (without reading it) through appropriate channels to the subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point / Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point – ***within 24 hours***.

If a researcher receives the report in person, they **must** tell the informant or the victim / survivor that they are **not** a Safeguarding Focal Point. They should then follow these steps:

- a) The researcher should ask the informant or victim / survivor if they need any immediate support – such as protection or medical treatment.
- b) Explain who the Safeguarding Focal Point<sup>22</sup> is – their name and contact details. If the informant / survivor agrees, they should offer to call the Focal Point immediately so the informant or victim / survivor can speak with them.
- c) If the Safeguarding Focal Point is unavailable and the informant or victim / survivor wishes to continue speaking with the researcher, they should re-iterate that they are **not** a Safeguarding Focal Point and that if the informant or victim / survivor wishes to make a report the researcher will need to pass on the information they receive to the Safeguarding Focal Point for appropriate follow up. However, they will only pass on the informant's or victim's / survivor's personal details (or any other identifying information) with their consent – exempting cases that involve children or persons with disabilities who lack capacity to make decisions in their own best interests.
- d) The researcher should reassure the informant that what they say will remain private and confidential – they will need to take follow up action but unless the informant gives their consent, neither the informant nor the victim / survivor will be identified in any way.
- e) The researcher must tell the informant that, in the case of children, they cannot make this guarantee of confidentiality as the best interests of the child is the primary consideration. The same applies to cases of adults with impaired decision-making capacities.
- f) With their informant's / survivor's permission, the researcher should write down the details of what happened, when and where, and who did this.
- g) The researcher should advise the informant or the victim / survivor what will happen with the report after it is given to the Safeguarding Focal Point, including aspects relating to confidentiality.
- h) The researcher should **not** take any further action.

Researchers should keep in mind that:

- It is very important to give the informant support and validation for coming forward, especially if they are the target / survivor of the inappropriate sexual behaviour they are reporting. This might include for example reiterating to the informant:

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<sup>19</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetracheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Whistleblowing-Policy.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetracheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Safeguarding-Policy.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetracheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Whistleblowing-Policy.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Depending on the study arrangements, this may be the Tetra Tech or the Subcontractor Focal Point.

- “I’m sorry this happened to you.”
- “No one deserves to be abused.”
- “I’m glad that you were able to tell me this. After we finish speaking, I will provide you with some referrals for where you can receive additional support, if you would like.”
- It is not their responsibility to initiate investigations into who the victim / survivor and/or the perpetrator are, or what may have happened.
- If they know the parties concerned, they must under no circumstances speak with them about the report, or even let them know that a report has been made. ***It is a violation of the Code of Conduct for the researcher to inform anyone against whom a SEAH report has been made that they are the subject of such a report. If they do this, they will face disciplinary measures.***
- They should not communicate the fact that they received the report, and they should not disclose the contents of the report, to anyone outside of the appropriate channels. In this case, the only appropriate person with whom to communicate is the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point (or their Subcontractor Focal Point, who will subsequently report to the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point), who will make an assessment dependent on the nature of the incident about how and when to escalate the report to other channels (such as referral pathways, local law enforcement or other local health services). The only exception to this would be a case in which the researcher has reason to believe the victim/survivor is at risk of imminent physical harm and this cannot be immediately discussed with the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point, in which a researcher should report the risk to appropriate local authorities. If urgent medical support is required, this should be sought by the researcher in all cases without disclosing specific details of the incident to the medical authorities above what is required to provide the necessary medical care. Details will be discussed with researchers in initial training, with tailoring to the local context as needed.
- It is not the job of the researcher to assess the veracity of the allegation before forwarding it on to the Subcontractor / Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point. The researcher must forward all allegations, suspicions and concerns relating to a potential or actual SEAH to the Subcontractor / Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point ***within 24 hours***, even if they are not sure that they constitute SEAH. This includes uncertainty as to *whether* misconduct has taken place and *what type* of misconduct it might be. This includes both reports of misconduct both within the research team and external to the team (as set out in Section 8.6.2).

### 8.6.2. Types of report

**The IE team may become aware of an actual or potential case of SEAH through one of many sources:**

- A general feedback or reporting box or other mechanism, including a hotline, established by our local data collection partner;
- A referral from the authorities;
- A verbal report from a colleague from one of our suppliers or research partners;
- A verbal report from someone in another organisation;
- The researcher’s own observations; or
- The email or phone reporting mechanism of the FM or Tetra Tech;

**The information regarding actual or suspected SEAH may be very detailed or quite vague:**

- We may receive very detailed information about a known or suspected SEAH incident, specifying what happened to whom, when and where.
- We may receive vague information about “bad behaviour” or people “feeling uncomfortable” that suggests possible SEAH.

**The identities of the parties involved may be known or unknown:**

- The **identity of the person accused or suspected of perpetrating SEAH** may be known or unknown. If their identity is known, this should be communicated when the report is passed to the focal point. If their identity is unknown, as many details as possible should be included (age, height, build, skin colour, ethnicity, clothing, any visible logos on t-shirt, lanyard, cap, tattoos, body marking, etc).
- The **identity of the person who may have experienced the potential or actual SEAH** may be known or unknown. If their identity is unknown, the report to the Safeguarding focal point should include as many details

as possible relating to the victim's / survivor's age, location where the incident may have occurred, roughly when the incident may have occurred, the context in which the incident may have occurred. This is important for two reasons: first, to help locate persons who might require protection and/or survivor assistance; and second, to identify weak points in the GEC project in order to strengthen prevention and mitigation measures.

**The report may concern individuals from the IE team; implementing organisations; or the community in which the research is taking place:**

- Researchers may receive reports of, or become aware of, potential safeguarding concerns involving (a) fellow Tetra Tech researchers, (b) persons associated with the GEC Implementing Organisation, or (c) members of the child's family / community.
- At the same time, Tetra Tech or the GEC Implementing Organisation may receive reports of, or become aware of, safeguarding concerns involving Tetra Tech researchers.

In either case, the concern must be reported to the designated Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point (or nominated Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point, who will subsequently report to the Tetra Tech Focal Point) within 24 hours of becoming aware of it, *and* the person sharing the concern must receive confirmation of receipt within 24 hours.

The process by which the reports are handled by the Safeguarding Focal Point are listed below.

**NB:** Reports are often made anonymously, and this should be encouraged and allowed.

### 8.7. Safeguarding and receiving reports

The Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point will then map any reports and concern received across the independent evaluation as set out in Table 3.

**Table 3: Mapping of escalation of reports/concerns**

Type of concern	Escalated to / case handled by	Reported to the FCDO
Incident involving misconduct (violence, exploitation, abuse, sexual harassment, bullying, etc.) perpetrated by a <b>GEC II IE team member or as a result of taking part in research or evaluation activities</b> (i.e. through interactions with local data collection partners, Tetra Tech consultants), or other visitors, consultants or service providers.	Escalated using process outlined in Section 8.6.1 above.  Incidents to be escalated to Tetra Tech Child and Vulnerable Adult (CVA) Committee within 24 hours of case/concern being received.	Within 24 hours of the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point being notified, Tetra Tech will notify the FCDO. A full case report will be shared with the FCDO following case handling and investigation.
Incident involving misconduct (violence, exploitation, abuse, sexual harassment, bullying, etc.) perpetrated by <b>FM or due to the involvement of the survivor with activities funded or implemented by the FM or one of their partners.</b>	Escalated using process outlined in Section 8.6.1 above.  Tetra Tech to inform the FM within 24 hours of case/concern being received. The FM will be responsible for conducting their own investigations, but Tetra Tech will be invited to join the investigation team.	Tetra Tech to escalate to the FCDO within 24 hours of receiving the case or concern.
GEC II Independent Evaluation research participant (child or adult) experiencing an <b>active of violence including GBV perpetrated by a community member or stranger.</b>	The staff member, consultant, supplier or researcher working on behalf of Tetra Tech made aware of the allegation will notify the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point (or their nominated Subcontractor Safeguarding Focal Point, who will subsequently report to Tetra Tech).	Tetra Tech to report to the FCDO within 24 hours as appropriate.

Type of concern	Escalated to / case handled by	Reported to the FCDO
	The Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point will undertake a rapid risk assessment and support referral to appropriate or relevant authorities or services within the country where the allegation arose. <sup>23</sup>	

If someone does not feel comfortable reporting the allegation to the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point, they can also report it directly to the programme's leadership, including to the Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader and the Programme Director. If that person does not want to approach any of the team members, they can also use Tetra Tech's whistleblowing procedures (posters with whistleblowing contact details will be distributed to Tetra Tech's local data collection partners and other suppliers for display and distribution in local languages during data collection activities.)

The numbers of safeguarding reports submitted will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the IE Programme Director, the Team Leader or Deputy Team Leader and the IE Ethical Research and Safeguarding Expert. If the number of reports is deemed too high or non-existent (may signal that reporting mechanisms are not working), appropriate measures will be taken to investigate further.

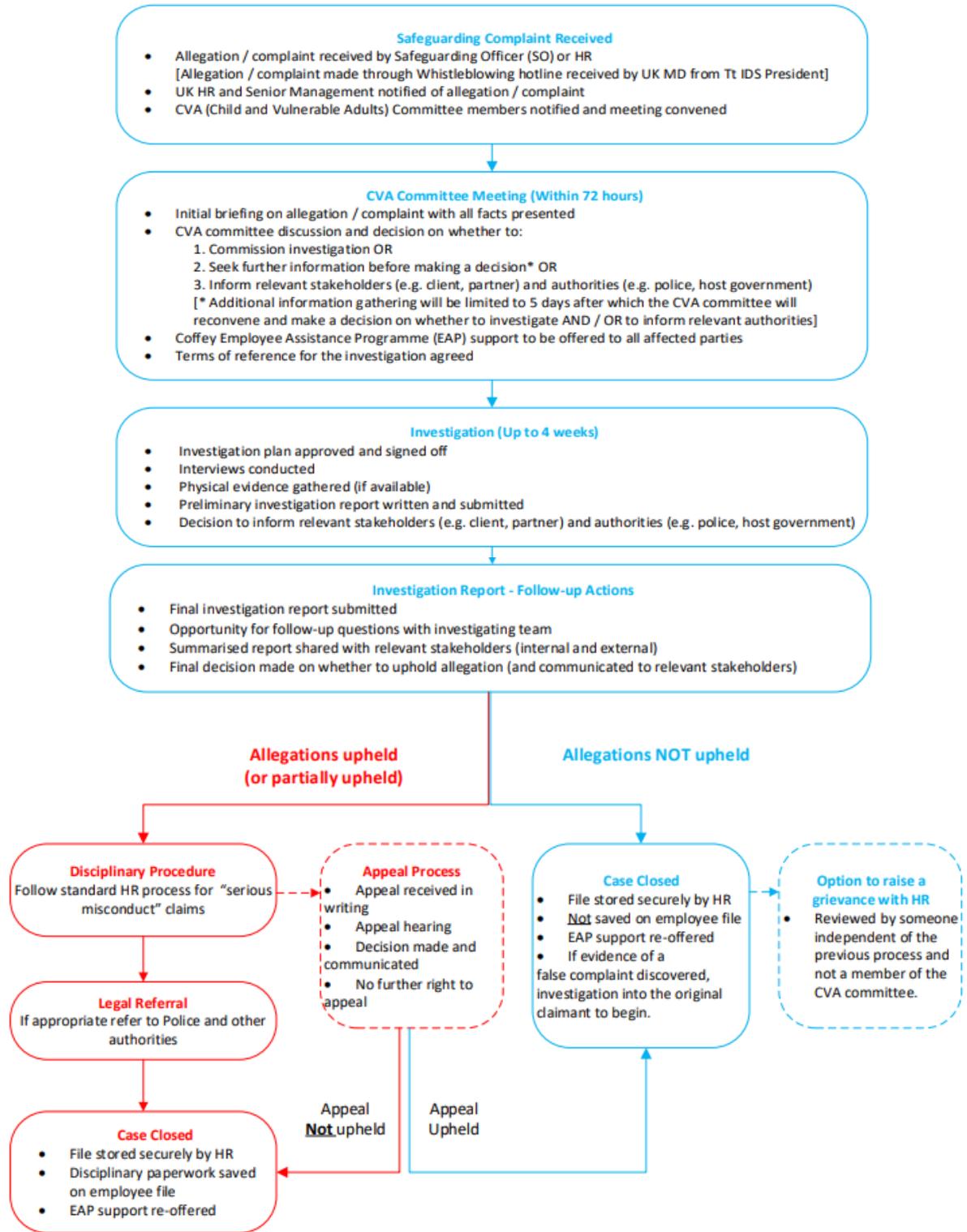
### 8.8. Safeguarding investigation process

Figure 1 outlines how safeguarding concerns or issues will be investigated upon being received by the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Focal Point, as outlined in the Tetra Tech Safeguarding Policy.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> A list of these available services will be collated by the research team prior to data collection activities being carried out in different countries where the GEC II Independent Evaluation is operating.

<sup>24</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetratecheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Safeguarding-Policy.pdf>

Figure 1: Safeguarding investigation process



## 9. Conflicts of interest

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*We do not expect our Conflict of Interest procedures to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.*

A Conflict of Interest (COI) is defined by the IE as follows:

*Because of activities performed or relationships with other persons, either (1) a person is unable to render impartial assistance or advice to a client, (2) a person's objectivity in performing work for a client is or might be impeded, or (3) a person has an unfair competitive advantage.*

Tetra Tech's "Conflict of Interest Ethical Wall Policy and Procedures" outlines the requirements for handling Sensitive Information and Ethical Wall principles.<sup>25</sup> All partners and members (i.e. employees and active sub-contractors) of the Independent Evaluation Team are expected to comply with these procedures. Furthermore, each employee agrees to report to the appropriate person any past, present or future relationship that may result in an actual or potential COI. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of the individual's role in the IE team and/or contractual relationship with Tetra Tech.

These procedures include (but not exclusively):

- **Identifying and addressing COI:** Any potential COI will be handled in a professional, open and transparent way as outlined below:
  - If a member of the IE team identifies any potential COI, or a situation that may influence someone in the team (*actual*) or that others may think could influence someone in the team (*perceived*), then that team member should declare the COI to the IE Programme Manager as soon as possible;
  - If the COI is considered real, the team member should be recused from all relevant work;
  - If the conflict is considered one that creates a risk of an actual or perceived COI, then the team member should notify the IE Programme Manager in the first instance ([janki.rajputra@tetrattech.com](mailto:janki.rajputra@tetrattech.com)), who will liaise internally with the Programme Director ([simon.griffiths@tetrattech.com](mailto:simon.griffiths@tetrattech.com)), Compliance Team and Compliance ([cuereporting@tetrattech.com](mailto:cuereporting@tetrattech.com)) as appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, the IE Programme Manager should then advise the FCDO (where possible, in a way that respects the confidentiality of others concerned) and offer to stop acting, so that the FCDO can make an informed decision about how to proceed;
  - If in any doubt, further guidance should be sought by the IE Programme Manager from the Tetra Tech Compliance Team *immediately*;
  - If, having followed the above procedure, the team member still has concerns or feel the matter is not being addressed adequately, then that person should make use of the Whistleblowing Hotline.
- **Managing COI:** Depending on the facts in a particular situation, some COI can be managed as outlined below:
  - The starting point is to give all parties the full facts of the actual or potential COI. Those parties can then make an informed decision on whether they still want the affected team member to continue to act. The final decision needs to be authorised by the Tetra Tech Compliance Team.
  - If a potential COI can be managed, then the measures put in place to do this this should be discussed, agreed and confirmed with the FCDO in writing. It may be possible and appropriate to operate information barriers in terms of electronic and physical access to information.
  - If a solution cannot be found, or a solution is not agreed by all parties, then we cannot proceed. This may result in the termination of the individual's relationship to the IE team. This will be discussed with the FCDO and relevant parties and a way forward agreed.
  - **COI Register:** A register of any declared conflicts of interest will be maintained by the IE Programme Manager (Janki Rajputra), who will liaise closely with the Tetra Tech Compliance Team, as needed. COI risks will be dealt with at the Programme Manager level or, where required, be escalated to the IE Programme Director (Simon Griffiths), and Compliance Team as appropriate.

<sup>25</sup> See: <https://intdev.tetrattech.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Conflict-of-Interest-Policy.pdf>

## 10. General feedback and complaints

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*At the time of writing, we expect data collection for the foreseeable future to be primarily conducted remotely, or by local data collection providers under remote direction from the IE team.*

*This may mean relying primarily on remote mechanisms for feedback and complaints. These will be set up on a study-specific basis, in a way that is tailored to the local context and accessible for research participants and local stakeholders.*

Clear feedback and complaint mechanisms will be set up by the research team in conjunction with local data collection partners in advance of any research taking place. All research participants will be advised of the procedures and contact details for confidentially filing a complaint or providing feedback on the activities and conduct of interviewers. The mechanism may be managed by the local research partner but monitored and addressed by the core IE team, or directly by the core IE team, depending on the nature of the research and evaluation activity being undertaken. Findings, conclusions and recommendations that emerge from the feedback and complaints process will be shared with the complainants in an accessible manner.

Details of the feedback and complaints mechanisms will be included in research protocols, including in PLSs and consent forms. Any feedback or complaints should be carefully documented and addressed in a sensitive, timely and appropriate way, and in line with Tetra Tech's safeguarding, whistleblowing and anti-bribery policies (see Annexes B-E). Safeguarding complaints will be handled in line with the process set out in Section 5.

All IE personnel (including subcontractors) will also be provided with details of how to raise any complaints or concerns of their own with regard to the conduct of IE staff or subcontracted organisations. It may sometimes be the case that staff fear reprisals as the result of reporting suspected abuse within their own organisation. In these cases, they will be able to draw upon Tetra Tech's independent whistleblowing policy and procedures.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, any person who has concerns or suspicion of fraud, sexual exploitation and abuse or other corrupt practices may also make a complaint directly to the FCDO Internal Audit Department at [reportingconcerns@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:reportingconcerns@fcdo.gov.uk) or by reporting through the confidential hotline (+44 (0)1355 843747). These details will be displayed on our reporting poster and made available to all IE personnel (including subcontractors).

## 11. Ethical research forms

### **Adaptations to the COVID-19 context – as of 22/09/2020**

*Any forms developed for research and evaluation studies will be tailored to reflect any relevant information relating to the pandemic or local pandemic response at the point of study implementation. These will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that information is up to date, and updated versions produced as required.*

As outlined in this document, there are a number of ethical research forms that will need to be developed and used during individual research and evaluation studies. For ease of reference, the core forms are listed below, although additional forms may be developed for individual studies where relevant:

- **Application form for ethical research approval:** Forms will be specific to the relevant ethical research clearance processes (as set out in Section 2.2).
- **Plain language statements (PLSs) and consent forms:** PLSs and consent forms should be developed in line with country-level and study-specific requirements (as set out in Section 3.5). Separate PLS and consent forms should be developed for adult participants and parents/guardians of child participants, and specific assent forms should be developed for children.
- **Safeguarding information sheets:** Research teams should receive clear instructions on IE safeguarding protocols, expectations of staff and instructions on what to do in cases of a suspected safeguarding breach (as

<sup>26</sup> Available at: <https://intdev.tetratecheurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Whistleblowing-Policy.pdf>

set out in Section 5). This may include dedicated tools, such as a safeguarding checklist or reporting flow chart and signed conduct agreements on the part of the researchers.

## Annex A: Key documents

The following documents are key frameworks and guidelines which are relevant to the principles above. As these documents are updated or new frameworks released, the principles above will be revised accordingly:

- ESOMAR International Code of Conduct on Market, Opinion and Social Research and Data Analytics
- FCDO 2011 Ethics Principles for Research and Evaluation
- FCDO 2013 Evaluation Policy
- FCDO 2018 DFID Digital Strategy 2018 to 2020: doing development in a digital world
- FCDO 2019 FCDO ethical guidance for research, evaluation and monitoring activities
- FCDO 2020 Child Safeguarding Due Diligence: for external partners
- FCDO 2020 Enhanced Due Diligence: Safeguarding for external partners
- FCDO 2020 Guidance on Safeguarding against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) in the aid sector
- HM Government 2018 Data Protection Act
- HM Government 2011 Involving Disabled People in Social Research: Guidance by the Office for Disability Issues

The following documents are key consortium policies to which the principles above are aligned:

- Tetra Tech Code of Conduct
- Tetra Tech Conflict of Interest Policy Tetra Tech Whistleblowing Policy
- Tetra Tech Safeguarding Policy
- University of Cambridge Policy on the Ethics of Research Involving Human Participants and Personal Data<sup>27</sup>
- University of Cambridge Policy on the Ethics of Research Involving Human Participants and Personal Data<sup>28</sup>
- University of Cambridge Children and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy<sup>29</sup>
- University of Cambridge Policy Against Bribery and Corruption<sup>30</sup>

The following documents are key IE documents which should be read in conjunction with this framework:

- Inception Report (in development)
- RRLF Handbook
- GESI Approach Paper: *GEC II Independent Evaluation: Our Approach to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion*
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Fund Manager and Independent Evaluator
- IE contract with the FCDO

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<sup>27</sup> Available at: [https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/policy\\_on\\_the\\_ethics\\_of\\_research\\_involving\\_human\\_participants\\_and\\_personal\\_data\\_oct\\_2016.pdf](https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/policy_on_the_ethics_of_research_involving_human_participants_and_personal_data_oct_2016.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Available at: [https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/policy\\_on\\_the\\_ethics\\_of\\_research\\_involving\\_human\\_participants\\_and\\_personal\\_data\\_oct\\_2016.pdf](https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/policy_on_the_ethics_of_research_involving_human_participants_and_personal_data_oct_2016.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Available at: [https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/children\\_and\\_adults\\_at\\_risk\\_policy\\_v3\\_final.pdf](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/children_and_adults_at_risk_policy_v3_final.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Available at: <https://www.governanceandcompliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/bribery-and-corruption-policy.pdf>

## Annex B: Tetra Tech Safeguarding Checklist

The Safeguarding checklist should be used by the Programme Manager at the beginning of the programme to ensure compliance with the Safeguarding Policy. The Programme Manager should ensure that each activity/ operating standard has an allocated responsible staff member (e.g. Programme Manager, Safeguarding Focal Point, Grant Officer, HR Manager, Risk Manager). The form should be reviewed regularly to ensure that all standards are maintained.

Activity or operating standard	Responsible	Progress
Is the Safeguarding Policy included as an annex to all contracts?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager</i>	
Has safeguarding been included in all partner assessments (due diligence, organisational capacity assessments etc.) and their capacity building plans?	<i>Example: Grant Officer</i>	
Do all offices have a Safeguarding Reporting Poster? Is the reporting procedure readily accessible by all staff?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager / Safeguarding Focal Point</i>	
Has safeguarding been incorporated into relevant programme implementation and research tools, such as risk assessments, monitoring checklist, workplan and budget, programme learning review tools? If so, how?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager</i>	
Have you undertaken a safeguarding risk assessment and identified risks and mitigation measures which are specific to your programme and the local context?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager</i>	
Have all staff members, subcontractors and consultants (including research partners and their enumerators) received training on safeguarding?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager Safeguarding Focal Point</i>	
Who is the dedicated project Safeguarding Focal Point?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manger</i>	
Does the project have an allocated staff member who will deliver safeguarding training to partners and staff?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager; IE Field Research Manager</i>	
Is safeguarding included in the orientation for all programme visitors together with security briefing? If not, how are project visitors made aware of programme's reporting procedures?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager/</i>	

Independent Evaluation of the GEC II – Ethical Research and Safeguarding Framework

	<i>Risk Manager</i>	
Have all staff members, subcontractors and consultants successfully completed national police checks and reference checks?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager/ HR Manager</i>	
Are operational suppliers aware of our safeguarding policy? Do they have a reporting mechanism for beneficiaries, staff and others to report safeguarding concerns?  Do they have a safeguarding policy which includes training and/or awareness raising?	<i>Example: IE Programme Manager</i>	

## Annex C: Indicative Safeguarding Incident Form

**Please remember that all allegations of abuse must be reported to your IE Programme Manager.**

**Please complete this form and send it to the IE Programme Manager. If for any reason, you do not feel comfortable reporting to the Programme Manager, please report their concern directly to the Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader or the Programme Director, or follow the whistleblowing reporting procedures [insert reference to associated documentation] within a 24-hour reporting period.**

- Programme name:
- Incident location:
- Programme Manager:
- Incident report date:
- Programme Director:
- Associated Organisation/s:
- Incident occurrence date:

### Incident report

If possible, please include details of the person who originally made the report and other people involved in the incident.

If possible, explain what type of abuse is being reported and its consequences (e.g. injuries, behaviour or mood changes)

Accurately describe the incident – be objective and focus on facts.

Incident report:

### Actions taken:

What is the current safety and health status of the reported survivor/affected individual and their family? Are they at risk of further abuse or violence? Are there any immediate needs or risks that have to be addressed? Have any actions been taken to mitigate them?

Based on the incident report, is emergency medical attention needed? Has any medical care been provided? By whom?

Have the local police been notified?

Has this report been referred to any other bodies (e.g. client or using other safeguarding mechanisms)?

Actions taken:

**Follow on action**

What actions have to be taken?

Are there any other processes or investigations that are underway?

Who is aware (project level and stakeholders) of this incident?

Follow on actions:

# Annex 3 - Ethics and Safeguarding for Access and Learning Study

The GEC Independent Evaluation Ethical Research and Safeguarding Framework (see *Annex 2*) forms the ethical framework that guides all research and data collection protocols for the IE. These ethical research and safeguarding guidelines apply to the design, implementation and reporting of all research and evaluation activities conducted as part of the IE of Phase II of the GEC, including the Access and Learning study.

## Overview of Ethical Research Protocols

For the purpose of this Evaluation Study, the Ethical Research and Safeguarding Framework was operationalised in the study research through three key processes:

- (1) Development of ethics forms and protocols with our local data collection partners and in consultation with IPs participating in the research;
- (2) Training field staff in the use of these forms and protocols and piloting them at the same time as piloting the research instruments; and
- (3) Ensuring that all research, analysis and reporting strictly applies and adheres to the IE team's guidance and protocols.

In addition, ethical clearance and research permissions were sought prior to all data collection activities being conducted.

### Ethics forms and consent/ assent processes

For the purpose of this study, as we interviewed girls under the age of 18 years old targeted by GEC projects, plain language statements (PLS) and **consent forms and assent forms** were developed to ensure meaningful consent (and assent) was acquired from children and their parents, caregivers or guardians prior to participation in the study.

These forms provide detailed information about the research, including information about the content and purpose of the interview, possible benefits and risks of participation, the anticipated uses of the data, how data will be stored and kept secure, and details of how participants can remove their data at a later stage. Consent forms were also adapted for participants aged 18 years and above, including teachers, caregivers and other stakeholders who we spoke to during the research.

Forms were translated into local languages and distributed to children and their caregivers through schools in advance of the research taking place by our local data collection partners in collaboration with the sampled projects.

A copy of the consent and assent forms that were used during fieldwork is available in *Annex 1* 'Research Instruments and Consent Forms'.

### Training in ethical research and safeguarding

Research staff, including staff from our local data collection partners Research Plus Africa and Rooster Logic, received full training by our study team in ethical research protocols and safeguarding procedures. This included training in sensitive interviewing methods, how to speak to participants in ways that Do No Harm, use of consent and assent forms, and how to interview children and vulnerable adults. Trainings also covered interviewing remotely and detailed information about how to respond to safeguarding concerns or reports made during primary data collection, and who to report incidents to.

## Ethical Board Approvals

In each country, local partners obtained research permissions using standard protocols in both Kenya and Nepal. In all countries, final permission was obtained from respondents themselves through informed consent. With support of the GEC implementing partners – EDT in Kenya and Mercy Corps in Nepal – our teams contacted girls and their parents or caregivers and distributed consent forms via their schools prior to the research team's arrival in the area. For cases in which the respondent was 18 or older, no parental consent was required; teams obtained consent from the girl only. For girls who were under the age of 19 and married, the team gained consent from the girl and an adult over 18 in the household, often an in-law.

## Annex 3 – GEC II Ethics and Safeguarding for Access and Learning Study

No ethical board approvals were required to conduct research in schools in either Kenya or Nepal.

However, additional ethical clearance was sought from the REAL Centre at the University of Cambridge in advance of data collection taking place in Kenya and Nepal. This involved submitting documentation to acknowledge that provisions were in place to address the following ethical considerations:

- Relevance and necessity of data being gathered to fulfil the study aims and objectives;
- Clear timelines associated with the use and retention of data gathered through the study; Protocols for securely storing and restricting access to data gathered through the data;
- Protection of participant identifiers and personal information;
- Information shared with participants on expected participation and explicit focus of research;
- Clear timelines, procedures, ethics and protocols for consent and consent withdrawal; and
- Clarity of intended benefits to research participants and how findings will be shared.

Ethical clearance was granted on 5th February 2021.

### Research Permissions Ethical Board Approvals

In addition to ethical clearance, research permissions were also obtained from relevant government departments in Kenya and Nepal prior to data collection taking place.

Specific research permissions processes for each country are detailed below.

#### **Kenya**

To complete this study, we required research permission at three levels: from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI); from the Ministry of Education; and from county commissioners.

As a national government-approved organisation, permission from NACOSTI granted Research PLUS the ability to collect data across Kenya. Furthermore, because the study involved visiting schools, the team needed support letters from the education ministry, including from the County Directors of Education in all eight counties included in the study: Nairobi, Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, Tana River, Samburu, Marsabit and Turkana. Finally, permission from County Commissioners in all the areas visited was obtained prior to the commencement of fieldwork and received in December 2020. Permission had also been sought from Kilifi county commissioner in December but this had been rejected on the grounds of wishing to minimise contact with students/ schools as a way of curbing the spread of Covid-19. As such, Kilifi county was removed from the sample and fieldwork did not take place there.

#### **Nepal**

In Nepal, we required research permission at three levels: local government, district education offices, and school principals or management councils. To obtain permission to work in schools, the Nepali team submitted letters of request to local government and district education offices. With the aid of the local implementing partner, the team then approached the Principal or School Management Committee (SMC) for each school included in the research sample with a letter of intent and request to conduct research.

## Ethical Challenges or Safeguarding Incidents During Fieldwork and Mitigations

Table 1 below provides an overview of the ethical challenges or safeguarding incidents faced by research teams throughout the research, by location.

**Table 1: Ethical issues or safeguarding incidents during fieldwork in Kenya and Nepal**

Country	Institution(s)	Issue	Details	Effect on data collection	Mitigation steps taken	Lessons learned (if applicable)
Nepal	Dhangadi HSS	Concerning fragile mental state reported by a respondent	During quantitative data collection one of the supervisors was informed by the enumerator collecting data about a girl who was visibly depressed with answers regarding the questionnaire and hinting at surrendering her life.	No delay	Tetra Tech was immediately informed and a safeguarding incident report was completed and sent to FCDO in line with due process. BASE Nepal and Mercy Corps were also informed about the incident and steps were taken to ensure the safety of the girl. Tetra Tech also suspended further IDIs with out-of-school girls given the diminishing returns of conducting further interviews against the relative risk of harm.	
	Basudevi and Fulbari SS	Refusal from students to take the survey and assessment	Students had just completed their examination and the prospect of another assessment which was similar to examination was too daunting for many students	Minimal delay	Reduced sample selection was done to accommodate for non-consent refusals	Should not have led defining assessment as assessment rather would have pushed more for anonymity of their performance in the said assessment
Kenya	General issue	Exam fatigue experienced by the girls included in the study	Exam fatigue experienced by the girls included in the study	None	The teams worked closely with schools to time assessments during non-exam period	

# Annex 4 – Qualitative Methodology

## Secondary Evidence Review on Girls' Education During Covid-19 (for RQa and RQb)

To complement the review of secondary evidence conducted as part of the desk review phase of this study (completed in November 2020), we conducted a further review of evidence to respond to our research questions. In particular, this review focused on two of our research questions:

- **RQ: How have projects sought to provide continued access to learning opportunities during school-closures?**
- **RQ: How have girls' learning levels changed during the Covid-19 period?**

The secondary evidence review was intended to contextualise findings from our research study and situate our research within the broader evidence base.

- For the first research question, the evidence review focused on understanding what other educational interventions have supported girls (and students more broadly) to continue with their learning during school closures.
- For the second research question, the review focused on understanding the effects of Covid-19 on educational outcomes, and specifically how learning levels may have changed or be projected to change as a result of the pandemic.

The review for each of these questions was carried out separately during the analysis and synthesis phase in July 2021. Further details on the approach and methodology for the secondary evidence review are provided below.

Our approach to the secondary evidence review is as follows:

1. Identify relevant sources of evidence on interventions to support girls' access to education during Covid-19 using snowballing techniques.
2. Compile relevant sources to include in the review.
3. Expand search using the following keywords/search terms on Google associated with the research question:
  - a. For the first research question: "Covid-19", "educational access", "remote learning", "learning during school closures", "Kenya", and "Nepal".
  - b. For the second research question: "Learning loss", "Covid-19", "Kenya", "Sub-Saharan Africa", "East Africa", "South Asia", "Nepal".
4. Systematically extract the evidence that relates to the research question on how interventions have provided continued access to learning opportunities during school closures.
5. Synthesise and summarise the results to respond to the research question in the relevant section(s) in the report.

Due to the resources available for the study, the scope of the review was limited to one day of researcher time to conduct and write up each secondary evidence review.

## Primary Qualitative Data (for RQa, RQc and RQd)

### Design

Qualitative data collection was envisaged to complement quantitative data and add depth and insight into girls' experiences of education during school closures. Specifically, to deepen understanding into the following areas:

- Barriers facing girls' continued learning and education during school closures;
- Experiences of girls' learning during school closures;
- Perceptions of how planned project interventions have been implemented in practice;
- Reasons that girls may have dropped out of education during school closures;

## Annex 4 – Access and Learning Study: Qualitative Methodology

- Reasons that girls continued to remain in education during school closures; and
- Perceived challenges to girls returning to school once they re-open;

### Data collection methods

Primary data was gathered through a combination of:

- Focus Group Discussions with girls, parents/caregivers, teachers and Community Health Volunteers (Kenya)
- In-depth interviews with girls, parents/caregivers, teachers, coaches/mentors (Kenya), girl champions (Kenya) and Community Health Volunteers (Kenya)
- Key informant interviews with project partners (including M&E staff) and district officials

The group setting within the FGDs enabled us to gather a broader range of views while at the same time being an appropriate forum for participatory exercises that are effective in engaging young people. These exercises were used to encourage girls to open-up in a group setting to discuss their views and issues on important and sensitive topics, such as drop-out and the underlying factors that may have contributed to this. This was intended to elicit views towards a common topic rather than to develop deep insights into individual experiences of drop-out. Interviewers will be trained to moderate these discussions sensitively and to manage the dynamics to prevent disclosures of very sensitive issues, such as violence in the home or at school.

FGDs were complemented with in-depth interviews with individual girls to enable us to explore individual experiences of Covid-19 among girls in greater depth and how that may have affected their learning trajectories.

Our approach also included a smaller number of KIs with project partners to better understand what EDT and Mercy Corps were delivering and the context of their implementation.

Semi-structured topic guides were developed for the FGDs, IDIs and KIs to facilitate discussion (see [Annex 1 Consent Forms and Qualitative Research Tools](#)).

### Sampling design

#### EDT, Kenya

In Kenya, EDT are implementing the project in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL); **Turkana, Samburu, Marsabit, Tana River, Kwale and Kilifi**, and in urban slums in **Nairobi and Mombasa**. To gain a comprehensive understanding of how the project has responded, we set out to sample participants and partners in a range of geographic locations. From the total number of girls targeted in the project is 70,537 all of whom attend primary schools, we propose a sample of 45 girls, and approximately 30 other key stakeholders including community members, parents or caregivers, teachers and Community Health Volunteers. The table below ([Table 1](#)) provides a summary of the key stakeholders.

**Table: Summary of key stakeholders to interview during the primary qualitative data collection (EDT Kenya)**

Stakeholder	Method	Notes
Girls	<p>A total of five FGDs with seven participants in each.</p> <p>Three FGDs in ASAL areas and two FGDs in urban slums.</p> <p>KIs with a sample of 10 girls, including girls identified as particularly at-risk by the project.</p>	<p>The project team identified the following as most at risk to Covid-19 challenges, and therefore should be included in the sample:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teen mothers</li> <li>- Children with disabilities</li> <li>- The poorest or orphans.</li> </ul>
Parents/ Caregivers	<p>A total of four FGDs with six participants in each.</p> <p>Two FGDs in ASAL areas and two focus groups in Urban Slums.</p> <p>KIs with an additional five parents (three and two from ASAL and Urban Slums, respectively).</p>	<p>Should onboarding the parents or caregivers into the focus groups be a challenge, there may be the option to engage with representatives of the Parental Engagement Working Group.</p>

Stakeholder	Method	Notes
Community Health Volunteers (CHVs)	Total of five IDIs with CHVs in the same areas as the girls in FGDs.	CHVs have been vital in providing in-person support to the girls and speaking to at least one in each of the areas where the focus groups take place is advised.
Teachers/ Remedial teachers	Total of five IDIs with teachers in the same five areas as the girls in the FGDs.	The teachers have shifted to focus more on CWD and other groups at risk of not returning to school.
Coaches/ Mentors	Total of five IDIs with Mentors in the same five areas as the girls in the FGDs.	Along with CHVs, the coaches/ mentors have had most contact with learners during school closure.

### Mercy Corps, Nepal

The project was implemented in the **Kailali** District of Nepal. This includes rural, urban and semi-urban areas, and a sample for each of these, as well as the IS and OOS activities is recommended. The project focused on both in-school (IS) and out-of-school (OOS) girls, and therefore a sample of each will be included in qualitative research activities, as the project has been running a variety of activities targeting girls differently. The target beneficiaries are 4,460 girls all either in secondary school, or school leavers taking part in vocational training. It is recommended that the focus of the engagement at this stage is with the girls themselves (a sample of 40) and those who have had most contact with them. The MC Nepal team did not submit a MTRP, and therefore the sampling is based on the IRP.

**Table 2: Summary of key stakeholders to interview during the primary qualitative data collection (Mercy Corps Nepal)**

Stakeholder	Method	Notes
<b>Girls</b>	A total of five FGDs of seven participants in each.  The groups will be based on location (rural, urban and semi-urban).  IDIs with a sample of five girls (both in-school and out-of-school).	The groups should sample both IS and OOS, but in separate focus groups.  A rapid survey was conducted with 58 girls early in Covid-19 lockdown – these are potentially good participants to re-contact.
<b>Parents/ Caregivers</b>	A total of four FGDs of six participants in each.  The groups will be sampled based on location (rural, urban and semi-urban).  IDIs with six parents in different location types.	Little information was given in the IRP on the engagement with parents in the project.
<b>Girl Champions</b>	A total of five FGDs of seven participants in each.  The groups will be in the same locations as the focus groups with the girls.	Girl champions have had the most contact with the girls in the form of peer-support. A focus group is preferable, as the girls have also been experiencing challenges in Covid-19.
<b>Headteachers/ Teachers</b>	At least five IDIs with teachers in each of the locations identified for the girls.	In this, it may also be worth including interviews with those who support OOS girls in vocational training or life skills.

### Achieved sample

Details of the achieved qualitative samples in each country are presented in [Table](#) below.

**Table 3: Sample completion of In-Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions by country**

	# Schools Visited	# IDIs with Girls	# IDIs with Caregivers	# IDIs with Teachers 17	# FGDs with Girls	# IDI / FGD with parents	# IDI with Mentor/Coach or Teacher	# IDI with Community Health Workers	Total
<b>Kenya</b>	6	20	20	16	16	12	4	4	92
<b>Nepal</b>	4	24	15	2	14	4	2	0	61

### Cleaning and Processing of Qualitative Data

All transcripts were first checked for consistency and quality by the Lead Qualitative Analysts. Transcripts were supplied to the Qualitative team in English, following any translation as needed by our local data collection partners from the language(s) used in the interview. Transcripts were anonymised and assigned an identifier code using this format: location + respondent + type + number (e.g. TATEAIDI001 is Teacher IDI from Tana River). This ensured that responses could be readily identified and analysed for different participant types (e.g. teachers, girls and other stakeholders).

Once anonymised and assigned with identifier codes, transcripts were uploaded on Dedoose, and assigned to the coding team for coding. Lead Qualitative Analysts organised periodic calls and meetings with the coding team to review coding progress, to discuss any changes needed to the coding framework, as well as any challenges in coding, and emerging trends and findings.

Once first level coding was completed, the various sections of the report were allocated among the coders. The relevant codes for these sections were then extracted, merged and assigned to the coding team for second level coding.

### Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative coding was undertaken through a two-stage process (first and second-level coding) by a team of four coders. Coders were trained and overseen by the Lead Qualitative Analysts. For first level coding, a draft coding framework was developed using the research questions and research instruments (topic guides for the FGD and KIIs). The draft coding framework was reviewed by the Qualitative Lead, Principal Investigator and senior members of the IE team and finalised. All coders were trained by the Lead Qualitative Analysts and training included how to use Dedoose (the coding software)<sup>1</sup> and an introduction to the coding framework. All four coders, as well as the Lead Qualitative Analysts piloted the coding framework using the same two transcripts (an FGD and a KII), after which the coders met to revise the coding framework as needed.

In second-level coding, codes were deductively analysed. This means that all quotations coded in first-level coding under a specific code or group of codes were analysed in depth to respond to the research questions.

Coders produced a summary of key findings from the analysis of a given code or code group (per country/project) and were shared with the report-writing team for further synthesis and production of high-level findings. Analysis was conducted at a country-level (i.e. for each country), with particular attention given to any notable trends or patterns emerging between urban and rural areas, in-school and out of school girls, and older and younger girls.

<sup>1</sup> For further information on Dedoose see: <https://www.dedoose.com/home/features>

# Annex 5 – Qualitative Coding Framework

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>* Other interesting content/ Unintended consequences</b>	Something that strikes the coder as particularly unexpected or worth noting, including unintended consequences of the programme intervention.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>** Identifying marginalised girls</b>	How schools or projects have identified which girls will be more marginalised and less likely to re-enrol post Covid-19. What the schools and projects are doing to target these girls in re-enrolment activities.  Any mention of who the respondent has identified as most marginalised. This could include: girls with disabilities, teen mothers, married girls, orphans, older girls, pastoralists (and potentially others).	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>*** Difference between boys and girls</b>	Any difference mentioned in boys' and girls' education. Mostly with regards to education outcomes, but also if there is a marginalisation factor specific to boys or girls. Should also include differences in how time was spent during school closures. Also, code for no difference.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>**** Difference between age groups (girls)</b>	Any mention of differences between age groups among girls. This will mostly be regarding issues such as access to learning during Covid-19, how girls spend their time, re-enrolment activities or learning loss. However, please also note when it is mentioned for other reasons.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>***** Girls in transition grade</b>	Any mention of factors particularly affecting girls transitioning from lower to higher secondary school. In some instances, girls could transition into vocational training or another institution.  NOTE there tends to be dropout at this stage, both for reasons specific to the transition (such as exams and fees) and as a result of Covid-19.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>***** Spill over effect</b>	Any mention of spill over effect of an intervention on other members of the households (e.g. siblings, parents...)	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
***** Recommendations for project	Recommendation from respondent on additional project intervention/ requested changes.	
***** Coping mechanism	Mention of coping mechanism introduced by girl/ families/ communities to improve education outcomes (e.g. borrowing learning materials, organising tutorial lessons).	
<b>1. Changes due to Covid-19</b>		
<b>Changes in girls' own attitudes towards school</b>	Changes in girls' attitudes due to Covid-19 to return to or enrol in school. How they feel about going to school now, as opposed to before school closure. How they feel about their own school attendance in comparison to boys.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Changes in parents' attitudes towards girls' education</b>	Changes in how parents perceive the importance of girls' attendance at school and girls' education in general as a result of Covid-19.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Changes in community attitudes towards girls' education</b>	How communities perceived the importance of girls' attendance at school and girls' education as a result of Covid-19.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Changes in violence due to Covid-19</b>	Examples of violence related to Covid-19 could include increased cases of rape, FGM, pregnancy and marriage.	
<b>Changes in future aspirations (after school)</b>	Changes in girls' future aspirations as a result of Covid-19, such as continuing at school, getting a job, getting married or having children.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Changes in how girls spend their time</b>	How do girls spend their time at home, how do they spend their free time, time spent studying, working outside the home.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQd</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Changes in family structure</b>	Including cases of early marriage and pregnancy, migration, number of family members in the household.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Changes in project intervention due to Covid-19</b>	Including new interventions, pausing some interventions, or changing the intervention. Project interventions are highlighted in the codes below in terms of access, learning and other. If there has been any change to these that have been mentioned please double code to highlight the intervention and the change. Only double code for change when it is explicitly mentioned the intervention changed as a direct result of Covid-19.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Changes in marginalisation level</b>	Changes in who the most marginalised are considered to be by the girls, schools and others in the community.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Changes in boys' learning</b>	Including subjects that boys were able to do well in or struggled in more, overall exam results and need to repeat the year.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Changes in boys' re-enrolment</b>	Including boys deciding not to re-enrol, girls re-enrolling in a lower grade or higher grade, girls in transition groups into TVET or higher school.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Changes in boys' own attitudes towards school</b>	Changes in boys' attitudes to return to or enrol in school. How they feel about going to school now, as opposed to before school closure. How they feel about their own school attendance in comparison to girls.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Changes in how boys spend their time</b>	How do boys spend their time at home, how do they spend their free time, time spent studying, working outside the home.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>No change due to Covid-19</b>	If respondents explicitly say education outcomes have not changed due to Covid-19.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>2. Project interventions: Access</b>		

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Cash transfers to girls or families</b>	Any mention of cash transfers (mostly conditional).	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>In-kind resources to girls or families</b>	Any mention of in-kind resources: these include items such as food packs, sanitary or dignity kits for menstruation, or provision of a device to work from. There could be others, please highlight.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Savings or loans scheme</b>	Activities to do with saving and loans schemes, for in-school or out of school girls as income generating activities.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i>
<b>Improved school facilities</b>	Including WASH facilities, desks, chairs, EdTech etc.	<i>RQb</i>
<b>Awareness raising with parents and communities</b>	On the importance of girls' attendance at school, on girls' enrolment, on the importance of home learning, on how to support home learning, on the importance of girls' and boys' education, on safeguarding and child protection. There could be others, please highlight.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Re-enrolment activities (school level)</b>	Activities that the project are implementing at school-level to support re-enrolment.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Re-enrolment activities (community level)</b>	Activities that the project are implementing at community-level to support re-enrolment.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Re-enrolment activities (household level)</b>	Activities that the project are implementing at household-level to support re-enrolment.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Other interventions (project)</b>	Any access related interventions not listed above.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Other interventions (non-project)</b>	Any interventions related to girls' access to education which are explicitly reported to not have been implemented by the project or a project activity, such as national campaigns for re-enrolment.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>No support/ lack of intervention</b>	Respondent mentioned receiving no support (e.g. no enrolment drives in their area).	
<b>3. Project interventions: Learning</b>		
<b>Remote learning</b>	Any remote learning mentioned including digital (TV, radio, phone, tablets), physical (work packs and books). Can include promotion of the government learning activities (i.e. national radio).	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Girls' clubs</b>	Any mention of a Girls' Club as an existing or new activity.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Household visits from schools or project representative</b>	Any mention of how a project or school representative visited the household to support learning needs.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Project or school contact with household (remote)</b>	Phone calls or email follow-ups from project.	
<b>Remedial classes</b>	Any mention of classes that are put on out of normal school hours to catch up on specific subjects, or provide support to a specific group of students such as those with learning difficulties or transition groups.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Other interventions (project)</b>		
<b>Other interventions (non-project)</b>	Any other intervention implemented by other actors (including other NGOs, government).	
<b>Community education</b>	Any mention of community-level education activities such as group learning in a community space, study groups or peer-to-peer support.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>No support/ lack of intervention</b>	Respondent mentioned receiving no support (e.g. no telephone follow-up from teacher).	
<b>4. Project interventions: Other</b>		
<b>Provision of PPE equipment as a response to Covid-19 protections</b>	This includes masks, hand sanitiser, or soap. This could be for girls, but there may be mention of this for teachers, project staff or partners, at the household or community level.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i>
<b>Life skills training</b>	Mention how the life skills classes were present - includes SRHR, financial skills, mental health support, etc.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Provision of safe spaces and reporting mechanisms</b>	Any mention of safe spaces and reporting mechanisms, such as in schools, helplines, information books etc.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Vocational training</b>	Mention of the vocational training programmes as alternative education pathways.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Mentors</b>	Mention of mentors (including peer mentors and Girl Champions).	
<b>Other interventions (project)</b>	Interventions the girls mention which are not directly related to access or learning such as sports clubs or recreational groups.	
<b>Other interventions (non-project)</b>	Any other intervention implemented by other actors (including other NGOs, government).	
<b>5. Factors affecting education: Attitudes</b>		

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Attitude/ Relevance of education</b>	This includes: - The respondent's attitude towards girls' education (positive or negative); - The respondent's perception of the relevance of schools and education in general for both boys and girls; and - The community's perception of the relevance of schooling.	<i>RQb</i>
<b>Religious/ cultural concerns</b>	Whether the respondent expresses religious concerns regarding education, or whether s/he perceives the community has any of the concerns regarding education.	<i>RQb</i>
<b>Attitudes towards minorities/ Social exclusion</b>	Whether the respondent expresses that s/he thinks there is positive/ negative attitude towards/ treatment of minority person/ people/ groups/ girls/ children within the community.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>6. Factors affecting education: Personal/ Family factors</b>		
<b>Early marriage</b>	Any mention of early marriage.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Pregnancy</b>	Any mention of pregnancy.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Geographic location</b>	Urban, rural or semi-urban area.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Language of instruction</b>	When a girl has a different language of instruction in school to that of the language used at home.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Overage girl</b>	Girls attending school older than the average age for that grade.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Disability</b>	Any mention of a disability or learning difficulty.	<i>RQc</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Girl/s health/disability challenges/ S&amp;R Health/ Mental health</b>	Any expression of hardship or challenge of girl(s) due to health or disability, sexual and reproductive health.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Orphan status /family bereavement</b>	Mention of orphan status.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Migration history/ mobility/ displacement</b>	Including pastoral lifestyles; including if the girl has migrated and moved to another town for work or study.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Natural / environmental disruptions</b>	Including weather disruptions, but not general talk about weather conditions. This also includes lack of water or unsanitary water sources.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Household educational background</b>	General family education background, whether educated or not; this is a generational issue, to capture whether there is a change in the perception of education or access to education between the previous generation and the current one.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Household poverty</b>	Capture lack of access to pads and to electricity, lack of food, as well as general poverty of the family.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Housework commitments</b>	References to work inside of the household that is not related to school work. This includes but is not limited to: cooking, cleaning, looking after siblings, looking after a relative, working on the family land (note this is different to paid employment), collecting firewood/ water.	
<b>Work outside the home</b>	References to work outside of the home, generally for paid employment. References to prostitution or other sex-work should also be coded as gender-based violence.	
<b>7. Factors affecting education: Female aspirations</b>		

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Girls' self-esteem and aspiration</b>	Respondents' comment and opinion about girls' aspirations, future outlook, general level of confidence; or girls' perception on education; what girls aspire to in life, whether it is to gain good education; determination to study well; get married and have children...	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Local women of Influence / role models</b>	Mentions of local women or role models who are noted to have an impact on girls' education, or mentions of the role of women in the community on girls' education more broadly.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Ability to make decisions (Marriage &amp; pregnancy &amp; Education)</b>	Whether the girl has the ability and power to make a decision about when and who she wants to marry, get pregnant (how many, etc).	<i>RQb</i>
<b>8. Factors affecting education: Safety</b>		
<b>Journey to school safety and security</b>	Any issue that children face on the way to school: violence, fear of violence, harassment, traffic issues, wild animal attacks, sexual harassment, bullying.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Community related safety and security</b>	Any issue within the community: clan violence, sexual abuse, theft, domestic violence, adults attacking children, children attacking children.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i>
<b>Violence experienced in the home</b>	Any mention on the forms of violence in the home.	<i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Support mechanisms for girls</b>	Any mention of the support systems for girls if they do experience violence.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i>
<b>Reporting mechanisms for girls</b>	Any mention on the ways in which the girls can report these cases. Any mention on how the schools or projects follow up with these cases.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>9. Factors affecting education: Learning resources</b>		
<b>Access to digital resources in the home</b>	Access to a TV, radio, tablet or telephone for online learning.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Access to physical resources in the home</b>	Books, learning packs, pens and paper, worksheets.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>Access to resources outside of the home</b>	Community learning centres, study groups, remedial classes.	<i>RQa</i> <i>RQb</i> <i>RQc</i> <i>RQd</i>
<b>10. Factors affecting education: School infrastructure and support</b>		
<b>Toilet situation at school</b>	Including separate for boys and girls, availability of toilets, WASH facilities.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Distance from home to school</b>	Long distance or short distance.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Teaching quality</b>	Any mention of quality of teaching and support to teachers.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Teacher absenteeism</b>	Any mention of teacher absenteeism or teachers missing from schools/ lessons.	<i>RQc</i>
<b>Academic performance</b>	Any mention of academic performance (general or in some subjects) either supporting or being a barrier to girls' education.	<i>RQc</i>

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Quality/ availability of school facilities/ infrastructure</b>	Desks, chairs, water, electricity, classrooms, situation of school building/ structure.	RQc
<b>School fees/ cost of school</b>	Uniforms, shoes, paying teachers, fees.	RQc
<b>School support for special needs / disability</b>	Any mention of these activities before, during or after school closure.	RQc
<b>Social service delivery (incl. meals)</b>	Whether the school provides meals or any other services and packages.	RQc
<b>11. Political Economy Analysis*</b>		
<b>Challenges to girls' education</b>	Any mention of challenges specific to girls' education (before or during Covid-19) (please note this will also be covered by some codes above - double code for PEA).	In your opinion, what are the main challenges facing girls' education [both in the context of Covid-19 and otherwise]?
<b>Girls' future education outcomes</b>	Any mention of factors likely to influence girls' education in the future (Double code for PEA).	In your opinion, what are the main factors that will allow girls to continue to attend and do well in school in the coming years? How far has this been affected because of the pandemic?
<b>Political, social and economic factors in the country/ region/ community influencing the project</b>	Any mention of contextual factors influencing project activities or outcomes (Double code for PEA).	Can you provide an explanation of some of the political, social and economic factors in the country/region/community that may have influenced project strategies and outcomes?

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Key stakeholders in girls' education</b>	Explicit mention of stakeholders involved in delivering girls' education through the project (Double code for PEA).	Who are the key stakeholders involved in delivering girls' education through this GEC project?
<b>Interaction between stakeholders in girls' education</b>	Any mention of how key stakeholders working through the project interact with each other (Double code for PEA).	In your opinion, how do they interact with each other, and are particular groups more influential than others?
<b>Influential stakeholder groups in girls' education</b>	Any mention of stakeholders that are particularly influential in the project intervention (Double code for PEA).	In your opinion, how do they interact with each other, and are particular groups more influential than others?
<b>Incentives or disincentives to support girls' education</b>	Any mention of incentives or disincentives for education stakeholders engaged by the project (Double code for PEA).	What are the incentives and disincentives, in your opinion, that motivate the actions of these people? Please give details.
<b>12. Changes in education outcomes - both Covid-19 and non Covid-19 related (girls)</b>		
<b>Learning - improvement</b>	Reports of improvements in learning (whether due to Covid-19 or not) and factors supporting those.	
<b>Learning - no change</b>	Reports that learning stayed the same.	
<b>Learning - worsening</b>	Reports of worsening in learning (whether due to Covid-19 or not) and factors supporting those.	
<b>Access - improvement</b>	Reports of improvements in access to education (enrolment, attendance or retention) (whether due to Covid-19 or not) and factors supporting those.	

Level 1		
CODES	Explanation- What does the code entail?	Research questions
<b>Access - no change</b>	Reports that access to education (enrolment, attendance or retention) stayed the same.	
<b>Access - worsening</b>	Reports of worsening in access to education (enrolment, attendance or retention) (whether due to Covid-19 or not) and factors supporting those.	

# Annex 6 - Sampling Frame and Sample Sizes (Quantitative Data Collection)

The starting point for learning outcomes in this research was the data collected as part of the midline evaluations of the GEC programs in Kenya and Nepal. This data, collected in July 2019, were the most recent before the school closures due to Covid-19 in 2020. This was our ‘before’ – and to estimate the ‘after’, we conducted primary data collection between February-March 2021 using the same learning assessment instruments used by the external evaluators in the same schools to estimate the learning loss. As such, we inherited the schools for the primary data collection rather than resampling, with our sampling frame being the list of schools at midline – with a view to collecting in all schools included in the midlines. We included both treatment and control schools to maximise our sampling power.

In Kenya, the midline external evaluation was conducted by Women Educational Researchers of Kenya. The midline dataset included a total of 8,942 observations with learning assessment data across 197 primary and 70 secondary schools.

Within the 70 secondary schools, there were 1,481 and 1,274 learning assessment cases for girls attending Form 1 and Form 2 of secondary schools. After excluding those who were ‘benchmarking’ schools – that is, had only a small number of girls tested in later grades, we sought access to 66 schools. Due to Covid restrictions, we could not access Kilifi region, which left us 52 schools. Of these, the data collection was conducted successfully in 50 schools – with issues accessing the other two schools due to Covid concerns from school leaders. Of these, 41 were previously treatment schools and 9 were previously control schools.

In Nepal, the midline external evaluation was conducted by Foundation for Development Management (FDM). The midline dataset included a total of 579 observations with learning assessment data across 47<sup>1</sup> secondary schools.<sup>2</sup> A sample of 45 secondary schools was selected for the primary data collection in 2021.<sup>3</sup> Of these, 30 schools were treatment, while the remaining 15 schools served as control during the midline evaluation.

**In Kenya**, a total of 2,313 girls were tested Post-Covid-19 compared to 2,289 girls at Midline across Forms 1 and 2 (the first two years of secondary education) across the 50 sampled schools. The study aimed to replicate the sampled numbers from the Midline data in each school, yielding 46 pupils on average per school.

At Midline, 54% of pupils attended Form 1, while 46% of pupils attended Form 2. In Post-Covid-19, pupils were split equally between the forms as shown in Table 1 below. We find our sample to be relatively balanced, aside from more children reporting certain disabilities and speaking Kiswahili at home than at Midline (see Table 2 [Table 1](#) below).

**In Nepal**, a total of 1,685 girls across grades 8-12 were tested post-covid, while there were 577 girls tested at Midline across the 45 sampled schools. The remaining sample of girls (1,572 Post-Covid-19 and 464 Midline) are referred to as ‘cross-cohort’ sample. The cross-cohort sample consists of different girls, but a comparison is possible as a sample of girls attending the same grades at two different points in time is collected.

Alongside this sample, 113 of these girls tested at Midline were identified and tested again post-Covid-19 – these are referred to as a ‘panel cohort’ sample. These girls typically progressed two grades between the two data collection points.

The midline data collected included insufficient number of observations on grades 8 and 11, but because we were already in the schools, we decided to collect data on grade 8 girls (with a view to seeing how learning levels vary between years in the same cohort) – **but only the sample of cross-cohort girls attending grades 9 and 10 are included in the analysis to answer RQb** in Nepal. This is a cross-cohort sample of 1,046 and 432 girls in Post-Covid-19 and Midline.

As the sample was small in Nepal, the IE team aimed to increase the sample numbers in each school, yielding 12 pupils on average for each grade in each school instead of an average of 3-5 pupils at Midline.

For the midline sample, 59% were drawn from Grade 9, and 41% Grade 10 at Midline – this is slightly unbalanced, so we split the sample equally between the two forms in our data collection. This is shown in

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**Panel sample**

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**Cross-cohort sample**

<sup>1</sup> In baseline external evaluation data, there were 45 secondary schools with learning assessment data.

<sup>2</sup> Secondary schools include lower secondary (grade 8), secondary (grades 9 & 10), and higher secondary (grade 11).

<sup>3</sup> Two schools were dropped due to issues such as having only one observation.

Grade	Midline	Post-Covid	Midline	Post-Covid
Grade 8	15	-	28	526
Grade 9	61	-	257	534
Grade 10	37	17	175	512
Grade 11	-	60	4	-
Grade 12	-	36	-	-
Total	113	113	464	1,572

Table 3 below, while

Table 4 below shows the cross-cohort sample balance and characteristics of panel girls.

Alongside the learning tests, we also try to unpack why average learning levels have changed - to do so, we look at girls' time use which makes use of the Post-Covid-19 data only – here, we use the full sample of girls to maximise the number of observations (so we include data from all forms in Nepal. as there is no need for a comparison with Midline evaluation data).

Table 1. Sample size by grade, Kenya

Grade	Midline	Post-Covid
Form 1	1,229	1,162
Form 2	1,060	1,151
Total	2,289	2,313

Table 2. Sample balance, Kenya

Variable	Midline	Post-Covid
Age	16.11	16.34
Married	1%	1%
Language spoken at home: Kiswahili	41%	48%
Seeing disability	3%	4%
Hearing disability	1%	2%
Walking disability	2%	2%
Remembering disability	2%	5%
Self-care disability	1%	3%
Communication disability	2%	4%
Serious illness during last year	26%	24%

Table 3. Sample sizes by grade, Nepal

Grade	Panel sample		Cross-cohort sample	
	Midline	Post-Covid	Midline	Post-Covid
Grade 8	15	-	28	526
Grade 9	61	-	257	534
Grade 10	37	17	175	512
Grade 11	-	60	4	-
Grade 12	-	36	-	-
Total	113	113	464	1,572

Table 4. Cross-cohort sample balance, Nepal

Variable	Panel sample		Cross-cohort sample	
	Midline	Post-Covid	Midline	Post-Covid
Age	15.96	15.21	15.48	17.42
Married	1%	0%	0%	0%
Language spoken at home: Nepali	57%	35%	55%	39%
Language spoken at home: Tharu	42%	35%	42%	43%
Seeing disability	1%	1%	1%	1%
Hearing disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Walking disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Remembering disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Self-care disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Communication disability	0%	1%	0%	0%
Serious illness during last year	11%	5%	4%	5%



# Annex 8 - Which Girls Were Identified by the Prediction Model as Being ‘At Risk’ of Dropout?

Table 1: Significance of prediction factors by type of prediction model, Kenya

Prediction Model	Broad prediction				Broad prediction, only Secondary				Strict prediction				Strict prediction, only Secondary			
	No risk	Risk	T-stat	Difference	No risk	Risk	T-stat	Difference	No risk	Risk	T-stat	Difference	No risk	Risk	T-stat	Difference
Own animals	0.602	0.596	0.871	0.006	0.577	0.498	2.355	0.079**	0.608	0.573	4.942	0.035***	0.578	0.485	2.725	0.094***
Married	0.029	0.310	-74.411	-0.280***	0.002	0.861	-111.929	-0.859***	0.034	0.325	-73.843	-0.290***	0.005	0.868	-103.438	-0.863***
Own agricultural land	0.188	0.203	-2.569	-0.014**	0.168	0.211	-1.665	-0.043*	0.189	0.202	-2.174	-0.013**	0.169	0.207	-1.462	-0.038
Household head education: none	0.252	0.223	4.786	0.029***	0.241	0.257	-0.568	-0.017	0.246	0.243	0.505	0.003	0.243	0.238	0.163	0.005
Household head education: primary	0.537	0.610	-10.485	-0.073***	0.486	0.511	-0.727	-0.025	0.546	0.586	-5.508	-0.040***	0.484	0.529	-1.280	-0.044
Household head education: secondary or higher	0.211	0.167	7.860	0.044***	0.273	0.232	1.367	0.041	0.208	0.171	6.297	0.037***	0.273	0.233	1.285	0.040
Household size: 1-3	0.103	0.105	-0.588	-0.003	0.114	0.118	-0.174	-0.004	0.104	0.102	0.437	0.002	0.115	0.115	0.008	0.000
Household size: 4-6	0.611	0.552	8.557	0.059***	0.603	0.523	2.379	0.079**	0.611	0.545	9.321	0.067***	0.602	0.524	2.291	0.078**
Household size: 7-10	0.238	0.299	-10.179	-0.062***	0.246	0.274	-0.952	-0.028	0.237	0.310	-11.545	-0.073***	0.246	0.273	-0.888	-0.027
Household size: 10 and more	0.048	0.043	1.892	0.006*	0.037	0.084	-3.536	-0.048***	0.048	0.044	1.438	0.004	0.037	0.088	-3.751	-0.052***
Age	14.465	16.994	-84.031	-2.530***	17.207	17.460	-2.265	-0.253**	14.529	17.059	-79.916	-2.530***	17.201	17.529	-2.873	-0.327***
Overaged	2.139	3.963	-74.150	-1.824***	2.033	2.270	-2.261	-0.237**	2.185	4.013	-70.870	-1.829***	2.028	2.335	-2.874	-0.307***
Grade	6.418	7.095	-31.366	-0.678***	9.230	9.519	-7.061	-0.289***	6.441	7.090	-28.789	-0.650***	9.237	9.458	-5.277	-0.221***
N	28,247				2,633				28,247				2,633			

Annex 8 – GEC II Access and Learning: Which Girls Were Identified by the Prediction Model as Being ‘At Risk’ of Dropout?

**Table 2: Significance of prediction factors by type of prediction model, Nepal**

Prediction model	Grades 8, 9, and 10, both genders				Grades 8, 9, and 10, only females			
	Drop-out	Continue schooling	T-stat	Difference	Drop-out	Continue schooling	T-stat	Difference
Seeing disability	0.084	0.056	1.035	0.028	0.000	0.063	-1.098	-0.063
Hearing disability	0.011	0.035	-1.275	-0.025	0.000	0.032	-0.775	-0.032
Walking disability	0.000	0.013	-1.096	-0.013	0.000	0.011	-0.442	-0.011
Disability walking 100m	0.000	0.010	-0.999	-0.010	0.000	0.009	-0.403	-0.009
Disability walking 500m	0.032	0.006	2.222	0.025**	0.000	0.011	-0.442	-0.011
Self-care disability	0.011	0.000	2.253	0.011**	0.000	0.002	-0.180	-0.002
Disability speaking at home	0.000	0.008	-0.893	-0.008	0.000	0.007	-0.361	-0.007
Disability speaking outside of home	0.011	0.013	-0.162	-0.002	0.000	0.013	-0.478	-0.013
Learning disability	0.011	0.023	-0.773	-0.012	0.056	0.020	1.043	0.036
Disability memorizing	0.000	0.023	-1.492	-0.023	0.000	0.020	-0.602	-0.020
Concentration disability	0.011	0.019	-0.561	-0.008	0.111	0.014	3.107	0.097***
Disability of accepting changes	0.000	0.015	-1.185	-0.015	0.000	0.013	-0.478	-0.013
Behaviour disability	0.000	0.015	-1.185	-0.015	0.056	0.011	1.704	0.045*
Socialising disability	0.011	0.006	0.456	0.004	0.000	0.007	-0.361	-0.007
Household religion: buddhist	0.000	0.004	-0.630	-0.004	0.000	0.004	-0.254	-0.004
Household religion: christian	0.011	0.025	-0.868	-0.015	0.000	0.023	-0.655	-0.023
Household religion: other	0.021	0.000	3.204	0.021***	0.056	0.002	3.852	0.054***
Language spoken at home: Tharu	0.358	0.447	-1.598	-0.089	0.333	0.435	-0.858	-0.102
Roof material: hay	0.000	0.029	-1.688	-0.029*	0.000	0.025	-0.681	-0.025
Number of children in the household	1.926	2.334	-2.473	-0.408**	2.833	2.248	1.659	0.585*
Age	17.158	15.612	11.988	1.546***	16.722	15.840	2.889	0.882***
Overaged	7.400	5.426	6.692	1.974***	6.778	5.719	1.624	1.058
Household head education: secondary	0.221	0.207	0.314	0.014	0.389	0.203	1.909	0.186*
Household head education: college	0.053	0.058	-0.222	-0.006	0.111	0.056	0.992	0.055
Household size	6.779	6.200	1.970	0.579**	8.889	6.212	4.329	2.677***
Grade	9.600	9.236	5.550	0.364***	9.944	9.275	4.752	0.669***
Married	0.032	0.000	3.945	0.032***	0.167	0.000	10.527	0.167***
N	574				574			

Annex 8 – GEC II Access and Learning: Which Girls Were Identified by the Prediction Model as Being ‘At Risk’ of Dropout?

Prediction model	Grade 10, both genders				Grade 10, only females				Grade 8, both genders			
	Drop-out	Continue schooling	T-stat	Difference	Drop-out	Continue schooling	T-stat	Difference	Drop-out	Continue schooling	T-stat	Difference
Seeing disability	0.056	0.073	-0.474	-0.016	0.089	0.060	0.703	0.029	0.167	0.000	2.656	0.167**
Hearing disability	0.022	0.024	-0.081	-0.002	0.022	0.024	-0.062	-0.002	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Walking disability	0.000	0.000	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Disability walking 100m	0.000	0.000	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Disability walking 500m	0.011	0.024	-0.685	-0.013	0.000	0.024	-1.043	-0.024	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Self-care disability	0.000	0.008	-0.847	-0.008	0.000	0.006	-0.517	-0.006	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Disability speaking at home	0.000	0.008	-0.847	-0.008	0.000	0.006	-0.517	-0.006	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Disability speaking outside of home	0.000	0.008	-0.847	-0.008	0.000	0.006	-0.517	-0.006	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Learning disability	0.022	0.000	1.680	0.022*	0.044	0.000	2.782	0.044***	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Disability memorizing	0.011	0.008	0.236	0.003	0.022	0.006	1.003	0.016	0.000	0.054	-0.572	-0.054
Concentration disability	0.022	0.008	0.878	0.014	0.044	0.006	1.954	0.038*	0.000	0.081	-0.710	-0.081
Disability of accepting changes	0.000	0.008	-0.847	-0.008	0.000	0.006	-0.517	-0.006	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Behaviour disability	0.011	0.008	0.236	0.003	0.022	0.006	1.003	0.016	0.000	0.027	-0.399	-0.027
Socialising disability	0.011	0.000	1.181	0.011	0.000	0.006	-0.517	-0.006	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Household religion: buddhist	0.000	0.000	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Household religion: christian	0.034	0.008	1.359	0.026	0.000	0.024	-1.043	-0.024	0.167	0.054	0.992	0.113
Household religion: other	0.022	0.000	1.680	0.022*	0.000	0.012	-0.733	-0.012	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Language spoken at home: Tharu	0.640	0.306	5.102	0.334***	0.689	0.381	3.797	0.308***	0.000	0.541	-2.594	-0.541**
Roof material: hay	0.011	0.008	0.236	0.003	0.000	0.012	-0.733	-0.012	0.333	0.054	2.263	0.279**
Number of children in the household	2.461	1.863	3.604	0.598***	2.400	2.036	1.777	0.364*	2.167	2.568	-0.340	-0.401
Age	16.685	16.460	1.244	0.226	16.289	16.625	-1.536	-0.336	17.167	15.054	5.216	2.113***
Overaged	5.730	5.250	1.124	0.480	4.733	5.643	-1.769	-0.910*	9.167	7.054	5.216	2.113***
Household head education: secondary	0.202	0.250	-0.814	-0.048	0.200	0.238	-0.537	-0.038	0.000	0.243	-1.356	-0.243
Household head education: college	0.056	0.056	-0.008	-0.000	0.022	0.065	-1.116	-0.043	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
Household size	7.640	5.613	5.779	2.028***	8.000	6.048	4.478	1.952***	6.500	6.351	0.113	0.149
Grade	10.000	10.000	.	0.000	10.000	10.000	.	0.000	8.000	8.000	.	0.000
Married	0.011	0.008	0.236	0.003	0.044	0.000	2.782	0.044***	0.000	0.000	.	0.000
N	213				213				43			

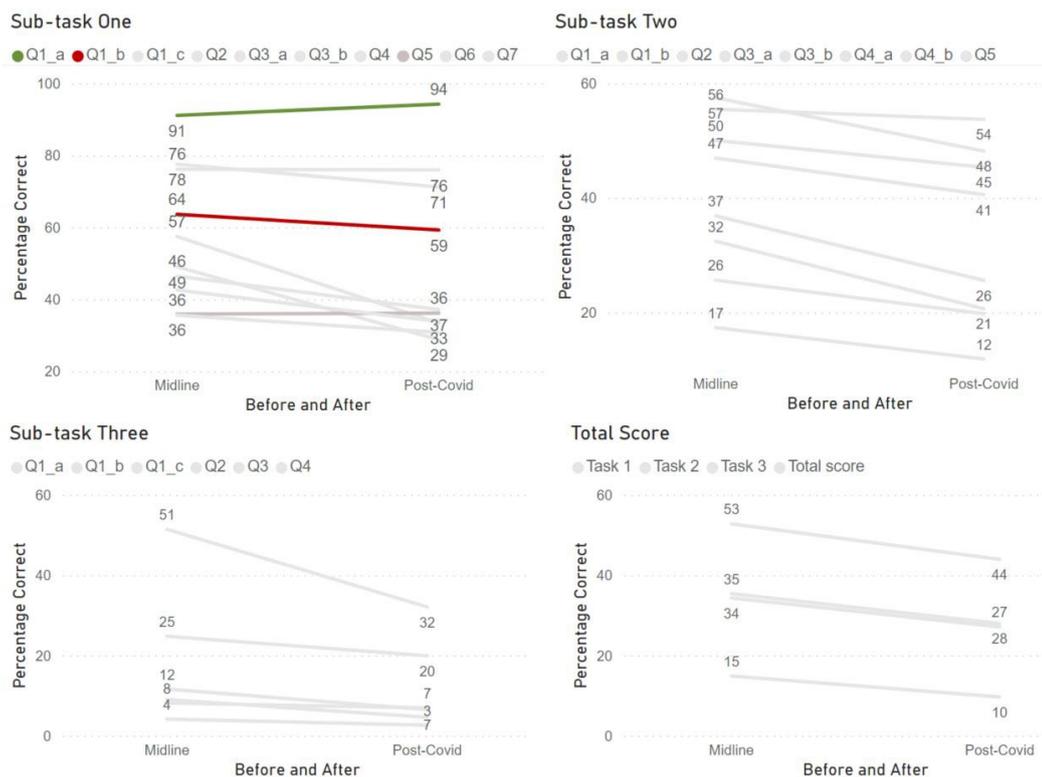
# Annex 9 - Changes in Girls' Learning Levels

In both countries, we observe a positive correlation between changes in learning levels and task difficulty, with greater falls in the more difficult tasks. In Kenya, we find learning losses in all but three questions of the SeGRA<sup>1</sup> test and all but two questions in maths. In four of those five questions, we observe a correlation between learning levels and task difficulty with one task of the SeGRA test being an exemption. Similarly, we observe greater learning falls in the more difficult tasks in Nepal. In both reading and maths, we estimate declines in learning across all tasks except for one maths and reading task. The panel sample of girls shows similar results to the cross-cohort sample of girls, validating the results.

For example, in Kenya, while there is an estimated learning gain on SeGMA Task1q1a, pupils registered a learning loss on Task1q1b. Both these tasks consist of multiplication exercises, but the level of difficulty marginally increases in the latter task. Analogy is observed for SeGRA where students registered a learning gain on Task1q1, but a learning loss on Task1q2. This is likely because the answer to the former could have been seen by pupils, while the latter requires a name for an object under a water surface. This is illustrated in *Figure 1* and *Figure 2* below, which detail the percentage changes per task achieved and examples of exercises for Maths and reading, respectively.

Similarly, task difficulty is found to be positively correlated with learning losses identified in Nepal, which are of a greater magnitude compared to Kenya. See *Figure 3* and *Figure 4* for an illustration of this association for Maths and reading in Nepal, respectively.

**Figure 1: Learning levels by maths subtask and example exercises, Kenya**



<sup>1</sup> The reading (SeGRA) test consisted of drawing inferences from two passages and an essay question where children write a short story based on a specific issue. The maths (SeGMA) assessment consisted of three parts, starting with simple numerical operations through simplifying algebraic expressions to more sophisticated maths problems.

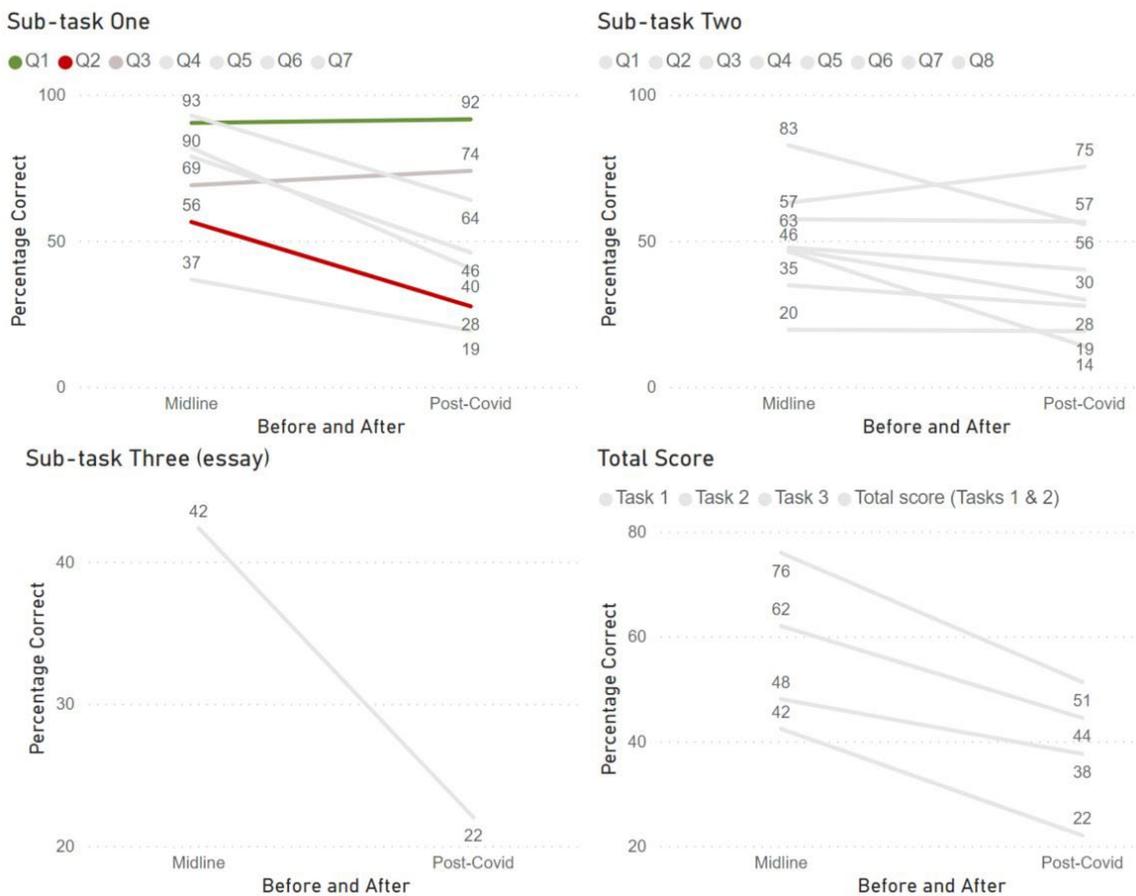
**Task 1**

1. Work out the following:

(a) 
$$\begin{array}{r} 67 \\ \times 4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$
 (1 mark)

(b) 
$$\begin{array}{r} 469 \\ \times 37 \\ \hline \end{array}$$
 (1 mark)

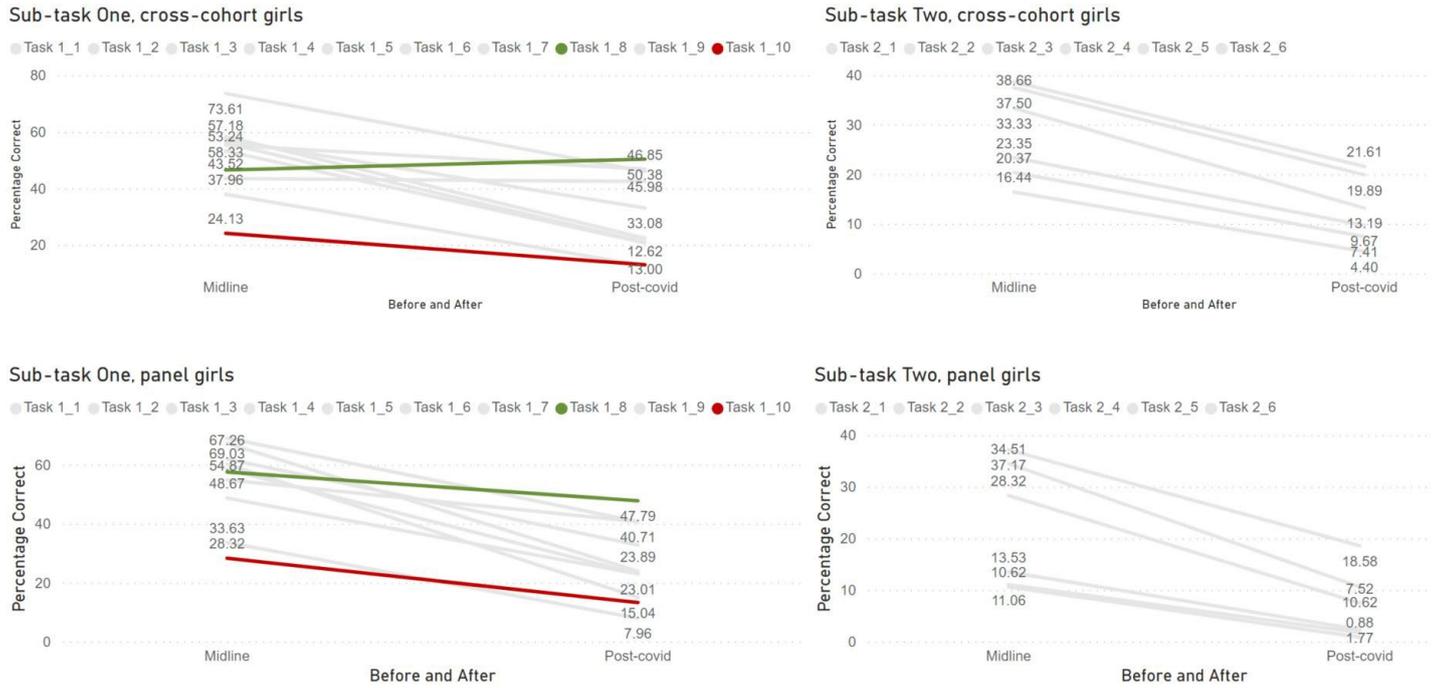
**Figure 2: Learning levels by reading subtask and example exercises, Kenya**



1) What do we call the largest surface covered with water? (1 mark)  
 ...Oceans.....

2) What do we call the hard like rocks found in the sea formed by tiny creatures (1 mark)  
 ...Coral reefs.....

**Figure 3: Learning levels by maths subtask and example exercises, Nepal**



**Task 1.**

8. Calculate the profit or loss while buying pair of shoes at Rs. 380 and selling it at Rs. 388.

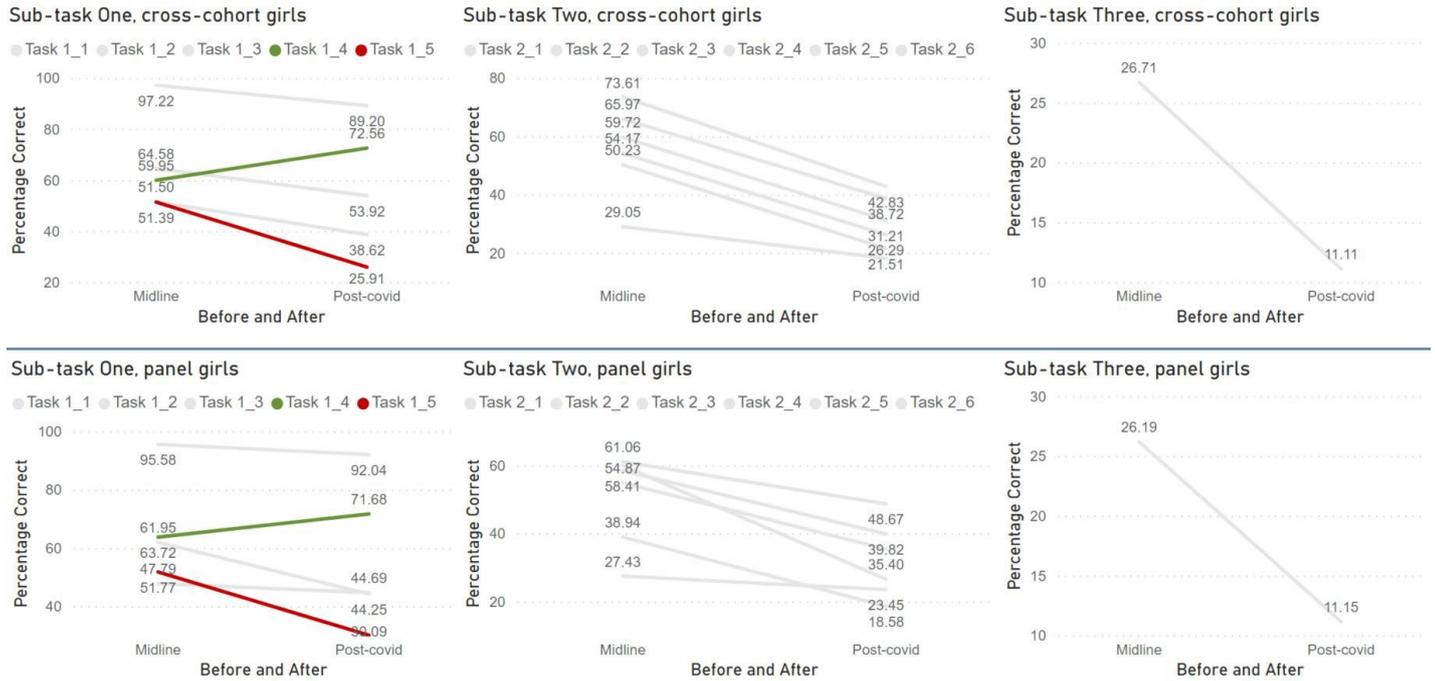
----- (1)

10. If the 2 year interest of Rs.8000 is Rs.1600 then find the interest rate. (You can use formula

$$\text{Interest} = \frac{100 \times I}{P \times T}$$

----- (1)

**Figure 4: Learning levels by reading subtask and example exercises, Nepal**



## Task 1.

4. Write how the decrease in the number of tigers in forest leads to the loss of farmer’s crops? Write the reason.

...As the number of tigers in the forest decreases, the number of grass-eating animals (deer and rabbits) increases and the farmers lose their crops.....

5. How is the earth's ecosystem disturbed? Explain.

...Deforestation, water pollution, carnivorous eating, and rapid fluctuations in the number of animals have affected the earth's ecosystem. The risk to food and shelter has increased.....

# Annex 10 - Steps Followed in Machine Learning Methods for Predicting Dropouts (for RQc)

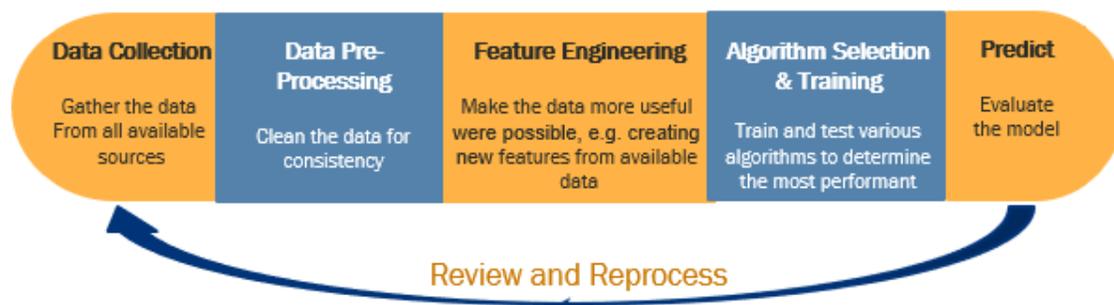
This Annex describes the steps taken by the IE team to conduct machine learning in order to help answer RQc - **How useful is a machine learning approach in identifying girls are most ‘at risk’ of not returning to school?**

The findings are summarised in the main document.

Machine learning has been applied to a broad range of problems, expanding on predictive modelling to introduce a review/reprocessing loop to allow the algorithms to ‘learn’ from previous models. In our example, we are limited to one wave of predictions and validations, so we are essentially using key aspects of the machine learning methods to try and improve the accuracy of predictions of which girls will drop-out of school, rather than testing a true machine learning model (which would require multiple waves of reviews and reprocessing to fine-tune the algorithms). That given, this note aims to provide further detail on the technical steps taken, and key decisions in the process.

At the highest level, we followed a standard series of steps to move from data collection, processing and training to predictions. This is shown visually in the six steps in *Figure 1*.

*Figure 1: The machine learning pipeline*



**Step 1. Data collection:** The first step in developing a machine learning system is to identify the source of the data that is being used – we used secondary data to initially train and predict, using semi-public household survey data to increase the sample size for training; while predicting on more targeted project data.

To answer our question, we used data from two sources, which provided information on the characteristics of school-aged girls: public household surveys *for training* the machine learning models (which had information on girls’ characteristics and their drop-out status); and GEC project data (which had girls’ characteristics, but not their drop-out status) *for which we could predict drop-out status* (*Table 1*).

*For the training data*, we used datasets from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) which capture both the status of schooling (to proxy drop-outs) but also a range of household characteristics.<sup>1</sup> These datasets, have many desirable characteristics that allow for their use in machine learning models – the data is at a child-level, relatively large (at least 6,000 records), and contains similar demographics and socioeconomic features. Additionally, because both MICS and DHS operate in many different countries, the same process can be applied elsewhere if needed.

<sup>1</sup> In Nepal, we thought we could use both DHS and MICS for the training. However, DHS is both more outdated (data collected in 2016) and has more restrictive variables.

**Table 1: Summary of data sources used**

Country (Implementer)	Training data <sup>2</sup>	Prediction data
Kenya (EDT)	MICS 2013-2014 (5 <sup>th</sup> round of survey) and DHS 2014	EDT monitoring data 2019
Nepal (Mercy Corps)	MICS 2019 (6 <sup>th</sup> round of survey)	Mercy Corps midline survey 2018

For the prediction data, we used the selected GEC projects’ monitoring data, with the long-run view of integrating any findings within the projects monitoring systems. This data contains the demographics information to match with the MICS/DHS prediction data, and also allows us to identify girls for validation purposes. The monitoring data collected by each project differs in terms of the features collected, as well as the scale of the project. In general, the monitoring data includes basic demographic information as well as a girl identifier.

In the case of EDT, we received project monitoring data that included all girls in the project, with their most recent demographics data collected in 2019. This data contained over 28,000 cases. In the case of Mercy Corps, we were given data on girls’ club attendance, which the project uses partly for flagging at-risk girls (when a student accumulates a certain number of days of unexplained absences) and project midline external evaluation data. We ended up using this midline data for prediction as it included attendance, drop-out information, and demographics data.

**Step 2. Data pre-processing:** Prior to running models, we had to clean the data and ensure that it was structured in the right way for analysis. Additional work was required to ensure data was well-structured for the algorithms - this included dealing with issues of missing values, outliers, wrongly labelled examples, and skewed data.

We used public data to train our models and project data, so the first step was to ascertain the ‘features’ that were common across the datasets. Ultimately, we must work with the lowest common denominator in terms of data features that we can train against. In this case, there were fewer features available in the prediction dataset in relation to the training data (DHS and MICS). Hence, we limited both sets of data to the features of the prediction set.

We cleaned the datasets to match the features in the training and prediction sets. For Kenya, as we used two training datasets (the MICS data, and the DHS data), we first did this process separately for MICS and DHS. Variables that were the same (or closely related) were mapped and kept for training. In cases where the variables were coded differently, we recoded them so that they were in the same format<sup>3</sup>. Lastly, we combined MICS and DHS data together, deleting variables that were present in one but not the other.

In Nepal, MICS data included a wider range of information including disability and work/chores, which were not present with MICS data from Kenya. This allowed the training set in Nepal to have wider sets of features than in Kenya.

The features we included in the final model for both countries were age, grade, overage, education level of head of household, household size, gender, marital status, and whether the family owns agricultural land.

For Nepal, the additional features included language, the kinds of disabilities the students had, whether the family lived in a rural or urban area, number of children in the household, religion and language of head of household, roof material, whether the girl had given birth and the number of children she had. For Kenya, one additional feature was whether the family owned animals.

For both countries, we limited the training data to the sub-sample of children and youth age 5-17 as they were school-aged. Further restrictions were made for some countries to best fit the situation at hand (discussed below).

### Issues with data and our decisions

In our data, there are more children of basic education age who are in school than out, meaning that our dataset is highly unbalanced, which can affect algorithm performance. To deal with this, we used the technique known as oversampling to increase the percentage of dropout (i.e. the “at risk” rows), from 5% of the data up to about 20%.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Different datasets are available for each country at different years.

<sup>3</sup> An example of this is the variable ‘Household size’. In MICS, the data is recorded in numbers, ranging from 1-17. However, in the monitoring data, the data is recorded in ranges (such as 4-6 people). We grouped data in MICS to match the monitoring data.

<sup>4</sup> We tried other techniques other than simple duplication - called SMOTE (synthetic minority oversampling techniques) which uses algorithms to generate new records based on other records but we did not have enough data to make this work well so simple duplication was better.

### Kenya

One drawback for using the semi-public household surveys is that they were collected infrequently – specifically, while the most recent monitoring data was from 2019, the most recent training data from MICS and DHS was from 2014. This creates a potential bias if the correlates of drop-out in 2014 changed.

An additional challenge is that there are some non-overlapping counties in the training and prediction data. MICS data used is not nationally representative, but only includes households from Turkana, Kakamega, and Bungoma counties. We combined the data from the three countries to form one dataset to use for training. DHS data contains all counties in the country. By contrast, EDT project works in 7 counties, one of which is Turkana. One option we had was to restrict the sample to only overlapping counties. However, that would make the sample size too low, and we wouldn't have been able to predict on counties in EDT not present in MICS. Hence, we combined data of all available counties together to form a training set.

### Nepal

We originally aimed to use both DHS and MICS for the training data, but focussed on just the MICS data, as it was collected in 2019. In Nepal, we restricted our sample to include only students at secondary level because the project girls were only secondary. However, this left us with the smallest size of training data (less than 1,500 cases). There was a trade-off between having a large number of training samples and having relevant samples – our hypothesis<sup>5</sup> was that only including girls that have similar characteristics would make the prediction more accurate.

**Step 3. Feature engineering:** We start with a long list of questions from the MICS/DHS surveys, which are saved in a dataset, with each characteristic stored in different ways. For example, a question with five options maybe in five columns, rather than one with multiple choices. To extract information from the data, we perform feature engineering. This usually follows two steps. First is feature transformation, where textual answers are converted to numbers. This step is crucial because all algorithms work on numbers and higher numbers signify higher weights. The weights can be assigned using knowledge on the literature of what characteristics are more predictive of the outcome. Next is feature creation or the process of creating new features – for example wealth indexes.

For the feature engineering, **we first had to decide on a definition of students at-risk of dropout.** This was done slightly differently for Kenya and Nepal, using two main variables:

- Whether a child attends school in the current year
- Whether a child attends school in the previous year

For Kenya, we tested a broader and strict definition of at-risk, based on information of whether a child attends school in the current and/or previous year or not.

For the strict definition, *we included only children* who used to attend school the previous year but were not attending any more. With this definition, children who are not attending school in this year, but were attending last year, are at-risk.

For the broad definition, a child is at-risk if he/she answers no to either questions. This means we include those who attend neither of the years, as well as those who did not attend the previous year, but attend this year. To ensure that we are not wrongly categorising children who just started school, we recategorise children aged 5 and 6 who attend this year but not last year as not at-risk.

For Nepal, instead of having simple 'at-risk' and 'not at-risk' definitions, we defined at-risk students in three categories: progress, repeat, and dropout. This means that the model would try to predict these three outcomes for the girls. *These definitions were adopted because we focused on transition of students from Lower to Higher Secondary*, in line with the projects sample of girls. Hence, it is important to separate out students who repeat Lower Secondary from those who progress to the next level of education. In our training data, we use four main variables from MICS data, namely:

- Whether a child attends school in the current year
- Whether a child attends school in the previous year
- Grade level that a child attends in the current school year

<sup>5</sup> This is a testable hypothesis which we looked at, in part, in Kenya, where we trained using all age ranges and a restricted sample. We discuss this more later.

- Grade level that a child attends in the previous school year

A child is progressing if he/she attends school in both years, and progresses by at least one grade level in the current year. A child is a repeater if he/she attends school in both years but remains in the same grade level. Lastly, a child is a dropout if he/she did not attend school in the current year (they can either attend or not attend the last school year, as long as they enrolled in school at some point in time). We dropped the cases where a child attended school in the current year and not last year (so has re-enrolled).

Other than the at-risk feature, we also put weights on the categorical variables based on our domain knowledge, and the results from the Kenya modelling, of which groups are more at-risk of dropping out of school. For instance, head of household having no schooling should have higher weight than head of household having a university education, as the latter makes the student more at-risk of dropping out. The same is with marital status, as being married makes girls a higher risk of dropping out. Additionally, we created an overage variable based on age and grade.

**Step 4. Algorithm selection and training:** Many possible algorithms are available to researchers. In practice, choosing which algorithm to use is done through trialing, and observing their performance. Data is partitioned into train, test, and validation sets prior to training so that the resulting algorithm can be compared and tested on data that it has not learned from. When we have the algorithm, this can be tested with the data we set aside before training. Performance of the model is assessed through the confusion matrix, classification report, and feature analysis. These are reviewed to see if the algorithm suits our purposes or not. If the performance was not satisfactory, we adjusted the parameters and reran the process.

After the algorithm was trained, it was reviewed for feature analysis and performance metrics (accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 score) so that the features can be fine-tuned, adjusted, and reanalysed.

We tested seven different algorithms for each model from the sklearn Python package:

- Logistic Regression
- Linear Discriminant
- K-Neighbours
- Decision Tree
- Random Forest
- Gaussian-NB
- SVM-SVC

The Random Forest algorithms performs best for all our models. This is likely due to the unbalanced nature of the data and the relatively small feature set combined with the power of using many decision trees participating in the prediction process.

While simpler models, such as a logistic regression were easier to interpret, they led to lower prediction power, and they did not perform well on our data.

**Step 5. Make predictions:** Here we ran the algorithm on the prediction dataset.

The algorithm was tested with the data we set aside before training and we obtained a list of girls with their predictions. This list, less our predictions, was shared with the data collection partners for roll call (see below).

**Step 6. Review predictions**

#### **Roll-call validation and qualitative work (primary data collection)**

We conducted primary data collection to answer two questions:

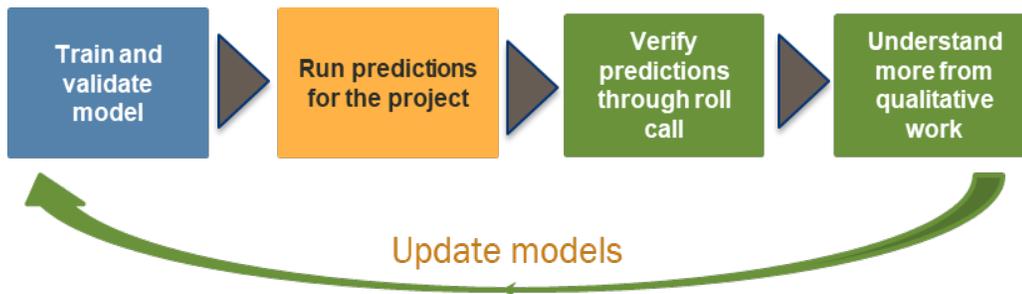
- How accurate were the predictions from the machine learning model?

Annex 10 – GEC II Access and Learning Study: Steps Followed in Machine Learning Methods for Predicting Dropouts (for RQc)

- Which factors affecting drop-out were highlighted by girls but had not been considered in the machine learning model?

We went out into the schools and did roll call to verify whether girls in our list (previously enrolled in that school) were back in school and how that matched our predictions. Alongside this, we picked approximately four girls to do in-depth qualitative interviews to identify missing factors in our models. We also conducted FGDs, teacher interviews, and community interviews.

**Figure 2: Roll-call validation and qualitative work (green boxes)**



For Kenya, EDT monitoring data was used for dropout predictions which included secondary school girls to assess whether they progress or drop-out of school. The monitoring data was collected between August 2018–March 2019, while the new post-Covid-19 roll-call data to verify predictions was collected between February–March 2021. As EDT decided to collect project data on girls at primary level, so as to not duplicate actions, we instead focus on validating our predictions of girls at secondary level.

To verify the Kenyan predictions, 52 schools were selected (see the main report for details – but to mimic the GEC midline data) of which we had monitoring data, and therefore predictions, for 208 girls. These girls were attending secondary grades (predominantly Forms 1 & 2) during the midline data collection in 2019 before the school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. If they were still enrolled, it was expected to find these girls one grade up from their midline grade – mainly in forms 2 & 3 if progressed successfully. *Table 2* below summarises the number of girls shared to try and locate during the roll call.

**Table 2: Sample size for roll call shared, Kenya**

Grade	# girls
Form 1	169
Form 2	37
Form 3	0
Form 4	2
<b>Total secondary</b>	<b>208</b>

Of the 208 secondary school girls shared for roll calls, the research team received information on enrolment status of 203 girls. Of these, 138 were still enrolled in 2021, while the enrolment status of 30 girls could not be verified. This means that the roll call status was not verified in 35 cases (17% of the original shared secondary lists).

**Table 3: Number of girls from roll call received, Kenya**

Enrolled	# girls
Yes	138

Annex 10 – GEC II Access and Learning Study: Steps Followed in Machine Learning Methods for Predicting Dropouts (for RQc)

Enrolled	# girls
No	35
Unknown	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>

The 30 girls for whom the roll call could not be verified come predominantly from Form 1 in 2019. The main reason for not being able to verify girls' status was no ability to speak with the caregiver due to offnet number or simply not picking up calls (90%). In three cases, there was a mismatch between the EDT monitoring data and what was shared by a primary caregiver when reached over the phone. Therefore, these girls could not be found in the expected secondary schools as they were in lower primary grades in 2021. This may in fact be a reason for some other of the unknown cases as the girls who were not found come from Form 1 of the EDT monitoring data in 80% of cases as shown in [Table 4](#).

**Table 4: Grade (in 2019) of unknown girls in 2021, Kenya**

Grade	# girls
Form 1	24
Form 2	5
Form 4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

Therefore, 173 girls are used in the analysis and their enrolment status is verified against predictions.

For Nepal, Mercy Corps' midline survey conducted in January 2019 was used to make predictions about girls' future transition or drop-out. The newly collected post-Covid-19 roll-call data was collected in April 2021. To verify the Nepalese predictions, 45 sampling schools were selected which were attended by 574 girls in grades 8, 9, and 10 in 2019. Therefore, if still enrolled, it is expected to find these girls two grades up from their midline grade – in grades 10, 11, and 12. The predictions are checked against transition outcome for 317 girls who were in grades 9 and 10 in January 2019 and are therefore expected to be found in higher secondary levels. Furthermore, transition status is verified for 214 girls who are expected to have completed their secondary school education since they were in grades 9 and 10 in January 2019 which are the highest grades available in their schools, and for 43 grade 8 girls who are expected to transition into secondary schools.

**Table 5: Sample size for roll call, Nepal**

Grade	# girls who should transition into a secondary school	# girls who should transition within their school	# girls who should have completed their school
Grade 8	43	0	0
Grade 9	0	183	135
Grade 10	0	134	79
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>214</b>

The roll call status was verified successfully for 442 of the 574 girls (77%). In the remaining cases, the enrolment status could not be verified as the girl was not enrolled in the thought school, but no information was obtained on whether the

girl transferred to a different school or dropped out (in 120 cases). In two cases, the girl was not known to the school, and the transition status of the 10 grade-8 girls who were meant to transition into a secondary school is unclear as shown in *Table 6*.<sup>6</sup> The girls for whom the enrolment status could not be verified come from various grades as shown in

*Table 7*.

**Table 6: Roll call status by type of school, Nepal**

Enrolment status	# girls who should transition into a secondary school	# girls who should transition within their school	# girls who should have completed their school
Drop-out of school	16	48	52
Continues education in this or another school	16	194	116
Not enrolled in this school but no info whether in education	0	74	46
This girl did/does not study in this school	1	1	0
Unknown: might have migrated to another village or India for work but no one has any information	10	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>214</b>

**Table 7. Grade (in 2019) of unknown girls in 2021, Nepal**

Grade	# girls
Grade 8	11
Grade 9	83
Grade 10	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>

*Full details of the results are in the main body of the text.*

<sup>6</sup> Data collection team mentioned that these girls could have got married in India, but no one has definitive information on their enrolment status in the school.

# Terms of Reference (ToR) for GEC II Independent Evaluation (IE) Evaluation Studies

Version 3

September 2020

## Evaluation Study 1: Access and Learning Outcomes

### Abbreviations

AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
BL	Baseline
Covid-19	Coronavirus 2019
EL	Endline
ESWG	Evaluation Studies Working Group
FCAS	Fragile and conflict-affected states
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FM	Fund Manager
F2F	Face-to-face
GEC	Girls' Education Challenge
GEC-II	Girls' Education Challenge Phase II
GEC-T	Girls' Education Challenge – Transitions
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
HHS	Household Survey
IE	Independent Evaluation
IP	Implementing Partner
LNGB	Leave No Girl Behind
ML	Midline
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
REA	Regional Education Advisors
ToR	Terms of Reference
VfM	Value for Money

## Purpose and Primary Audiences

### Thematic focus

1. The theme of the proposed study is **continued access and learning for girls within the Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC)**. This Evaluation Study is expected to commence in October 2020.
2. The purpose of this evaluation study is to provide a deeper understanding of how access to education and learning has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically: how projects have supported continued learning during the pandemic; how projects are supporting girls’ return to school following re-openings, and the learning losses experienced by girls during this period.
3. Following feedback from the ESWG, this study has been streamlined to focus on the Covid-19 period and will be complemented by a future study which will look at ‘what was working’ for access and learning retrospectively up until March 2020. The timings and terms of reference for that study will be agreed with FCDO once more details are known about the timelines for delivery of the projects’ endline data.
4. Table 1 summarises the intended purpose of the study against its expected audiences.

**Table 1: Study objectives and stakeholder audiences**

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Audience	Study Objectives
		How access to education and learning has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic
Primary stakeholders	DFID GEC Programme Team	✓
	DFID Education Advisors	✓
	GEC Phase II Fund Manager	✓
	Project Implementing Partners (IPs)	✓
Secondary stakeholders	Other international donors, agencies and stakeholders working in and investing in education	✓

### Background and study objectives

5. The Covid-19 pandemic is an emergency of unprecedented scale that, when it hit, resulted in more than 1.5 billion children cut off from school, with many of those in developing countries facing a learning crisis<sup>1</sup>. This ongoing emergency will have long-standing effects and despite the best efforts and actions by national governments and international communities, learning losses will be unavoidable and considerable, and will disproportionately affect the more disadvantaged individuals across the world<sup>2</sup>. There is evidence that students – notably the most marginalised – will fall behind when schools are closed, and that falling behind can decrease children’s ability to progress<sup>3</sup>. Mitigating the short and long-term impact on children’s learning and well-being, and the role of education in achieving that given the Covid-19 crisis facing education systems the world over, will have a bearing on all aspects of this evaluation.
6. Following a rigorous consultation process with a range of stakeholders (including the Fund Manager, various FCDO (formerly DFID) colleagues, the Independent Advisory Group members), as well as through conducting a scoring exercise (see *Independent Evaluation of the GEC Phase II – Proposed revised evaluation approach in response to the Covid-19 Crisis* – henceforth “approach paper” – available upon request), this theme has emerged as one of two initial Evaluation Studies to be conducted by the Independent Evaluation (IE) team. This theme has also been highlighted as a gap in the global evidence base in recent publications from the REAL Centre (2020) and K4D (Hallgarten 2020).

<sup>1</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse> has a rolling count of those impacted by school closures.

<sup>2</sup> <https://hpatrinos.com/2020/06/08/the-economic-and-social-impact-of-covid-19-on-education/>

<sup>3</sup> Noam Angrist, Peter Bergman, David K. Evans, Susannah Hares, Matthew C. H. Jukes, Thato Letsomo, 2020. “Principles for Phone-Based Assessments of Learning.” CGD Working Paper 534. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/principles-phone-based-assessments-learning>

7. Given the magnitude of the Covid-19 disruption, the education experiences of girls have been substantially disrupted and projects have adapted to meet their changing needs. Given the importance of access and learning as GEC outcomes, this study will focus on understanding how they have changed during the pandemic period and how the programme has adapted to mitigate these issues. This is key to documenting evidence in a timely manner to support research into the learning losses during the Covid-19 crisis.

## Scope of Work

### Key Evaluation / Research Questions

8. This Evaluation Study will address the following **Area of Inquiry** from FCDO's ToR for the independent evaluation:
  - *How and why different approaches have delivered their intended (and unintended) outcomes, including improved literacy and numeracy, for different groups of marginalised girls in different contexts.*
9. Within this Area of Inquiry, this Evaluation Study will aim to address the following **high-level evaluation questions and sub-questions** as set out in FCDO's ToR for the independent evaluation:
  - *Which approaches /strategies have been more and less effective (how, why and for different groups of girls) in different contexts for:*
    - *Improving learning outcomes (numeracy, literacy and other outcomes);*
    - *Minimising attrition; and*
    - *Removing barriers to participating in education.*
10. This Evaluation Study will examine changes in relation to the period since the outbreak of Covid-19:
  - *Changes or differences that have emerged, or how projects have adapted, since the outbreak of Covid-19.*
11. The overarching research questions and potential research sub-questions that will be used to frame this Evaluation Study are listed below. These research questions will be further refined and tailored as part of the **design and development phase which is part of the desk-based review process** (see **Approach**) to ensure these can be answered within the time and budgetary constraints of this Evaluation Study.

#### **Research Questions – Covid-19 response and school reopening:**

- a) **How have projects sought to provide continued access to learning opportunities during school-closures?**
  - b) **How are the projects supporting girls to re-enter formal schooling (or alternative pathways), and with what effects on girls' access to learning opportunities?**
  - c) **How are projects identifying which girls are most at risk of not returning?**
  - d) **How have girls' learning levels changed during the Covid-19 period?**
12. The evidence on these research questions will be gathered from those projects that are determined to be part of this study, as based on the selection criteria (see Table 2).
  13. While the IE team recognises that there is limited evidence of what works in education during crises like the Covid-19 pandemic, it is anticipated that these questions would explore reasons behind why certain projects decided on and chose certain interventions and who to target, and on what basis those decisions were made. These questions alongside the others listed here will be further refined and tailored as part of the desk review phase (see **Approach section**) to ensure that the IE team can fully respond to them within the time and budgetary constraints of this Evaluation Study.

### Cross-cutting themes

14. Cross-cutting themes are intended to complement the research questions listed above through research sub-questions. These themes and research sub-questions will be further refined through the **design and development phase** to frame how and to what extent these can be answered given the time and budgetary constraints of the Evaluation Study.
15. For this evaluation study, the cross-cutting themes and how they will be addressed are as follows:
  - a) **Gender and inclusion:**

- How, and in what ways, do gender and other social and demographic factors<sup>4</sup> influence who accesses learning opportunities during school closures?
  - How, and in what ways, do gender and other social and demographic factors influence who is most at risk of failing to access or progress through schooling following the Covid-19 pandemic (for example, by comparing predicted risk factors for girls with risk factors for boys and identifying where there are similarities /differences, data permitting)?
  - How do girls’ learning levels vary according to their marginalisation factors (for example, for girls with and without disabilities (data permitting) – and how do the findings compare to changes in boys’ learning levels)?
  - Do the strategies used by projects to mitigate learning losses benefit girls equitably (compared to boys and less marginalised girls), or do these vary by demographic and marginalisation factors (location, socio-economic status, and other dimensions of marginalisation, such as disability and age where possible)?
- b) **Political economy analysis** – where possible, we will consider how political, social and economic factors interact with projects’ strategies to mitigate learning losses and their effects on girls’ learning outcomes.
- c) **Value for money (VfM)** – Where data are available, a value for money analysis will be conducted – i.e. VfM offered by different approaches in relation to different outcomes for girls and boys with different characteristics and in different contexts. Depending on data availability, the VfM analysis might be on a particular aspect of interventions related to access and learning. Given the time and data needs, it is likely that this will be carried out for 1-2 projects. This includes an assessment of economy, efficiency, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and equity.

### GEC Project Selection Strategy

16. The factors set out in Table 2 will be used as potential project selection criteria during the design and development stage to determine the final selection of projects for this evaluation study. This includes determining both the long-list and the short-list of projects to be included in the study. It is worth noting that these criteria may be amended during the design and development phase.

**Table 2: Proposed criteria for selecting the GEC Phase II projects for inclusion in the study**

Selection Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Availability of a range of project stakeholders for primary data collection	✓	
Availability of project data on learning outcomes	✓	
Availability of recent project baseline (BL) or midline (ML) quantitative data	✓	
Availability of (linked) project household characteristic data, including on aspects of marginalisation (poverty, disability etc)	✓	
Availability of project data on schools		✓
Availability of project data on out-of-school children in household survey/ girls’ survey collected by the FM		✓
Availability of project data from qualitative interviews with girls		✓

17. The FCDO’s ToR for the evaluation studies requires each study to cover 3 – 5 countries<sup>5</sup>. To respond to this, projects will initially be screened and selected based on the above **project selection criteria**, and programme

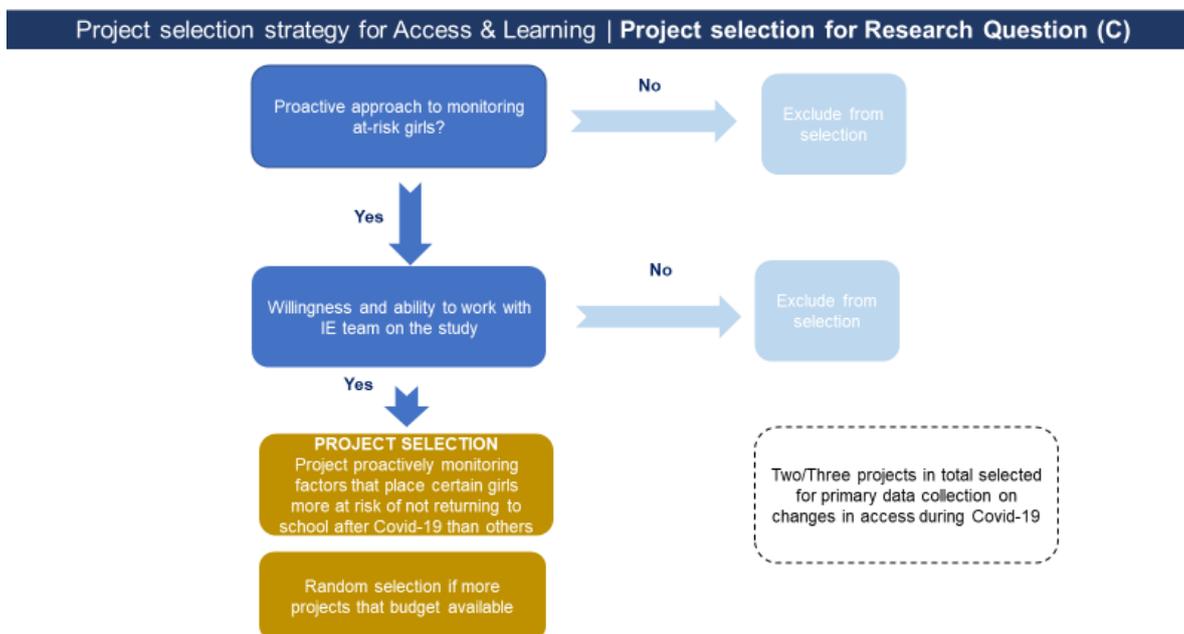
<sup>4</sup> The specific social and demographic factors (including marginalisation factors) will be informed during the design and development phase, which will enable us to classify the factors based on how they have been mapped at the portfolio level by the FM.

<sup>5</sup> While each study will cover 3 - 5 countries, due to the nature of the projects and the scope of the Evaluation Study, it will not be possible to assess and distinguish country-level effects from project-level effects observed during primary data collection (i.e. sampling will be done at the unit of the project-level rather than the country-level).

management information shared by the FM. This exercise is ongoing and the outcome will be included in the desk-based review report. The format for this is presented in an example (Annex 1). Please note this is merely an illustration of the format and content.

18. For this study on Access and Learning, we will draw on secondary data combined with project documentation, monitoring data and additional primary data collection.
19. We will use different project selection strategies for each question. For questions (A) and (B) we take a portfolio wide approach and look to map how projects are supporting both continued access and the return to schooling, before going into more detail for a sub-sample of projects which will form the sample base for questions (C) and (D).
20. The selection strategy for the deeper dive sub-sample is described in the section that follows, and summarised diagrammatically below. Overall, this approach should provide a **sample of four to five projects for primary data collection** to understand outcomes during the Covid-19 period in response to research questions (C) and (D) as follows:
  - a) Two or three projects for research question (C) on access; and
  - b) Two projects for research question (D) on learning.

**Figure 1: Project selection strategy for deeper dive and Research Question (C)**

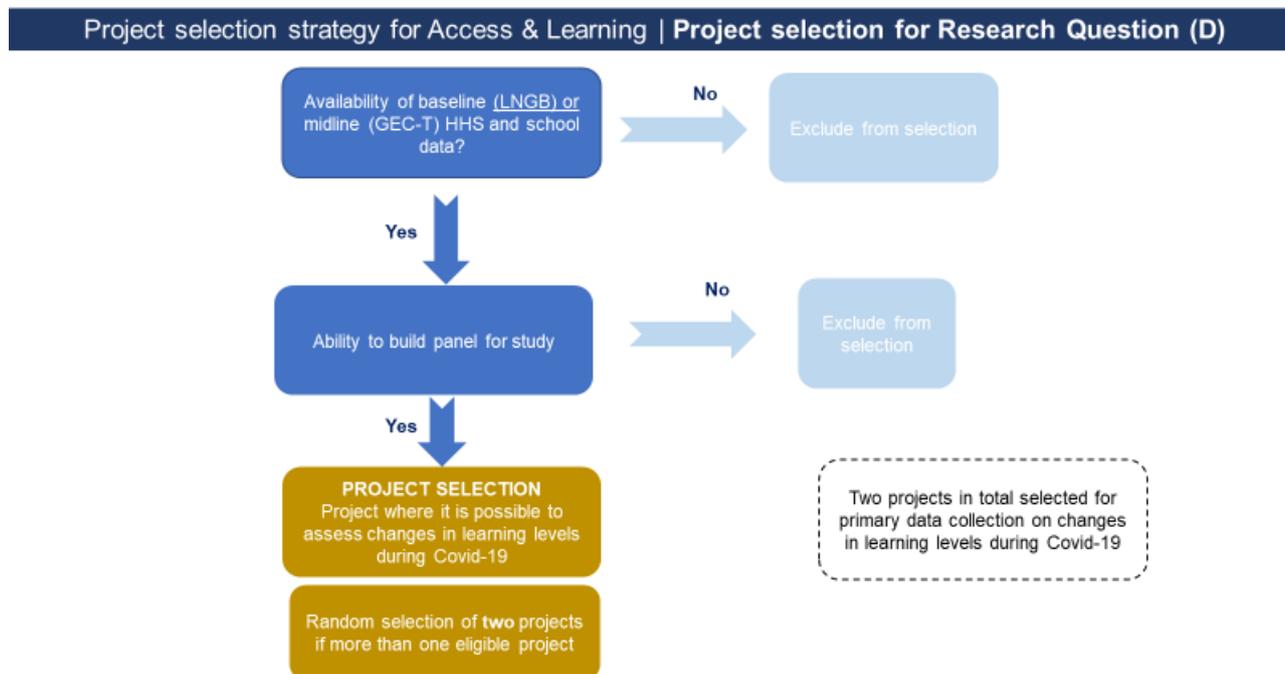


21. This research question will be framed around the work undertaken by the Fund Manager to develop a guidance note entitled ‘Inclusive approaches to drop out and retention in low-resource settings’, and seek to assess and expand on the projects methods for accessing, and acting on, information relating to the risk of drop-out.
22. We will seek to update the mapping completed by the FM for the guidance note, to develop a sub-sample of projects who are continually monitoring the risk of drop-out<sup>6</sup>, and who have updated (or want to update) their interventions to support girls accordingly.
23. We will work closely in consultation with the FM and look to sample projects from both windows, looking at projects which:
  - a) have monitoring data available during the Covid-19 period;
  - b) are willing and available to engage with the IE team on this Evaluation Study; and
  - c) have the capacity and willingness to adapt their monitoring data to facilitate data collection.

The exact number of projects that are affordable will depend on the data collection costs (which vary by country, and by region within countries). It is expected that two or three projects will be available /feasible – but this will be confirmed in the desk-review stage.

<sup>6</sup> This contrasts with projects who may have assessed the risk during the design stage only, or taken a less targeted strategy to supporting girls.

Figure 2: Project selection strategy for deeper dive and Research Question (D)



24. For **research question (D)**, on assessing changes in learning levels and learning losses, we will aim to undertake primary data collection to answer this question. We will purposefully sample projects that enable us to assess changes before and after the outbreak of Covid-19 (i.e. by recreating a panel data structure<sup>7</sup>). Where this is possible for more than two projects, we will randomly select two within these.
25. In addition to the above criteria, we will consult further with the FM and Regional Education Advisors (REAs) as part of the Evaluation Studies Working Group (ESWG) to assess whether there are additional projects that may be relevant to the study but whose data quality might be unknown or would otherwise preclude them from selection. This would allow us to assess whether the quality of existing project data as gathered by their external evaluators is biasing project selection, and what actions can be taken to avoid this.
26. At this stage, prior to the selection process for the projects for the learning losses, it is not yet known how many projects will be eligible for the study, or whether the process will generate bias towards projects based on the quality of the available data. This process will be a key activity completed during the design and development phase of the study and the outcome of this discussed further with the FM and relevant IPs.
27. In addition, based on the outcome of the project selection strategy, it is possible that the same projects will be eligible for inclusion for all research questions for this study. Should this be the case, and should multiple projects qualify for all research questions, then this and the possible trade-offs and benefits of including these overlapping projects for this Evaluation Study (i.e. broader representation across the GEC portfolio versus a deeper analysis into fewer projects) will be discussed internally and with FCDO. On the basis of this, the IE team will propose a selection to the FCDO and reach a decision to inform final project selection.

## Evaluation / Research Methodology

### Approach

28. We will begin with an initial mapping of the activities that have been conducted by the projects to support access and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic and how they plan to support the return to schooling. We will further map how projects identify and selected their beneficiaries. Where possible, this will build on the FM’s tracker information for the two windows (i.e. GEC-T and LNGB).

<sup>7</sup> By this we mean that we can speak to before and after for the same unit of observation – so we have multiple measures over time.

29. Our approach to the evaluation / research methodology will be structured in three key phases as set out in Table 3.

**Table 3: Description of phases for the Evaluation Study**

Phase	Purpose
1. Desk-Based Review Phase	The purpose of this phase is to enable us to further refine the design and approach to the study based on the indicative methodology presented in this ToR. This includes the development of research tools as needed to gather the relevant data to answer the proposed research questions.
2. Primary Data Collection Phase	This phase refers to the collection of primary and secondary data used to respond to the proposed research questions.
3. Analysis and Reporting Phase	This will take place once all data has been gathered and will be analysed in line with our analytical framework to respond to the proposed research questions.

Further details on each of these phases, their timelines and corresponding outputs are included in the **Research Methodology, Workplan and Budget** and **Expected Deliverables** sections.

***Covid-19, continued access to learning, and school /alternative pathways reopening***

- 30. We will review in more detail how projects have been seeking to provide continued access to learning during the period of school closures. The study will consider the different approaches to, and levels of, engagement that projects have had in supporting continued access.
- 31. We will also review in more detail how projects are seeking to ensure girls’ return to school /alternative pathways as countries resume schooling. The study will consider the different approaches to support children’s return to school /alternative pathways, and how they are identifying and differentiating between their beneficiaries.
- 32. This will be a staged process:
  - a) We will begin by mapping, at the portfolio level, how projects responded to the challenge of providing continued access, and are responding to, or preparing for, the challenge of school /alternative pathways reopening. Alongside the question of *how projects are supporting continued learning and a return to school /alternative pathways*, we will seek to understand *who projects are supporting and how they are allocating scarce resources at a time of increased need*.
  - b) We will review projects’ activities to better understand how they have identified girls deemed to be at risk, and how they have sought to help them. Our understanding, based on the GEC Guidance Note on Drop Out and Retention,<sup>8</sup> is that some projects are actively monitoring attendance data, among other measures, to target students at risk; and using descriptive statistics to detect patterns to facilitate community discussions.
- 33. For the sampled projects we will complement this portfolio view with primary data collection, including in-depth qualitative interviews with girls, teachers, and parents, to gather more evidence on the effectiveness of continued access to learning (through mitigating learning losses), and /or how are supporting girls to re-enter schooling /alternative pathways.

***Covid-19 and school reopening – how support is targeted – Research Question (C)***

- 34. For a sub-sample of projects, this Evaluation Study will investigate if, and how more advanced predictive techniques, such as applying machine learning algorithms to identify the key factors which predict drop-out and repetition, can deepen our understanding of these risk factors and improve targeting of girls. Subject to demand from Implementing Partners (IPs) and ideally where project data collection systems are already in place, we will also conduct predictive analysis that focuses on identifying which girls are likely to repeat or dropout<sup>9</sup> from their studies, using a combination of survey data and GEC project data. We will then seek to complement this with data from the prediction models and use qualitative interviews to deepen our understanding of girls’ perceptions of how this will, or in some cases already has, affected their ability to progress through school.

<sup>8</sup> Inclusive approaches to drop out and retention in low-resource settings”, GEC Fund Manager 2020.

<sup>9</sup> One key caveat here is that this analysis is not casual inference – finding that a specific factor should be in the model as it improves our prediction that a girl will dropout does not imply that this is the causal factor here.

### ***Covid-19 and learning losses – Research Question (D)***

35. Given the severity of the shock to education, it is highly likely that learning losses will have occurred during the period of school closures. Given the evidence on teaching at the right level, having accurate and timely information on children’s current levels of learning can help projects and teachers ensure that children’s return to school does not leave them behind their expected learning trajectory.
36. A portfolio-wide quantitative analysis of project learning outcomes during the current Covid-19 period will be hampered because projects conducting endlines in this period are not expected to collect data on learning outcomes. As such, it is highly likely that the availability of secondary information will be extremely limited.
37. We will assess the feasibility of conducting learning tests for two projects in conjunction with the FM and IPs. It is not possible to speak directly to the same girls that were tested at midlines because of data confidentiality restrictions. So, we will try to identify a suitable unit of analysis for the periods before and after the pandemic – for example it may be possible to identify sampled villages or schools which formed part of previous studies, which can be re-sampled. If possible, we will collect primary learning outcome data for this sample. This will be accompanied by qualitative data if possible, through a combination of desk-based research of project documents and qualitative interviews with stakeholders, including girls and their parents / caregivers.
38. We will do this by reviewing the availability of data gathered and shared by the FM and discussing the feasibility of conducting these learning tests further with the FM and the relevant IPs. These discussions will consider the relevant trade-offs (on research quality, accessibility, etc) between the different modes of data collection (i.e. the bias in terms of access to phones for phone-based methods as compared with the possibility of gathering data face-to-face if schools have re-opened).

### **Evaluation / Research Design**

39. Our design for this Evaluation Study is structured around two areas:
  1. **Using existing project data, evidence and information to identify information** that could help us understand girls’ experiences of schooling and learning during Covid-19, including the effects of projects in mitigating against further adverse effects to girls’ education during the pandemic. This project data will include external evaluation data, but also quarterly and annual reviews and project monitoring data; alongside their proposals and any amendments to these.
  2. **Using primary data** to understand what is happening during the Covid-19 period, and after schools have reopened. This entails in-depth qualitative research to understand the experiences of girls and primary quantitative data on learning post-Covid-19 to estimate and understand learning losses.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Data Quality Assessment**

40. The Evaluation Study will begin with an assessment of data quality to assess whether, and to what extent, the data available can provide evidence against the proposed evaluation / research questions. We will assess the credibility, quality and relevance of the different sources of data to assess the strengths and limitations of the evidence and to inform the selection of specific questions and projects for consideration in the study. This work is intended to complement / update the work undertaken as part of the Research Feasibility Study (REAL, 2020) and the GEC-T baseline data cleaning exercise but using the LNGB project baselines and GEC-T project midline data which are more recently available.

#### **Review of GEC Projects / Project Mapping**

41. An important stage in the Evaluation Study methodology will be a project mapping exercise. In the first instance this will be used to identify the projects for selection in the study based on the selection criteria previously described.
42. Evidence from the project mapping exercise will also be used to inform the development of a long list of projects and map out activities being undertaken to support continued learning. As discussed, a short-list of the sampled projects will be drawn from this longer list for more extensive examination, and to answer the questions detailed above.
43. The purpose of this will be to:
  - a) Capture what interventions or activities projects are doing to support girls during Covid-19 and for re-opening;

- b) Identify the key stakeholders that projects are working with to inform primary data collection; and
  - c) Map the available data gathered by projects during the Covid-19 period to inform the approach to secondary data analysis:
44. A template will be designed to capture this information and detail of this will be presented in the **Desk Review Report**. The report will also include the output of the project mapping exercise. As all projects focus on transition and learning (being the GEC outcomes), we will focus on: (i) comparing how projects approach issues of access within their contexts; (ii) identifying how projects measure transition, learning, and any additional measures of access; and (iii) comparing a diverse range of interventions that projects had developed to improve access and learning, as well as how they have selected these, and their beneficiaries.
45. The long list of projects will be analysed primarily through secondary data and documentation to provide a wider synthesis of the evidence in response to the research questions. The short-list of projects will form the basis for in-depth stakeholder interviews and primary data collection (for research questions (C) and (D)).

### Secondary Data Analysis – GEC Project Quantitative and Qualitative Data

46. We will use documentation provided by the FM to review how projects have adapted their approaches to access and learning during the Covid-19. This will enable us to catalogue how projects have changed – both in terms of their activities, but also how they are delivering these and how they are identifying those most in need.
47. The baseline (for LNGB) and midline (for GEC-T) project data for GEC projects will form the basis for the underlying analysis of research question (D) to allow us to recreate a panel. Once projects have been selected for inclusion within the study, depending on the research question(s), a range of quantitative data analysis methods will be considered and used as appropriate. These could include simple descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and other statistical modelling techniques. Where affordable within data collection budgets, analysis will be disaggregated by gender, location, socio-economic status, and other dimensions of marginalisation, such as disability and age.

### Primary Research

48. Primary data collection forms a critical component of this Evaluation Study. In particular, the ToR for the IE clearly set out the need for qualitative data collection and analysis to provide insightful evaluative evidence specifically to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions.
49. Primary data (potentially quantitative and qualitative) will be used to supplement secondary data gathered through the desk-based and rapid evidence reviews. Primary qualitative data will also be used to triangulate and corroborate emerging pathways and narratives about how and why some girls are at risk of being left behind in their access to school and learning in different contexts. Any data collection efforts will depend on access and availability of resources, particularly given that the current Covid-19 situation means most data collection may need to be carried out remotely.
50. We expect to work with four to five projects for primary research:
- **For research question (C):** We will work with two or three projects that are actively monitoring risks of children not returning to understand how their methods can be adapted with more in-depth prediction modelling.
  - **For research question (D):** We will work with two projects, that have a pre-Covid-19 assessment of learning to understand the extent of learning losses over the period.
51. For all sampled projects, we will seek to gain information on access and learning more broadly, before exploring the sub-questions above in more depth. The purpose of in-depth interviews would be to test and inform the emerging narrative of the underlying factors affecting which girls are most at risk of being left behind in their access to school and learning in different contexts. The interviews would also be used to identify how, why and in what ways the strategies used by projects to mitigate against learning losses and drop-out or retention are having an effect on attendance and learning outcomes.
52. The IE team would conduct in-depth interviews with a sample of direct beneficiaries from each of the sampled projects. These would include both individuals identified as being most and least at risk of learning loss to better understand the underlying barriers or drivers in their learning, as well as how, and in what ways, Covid-19 has impacted their ability to progress with their schooling and learning. These would also include caregivers and teachers to understand their perceptions of the key drivers and barriers inhibiting or enabling attendance and learning of those girls at risk of learning losses.
53. The IE team would conduct in-depth /semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions with selected key stakeholders, where this is feasible or remotely depending on the research participant. These stakeholders could include:

- a) **Girls**, to deepen our understanding of the challenges that Covid-19 has presented to their access and learning, and understand any changes in the support or interventions girls may have been exposed to in response to the outbreak; in addition to gathering their perceptions on how their access and learning opportunities have changed before and since the onset of the crisis, and how well these opportunities have been able to respond to their learning needs.
  - b) **Parents / caregivers**, to understand their perceptions of how support from GEC schools has changed before and since the onset of the crisis, and how far this can be attributed to GEC projects as compared with wider contextual changes in education priorities and educational directives as a result of the crisis; and
  - c) **Teachers**, to understand their perceptions of the key drivers and barriers inhibiting or enabling attendance and learning of those girls at risk of learning losses.
54. For the two projects where we will seek to explicitly measure learning losses, we will undertake additional quantitative research to conduct learning tests (possibly through phone surveys). Ideally, these surveys will ensure that the test items are comparable and seek to identify those areas which have been part of a GEC-T panel to date. The exact methodology for this research will be determined following an assessment of the existing data and sampling and the situation in-country with regards to Covid-19 related restrictions once the projects have been selected.
  55. Further details regarding the project selection approach and proposed methods would be discussed with individual IPs during the design and development phase of the study's implementation. Due to current limitations and restrictions on travel, in-depth interviews are likely to be conducted remotely by telephone. Key informant interviews with key stakeholders and focus group discussions would be conducted with the support of our local data collection partners where possible.
  56. Discussion guides will be developed for the primary qualitative data collection. These will be based on the key evaluation / research questions and adapted for the different stakeholder types as identified during the mapping exercise. Draft guides will be presented in the **Desk Review Report**.
  57. A debrief will be held following the completion of qualitative interviews to discuss emerging findings prior to more detailed coding taking place.
  58. Qualitative data will be voice recorded and later transcribed and translated into English, except where interviews are conducted in English. Data will be encrypted and stored confidentially, with access restricted to key members of the IE team. Data from the interviews will be uploaded before being coded (first and second-level coding) using coding software (e.g. NVIVO, Atlas.ti or Dedoose). Software will be used to apply codes to transcripts in line with a coding framework developed by the IE team to identify key themes and pathways under each evaluation / research question.
  59. Quantitative data will be analysed in Stata, with the predictive algorithms analysed in Visual Studio, using Python.
  60. Further detail on the methodology, including analytical techniques, triangulation and synthesis for each research question, will be presented in the **Desk Review Report** submitted upon completion of the design and development phase of this evaluation study (see further details in the Expected Deliverables Section).

## Research ethics and safeguarding

61. All research and evaluation activities conducted as part of the Evaluation Study will adhere to our guidelines for ethical research as referenced in the **Ethical Research and Safeguarding Framework** (separate document - available upon request).
62. This ethical research framework is fully compliant with the guiding concepts and principles set out in FCDO's Evaluation Policy (2013); DFID (now FCDO) Ethical Guidance for Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Activities (updated 2020); and the UK Data Protection Act (2018).
63. The guidelines set out in the framework are designed to ensure that all primary research and related data collection involving individuals, communities and other programme stakeholders is conducted in an ethical, safe manner that prioritises the rights and dignity of all research participants and protects them from harm.

## Work Plan and Budget

64. After finalisation of the ToR, mobilisation and data collection for the study would commence in October 2020,
65. A summary workplan is provided and the approximate budget is in line with the agreed milestone schedule value. **A more detailed, costed workplan will be developed upon approval of this ToR** and submitted to the FCDO as part of the Design Report during the design phase of study implementation.

## Expected Deliverables

**Table 4: Expected deliverables and timelines**

Phases	Key Activities	Deliverable Date
<b>Finalising Project selection and desk-based reviews</b>	Finalise country selection	16 October 2020
	Mapping of projects support to continued access and learning	18 December 2020
<b>Access Research</b>	Train models in selected countries /projects	13 November 2020
	Develop qualitative research tools and ML strategies	18 December 2020
	Fieldwork	January /February 2021
<b>Learning Losses Research</b>	Clean pre-existing data; develop learning tools and quant surveys; qual surveys	27 November 2020
	Pilot learning tools	Early December 2020
	Fieldwork	January-February 2021
<b>Begin cleaning data /writing</b>	Data cleaning/processing	March 2021
<b>Reporting</b>	Produce first draft of report	April 2021
	Submit first draft of report	End April 2021
	Feedback and second draft report	End May 2021
	Final report	End June 2021

66. A Desk Review Report will be provided to the FCDO and ESWG in December 2020. An outline of the Desk Review Report will be shared with the FCDO for review in advance of the report submission. However, it would be expected that the desk-review included: Final research questions and cross-cutting themes; selected projects; more detailed research methods; a summary of the data that will be used, including any preliminary findings; a primary data collection plan (including stakeholders); a mapping of existing activities and how they will inform primary research; risk management (including ethical risks)<sup>10</sup>; final team details.
67. A draft Evaluation Study Report will be shared with FCDO and the FM in the second quarter of 2021 (expected April 2021). Timelines for submitting the final report are yet to be agreed with FCDO but the provisional timelines are proposed in the workplan in Annex 2 (expected June 2021).
68. Other possible deliverables, including a Policy Brief or other learning products, will be discussed with stakeholders during the design and development phase and outlined in the Desk Review Report as part of the Communication and Dissemination Plan. Consulting with different stakeholder groups, including the FCDO, IPs and FM, will ensure deliverables are designed with stakeholder needs front and centre and that learning is successfully taken up by projects and the FM.
69. Additional communications and dissemination activities will be set out in the Desk review Report.

## Team Composition

70. This Evaluation Study will be led by a core study team comprising: Principal Investigator and Lead Author (Paul Atherton), Lead Qualitative Analyst (Sophie Amili) and Synthesis Lead (Maria Jose Ogando). The Study will be managed by the Evaluation Manager (Janki Rajpura). Additional support will be brought in from the wider team as required.

<sup>10</sup> This will include both an assessment of the ethical risks involved in the study as well as details for how these will be managed during implementation, including through the research design, data collection, data storage, analysis and dissemination.

71. The Synthesis Lead will be supported by a smaller team of quantitative researchers. Together, they will work flexibly across the study to ensure harmonisation and standardisation in the approach to quantitative analysis and synthesis and promote efficiencies across the team.
72. In addition to the core study team, a wider team will be selected during the design and development phase, depending on the required skills, availability, and geographic focus of the study. The wider team will include representation from, but will not be limited to:
  - Technical evaluation specialists with quantitative and/or qualitative skills;
  - Thematic experts in the area of education relevant to the selected study topic; and
  - Regional and national education experts, bringing expertise on national education systems in the relevant countries included in the study.
73. Details of the final team composition will be presented in the **Desk Review Report**.

## Stakeholder Engagement Plan<sup>11</sup>

74. The IE team will seek to interact with the following categories of stakeholders in the course of the research (where relevant, some of these stakeholders will be consulted through the Evaluation Studies Working Group):
  - FCDO UK;
  - FCDO Regional Education Advisors;
  - GEC II Fund Manager;
  - Implementing Partners;
  - Beneficiaries of GEC II interventions; and
  - Other bilateral and multilateral agencies collaborating with GEC II or otherwise operating in the same sectors or thematic areas.

### Engagement with the FM Implementing Partners

75. Engagement with the FM and IPs and receiving their inputs and feedback is a critical element of this evaluation study. Engaging with the FM happens through the ESWG in addition to fortnightly meetings between the IE and FM teams.
76. Engaging with IPs of the selected projects will also ensure that we have a good understanding of their interventions, have identified relevant documentation and data for review and are able to triangulate findings for accuracy.
77. Following agreement of the ToRs by the FCDO and inputs from the ESWG (see separate document - **Evaluation Studies Working Group: Terms of Reference**), we will initiate a kick-off meeting to engage with all the IPs selected for possible inclusion within this study.
78. Further details regarding how we will engage with IPs selected for this study are provided in the **Stakeholder Engagement and Management Plan** (separate document – available upon request). This sets out our broader strategy for engaging stakeholders as part of the Independent Evaluation.

### Engagement with intended beneficiaries

79. It is important that the IE team engage closely with the **beneficiaries** who will be sampled for inclusion in the study. Engaging with project beneficiaries early in the design process will ensure they can meaningfully contribute and participate in the design of the individual studies to ensure that they can benefit from any evidence and learning generated.
80. For this Evaluation Study, we primarily plan to engage with **girls and their parents / caregivers** with whom GEC projects have been working.
81. We would propose discussing our approach during our initial kick-off meeting with selected IPs, including the feasibility of engaging with girls and their parents/ caregivers. Should this not be possible we would seek to convene small working groups comprised of teachers and head-teachers from individual GEC projects to gain their support in developing individual research plans for each of the sampled projects. These plans would set out our timelines for data collection and provide an opportunity to raise and discuss any logistical considerations and mitigations to refine and adapt our data collection approach.

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<sup>11</sup> The IE is currently developing a Stakeholder Management and Engagement Plan which will be shared with FCDO in October.

## Key Limitations and Mitigation Plan

82. Given the likelihood of continued disruption to schooling and travel during the timeframe of this study, it is necessary to caveat this scope of work. This study design has been based on an estimate of what is possible given the information available and the amount of time and budget allocated. However, there is a risk that upon further investigations some questions will be out of scope. This risk is greater for questions relying on project data, which are of uncertain quality.
83. Most noticeably, this study will not be able to undertake any causal analysis of the impact of any GEC project on outcomes prior to, or during the Covid-19 period, given issues around causal inference (stemming from data quality and collection limitations).
84. There are some areas of interest which are likely to fall out of the scope of this work – for example, while we endeavour to use a gender lens, the data on boys is limited. Similarly, while we will endeavour to include disability where possible, we are unlikely to have sufficient data to do this with a high level of rigour.
85. Table 5 highlights some key challenges, risk and mitigation strategies to evaluation and research activities planned under this Evaluation Study. These will be further elaborated in the **Desk Review Report** drafted following completion of the design and development phase for this study.

**Table 5: Challenges, risks and mitigation strategies identified**

Challenge	Likelihood of Risk	Impact of Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Lack of data available to estimate learning losses before and after Covid-19.	Likely	Moderate	We will seek to investigate if it is possible to recreate a panel at a higher level – either the school, community/village.
Misalignment of study timings with FM workplan.	Possible	Moderate	We will work closely with the FM and FCDO to agree timelines and prioritisation of the processing of midlines.
Inability to access all relevant GEC data and documentation (see MoU document list) during design and development phase	Possible	Moderate	At the earliest possibility, we will draft a list of desired data/ documents intended for inclusion in the desk review and arrange an early discussion with the FM to locate any missing documents and identify further documents for inclusion.
Covid-19 forces school and stakeholder facility closures in countries where data collection is being done, or schools may open and close repeatedly during the period.	Likely	Major	We will factor the risk of closures in our primary data collection plan (including up-to-date Covid-19 data for relevant countries), and leave contingencies for phone or online data collection protocols; we will liaise with all in-country partners/ stakeholders to promote safe practices and to ensure no activities undertaken on behalf of this study presents a risk to the health of any staff or participants (including drafting Covid-safe protocols for primary data collection, where relevant). We will also look to work flexibly and have a broad definition of access

Challenge	Likelihood of Risk	Impact of Risk	Mitigation Strategy
			which facilitates any change in evaluation /research questions.
Covid-related illness for members of Evaluation Study team, IPs, and other stakeholders.	Likely	Moderate	While it is unlikely all members of any team will be affected at the same time, this risk would have an adverse impact on the evaluation study. All team members will follow occupational health and safety policies for their respective workplaces.
IP data and documentation may be of variable scale, scope and quality.	Likely	Major	We will use the data quality assessment stage of the Desk Review Stage to assess the quality of IP data and documentation, and make use of the Research Feasibility Study (2020), to ensure high quality data are being included, but also to consider the risk of data quality bias.
Key stakeholders in primary data collection countries may not be easily accessible during the data collection phase.	Possible	Major	We will use the primary data collection plan stage to develop positive relationships with stakeholders in proposed primary data collection countries and sites, and will factor in generous and flexible time allocation for primary data collection (see Gantt chart), in case of delayed access to stakeholders.
Risks associated with fragile or conflict-affected areas make primary data collection unfeasible, and/or threaten the safety of GEC cohorts and stakeholders.	Likely	Major	The GEC portfolio and some IPs work with girls and schools threatened by FCAS, and this study aims (as a desirable inclusion criterion) to include one or more projects from FCAS. We will endeavour to monitor FCAS, through communication with the FCDO and FM, to inform decision making around primary data collection feasibility and safety.

- 86. Given budgetary limitations, and the travel restrictions in place due to the current pandemic, the study is likely to be limited in the amount of new information it can collect. As such, it has been designed in a way to make the best use of existing information, drawing on projects quantitative and qualitative data from baseline and midline.
- 87. This approach has some noticeable limitations and necessitates a mitigation strategy of identifying a narrower range of possible evaluation and research questions. This can be compensated for by a wider range of questions in any extension of this theme in further studies.
- 88. It is probable that, upon further investigation of the information available, this ToR will be updated to reflect the exact questions which are possible given the resources available.

## Annex 1: GEC-II dataset availability

Please note that the table that follows is illustrative only and does not at present reflect the availability of datasets. Currently, this table also only reflects information from GEC-T projects, and not from LNGB projects. These projects are, in principle, within scope for the study and subject to the same criteria outlined above for inclusion in the study, if data on them are available.

- Green** (1): Data are available, and have been shared with the IE team;
- Red** (0): Data have not been collected; and
- Yellow** (1): Data may have been collected but have not yet been shared with the IE team, or there are outstanding issues that need to be verified with the data before they are available for use.

### *Availability of datasets for individual GEC-T projects gathered and shared by the FM*

Please note data within the table are illustrative, not actual data

			Baseline datasets available				Midline datasets available		
	Project Name	Country	Household survey	Teacher survey	School survey	Headteacher survey	Household survey	Teacher survey	School survey
GEC-T Projects		Afghanistan	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
	Project B	Kenya	Red	Red	Red	Red	unknown	unknown	unknown
	Project C	Afghanistan	Green	Green	Green	Red	unknown	unknown	unknown
	Project D	Tanzania	Red	Red	Red	Red	unknown	unknown	unknown
	Project E	Somalia	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	unknown	unknown	unknown
	Project F	Uganda	Green	Red	Red	Green	unknown	unknown	unknown
	Project G	Ethiopia	Red	Red	Red	Red	unknown	unknown	unknown
	Project H	Kenya; Nigeria; Ghana	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green







## Annex 2: Summary workplan for Evaluation Study Access and Learning

			May 31, 2021						
TASK	START	END	F	S	S	M	T	W	
<b>Submit ToRs to FCDO after engagement with ESWG</b>	30-Sep-20	30-Sep-20							
<b>Design and development phase</b>	01-Oct-20	30-Nov-20							
Rapid documentation review	01-Oct-20	20-Nov-20							
Initial stakeholder consultations with selected individuals within IPs	19-Oct-20	30-Oct-20							
Finalise country selection	09-Oct-20	16-Oct-20							
Refinement of research methodology, study team, sampling, risks, design of research tools, agreement of deliverables	01-Oct-20	15-Dec-20							
Application for necessary ethical approvals / clearance	15-Oct-20	30-Nov-20							
Draft desk review report (ongoing)	15-Oct-20	20-Nov-20							
ES team to provide a draft primary data collection plan and draft Desk Review Report to FCDO	20-Nov-20	20-Nov-20							
FCDO to return feedback on draft primary data collection plan and draft Desk Review Report	20-Nov-20	4-Dec-20							
Incorporate comments on Desk Review Report and data collection plan	04-Dec-20	17-Dec-20							
ES Team to submit final Desk Review Report to FCDO	18-Dec-20	18-Dec-20							
<b>Continued access and return to school</b>	1-Oct-20	28-Feb-21							
Train models in selected countries/ projects	16-Oct-20	13-Nov-20							
Develop qual tools and ML strategies	13-Nov-20	18-Dec-20							
Fieldwork	1-Jan-21	28-Feb-21							
<b>Estimating learning losses</b>	1-Feb-21	30-Mar-21							
Clean pre-existing data; develop learning tools and quant surveys; qual surveys	1-Nov-20	27-Nov-20							
Primary data collection	1-Jan-21	28-Feb-21							
<b>Primary data analysis</b>	28-Feb-21	30-Mar-21							
<b>Clean primary data</b>	1-Mar-21	31-Mar-21							
Analyse primary quantitative data	1-Apr-21	15-Apr-21							
Analyse primary qualitative data	15-Mar-21	30-Mar-21							
<b>Report drafting</b>	1-Apr-21	1-Jun-21							
Submit proposed table of contents to FCDO for approval	1-Apr-21	1-Apr-21							
FCDO to approve report contents	4-Apr-21	4-Apr-21							
Report drafting (ongoing through data analysis stage also)	1-Apr-21	30-Apr-21							
Submit first draft of report to FCDO for review	30-Apr-21	30-Apr-21							
Comments received from FCDO	7-May-21	7-May-21							
Address FCDO comments and revise report draft	7-May-21	25-May-21							
Circulate second draft to ESWG (and EQuALS if required) for feedback	25-May-21	25-May-21							
ESWG (and EQuALS) to provide feedback	30-May-21	30-May-21							
Address feedback from ESWG (and EQuALS) and finalise report	1-Jun-21	29-Jun-21							
<b>FINAL REPORT DUE</b>	30-Jun-21	30-Jun-21							