



# Case Study Report

# RET International

# Kenya

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# Acronyms

<b>AE</b>	Accelerated Education
<b>AEP</b>	Accelerated Education Program
<b>AEWG</b>	Accelerated Education Working Group
<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information System
<b>GoK</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>KCPE</b>	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
<b>KCSE</b>	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>KICD</b>	Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development
<b>MoEST</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SMB</b>	School Management Board

## Purpose of the Study

The AEWG is a working group made up of education partners working in Accelerated Education (AE). The AEWG is currently led by UNHCR with representation from UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, NRC, Plan, IRC, Save the Children, ECCN, and War Child Holland.

Based on the aim for a more standardised approach to AE provision globally, the AEWG has begun to develop guidance materials based on international standards and sound practice for AE. In 2016, the AEWG developed a set of 10 Principles for effective practice, as well as an accompanying Guide.

The purpose of this case study was to more fully understand the relevance, usefulness, and application of the AE Principles and Guide within the context of RET International's Accelerated Education Programme (AEP) in Dadaab, Kenya. This case study sits among three others – another from Kenya, one from Sierra Leone, and one from Afghanistan – all implemented by different actors and working with different populations of learners.

The research was guided by three objectives:

- 1** Identify the **current and/or perceived utility and relevance of the AE Principles and Guide** to the RET's programme in Dadaab;
- 2** **Describe the alignment of the RET programme with the AE Principles** by speaking to a range of stakeholders and reviewing programme documentation; and
- 3** **Identify if there is a link between alignment with the Principles and achievement of key AEP outcomes** related to access, completion, and attainment of qualifications.

It is important to note that the intent of this research is not to evaluate programmes or compare them against each other, nor is it to specify recommendations or areas of improvement for RET's activities. Rather, this case study (and others) helps to illustrate the possibilities and challenges of using the Principles and accompanying Guide in the development, refinement, and assessment of AE programmes in Dadaab, and with populations and contexts similar to that in which the RET programme operates.

# Programme Background and Context

## Description of the Programme

RET International (formerly known as the Foundation for the Refugee Education Trust) is implementing a secondary Accelerated Education Programme (AEP) in three camps in Dadaab – Dagahaley, Ifo 1, and Hagadera. Funding, provided by the US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, is on-going. The objective of the RET’s AEP is to increase enrolment in, completion of, and certification in secondary education by overage, out-of-school youth. Targeted learners are youth aged 16 to 35 who have completed primary education but who are not enrolled in secondary school.

RET collaborated with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) and the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development (KICD) to design the project and prepare for implementation during 2012 through June 2013. During the design phase, RET and KICD conducted a rapid assessment of feasibility and training needs, which was completed in April 2013<sup>1</sup>. Then, RET prepared for implementation of the AEP, which began in July 2013.

According to the RET’s acceleration timetable (see Table 1 for timetabling of the 2016 cohort), students can complete the full 4-year curriculum in 2.5 calendar years. RET condenses their curriculum such that a single secondary school year (9 academic months) is condensed into 6 academic months (see Table 1). AEP Levels 1 and 2 correspond with secondary school years 1 and 2 respectively, and AEP Level 3 corresponds with secondary school years 3 and 4. Students sit the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in November of their year of completing coursework.

**Table 1.** Timeline for 2016 Cohort<sup>2</sup>.

AEP Level	Timeline for 2016 Cohort	Secondary Syllabus
1	Term 1 (Jan. – Mar. 2014); Term 2 (May – July 2014)	1
2	Term 3 (Sept. – Nov. 2014); Term 1 (Jan. – Mar. 2015)	2
3 <sup>3</sup>	Term 2 (May 2015 – July 2015); Term 3 (Sept. – Nov. 2015)	3
	Term 1 (Jan. 2016 – Mar. 2016); Term 2 (May – July 2016)	4
	November 2016	KCSE

RET aimed to admit 170 students per year. As shown in Table 2, RET met the target enrolment rate in both the first and second enrolment period (July 2013 and Jan 2014) for the 2016 cohort. They exceeded the target enrolment rate in for the 2017 cohort (enrolled January 2015). They fell short of the target enrolment for the 2018 cohort (enrolled January 2016). The low enrolment in January 2016 was largely due to the push for repatriation and the closure of the camp by the Kenyan government and relocation of non-Somalis to Kakuma camp. The youth were not sure of their continuity of studies in such a circumstance, leading to a drop in enrolment.

<sup>1</sup> When RET first reached out to KICD to do the assessment, the intention was to implement an *alternative* education program, which would offer a non-formal or alternative option for those students who did not score high enough on the KCPE to enter the formal secondary school. However, when they better understood the Dadaab context – that many youth had a gap in their education since completing primary school and many were overage – as well as the feasibility of condensing the programme into 3 years, they decided to design an *accelerated* program to meet the needs of youth.

<sup>2</sup> The AEP Centres began offering classes in July 2013, when they enrolled the first group of students. Then, when they synced with the formal school calendar, they enrolled a second group of students. Together, these two groups formed the 2016 cohort. Subsequently, there was only one enrolment period per year, held in January.

<sup>3</sup> AEP staff explained that in the formal schools, similar condensing happens, and students spend the fourth year reviewing and preparing for the exam.

Also shown in Table 2, 22% of the total AEP students across the 3 camps are female. The percentage of female students per camp per year are shown in parentheses. Most females were between the ages of 18-20, while males ranged from 16 to 35.

**Table 2.** 2016 Enrolment Figures by Year Enrolled per Camp.

	2016 Cohort enrolled July 2013/Jan 2014 <sup>4</sup>	2017 Cohort enrolled Jan 2015	2018 Cohort enrolled Jan 2016	Total
	(% female)	(% female)	(% female)	(% female)
Dagahaley	153 (38%)	48 (13%)	57 (16%)	258
Hagadera	87 (20%)	99 (24%)	28 (8%)	214
Ifo 1	103 (25%)	33 (20%)	39 (18%)	175
Total	343	180	124	647 (22%)

The project's implicit Theory of Change is shown in Figure 1. According to RET's Theory of Change, youth who complete the programme and become certified in secondary education will experience some of the following benefits:

- Social benefits, such as feelings of higher or professional status in their communities;
- Improved employability profiles for improved livelihoods, including having the opportunity to become a teacher in the AEP or in any primary/secondary refugee school; and
- Being eligible for a scholarship for tertiary education.

Finally, this will lead to enhanced sustainability of refugee durable solutions of voluntary repatriation, resettlement and local integration, as educated youth are better prepared to face the challenges related to reintegration upon repatriation and integration upon resettlement, as well as to seize the opportunities these post-crisis contexts could offer to them.

<sup>4</sup> The number of students in Level 3 is much higher than the other levels. This is because of three factors: (1) students remain in Level 3 for longer to cover both the secondary Form 3 and 4 curricula (see Table 1); (2) the 2016 cohort actually had two enrolment periods (see footnote 4); and (3) because those students who entered the program straight out of primary cannot sit the KCSE until four years have passed, so they remain in the program for four years, instead of the usual 2.5.

## AEP Theory of Change, RET Dadaab, Kenya

If...

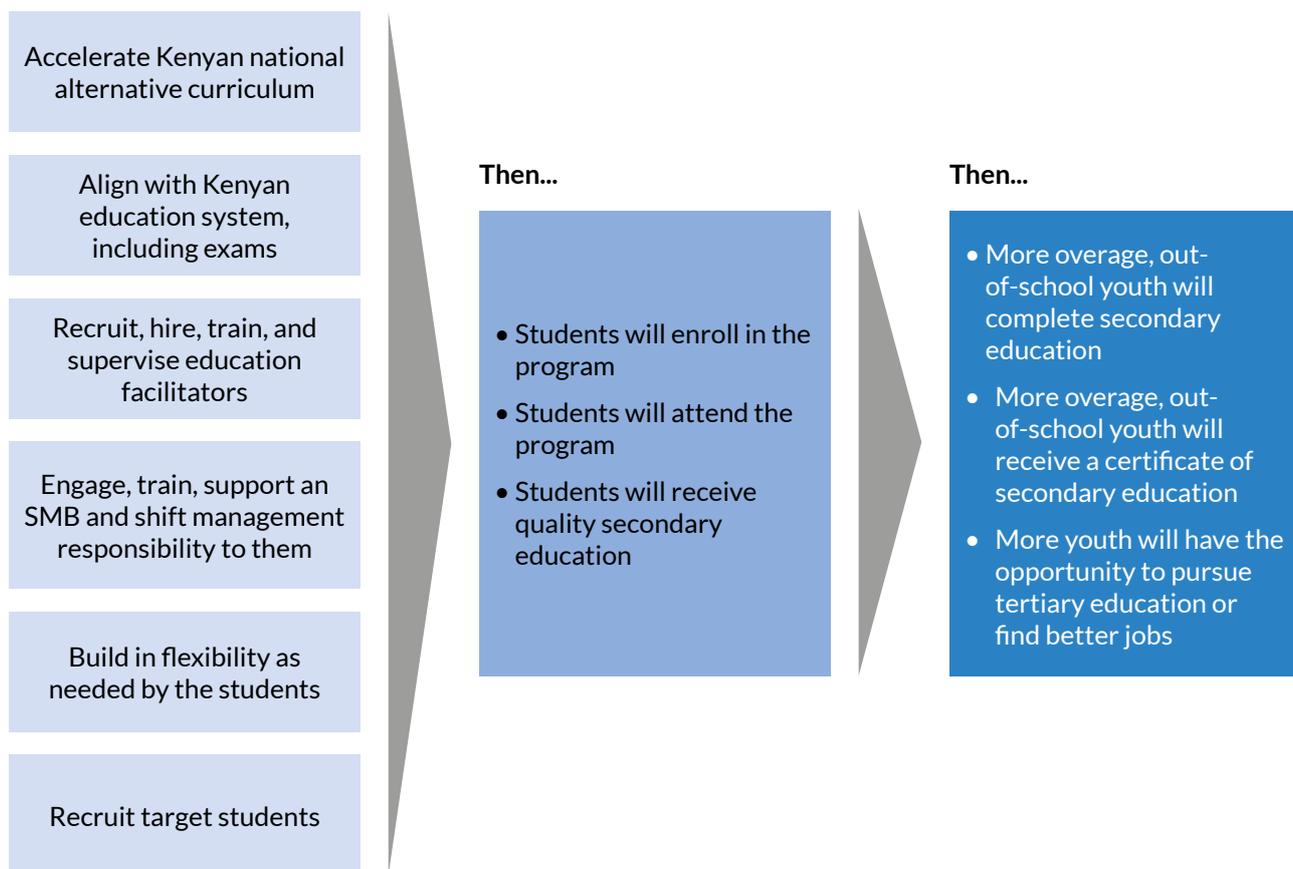


Figure 1. RET AEP Theory of Change.

### Structure of the Program

RET's office in Dadaab, supported by the central office in Nairobi, oversees operations of the AEP, which implements one AEP Centre in each of the three camps. In each camp, there is a camp coordinator from RET who oversees all camp-based projects, including the AEPs. At each of the Centres, there is one headmaster, one deputy headmaster, subject heads, education facilitators<sup>5</sup>, and a School Management Board (SMB).

Across all 3 Centres, there are 44 teaching staff, and 9 are female. All achieved at least a C+ on the KCSE, and many have obtained higher education. Additionally, many have had prior work experiences with other agencies worked in the camp, for example, facilitating women's groups or as primary teachers for other NGOs. (See Table 3 for the number of staff per position and/or highest teaching qualification.) All teaching staff, except the 6 teaching interns, are refugees in the camps. In Dagahaley, where this case study took place, there are 11 education facilitators (4 female), 1 headmaster (male), and 1 deputy headmaster (male).

<sup>5</sup> RET calls their teachers "education facilitators" to emphasize the role they play in facilitating the academic development of learners through different, non-traditional methodologies. Teachers, however, prefer the traditional designation ("teacher") because it is associated with more prestige in their communities. In this case study, the researcher has used the terms interchangeably.

**Table 3.** Number of teachers by highest educational attainment.

Position/Qualification	# Total (# female)
<b>Administrators</b>	6 (0F)
<b>Education Facilitators</b>	
Bachelor of Education (Teaching interns, Kenyan nationals) <sup>6</sup>	6 (0F)
Diploma in Secondary Teaching Education	4 (0F)
Enrolled at MKU for secondary teacher education	15 (1F)
Scored C+ or above on KCSE	13 (8F)
<b>Total</b>	<b>44 (9F)</b>

Each of the SMBs comprise nine individuals – six parents, one education facilitator, the headmaster (or deputy headmaster), and one RET staff (usually the camp coordinator).

## RET AEP and the 10 Principles for Effective Practice

The RET case offers a unique perspective on this research. While all other programmes examined are primary level AEPs, RET is implementing a secondary AEP. Before participating in the research, RET was not familiar with the AEWG nor the Principles. However, the researcher believes that the inclusion of a secondary AEP provides further nuance to the application, relevance, and utility of the Principles and Guide in the various contexts within which they are applied.

## Description of the Context

### History of Refugees in Dadaab, Kenya

In 1990, the Government of Kenya (GoK) and UNHCR jointly established Dadaab Refugee Camp in Garissa County to accommodate and administer to the massive influx of Somali refugees displaced by civil war. Today, the population of Dadaab is approximately 276,000; Somalis make up approximately 95% of the refugee population in Dadaab, with the remaining 5% of Burundi, Ethiopian, Rwandan, and South Sudanese origin. Over 60% of these refugees are under the age of eighteen.

The Refugees Act of 2006 established legal refugee status and outlined basic rights for refugees in Kenya, including the right to work. The 2013 Basic Education Act included refugees in its guarantee of the right to education for all children in Kenya. After a marked increase in both influx of Somali refugees (particularly in the aftermath of 2011 drought) and attacks within Kenya perpetrated by the Somali group Al-Shabab, in 2014 encampment policy formally restricted the mobility of refugees outside of the Dadaab and Kakuma camps.<sup>7</sup> In Dadaab, Kenya’s Ministry of the Interior banned the building of new permanent structures. This has particular implications for education, as current schools are overcrowded yet construction of additional facilities has been halted indefinitely.

Today, the refugees of Dadaab are accommodated across five camps (Hagadera, Dagahaley, Ifo, Ifo 2, and Kambioos). Due to continued violent conflict in Somalia and insecure borders, the GoK has repeatedly threatened to close the camps entirely (most recently in November 2016). However, the camps’ long-term

<sup>6</sup> Teaching interns are recently graduated Kenyan nationals who are certified teachers. They were hired to work with and build the capacity of refugee education facilitators.

<sup>7</sup> Approximately 63,000 refugees were located in urban settings in Kenya 2016. UNHCR registers and administers to this population in substantially different ways than in Dadaab and Kakuma (UNCHR, 2016a).

existence<sup>8</sup>, as well as Somalia's continued volatility, creates significant logistical challenges to relocating residents. A 2013 tripartite agreement between the two governments and UNHCR formalized a policy of repatriation (GoK, 2013). According to UNHCR staff in Dadaab, approximately 1,000 refugees are currently voluntarily repatriated to Somalia each week. From 2014 to 2016, approximately 34,000 Somalis returned home (UNHCR, 2016a).

## Refugees and Non-Formal Education Policy in Kenya

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In 2009, Kenya operationalized a policy framework for "Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training" in order to increase access to basic education for vulnerable communities. Under MoEST, schools offering alternative options were categorized as non-formal. The KICD non-formal basic education syllabus and curriculum were adopted as the required, national curriculum to be utilized by these schools. While KICD made recommendations for the condensing of primary and junior secondary curricula, no such recommendations were made for the senior secondary curriculum.

UNHCR described Kenyan education policy towards refugee learners as positive: "*[it is] good in practice, sometimes challenging in implementation,*" according to Nairobi-based education staff. Refugee students are allowed to sit for annual national examinations and are awarded official Kenyan certification in both primary and secondary education upon successful performance on exams (UNHCR, 2016a). Refugee students are legally allowed to attend Kenyan public schools<sup>9</sup>.

However, RET staff and UNHCR officers in Dadaab noted the logistical challenges to attending Kenyan public schools were largely insurmountable for those living in the camps. RET staff explained that, while the Kenya government allows for admission of non-citizens into formal Kenyan schools, there is no guidance or mandate. Decisions about admission of non-citizens is left up to the schools, who are already hard pressed to serve national students. Only recently has the government, led by the Ministry of Education with input from RET and other partners (UNHCR, Windle Trust Kenya, Lutheran World Federation, Xavier Project, and AVSI), begun to develop guidelines for admission of non-citizens<sup>10</sup>.

Kenyan education policy is largely decentralized to the county and sub-county levels. For UNHCR, this results in significant operational differences between Kakuma and Dadaab camps. In Turkana County (Kakuma), formal schools are technically registered, while in Garissa County (Dadaab) they are not. This affects, for example, the ability of those schools to proctor national examinations; refugee learners in Dadaab must be registered and transported (at the cost to UNHCR and NGOs) to Kenyan schools for the exams, often many hours away.

Teacher remuneration in the camps differs for Kenyan citizen versus non-Kenyan refugee teachers (UNHCR, 2016a). Refugee teacher pay<sup>11</sup> is based on national policy of incentivized pay for non-Kenyan citizens. This rate is established by the GoK, and administered and harmonized across all NGO's by UNHCR. Additionally,

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<sup>8</sup> ~100,000 children have been born to refugee parents in Dadaab since the 1990's, with an additional ~15,000 born to parents who were themselves born there (UNHCR, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR supports urban refugees in Kenya to attend public schools via facilitation of logistics, transportation, and payment of school/uniform/materials fees. UNHCR successfully advocates for overage children to be allowed into public schools. In 2016, 5,500 refugee students were enrolled in urban schools (UNHCR, 2016a).

<sup>10</sup> Interviews with different participants revealed contradicting understandings of Kenyan policies to non-citizens. RET staff at the local and national level described policies about non-citizens as being a challenge and noted that they are working with MoEST to develop friendlier policies. However, conversations with UNHCR staff in Nairobi indicate that policies do in fact mandate admission of non-citizen learners and that GoK policies are in fact friendlier than policies in other countries. The contradictions that appeared in the data are perhaps related to different perspectives at the different levels of interacting with policy, as well as different experiences working in and outside of Kenya.

<sup>11</sup> Per Kenyan law, refugees, as non-Kenyan citizens, cannot receive salaries. They are allowed to receive "incentives" for work, with strict limitations posed on how much they can be paid.

organizations pay certified teachers more than those that are untrained, a distinction that frequently aligns with Kenyan/refugee status.

## Education Situation in Dadaab

UNHCR funds and operates all formal schools in Dadaab. UNHCR partners with nine NGOs that administer education programming; these organizations comprise the Education Working Group, which is co-chaired by UNHCR and UNICEF and meets monthly. These organizations cooperatively implement education programming in 35 primary<sup>12</sup> and 7 secondary formal schools; 1 primary AEP and 1 secondary AEP; and 4 vocational/livelihoods programs.

According to the Dadaab 2016 Education Management Information System (EMIS), 70,000 (52%) of school-aged children (age 6-17) are currently out of school (UNHCR, 2016a)<sup>13</sup>. Additional data regarding primary and secondary education in Dadaab is included in Table 4, below.

**Table 4.** Dadaab Education Data, UNHCR 2016a

Indicator	Primary	Secondary
# Formal Schools	35	7
# NFE Centers	6	3
Enrolment	63,000 (1765 NFE)	7000 (500 NFE)
Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)	70% (Kenya National: 88%)	23% (Kenya national: 47%)
Gender Distribution	40% girls	30% girls
Gender Parity Index (GPI)	0.75	0.42
Average pupil: classroom ratio	1:87	
Average teacher: pupil ratio	1:69	
NGOs involved	UNHCR, LWF, Islamic Relief, CARE (formal), NRC (non-formal)	Windle Trust (formal), RET (non-formal)

Children in the Dadaab schools are predominantly overage, with 41% of primary school students over 13 years old (the national recommended age for students in the final year of primary school). UNHCR reports rising demand for educational access, but formal schools are severely congested. Due to the above-mentioned policy banning construction of new permanent structures, UNHCR is currently piloting a double-shifting strategy to increase access and relieve congestion in the formal schools of Dadaab.

Despite these challenges, refugee students in Dadaab perform well on national exams and have seen significant gains in recent years. In 2015, 86% of Dadaab students that sat for the KCPE received passing scores (highlighting substantial improvement from 2010, when only 46% of Dadaab students received passing scores). At the secondary level, 99.68% of Dadaab students passed, compared to 98.97% across Kenya. According to Nairobi-based UNHCR staff, MoEST acknowledges the high performance of students in Dadaab and Kakuma, and this adds complexity to political discussion regarding refugee education in a country that struggles to provide access to quality education to its own citizens.

<sup>12</sup> The primary schools include early childhood programs (Dugsis or Koranic schools), implemented by Islamic Relief Kenya.

<sup>13</sup> This figure does not include youth over 17 who may also benefit from (and have significant interest in) primary and secondary AE opportunities.

## Secondary Education in Dadaab

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According to UNHCR (2016b), about 22 percent of refugee adolescents worldwide attend secondary education. In Dadaab, the figures are similar – the secondary Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is about 23%, according to UNHCR staff in Dadaab.

In Dadaab, lack of access to secondary education is largely due to supply-side constraints – as described above, there are only 7 formal secondary schools in Dadaab, compared to 35 primary schools. The vast majority of students attending primary school in Dadaab will never have the opportunity to achieve a secondary level of education. Other common reasons for youth missing the opportunity for secondary education in Dadaab include marriage, pregnancy, the need to work to support their family, and not achieving the cut-off score<sup>14</sup> on the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam.

According to UNHCR staff in Dadaab, approximately 7,000 students attend some form of secondary schools. About 6,500 of those are in the formal schools, and the remainder are in the AEP Centres. In addition to the low enrolment rates at the secondary level, gender parity is particularly troubling. Only about 25% of students in all Dadaab secondary schools are girls, compared to 40% at the primary level, according to Dadaab UNHCR staff.

Two additional education policies affect refugee secondary education and the RET AEPs in Dadaab:

- **School Registration/Exam Centre Registration.** In order for a school/Centre to administer the KCSE, they must be registered first as a formal school. To do that, they must meet certain quality assurance guidelines, including having 50% Kenyan certified teachers. Once registered as a school, they must register as an exam centre, which has additional requirements such as ensuring a certain distance between student seats. The school and exam centre registration affects the programme because if they aren't registered as an exam site, they need to arrange for students to take exams at a different location. In some Centres, RET was able to work with local Ministry officials to register as a private exam site, which allowed them to become an exam site without being registered officially as a school.
- **4-year Gap to Register for KCSE.** The registration system for the KCSE requires that students have a gap of at least four years between taking the KCPE and the KCSE. This includes students who are overage. RET staff note that this causes problems for those students who continue into their AEP directly after taking the KCPE because they finish the AEP just three years after sitting the primary exam, so they cannot register for KCSE. These students remain in the AEP for a fourth year, even though it would be preferable to take the exam because they are overage. RET staff also note that this structural feature suggests a lack of acceptance of secondary accelerated education in the Kenya context.

Dagahaley camp, the site of this case study, has a population of 87,170. Within Dagahaley, there are two formal secondary schools and RET's secondary AEP. Of secondary school students in Dagahaley, 79% are boys and 21% are girls (UNHCR, 2014).

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<sup>14</sup> Upon completion of primary school, students sit the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam. In Dadaab, boys who score 210 and girls who score 200 (out of 500) points are able to continue on to secondary school. (Across the rest of Kenya, the cut-off for boys and girls is 250.) However, those who score below those marks are left behind.

## Methodology and Approach to Fieldwork

This research used a case study design. Prior to departing to the field, the researcher conducted a desk review that included the Accelerated Education (AE) Principles checklist and RET's AEP Programme Guide. Further documentation was provided and reviewed upon arrival, including KICD's Rapid Assessment of Training Needs, 2016 Education Facilitator's Assessment Report, and RET's AEP Acceleration Plan.

RET staff who participated in the study included the Nairobi-based programme manager and the Dadaab-based Quality Assurance Officer, Education Officer, and Assistant Education Officer. RET staff participated in initial and final workshops<sup>15</sup>, focus groups, and interviews. They were asked about the perceived relevance and utility of the Principles and Guide, the AEPs alignment with the Principles, and the link between programme outcomes and the Principles.

The Sahal AEP Centre, located in the Dagahaley camp, was selected for this study based on its proximity to the RET Dadaab office, its proximity to the NRC AEP selected for another case study, and its relative success in implementing the AEP. From the Dagahaley Centre, 6 of 11 education facilitators (3 men, 3 women) participated in a focus group. One was new to the program, four had just entered their second year teaching in the AEP, and one was entering her fourth year. All teachers taught different subjects, including history/government, English/Islamic studies, biology, physics/math, and Swahili. Education facilitators were selected based on availability and knowledge of the program. The headmaster participated in a key informant interview. All were asked questions that indicated alignment of the AEP to the Principles.

Four SMB members (one woman) participated in a focus group and were chosen based on availability and willingness to participate in the research. SMB members were asked questions that indicated alignment of the AEP to the Principles.

Eight female students ages 18 to 20 in Levels 2 and 3, as well as 3 female graduates from the 2016 cohort ages 19 to 21, participated in a focus group. Eight male students ages 17 to 32 in Levels 2 through 4<sup>16</sup>, as well as 9 graduates of the 2016 cohort ages 21 to 35, participated in a separate focus group. Students were selected to ensure a representative sample of ages and levels in the program, including graduates, as well as based on availability and interest in participating in the focus group.<sup>17</sup> The female student focus group included an interactive timeline activity followed by a discussion. The focus group with male students was conducted in a group interview format because of the large size of the group. All students were asked questions related to alignment of the AEP with the Principles.

Finally, the researcher conducted a "walk-through" of the AEP Centre to observe the school facilities, set-up of the classroom, materials and resources available, pupil-teacher ratio, and to look for evidence of the use of AE pedagogy. The walk-through was intended to provide further information about alignment with the Principles.

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<sup>15</sup> UNHCR staff and other NGO partners who comprise the Dadaab Education Working Group also participated in these workshops.

<sup>16</sup> While the program is designed to have three levels, some students are attending a fourth year because of the MoE regulation which only allows students to register for the KCSE exam four years after completing the KCPE. Students who attend the AEP directly after finishing primary must remain in the AEP for four years, despite the program's design to accelerate to three years.

<sup>17</sup> The researcher intended to have smaller groups and to separate out graduates and current students; however, the limited time allowed in the camp for security reasons did not allow for holding more than two student focus groups.

**Table 5.** Number of participants by stakeholder group.

Stakeholder Group	Number of Participants
RET staff	1 Off-site (programme manager) 3 On-site (QA Officer, Education Officer, Asst. Education Officer)
Teaching Staff	1 Headmaster (male) 6 Teachers (3 male, 3 female)
Male AE Students	17 (8 current students, 9 graduates)
Female AE Students	11 (8 current students, 3 graduates)
School Management Board	4 (3 male, 1 female community members; all are parents of students)

For a full list of sources by objective, see Table 6.

**Table 6.** Research objectives by source.

Research Question	Document Review	Off-site Staff	On-site Staff	School Staff	AEP Committee	Youth	Walk-through
Relevance of the Principles/ Utility of the Guide		X	X				
Alignment to the Principles	AE Checklist Programme Guide KICD Needs Assessment Ed Facilitator’s Assessment Acceleration Plan		X	X	X	X	X
Linkage of outcomes to Principles		X	X				

## Analysis

The researcher used a deductive approach to coding the data. The data collected through document review, workshops, interviews and focus groups, and a “walk through” were coded thematically against the Principles.

## Limitations

The following are limitations to the research:

- **Objective 1:** Through the fieldwork and document review, the researcher was able to deeply understand the application and contextualization of the Principles, as well as RET’s perception of utility of the Principles. However, because RET staff who were interviewed had not seen the Guide before the case study, it was difficult to ascertain their perceived utility of the Guide beyond the hypothetical.
- **Objective 3:** Determining a linkage between programme outcomes and Principles is challenging. RET provided outcome data on enrolment, attendance, and KCSE scores. They also offered their perspective and insight on how the outcomes are related to the 10 Principles. However, RET hasn’t done any rigorous examination of the link between outcomes and aspects of the Principles due to the fact the Principles were unknown by the organisation before the request to participate to this case study, and the present study design did not allow for that type of rigorous evaluation.

# Current Programme Alignment to the AE Principles

The researchers re-categorised the AE Principles thematically into four areas: learners & learning environment, teachers, programme management, and alignment. These areas were seen to broadly reflect the different domains which the Principles and accompanying guidance focus on. Under each category discussed, the researchers listed the associated principles within this category, to make clear how this was done. It should be noted that these categories are different to those presented in the original Guide, where there are only three categories – learners, systems/policy, and programme management. The researchers felt that some greater specificity was needed, particularly around issues of teachers/teacher management and alignment.

## Learners & Learning Environment

### Principle 1:

AEP is flexible and for older learners.

### Principle 4:

Curriculum, materials, and pedagogy are genuinely accelerated, AE-suitable, and use relevant language of instruction.

### Principle 8:

AE learning environment is inclusive, safe, and learning ready.

## Learners & Flexibility

The AEP was largely able to reach the youth that they targeted for inclusion in the program. All youth are between the ages of 16 and 35 and have not been able to continue on to secondary school. Female students appeared to be younger than male students. The headmaster explained that the cause of this is three-fold: (1) male students' opportunities for education were cut short due to the need to work; (2) male students in the programme came to Dadaab later than the female students, so they had fewer educational opportunities than those who were here for much of their lives; and (3) female students are unable to attend at an older age because they are at home taking care of the household and their children.

Many youth in the AEP have a gap between completion of primary school and start of the AEP, many having completed primary school over ten years ago, but this is not a strict criterion for enrolment since all youth are well over the typical secondary school age. Nearly all of the male students explained that they were working before beginning the AEP, though some came straight from primary education. Female students explained that many come straight to the AEP upon completing primary but failing to meet the cut-off for acceptance into the formal secondary school, while some were taking care of a household and children and were out of school. All youth reported they have responsibilities before or after school. Many of the students are married with children, and many are still working or taking care of a household and children. All youth had big dreams for their future – youth viewed completion of the AEP as an opportunity to continue on to higher education or get better jobs.

“ Our programme is about inclusivity, giving more people the chance for education, bringing people back to [school] when they were previously rejected.”

– RET AEP Staff

All participants noted the importance of flexibility within RET's AEP programme to meet the needs of such learners. RET has made efforts to accommodate the needs of their working and parenting youth in a number of ways. First, they offer morning and afternoon sessions. While the material covered in the sessions is different

(ideally students would attend the AEP all day) students who can only attend one session per day are not excluded from the program. As shown in Table 7, over half of all students attend the program between 20 and 59 percent of the time<sup>18</sup>. The low attendance rates, in combination with the profile of students, may suggest the need for this type of flexibility. Female and male students confirm that the program’s allowing them to come to one or the other session while still being enrolled helps them to maintain their livelihoods or families outside of the program.

**Table 7.** Attendance Rates July to September 2016.

Rate of Attendance	1-19%	20-39%	40-59%	60+%	Total
Total # of Students (% of total)	113 (25%)	132 (29%)	114 (25%)	96 (21%)	<b>455</b>
# of Female Students (% of total female)	18 (21%)	18 (20%)	28 (32%)	24 (27%)	<b>88</b>

To overcome the challenges of students missing class, RET tries to ensure opportunities for self-directed study. Students can cover the more basic material on their own, present and discuss in class, and use class time for covering more difficult material. Additionally, education facilitators make themselves available on weekends or during school breaks to support students who are missing a lot of class.

## Curriculum and Pedagogy

RET’s AEP curriculum is a modified and condensed form of the Kenya Non-formal Secondary Education curriculum, which was adapted from the formal curriculum by KICD for provision in any educational setting outside of the formal system. RET staff and education facilitators are trained on how to condense the curricula. They take the national curriculum and create a timetable, called a “Scheme of Work”. Teachers then create lesson plans based on the “Scheme of Work” and document what they teach in a “Record of Work”. To date, RET has condensed the Science and Mathematics syllabi, and efforts are underway to condense the other subjects. The AEP curriculum includes subjects such as English, math, general science, history, Arabic, Swahili, and religion.

Participants agree that the learning materials are age appropriate for learners from 16 to 35 because the secondary curriculum is already designed for older learners (aged 14-18) and can easily be relevant to youth who are somewhat older. RET staff do, however, emphasize the importance of teaching methods. They clarify that they use “andragogy”<sup>19</sup>, methods and techniques for teaching their adult learners, instead of pedagogy. Age appropriateness of teaching methods, they explain, is more important to emphasize, in their case, than age-appropriateness of the materials.

Education facilitators and students explain that lessons in the AEP Centre typically consist of: (a) review of past material; (b) introduction of new material with 2-3 examples; (c) group assignment; (d) review and revision of mistakes; and (e) assignment of homework. Homework is sometimes intended to be completed in groups, and students come to class and present what they have learned.

<sup>18</sup> The attendance rate is captured in half days. Students who attend a full day receive 100% attendance for that day, and those who attend either morning or afternoon receive 50%. Therefore, for example, a student who attends the morning session five days per week would receive an attendance score of 50% for that week. This is significant because it allows RET to track the attendance of their students who can only attend one session – rather than marking them absent and giving them 0% attendance if they can’t attend the whole day, they can note and track their partial attendance.

<sup>19</sup> Defined by Merriam-Webster as “the art or science of teaching adults”.

Because students need to gain the skills to be able to pass the KCSE, RET is not able to include life skills, health, social-emotional learning, or other material that is not examinable. RET staff do acknowledge, though, that it is an important part of youths' education and that it would be beneficial to be able to teach this additional content.

They also struggle with offering psycho-social support in any formalized way. They do have girl committees, which are intended to address the specific issues girls experience, and the headmaster often provides support in case students have a conflict. Many students and teachers have experienced trauma, which RET recognizes needs to be addressed. They have not formally done anything to address trauma, however, because there are many actors, such as other NGOs, working on these issues in the camps, and because of the limited capacity of the AEP Centres. They do feel, though, that it would be beneficial to be able to address trauma and psychosocial needs at the school level.

RET has implemented several safeguards against abuse. If youth experience maltreatment in or related to school, they know that they can report it to their teacher or headmaster, although RET explains that they haven't formally informed students about how to report abuse. Additionally, each classroom also has a student liaison to whom students can report school-related gender-based violence, and he/she will report up the chain of command. Sexual violence is not handled at the school level but rather referred out to authorities and other NGOs who handle this issue. All teachers sign a code of conduct.

Students and teachers report that female and male students are treated equally in the program. RET staff explain that they try to create an environment that treats girls equally by recruiting female teachers who serve as role models and who provide support to female students. However, there is a shortage and high turnover rate of qualified female teachers. Additionally, RET staff explain that they encourage male students to be supportive and encouraging of female students. They claim that having younger education facilitators also helps to shift the dynamic of inequality between the sexes. The Centres are able to provide some sanitary materials to girls, which encourages them to attend, but that there is not a sufficient supply.

RET staff explain that there is a specialized school for children with disabilities in Dadaab, so they are not targeted for this program.

## Physical Space

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The Dagahaley AEP Centre, which sits in a fenced in area and was built specifically for the AEP program, consists of one long permanent-structure building with three classrooms and a teachers' room. Adjoined to the building is a computer lab, which is not used by the Centre or the Centre students because it is owned and run by a separate technology training project. The plot also hosts two large tented classrooms that were set up for the 2016 KCSE testing because there wasn't enough space in the classrooms to meet test centre regulations and standards. School staff reported that the tented classrooms are used if there is an overflow of children attending. Additionally, there is a mosque, two water spigots, two girls' latrines enclosed within larger walls for added privacy, and two boys' latrines.

The facilities are in good condition. The classrooms are equipped with desks and benches, a blackboard and chalk. There was no evidence of group work, use of technology, or youth-friendly decorations or education materials in the classroom.

## Challenges

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One challenge has been enrolling 50% girls. In 2016, 647 students were enrolled across the three Centres, of which approximately 22% were female, and from July to September, 455 had attended, 88 were female. Some reasons females enrol and attend the programme less than males include marriage, parenting, taking care of households, and not being permitted to attend.

Two challenges are associated with flexibility. The Nairobi-based Programme Manager noted that much of the AEP is similar to the formal schools, explaining that, *“The expectations in terms of how hard the exam is for accreditation, it demands that a person give more time [in school]. So what you want to [be] very flexible can’t be too flexible. Because of demands of KCSE, we aren’t able to be as flexible as we wanted to be.”*

Additionally, the Nairobi-based Programme manager explained that flexibility is difficult because students see it as being allowed to miss class. The ideal situation is that students attend the whole day, but with flexibility built in to support them in fulfilling their other responsibilities. However, this reportedly leads to students thinking they can miss regularly. In this regard, and based on the need to encourage learners to attend lessons as much as possible, RET has enforced the attendance monitoring system at school level to record the attendance rate of each student to enable follow-up of the students who register chronic absenteeism.

One challenge identified by teachers is that students who come to the AEP often have significant gaps in schooling. Many started their education later than other youth their own age, and many have been out of school for several years after completing primary education and are just returning. Additionally, because most of the students in this programme did not make the cut-off for the formal secondary school on the KCPE, their academic achievement is low for students of their age. Teachers find that they often must review basic information that was covered in primary education so that children are able to understand the secondary curriculum. This puts a strain on teachers to be able to cover the secondary curriculum in the accelerated time frame.

Additionally, there is a shortage of textbooks and workbooks (approximately three students per book) because of the limited funding allocated to materials. This impacts RET’s ability to utilize self-directed and out-of-school learning techniques, which was identified as an important aspect of the program that aligned with AE pedagogy and enabled the flexibility that students need to be able to attend. Logistical challenges like not having lamps at home also impede self-directed and out-of-school group work. Finally, RET staff noted that not having internet in the classrooms makes project-based learning or other types of AE practices more difficult.

Education facilitators participate in yearly AE in-service trainings based on a yearly needs assessment. However, RET staff explain that teachers believe learning occurs best when the teacher stands at the front of the room and lectures while learners are quiet and listen. It is difficult for RET to help teachers to break out of this pattern and utilize AE pedagogical practices because of both the engrained traditional teaching techniques and the limited funding they have to provide training on AE pedagogy. Nevertheless, RET undertakes in-service training (either by the RET Headquarters Teacher’s Specialist or by a recognised Kenyan Institution) of education facilitators every year so as to cope with the mentioned challenges. Moreover, 15 teachers have been given the opportunity to enrol at Mount Kenya University to achieve a B.Ed. distance diploma in order to encourage and improve their professional development.

Students who have graduated indicate there are challenges in helping them transition to better jobs or get into tertiary education. They explain that they require further support. The headmaster explained that this has been difficult because of the exam scores of the students who left the program. For all students, the Centre provides references and a school leaving certificate. However, there are extremely limited opportunities for tertiary education, jobs, and technical/vocational training in Dadaab, so RET can only recommend those who do particularly well for those opportunities. This experience is not unique to RET or Dadaab – lack of job opportunity pervades most, if not all, isolated refugee camp settings – and the job market in the camp is out of the scope of influence for RET and similar organizations.

## Other

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Additional successes and challenges related to learners and learning environment include:

- There are minimal fees for attending the AEP. Teachers report that the AEP provides textbooks, but students need to buy other materials. They were not able to report whether this limited the ability of some youth to participate in the program, but thought it was plausible that it would have an effect.

- The pupil-teacher ratio in the Centres is roughly 40:1 in total, but teachers report that it varies greatly between the levels. In general, the upper levels have fewer students, and particularly fewer girls, than the lower levels. The incentive teachers report at different times to the school based on lesson scheduling, so not all teachers are present at the same time. High turnover has also been said to contribute to pupil-teacher ratios. During the walk-through, which was conducted at the beginning of the school year (when enrolment was still incomplete), the ratio was approximately 55:1 for Level 1 (~50% girls), 40:1 for Level 2 (~33% girls), and 15:1 for Level 3 (3 girls)<sup>20</sup>. RET staff explained that when the enrolment numbers increase, the tented classrooms will be utilized. The SMB noted that there are too few teachers.
- Staff explain that collaboration between partners and across sectors is important. For example, the AEP Centre in Dagahaley receives water from Care International, and programmes in the camps address trauma and gender-based violence, which reaches the students. However, RET staff also explain that the cross-agency, cross-sector coordination can lead to complications. In some cases, they are reliant on other organizations to meet their essential needs, as is the case with water, and in other cases, information about their students' needs might not reach them, for example if someone experienced violence in the community.

## Key Findings: Learners & Learning Environment

### Successes

- In 2016, 647 students aged 16-35 were enrolled
- RET is able to offer the level of flexibility that students need
- Teachers are taught how to condense the curriculum
- Materials are reportedly age appropriate
- In Dagahaley, the AEP Centre was constructed and is in good condition, including access to water and separate latrines
- RET established girls' committees to support female students
- RET established a reporting mechanism for students' to report abuses
- There are minimal fees for students to attend the AEP
- Age appropriateness of teaching methods is respected and considered important.

### Challenges

- Teachers worry that the flexibility is associated with poorer KCSE scores, but RET staff note that the data does not confirm this
- RET struggles to enrol 50% female students, and females enrolled are younger than males
- The need to teach the full secondary syllabus constrains flexibility
- Students misunderstand flexibility as being allowed to miss class
- Students want further support for transitioning to jobs or tertiary education, but there are few job and tertiary education opportunities in Dadaab
- Teachers struggle to implement AE pedagogy because of training limitations and prior experiences
- Lack of textbooks, solar lamps, and internet/electricity constrains self-directed learning
- RET relies on Care to provide water, and is occasionally constrained by their ability to do so
- The need to cover the national curriculum limits the ability to cover life skills, health, social-emotional learning, and other important material
- Pupil-teacher ratio varies greatly from level to level

<sup>20</sup> This observation contradicts the enrollment figures in Table 2, suggesting that while enrolment figures may be balanced across levels, attendance rates drop with time in the program.

## Teachers (Education Facilitators)

### Principle 5:

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**Teachers participate in continuous professional development.**

### Principle 6:

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**Teachers are recruited, supervised and remunerated.**

Before startup, RET collaborated with KICD to conduct a feasibility and teacher needs assessment study. The aims of this study were to evaluate the capacity of prospective education facilitators to: (1) implement AE pedagogical techniques; (2) demonstrate content knowledge; (3) utilize local resources; (4) teach learners with diverse needs; and (5) assess learning. This assessment was used as a foundation to develop the teacher training and professional development aspects of the program, including the initial training implemented by representatives of the Geneva RET team.

Before the school year begins, education facilitators participate in a pre-service orientation that helps them understand how the AEP is run and know what types of documentation they will be expected to keep, and introduces them to AE teaching methods. In January every year, RET conducts a needs assessment, which includes observations and a test, to evaluate teachers' skills and needs. This was ongoing at the time of the site visit. By March each year, RET brings in an AE specialist from headquarters in Geneva to implement an in-service training to build the skills that were identified as priority needs in the needs assessment.

RET also provides a small number of scholarships for education facilitators to pursue their B.Ed. at Mount Kenya University. Currently, 15 refugee teachers are receiving the scholarship, and RET hopes to be able to get funding to support more in the future. Additional professional development support includes coaching by the RET Education Officer and the headmaster, as well as mentoring by more experienced teachers. RET is planning to place two of the six Kenyan national, B.Ed.-level teaching interns in each of the three AEP Centres and rotate them every month so that they can provide additional support to the refugee teachers.

## Challenges

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Despite the professional development activities that RET conducts, teachers explain that the training is insufficient to support them in meeting their students' needs. RET explains that one challenge of training is the distance between the Centres. Logistically, it has been difficult to bring teachers together, so RET has often relied on conducting trainings within the Centres themselves.

Additionally, turnover is high. Teachers are frequently resettled. Additionally, when education facilitators who remain in the camp become trained, they have greater opportunity for better paying (or at least easier) jobs. With such high turnover rates, RET is constantly taking in new, untrained teachers, which affects the quality of teaching. This is particularly true for women teachers, who are among the few qualified and trained women in the camp. They are often pulled from the AEP Centres with offers of scholarships. To mitigate these challenges, RET ensures that they provide annual training on AE pedagogy and secondary content that ensures that the education facilitators are well equipped to cover the syllabus, yet teachers and RET staff still acknowledge that this is not enough.

Education facilitators and the headmaster explained that the incentive payment is not sufficient. RET staff also acknowledge this challenge but explain that in their context, they cannot remunerate refugee education facilitators – they can only provide an incentive payment. While they are incentivized according to Kenya regulations, the incentive payment is about one-fifth the payment of a Kenya national.

Finally, the Nairobi-based Programme Manager noted that teachers who become trained via the RET programme should receive some type of certification for their training. That way, when they repatriate their certificate could be used to demonstrate the skills they have obtained so they can apply for better jobs. However, as of yet there is only the opportunity for those teachers who pursue their Teaching Certificate or B.Ed. to become certified, which is only a small percentage of teachers.

## Key Findings: Teachers

### Successes

- RET conducted teacher needs assessment with KICD
- Most teachers are from the camps
- Teachers received pre-service orientation
- RET conducts yearly teacher needs assessment and in-service training that includes AE pedagogy and secondary content
- RET offers some scholarships for teachers to pursue higher education
- Education Officer and headmaster coach and supervise teachers

### Challenges

- Training is insufficient to support teachers to meet learners' needs
- Distance between Centres is one factor that makes training difficult
- Teachers are often resettled
- Trainings, which are intended to improve quality, make teachers more qualified for other opportunities, which increases turnover
- Refugee incentive payment is not sufficient, which also impacts turnover

## Programme Management

### Principle 7:

AE centre is effectively managed.

### Principle 9:

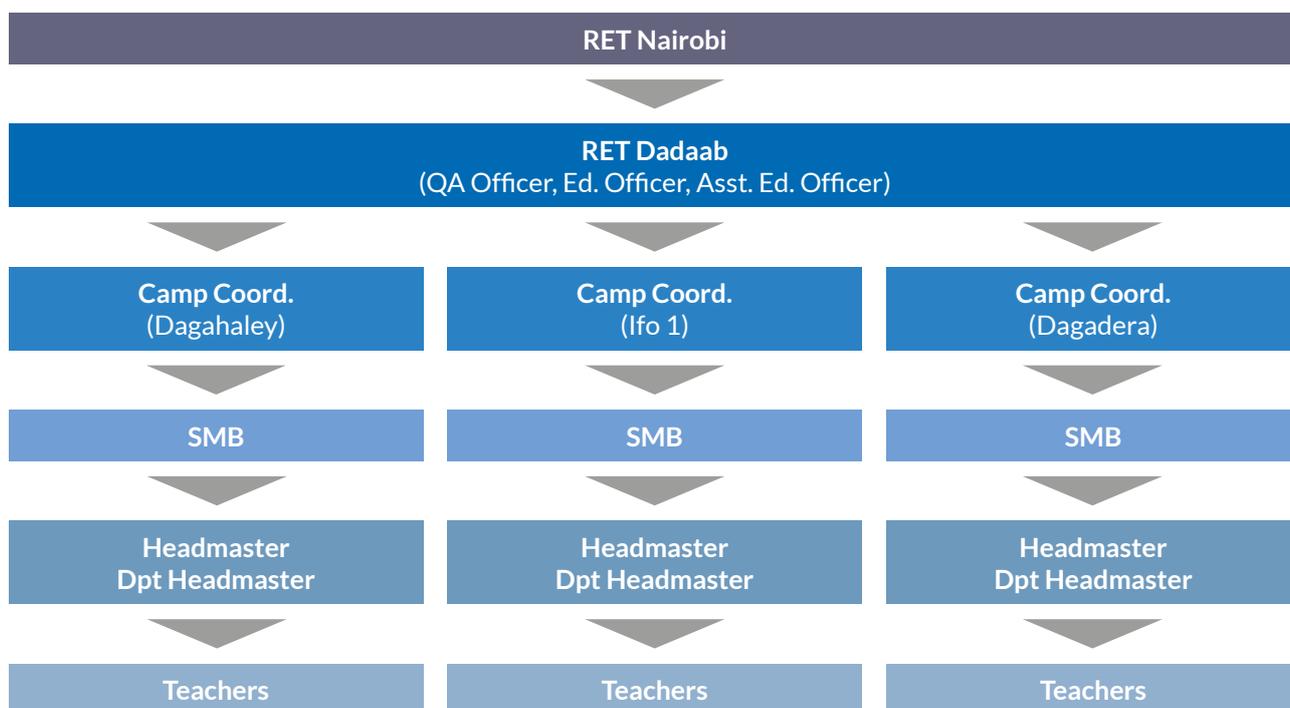
Community is engaged and accountable.

### Principle 10:

Goals, monitoring and funding align.

## Programme Management

Management structure of the AEP Centres is shown in Figure 2. Teachers are overseen by a headmaster and deputy headmaster, who monitor teacher attendance and provide some coaching and support in teaching, as well as oversee day-to-day operations of the Centre. The SMB is involved in some aspects of management of the Centre, although has little decision-making power. Camp coordinators are employed by RET and oversee administration of all RET programs in the camp, including the AEP. The Education Officer and Assistant Education Officer based in RET's Dadaab office are heavily involved in the management of the AEP. Their responsibilities include overseeing and maintaining student data on enrolment, attendance, and completion; managing recruitment, hiring, and remuneration of teachers; procurement and distribution of teaching and learning materials; reporting on weekly activities; and supporting exam registration.



**Figure 2.** RET AEP Management Structure

A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed that aligns with the indicators required per RET’s contract. Indicators measured include:

- ❶ 763 (105 new) learners aged 16 to 35 are enrolled in secondary AEP;
- ❷ 70% of the 763 learners record attendance at/above 60%;
- ❸ 90% of education facilitators increase skills related to accelerated education, lesson planning, classroom management, use of technology, and child/adolescent rights;
- ❹ three SMBs develop a 2-year school management strategic plan and implement at least 2 activities in the plan; and
- ❺ at least 85% of the 260 learners pass the KCSE.

At the school level, education facilitators collect records of student and teacher attendance. The headmaster maintains student enrolment and progress figures. All of these data are aggregated by RET at the Dadaab level across the three sites. Additionally, beginning with the 2016 Cohort, which took the KCSE in November 2016, RET intends to track KCSE scores, completion rates, and transition data.

## Community Engagement

RET has supported the engagement of the SMB, composed of parents, the headmaster, and RET staff. One SMB member explained, “*There is a Somali proverb: ‘Between the camel and the man, there is a rope. We [the SMB] are the rope.’*” The SMB serves as the link between the school (the man) and the community (the camel).

SMB members explain they were selected by vote in a meeting called by RET at the beginning of the project. They are largely responsible for representing the needs of the community, sensitizing the community about allowing their children to attend, supporting the Centre with student discipline issues, and managing the maintenance and beautification of the school environment, such as collecting funds and building a fence.

“ There is a Somali proverb: ‘Between the camel and the man, there is a rope. We [the SMB] are the rope.’”

– Dagahaley SMB Member

RET staff explain that early in the process of engaging the SMB, they established a one-year strategic plan that outlined the roles and responsibilities of the SMB, and they are currently working with the SMB to create a two-year strategic plan. RET staff also explain that they are strategically shifting more management capacity to the SMB in a way that ensures that the vision of the programme is maintained and management continues to be effective.

The SMB members who participated in the focus group said that they, and the community at large, are very thankful that the community’s youth have the opportunity to continue their education. They explained that unoccupied youth in the camp can become involved in drugs, robbery, and even killing to sustain themselves. The headmaster, however, explained that at the beginning of the project, community members were sceptical about the project because they did not know if students would receive a valid certificate. He confirms that after some time the community recognized the legitimacy of the program, in large part because they learned that students would receive a valid certificate, and are now supportive of the program.

In addition to engaging the SMB, UNHCR, who oversees the entire Dadaab complex, conducts a yearly needs assessment to collect information from community members to understand their needs and capacities. This informs the development of larger programming within the entire operation, under which RET operates. RET also participates in and conducts additional needs assessment focused on the education sector and their own priority issues as needed.

## Challenges

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RET staff explain that one of the challenges in programme design and management has been the lack of principles that provide guidance to programmes (which they acknowledge is currently being addressed by the AEWG). RET programme staff explain that all AEPs “*do things their own way*”, often based on what the donors identify as priority. This is true for RET. Without principles, they lack a clear sense of what is effective practice in AE.

A second challenge is that through 2015, students enrolled in AEPs were not captured in the Dadaab EMIS. This has proven a challenge in knowing the eligible number of students, as well as tracking their own students. According to RET staff, the new 2016-2020 Dadaab Education Strategy, which is under development, will incorporate AEPs into the EMIS. Therefore, RET staff have just begun to align their data collection with the Dadaab-wide EMIS system.

A further challenge lies with needs assessment. Funding to RET is limited to what was specified in the contract. They are not able to regularly conduct needs assessments and get updated information because of lack of funding.

RET staff note that engaging the community in the Dadaab context was difficult because many community members are not able to come to meetings at times that RET can hold them. RET staff are restricted to being in the camp from morning to early afternoon for security reasons. During this time, many community members are working, going to food distribution centres, or engaged in other activities. RET asks the SMB to collaborate with community members around what days and times are best for people, and then tries to work within those parameters as best as they are able.

Additionally, there are challenges associated with the low literacy rates of the SMB members. RET would like the SMB to oversee some of the finances of the Centre, such as for maintenance and beautification, but they must provide significant support for the SMB to open and maintain a bank account.

## Key Findings: Programme Management

### Successes

- RET staff in Dadaab largely support management of the AEP
- RET formed and engaged an SMB to support management
- Community welcomes and appreciates the AEP
- Dadaab-wide needs assessment is conducted yearly
- RET has set up M&E framework based on donor indicators

### Challenges

- Engagement of community without proper conceptualization and understanding of AEP in refugee context is difficult
- Until 2017, AEPs were not included in EMIS
- Limited funding affects RET's ability to conduct ongoing needs assessments
- Low literacy rates of SMB limit their involvement in overseeing finance school issues.

## Alignment to Government Education System or Humanitarian Architecture

### Principle 2:

AEP is a legitimate, credible education option that results in learner certification in primary education.

### Principle 3:

AEP is aligned with the national education system and relevant humanitarian architecture.

The primary goal of the RETs AEP is to support students to sit and pass the KCSE, which will provide them with the same secondary education certificate as their formal school peers and open the door for them to pursue higher education and better job opportunities and create durable refugee solutions upon repatriation and resettlement. To facilitate learner certification, the programme uses a condensed version of the national non-formal education curriculum. They also align themselves with the Education Act as best they can which specifies term dates, exam dates, and requirements of the SMB.

RET staff explain that they collaborate with the Ministry particularly around examinations. In Dagahaley and other Centres, the Centre has obtained accreditation as a licensed private exam centre. Although the process of exam site registration was different from the formal school, since the AEP does not meet the requisite number of certified teachers to be a school-based exam centre, students are still able to obtain the same certification as formal school students.

RET also hosts a series of examinations aligned with the national testing schedule. They support students to register for the exam and pay exam fees for students. Students participate in a monitoring visit and a mock examination before sitting for the KCSE. In the case that a site is unable to be registered, they facilitate transportation to a registered exam site.

RET also participates in many advocacy and collaborative initiatives. They have contributed, in collaboration with the Ministry and other partners, to developing a guideline for admission of non-citizen students into Kenyan schools. They have also advocated for and supported the inclusion of AEP students within the Dadaab EMIS system, which began in early 2017. They have contributed to the Dadaab Education Strategy 2016-2020. Finally, they participate in the Dadaab Education Working Group, which discusses education matters for all ages in formal and non-formal schools.

## Challenges

The primary challenge associated with learner certification is that students are not allowed to register for the KCSE examination until they have a four-year gap between completion of primary school and completion of secondary school (as described above). In the first years of the RET AEP, the programme focused on enrolling students with at least a one-year gap between primary and secondary. However, over time, there were fewer students with a gap to enrol, and the students who were leaving primary but who did not make the cut-off wanted to continue their studies rather than delay a year. To meet the demands of those learners, RET has admitted some students directly out of primary who will remain in the AEP for four years. Those students will complete the 3-year accelerated programme and spend the fourth year reviewing for the exam until they are able to register.

Additionally, some officials are very supportive of the AEP, and others are less so. There are many ways in which the Ministry has supported the program, such as helping them to register as a private exam site. However, in other instances, getting Ministry officials to participate and engage around AEP issues has been a challenge.

### Key Findings: Alignment with Government and Humanitarian Architecture

#### Successes

- RET uses the national syllabus
- Centres are registered as private exam sites, so learners are equally accepted to seat for the KCSE exam
- RET supports registration of students for exam and participation in monitoring visits and mock exams
- RET participates in advocacy initiatives and collaborates with other partners

#### Challenges

- Four-year gap between KCPE and KCSE is not conducive to accelerated education
- Engagement of government in AEP issues can be challenging

## Utility and Relevance of the Principles and Guidance to the Programme

### Usefulness/Relevance of the Principles

RET staff explained that there was a great need for these Principles. They were pleased that the Principles were developed for a number of reasons. One RET staff member explained, “*When we design programmes, we get stuck without principles*”. RET is using the INEE minimum standards for guidance, customizing them for their context, and although they are relevant from a general framework point of view, they are not AEP specific. They feel that AE Principles are important because it gives them a set of standards to work from to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

“ [The Principles] define what we as RET are doing. I felt that they are touching everything that is different from other types of education...”

– RET Programme Manager

RET staff also explain that the Principles are relevant and to a large extent describe what they are already doing. The Nairobi-based Programme Manager explained, “[The Principles] define what we as RET are doing. I felt that they are touching everything that is different from other types of education.” She clarifies, addressing Principles 1 and 9 specifically, “Obviously overage learners, and the fact that we need to have the community more engaged. Our approach is to be building the community to be able to deliver the program. For me, that is why I felt it is explaining everything we are doing...” However, despite the Principles holding much relevance for the RET program, they largely felt that secondary AEPs were not targeted or represented in the Principles. Additionally, they felt that some Principles as written did not truly describe the refugee context<sup>21</sup>.

The RET Programme Manager in Nairobi noted that there is a relationship between flexibility (Principle 1) and management (Principle 7), particularly for monitoring indicators. She explains that the normal school day in Kenya is from 8am to 5pm, and that is conducive to monitoring attendance and managing the school. However, when you build in flexibility, attendance becomes more erratic and it becomes more difficult to monitor attendance and manage the project.

The research also revealed that for secondary AEPs, tensions exist between principles that aim to address the specific needs of target learners (such as Principles 1 and 4) and those that aim for learner certification and transition into formal schooling (such as Principles 2 and 3). At the secondary level, where the curriculum is more demanding, and for students with a gap in their education, having flexibility is lost because of the perceived need to have students in school for a given number of hours focused on content provided in the syllabus.

## Current and Future Utilisation of the Principles and Guidance

While RET was not using the Principles or Guide prior to the study, they were able to reflect on some ways that they may use the Principles and Guide in the future, as well as ways other stakeholders may use the resources, including:

- **Sensitisation of the national government regarding the need for AEPs and advocacy for policy change.** RET believes that the Principles and Guide could be used to advocate for policy that is more conducive to operating a secondary AEP. They note some challenges with current policy, particularly around non-citizen admissions<sup>22</sup> and the requirement that a student has had a gap of 4 years between sitting the KCPE and the KCSE.
- **Sensitisation of donors of the need for AEPs in this context and advocacy for further funding.** RET indicates that the Principles and Guide provide added legitimisation and that these documents can be used to inform donors and advocate for further funding for AEPs.
- **Standardization across AEPs.** RET acknowledges the need to contextualise the Principles to their own situation, rather than take a one-size-fits-all approach. However, they also explain that a lack of Principles or guidelines for implementing AEPs means that individual programmes and their funders determine their own indicators, so programmes may look very different from each other without a set of good practices. While programmes should be contextualised, RET believes that having guidelines for implementation that describe effective AEPs is needed.
- **Measurement, evaluation, and improvement of programmes based on a set of standards.** RET staff noted that with a set of Principles, which they can adapt to their context, they will better be able to measure, evaluate, and improve their programme. Additionally, with evidence of how other programs are implementing AEPs, they can gain further ideas of how to contextualize the Principles to work in their context.
- **Guidance for the working group in Dadaab.** The Principles and Guide could also serve to enhance discussions on AE within the Dadaab education working group.

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<sup>21</sup> Recommendations are provided below in the section entitled, “What can be learned from this case?”

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 13.

## Challenges in Utilisation

Challenges to the application of specific Principles and sub-Principles were discussed above. In summary, the greatest factors affecting these challenges include:

- **Funding.** Many of the challenges RET faces are related to limited funding, including shortage of materials, insufficient training, and insufficient capacity to conduct further needs assessment and research.
- **The refugee context.** A number of national policies<sup>23</sup> specifically related to the refugee context have had an effect on alignment with exams, teacher turnover, quality instruction, and safe and inclusive spaces. Additionally, simply by being in a refugee context, RET explains that it is more difficult to engage the community.
- **National exam.** Because the AEP must align with the rigorous national secondary exam, this puts strain on the amount of flexibility they are able to have, as well as the integration of subject matter, including psycho-social support and social-emotional learning, into the curriculum.
- **Lack of opportunity for graduates.** In Dadaab, there are limited jobs, higher education spots, and scholarship opportunities. Even when students receive certification or complete secondary education, they do not always see the return that they expect.

## Links to Programme Outcomes<sup>24</sup>

### Enrolment and Attendance of Target Students

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The target student population – those who are overage and out of school, who didn't have the opportunity for secondary education because they didn't score high enough on the KCPE or who are working and maintaining households – is a challenging population to reach. As shown in Table 2, 647 youth ages 16 to 35 were enrolled as of 2016. Of those, approximately 22% were female students.

All participants explain that the enrolment figures of students of this very specific, hard-to-reach population are a reflection of the flexibility of the program. However, not all those who are enrolled actually attend, and not all those who attend come all day or all year. The attendance figures (shown in Table 7) prompt two questions regarding flexibility: (1) About half of all students are attending 40% of the time or more – could this be considered good attendance, in light of the allowance that students can attend one session per day? (2) Over half of all students attend between 20% to 59% of the time – does this suggest that over 50% of students are only able to attend one of the sessions, and thus require this level of flexibility to be able to attend at all? Perhaps a different way of tracking attendance could better answer these questions, but the data seem to suggest that if it weren't for the targeting of these specific learners coupled with the flexibility of the programme that these students would not have the opportunity to pursue secondary education.

### Completion of 2016 Cohort

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The completion rate<sup>25</sup> for the 2016 cohort was 67% (71% male and 52.7% female). 343 students (74 female) enrolled in the AEP for the 2016 cohort. Of those, 261 (44 female) registered for KCSE in February 2016. This disparity is related to several factors. First, some students in that cohort may have joined the AEP immediately

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<sup>23</sup> See footnote 13.

<sup>24</sup> The researcher was unable to obtain data on indicators 3 and 4, related to teacher training and school management board capacity building.

<sup>25</sup> Completion rate is defined as having continued through the whole program and sat the KCSE exam.

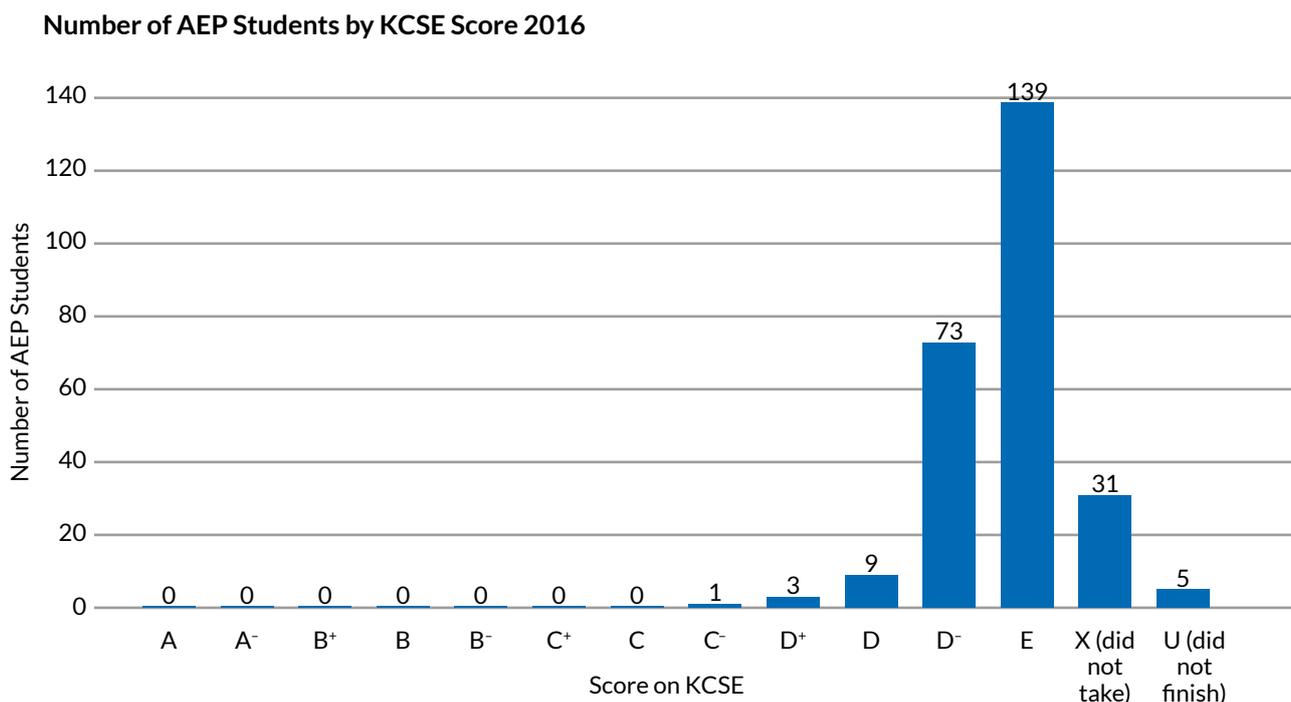
after completing the KCPE, which means they would not have passed the requisite 4 years between taking the KCPE and KCSE. Other factors include students repatriating or resettling, as well as some students dropping out or not attending.

Of the 261 students registered, 230 (39 female) sat the exam in November 2016. Again, this disparity is largely related to resettlement and repatriation, as well as other regular factors such as illness or refusal to sit the exam. The ability of these 230 students to sit the exam can be directly tied to several Principles and sub-Principles:

- Alignment with the MoEST curriculum
- Alignment with the exam registration, preparation, and testing timelines and processes
- Registering Centres as private exam sites (or providing transportation to registered exam sites)
- Paying exam registration costs for eligible students
- Collaborating with the MoEST on curriculum and exam alignment issues

## KCSE Achievement

RET’s report detailing their students’ exam results has not yet been published, so analysis is still underway. However, RET shared their students scores (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** 2016 Cohort Scores on KCSE.

As shown in the table, 38% of AEP students in the first cohort who took the KCSE passed the exam. Five who sat the exam did not complete due to illness. Teachers and the headmaster at Dagahaley were concerned that the low pass rate was a reflection of the low attendance rates (and the program’s flexibility) – they felt that students were not able to review the old material from primary and learn the new secondary material sufficiently to pass the exam while attending school fewer hours than even their formal school peers, despite using the accelerated curriculum. The headmaster explained that to regularize attendance, they have begun taking measures, such as locking the gate 30 minutes after the start of classes, to ensure that students arrive on time while still maintaining the flexibility to participate in either morning or afternoon sessions.

However, it is noteworthy that RET staff, who have an overview of all of RET’s secondary AEP Centres, clarify that the data do not confirm that low attendance rates are associated with poorer scores. Specifically, they explain, that in Hagadera, where the AEP Centre is only in operation in the afternoon, scores overall were better than in the other two Centres.

Additionally, RET notes that Kenya as a whole saw a dramatic and inexplicable drop in KCSE scores from 2015 to 2016. Dadaab camp secondary schools, who scored better than the rest of Kenya in 2015, experienced this drop even more strongly. In fact, Dadaab schools performed worse in 2016 than Kenya as a whole (see Figure 4 and Figure 5 for a comparison of Dadaab and Kenya scores in 2015 and 2016).

### Student Scores on KCSE 2015

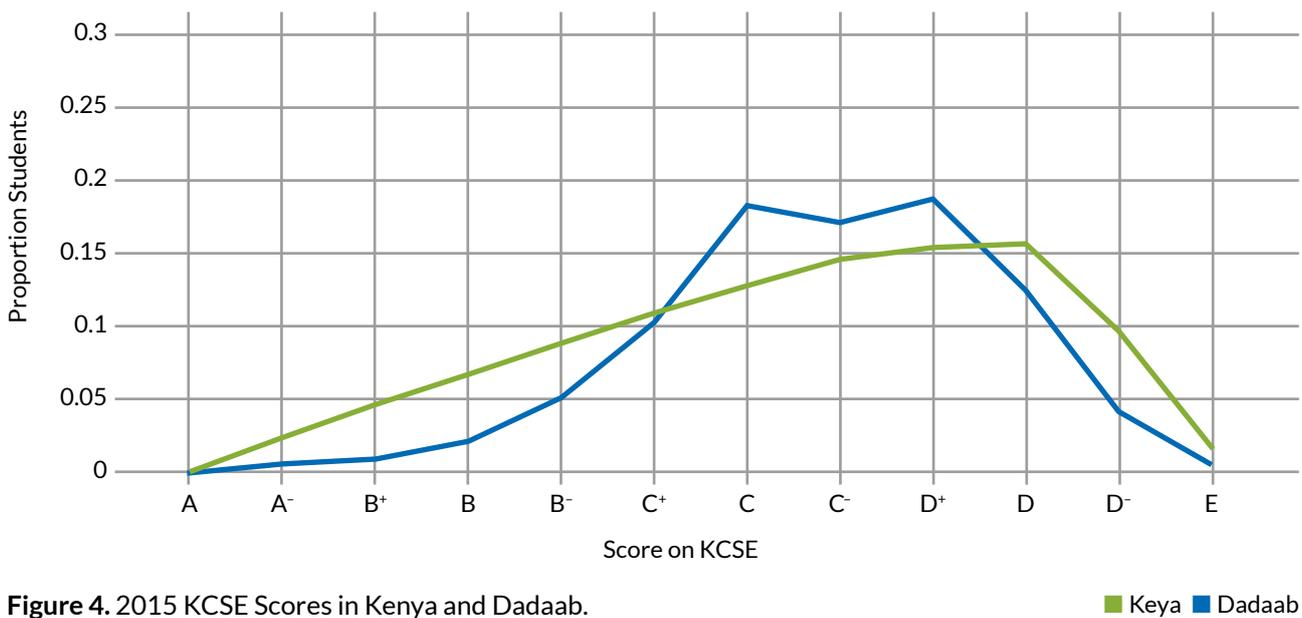


Figure 4. 2015 KCSE Scores in Kenya and Dadaab.

### Student Scores on KCSE 2016

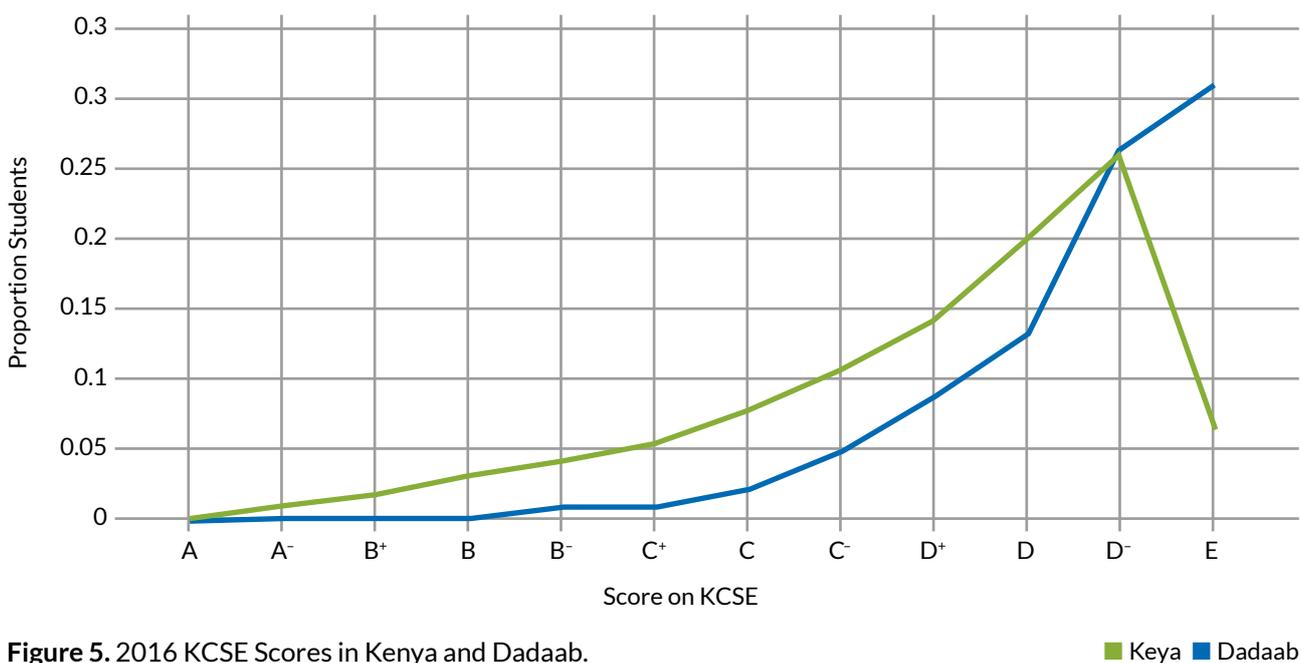


Figure 5. 2016 KCSE Scores in Kenya and Dadaab.

Finally, RET staff note that youth who enrol in their programme face substantially greater barriers to success on the KCSE. They come in with lower KCPE scores than those who are accepted into the formal schools, and many have been out of school for years. Some participants suggest that the low scores are likely to be related to individual characteristics, such as prior academic achievement and roles and responsibilities outside of school. Moreover, RET considers that while pass rates are important and the Secondary AEP aims at facilitating learners' success, it is also relevant to consider the positive impact on learners' lives of the AEP in general. In other words, the academic results are central to the purpose of the programme, but the 3 years' learning experience has also a role to play in positively changing learners' life perspectives and prospects.

Further analysis is required to understand the causes of the low scores on the KCSE by AEP students, as well as the relationship between the KCSE scores and the Principles. It is likely that a combination of factors, including attendance and student characteristics, compounded by apparent challenges in the exam system as a whole, affected the outcome. RET is in the process of examining these factors to determine what adjustments they could make to support students in achieving better KCSE scores.

## What can be learned from this case?

The AEP implemented by RET in Dadaab provides an interesting perspective in this research because they are a secondary AEP. Overall, participants in this case study explain that:

- 1 **The 10 Principles, and most of the sub-principles are relevant, if adapted to the program's context.** They explain that the Principles were written for primary-level AEPs, which differs somewhat from RET's secondary AEP. However, they explain that many of the issues they face are similar, and the Principles can guide them in their work.

RET offers some comments and recommendations for improving the Principles.

- 2 **Incorporate secondary-level AEPs into the Principles and Guide.** They explain that junior secondary is now part of the definition of Basic Education, and for this reason it is important to incorporate secondary education into the Principles so as to support organizations in working towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. While the Principles were developed with primary education perspective in mind, RET explains that there are many similarities to secondary AEPs. They have made some suggestions that would better incorporate secondary AEPs, which are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Recommendations to improve relevance to secondary AEPs.

Principle	Challenges	Recommendation
1a	Age range of RET programme is 16-35, so 10-18 age range doesn't fit context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broaden age range to include individuals up to 35</li> <li>• Include secondary education in AEP</li> </ul>
1c	Not applicable; students have already completed primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate entry exams to place students</li> <li>• Specify readiness/review courses for students who have a gap since finishing primary</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise wording to include secondary</li> </ul>
2b	This depends how you define formal system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include tertiary education, employment, or TVET in definition of formal system</li> </ul>
4g	Not applicable because of secondary context	

- ③ **Note that some sub-Principles don't apply to the refugee context.** RET explains that some sub-Principles, namely those that address refugee teacher remuneration (6b) and budgeting for AEP staff within Ministry (3e). In the refugee context, teachers cannot be remunerated fairly, only incentivized, and no AEP staff are placed within the Ministry.
- ④ **Enhance focus on advocacy within Principles and support organizations in advocacy.** RET noted throughout that support by the Ministry and integration of the AEP into the national system was important for success of the AEP. Therefore, they recommend that the advocacy component of the Principles be further emphasized.

Additionally, RET suggests that the AEWG:

- ⑤ **Add RET or another agency with expertise in secondary AEPs** into the working group. RET is particularly interested in contributing their expertise to the working group, and they note the importance of including secondary AEPs, which help make progress towards SDG 4 by ensuring access to basic education by all.
- ⑥ **Offer learning sessions.** RET staff note that the Principles and Guide shouldn't just be produced and disseminated. Rather, users should be engaged and trained. Then the AEWG can follow up with users in order to get further feedback for improvements.
- ⑦ **Provide advocacy support to organizations.** As discussed above, RET identified advocacy as an important component of sustaining the AEP. They suggest the AEWG provide further support to organizations in advocating for the acceptance of the AEP by the host government.

Upon reflecting on the research process, the researcher recommends that the AEWG:

- ⑧ **Continue to work with RET and other organizations to understand how the Principles affect achievement of outcomes and application in the secondary context.** It is of interest to the AEWG and implementers to understand how the Principles affect outcomes. However, the current design did not allow for a rigorous examination of this question. Therefore, the researcher suggests that further research be conducted to look at how the Principles are linked to outcomes. Additionally, a number of differences exist between secondary and primary AEPs, which should be explored further.
- ⑨ **Conduct follow-up field testing of the Guide** after programmes had more time to engage with and use it for a period of time. As noted by RET staff, the researcher suggests that the AEWG continue to field test the Guide and view it as a working document, so modifications can be made once users have had more time to engage with the Guide.

Throughout the research process, RET expressed their appreciation for being included in the research. They felt that deeply engaging with the Principles helped them to reflect on their own processes and note areas in which they would like to improve. They look forward to further engaging in this important work.

## References

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