

Strengthening Quality of the Somali Education System (SQOSES)



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Welcome to Edition 3 of the SQOSES Newsletter.

EC – UNESCO collaboration

One of the many projects through which EC supports the Somali people is the Strengthening Quality of the Somali Education System (SQOSES) Intervention. UNICEF and UNESCO are the implementing partners in this project.

An update on SQOSES project activities

Activities are gaining momentum following logistical difficulties and an increase in insecurity throughout Somalia over the last six months.

The UNESCO component of SQOSES provides the new textbooks for Grade 5 and 6 and supplementary readers to schools in Somalia. It further provides for the in service training of teachers in the use of the new textbooks, the conducting of Grade 8 examinations, and strengthening of services to the Somaliland Teacher Education College (STEC).

Distribution of Grade 5 textbooks

The Grade 5 textbooks of Somalia/Somaliland have been distributed and teachers and pupils have access to better learning resources at the Grade 5 level.



In-service teacher training

In order to ensure that the new learning materials for Grades 5 and 6 are better utilized in the teaching process, workshops for the Training of Trainers (TOT) in preparation for the teacher in service training in Grade 5 and 6 subjects were successfully conducted. The Bossaso TOT was conducted in March and in Hargeisa in April and May 2004. In addition, a series of further in-service workshops are scheduled during the school holidays (June-August 04) targeting over 3000 upper primary teachers.



Supplementary readers

A total of 6 readers were printed by UNESCO and have been freighted to Hargeisa, Garoe and Mogadishu from where they will be distributed along with the Grade 6 textbooks in July 2004 and integrated into the in-servicing workshops.

Grade 8 examinations

UNESCO provided financial support and technical assistance in the form of training workshops and capacity building for the preparation of the Grade 8 examinations in Somaliland, Puntland and Central-South Somalia to be held in June 2004.

UNESCO supported the Ministries of Education on the advertisements to campaign for a more general participation of Grade 8 leavers in the national Grade 8 examinations. The adverts would be announced through the mass media in Somaliland and Puntland. SACB members were also asked to encourage Grade 8 students in the schools they support to register for the common Somalia Certificate of Primary Education Examinations.

The Ministries of Education of Puntland and Somaliland each allocated premises for examination centres. Contractors were identified for their rehabilitation which will be supported by UNESCO.



The Somaliland Teacher Education College (STEC)

UNESCO supplied library resources and laboratory equipment to the Somaliland Teacher Education College and continued to support the administration and management of the college.



The Grade 6 – 8 textbooks

The pre-press work on the Grade 6 textbooks was completed and the texts are now with the printers. Meanwhile, with DFID (UK's Department for International Development) funding, preparations are made for the finalisation of the Grade 7 and 8 textbooks in two editions.

Textbook Provision Policy

Data gathering has concluded for a study designed to provide the basis for the evolution of a Textbook Provision Policy for Somalia. The study, conducted by International Book Development (IBD), sampled a broad range of stakeholders in education including the local education authorities, parents, booksellers, printers and publishers.

The output will be a textbook provision policy for Somalia which will help in identifying roles, responsibilities and capacities of different stakeholders in the sustainable production and distribution of textbooks for teaching and learning.

A stakeholder workshop on the outcome of the study is planned for July. Key decisions on the way forward for textbook and other learning material production will follow the workshop.

Revamping Education Management Information System (EMIS)

During the second quarter of the year, UNICEF completed a revision of EMIS tools.

The modified tools contain information relevant at the school level and have been made so that they are easier to use. For instance, the revised tools have simpler methods of tracking pupil movement and gauging enrollment, daily attendance, retention and pass rates to higher grades. They also contain a section on teacher data which will assist in knowing the number, qualification, location and movement of teachers.

The revised tools and accompanying mock-ups have been presented to all partners and authorities for their suggestions and comments and are now ready for printing.

Annual School Survey

UNICEF also conducted the annual school survey during the quarter which involved a number of phases involving training of the enumerators, support to data collection in the field, and collation and analysis of the collected data in Nairobi. Data analysis has been completed that the survey report is being prepared for distribution. This year, for the first time, information on teachers' names, qualifications, level of experience and location was collected in the Northwest and Northeast Zones. This information will form the basis of a Teacher Registration system in these areas.

The survey was completed in all operational schools in the Northeast and Northwest Zones. In the Central and Southern Zone, data collection was completed in all operational schools except in Lower Juba and Jillib, where data collection activities were hindered by insecurity.

The annual survey is instrumental in allowing education agencies to gather and maintain reliable education data to ensure appropriate planning and implementation. In addition, the preparatory processes leading to the conduct of the survey provided opportunities to build the data gathering and management capacities of educational functionaries throughout Somalia.

Support to Educational Development Centres (EDCs) in Hargeisa and Bossaso

Educational Development Centres serve as resource centres for both teachers and learners and play a major role in improving the overall quality of education. During the quarter, the EDCs in the Northeast and Northwest Zones were provided with basic support items in order to improve their capacity in vital teaching-learning support functions.

Items supplied to the two centres in Bossaso and Hargeisa included furniture, shelves, photocopiers, toners, drums and stationery. Toilets were also constructed for the EDC in Hargeisa. With these in place, the EDCs are now more equipped to support educational functionaries, particularly, the school mentors, who will then in turn provide support and guidance to classroom teachers. The EDCs are now also more able to serve as venues for meetings and training workshops in their respective zones.

Mentoring support to teachers

Twenty school mentors from the Northwest Zone, 12 from the Northeast and 28 from the Central and Southern Zone continued working in 212 pilot schools with 1751 teachers during the reporting period. Reports have been positive from monitoring visits by the zonal SQOSES in-service co-coordinators and UNICEF Project Officers using monitoring tools specifically developed for the pilot schools. Among the positive feedback, reporting indicate that teachers are increasingly adopting more participatory methodologies in their classrooms. These reports also indicate that textbooks distributed through the SQOSES project are being productively used in classroom interactions and that learners are adopting more process oriented approaches in solving problems. (See attached story)

"It all adds up well - report from a visit to a SQOSES project"

I took the opportunity of visits to Horsed and Kulmis schools in Johwar which I monitored during this month of February to take some photographs of actual classroom interactions.



I was excited to see a female pupil concretely explaining subtraction of a one-digit number from two digit numbers using the take away method. She subtracted 5 from 12 without "carrying" from the ones. The girl skillfully did the subtraction using a bundle of 10 sticks and two separate sticks to represent the number 12. First, she put away the two sticks and then untied the bundle of ten and further took away three sticks and placed these together with the two sticks. She then counted the remaining sticks in her hand and then shouted "seven stick are in my hand". The photograph captures the girl as she solves this problem.



The girl is in grade one at Horsed Primary School in Jowhar. In the other attachment, the teacher has set a task to the pupils and is walking round the class as the pupils are doing the exercise and providing guidance to pupils. Pupils are clearly learning, and the different SQOSES project activities are thus adding up well.