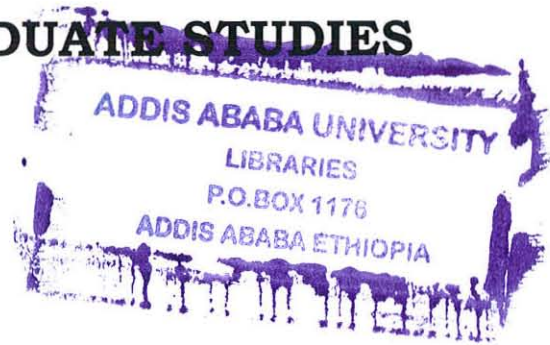


ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES



**CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF ALTERNATIVE
BASIC EDUCATION ESTABLISHED BY INTERNATIONAL
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: THE CASE OF
AMHARA AND OROMIA REGIONS**

By
ELIAS TADESSE



FEBRUARY, 2009
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ACRONYMS

AAE	Action Aid Ethiopia
ABE	Alternative Basic Education
ABEC	Alternative Basic Education Center
ABEP	Alternative Basic Education Program
ADA	Amhara Development Association
ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
AFSCDPO	Amhara Food Security Coordination and Disaster Prevention Office
RBoE	Regional Bureau of Education
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBO	Community Based Organization
CPO	Country Program Outline
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
ECD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education For All
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

OED	Operation Evaluation Department
ONRS	Oromia National Regional State
SCD	Save the Children Denmark
SCNE	Save the Children Norway Ethiopia
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Aid for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WoE	Woreda Office of Education
ZoE	Zonal Office of Education
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence Command

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to make an assessment of the Challenges and Prospects of Alternative Basic Education by International Non Governmental Organizations in the Amhara and Oromia Regions of Ethiopia. The study employed a descriptive survey method. Questionnaires, focus group discussion, key informant discussion and consultation of secondary data sources were used for data collection. Both random and purposive sampling was used to select sample respondents of the study at different levels. Regional, zonal and woreda Education offices of Amhara and Oromia regions , Country and project offices of sample INGOs and woreda administrations , capacity building and Finance offices were subjects of the study. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used for data analysis. Finally the study came up with the following major findings: ABE has improved access to basic education; quality of education was improved through improvements in the input side (textbook, training of ABE facilitators, community awareness raising, and capacity building at woreda levels); INGOs provided financial and technical support to woreda; improved policy environment through advocacy; and the program was cost-effective for it used local resources available. However, its sustainability seems threatened by factors like less flexibility of the program in practice, less effort of woredas on finding alternative mechanisms of financing the program, relatively lower quality of education, high staff turn over , and high student dropout rates. In conclusion, the ABE program by INGOs has been contributing significantly towards achieving the MDG goals complementing the formal education system through creating access opportunity, improving quality and enhancing local capacity. Given the low net enrolment rate in primary education, there is a need to enhance the cooperation further. There seems good policy framework which should be translated into practice through allocating adequate budget and other resources. On the other hand the program faces challenges of poor quality mainly linked to the capacity of teachers, limited institutional capacity related to human power, allocating budget, and using local resources. This demands further advocacy engagement with local governments from the INGOs.

CHAPTER ONE

1. THE PROBLEM and ITS APPROACH

1.1 Background

Formal school participation has long been strengthened and desired in Ethiopia. Recently the country has achieved a lot in terms of expanding primary education to as much as 91.6% of the school age children (MoE, 2005/06) using both formal and non-formal routes.

According to the National Education Sector Development Program III (ESDP III) (MoE, 2004), which is launched within the framework of the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (MoE, 1994), the general education faces multifaceted problems that can be seen in terms of lack of access, quality problems, and disparity among various children groups, lower relevance and lack of capacity at various levels.

Although a lot has been done to reach more children through establishing more schools, still there are a lot of school age children that are out of school. According to the Federal Ministry of Education, the primary education enrolment rate stands at 91.6% in the academic year 2005/06 and this disaggregated by sex is 98.6% for boys and 83.9 for girls (MoE, 2006). For a country of over 70 million people this ratio still leaves a lot of school age boys and girls under served by the education system.

Primary education has faced serious quality problems. This seen in terms of availing quality inputs indicates that there is shortage of trained teachers (97.6% lower primary, 59.6% upper primary). Pupil-teacher ratio and pupil- section ratio was 62 and 66.2 respectively in 2005/06.

Moreover, teachers lack basic teaching learning skills such as active teaching methodology which is aggravated by high classroom pupil ratio that poses difficulty for the teachers to manage classrooms and support their students individually (MoE, 2005/06).

Although significant changes in school participation have been recorded, there is still high disparity among boys and girls, among regions and rural and urban children. Annual report of Ministry of Education for the academic year 2005/06 indicates that the gross enrolment rate for boys was 98.6% and 83.9% for girls and the gender parity index stands at 0.84 in favor of boys and varying from region to region. Regional comparison also shows that gross enrolment ratio (GER) for some regions such as Afar and Somali is much lower than the rest of the regions. For instance, GER for regions Afar and Somali was 21.9 and 30.3 in 2005/06 compared to the 100.9, 89.8, 86.4, 148.5, 79.5 and 91%% of Tigray, Oromia, Amhara, Addis Ababa , Dire Dawa and the national average respectively (MoE, 2005/06:4).

Joint Review report of the first year of the ESDP III program clearly states that formal school textbooks are not adequately relevant and friendly(MoE, 2006:30-31). The report stated that some parents are not quite happy about relevance of education for children to get engaged in more productive works and less equipped with life skills.

The Sector Strategic Plan for the period of 2005/06 to 2010/11, has five broad goals. These are producing responsible and competent citizens, increasing access to primary education to achieve UPE by 2015, improving quality of education, enhancing efficiency and use resources wisely and addressing equity issues (MoE, 2004:16).

Ministry of Education has made it clear that using community and NGO involvement, a stronger and wider role of non-formal education (NFE) and other alternatives for expanding primary education, strengthening management capacity of woreda education offices, improving professional and technical capacity of teachers and transformation of the education system to provide good education must be sought (MoE,2004:18). In line with this, ABE has been wide spread in many regions in the country with the view to meet UPE by 2015.

For this purpose, the federal government and some regional governments such as Amhara regional government have their own ABE strategy to guide the program (MoE, 2006, ANRS BoE, 2000).

Various non-governmental organizations have been practicing innovative alternatives to address out of school children. Some of these are ACCESS program used by Action Aid Ethiopia and other NGOs such as RCWDA to improve access and opportunity for children and communities that would serve as a feeder or satellite to formal schools as of 1989 in different places in the country. Sidama Development Program has been implementing a non-formal primary education with the objective of accelerated universal primary education (Birhanu, 2000).

Save the Children Norway and Denmark have been also engaged in collaboration with Amhara region as of 1997 to address out of school rural children through a program called alternative basic education. This program has assisted the region to address more than 200,000 out of school children in covering lower primary education in three years time and join the upper primary education.

Project is defined in different ways by various authorities. A project is defined as a discrete package of investments, policies, and institutional

and other actions designed to achieve a specific development objective within a designed period (Baum and Tolbert, 1985:333). According to Baum and Tolbert (1985) education project objectives fall into the following areas: creating access, maintaining equal opportunity, improving internal and external efficiency, enhancing and maintaining institutional capacity.

One of the challenges of education projects is maintaining their sustainability after they are completed. Sustainability has various aspects: institutional, social, financial, and environmental etc. For educational projects, ensuring institutional and financial sustainability is challenging

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Children have the right to education and every country and government have the obligation to provide free and compulsory primary education (MoWA, 2006). The government of Ethiopia has explicitly indicated in its education policy that both formal and non-formal education programs are used in accessing education to its citizens (MoE, 1994). These days, various forms of non-formal education programs are being used to reach out of school children in different parts of the country (Birhanu 2000). One of these programs is called alternative basic education/ABE or non-formal basic education for children.

ABE program is used to reach those out of school children who can not go to the formal education system due to multifaceted problems including social, cultural and economic factors in both rural and urban areas. In addition to this, formal system has problems such as dropout rate, repetition, disparity (lack of equity), quality and relevance problems forcing governments to look for other alternatives which are responsive to

the diversified situations of communities and children that has led to the application of ABE program (MoE, 2005, ANRS BoE ,2000).

According to the Amhara Region's ABE strategy, the ABE program is designed with the objective of accessing basic education to out of school children, enhancing girls' education, providing cost effective, quality and relevant education (ANRS BoE, 2000:1).

Community participation and ownership, accessibility, flexibility, cost-effectiveness, appreciation of local potential, integration of ABE program with formal education, appropriateness and relevance are the guiding principles of ABEP(MoE:2006, ANRS BoE 2000).

Guided by the respective ABE strategy, various non-governmental organizations have been involved in implementing ABE projects in the two regions.

The two regions, Amhara and Oromia have clearly put alternative basic education/ABE as another route to the formal primary education to create the opportunity for access to primary education for school age children. Amhara education bureau (2006) has targeted 758,154 out of school children to be addressed through alternative basic education and this is anticipated to contribute 33.4% to the GER in primary at the end of 2010 (ANRS BoE, 2005). Likewise Oromia Education Bureau has recognized the program to reach those out of school children in achieving the UPE goals (OEB, 2005).

On the other hand, NGOs, both local and international NGOs, are operating in the regions in the area of basic education. This indicates that they are supporting the regional governments in their efforts to reach more children in meeting the EFA and MDG goals.

Hence, it is salient and timely to assess the contributions they are making to the regions and the challenges they are facing so that to make some recommendations both for the NGOs and the regional governments for more meaningful endeavors.

The study attempted to answer the following basic questions that guide the research:

1. What are the overall contributions of Alternative Basic Education Program/ABEP projects by INGOs for reaching more out of school children?
2. To what extent are the INGO projects contributing to enhance the capacity of woreda education offices to effectively manage the ABE program?
3. How sustainable are the ABE program interventions in terms of institutional and financial capacity?
4. What are the major opportunities considered and challenges encountered by INGOs in the process of planning and implementing the ABE programs in the two regions?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to assess the prospects and challenges of international NGOs working in alternative education program/ABEP.

The specific objectives were:

- To assess the prospects of international NGOs working in the area of ABE with particular focus to target children, capacity building and policy and strategy

- To identify challenges and problems international NGOs encountered in working in the area of ABE
- To examine the advantages and disadvantages of self implementation and collaboration with local government

1.4 Significance of the Study

Recently the educational system is characterized by alternative basic education being used side by side to complement the formal system as a strategy to achieve UPE and MDG targets. This is also guided by clear policy and strategy both at federal and regional levels. To this end, MoE has been developing federal ABE strategy and implementation guideline with the involvement of INGOs. Similarly, regions appreciating the role of this ABE program have been developing regional strategy.

It also becomes obvious that government has recognized the role of NGOs in coming with such innovative options and soliciting significant resource and capacity in supporting government to meet its UPE goals.

Hence, the study will have significance in informing NGOs and regional governments in policy and strategy matters. It will come up with recommendations that can be used by NGOs, woreda education offices, regional education bureaus in strengthening their cooperation and coordinating their efforts to use the ABE program to reach more out of school children. Moreover, the study will serve as a source document for further studies in the area.

1.5 Delimitations/Scope of the Study

This research was carried out in two national regional states, Amhara and Oromia. This is done for two reasons. One is for the fact that the two regions have introduced and have been managing alternative basic

education/ABE. The other reason is the researcher has better knowledge and experience in the two regions.

It is also decided that the study was delimited to international NGOs working in the area of ABEP as similar studies are carried out for local NGOs in various places.

The study focused only in the area of alternative basic education and for projects run in the duration of 2004-to date where the necessary policy and strategy documents are in place at federal and regional level and governments have mainstreamed ABE as a program in their system after various pilot projects. It is also focused in the age group 7-14 as the program is an alternative to the formal school system where the target group falls in the same age range or slightly over age.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Two major problems were faced during data collection. No reliable data was available at woreda level in relation to budget allocation and expenditure. The other challenge was scarcity of data on enrolment disaggregated by sex and year to observe the trend of contribution of ABEP and formal system.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Alternative Basic Education: Non-formal education delivered as an alternative to the formal education in order to provide basic education for all. The basic education program has a three-year cycle and is equivalent to the formal education (Grades 1-4). Under this program education is provided for out of school children and adults. (ESDP-II, 2002:16).

Partnership: Cooperation between non governmental organizations for a specific purpose.

Collaboration: Cooperation between government and non-governmental organization to jointly implement an agreed project.

Non-formal education: Any organized, systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected type of education to particular subgroups in the population such as adults, youth as well as children (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974:11)

Self-implementation: An implementation modality where NGOs enter into an agreement with government authority to implement a project by themselves.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one is about the problem and its approach. Background of the problem, significance of the study, , definition of terms and delimitation and limitation of the study was dealt here. Chapter two is about review of related literature and conceptual framework. The study design and methodology used is stated and described in chapter three. Chapter four is about findings and discussion. Chapter five has dealt with summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the review of the related literature. It is subdivided into five sections. The first section deals with status of primary education in Ethiopia and the two study regions. The second section of the chapter reviews status and conceptual understanding of ABEP or NFEC and its principles. The third part addresses the conceptual understanding of education projects and their sustainability with particular focus to institutional and financial sustainability. The last section briefly discusses sample INGOs and their contribution followed by the experience of other countries in NFE under section 2.5.

2.1 Status of Primary Education in Ethiopia

2.1.1 Context

National:

According to UN (2007), the population of Ethiopia is estimated to be 83.1 million in an area of 1.13 million square km. The life expectancy was only 52 for male and 54 for female with a fertility rate of 5.8(2005). The GNI per capita was USD 160 (World Bank, 2006). According to human development index, it is one of the lowest ranking countries.

The status of basic social services such as health and water are still very low. The number of physicians per 100,000 is only 3%. Contraceptive prevalence is only 15% among 15-49 married female age groups. About 69% of the population is undernourished (1992) and children under weight for under age five was 38% (1996-2005). Under five mortality rate was 164 in 2005. This is exacerbated by the high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (3.5 in 2005) that also has effect on the life of children.

Ethiopia is struggling to come out of the deep-rooted poverty cycle in which a large proportion of its people are living below the poverty line with 44% of them earning less than 1 USD (MoE, 2005). The main challenges facing the country (MoFED: 2005) in the struggle against poverty is the dynamics of population growth, very low productivity, structural bottle necks, dependence on unreliable rainfall, and being land-locked. Government has been making efforts with big emphasis on education, expanding infrastructure, opening the economy, building institutions, and developing administration.

The same document clearly puts the poverty and low investment in human capital as follows:

.....Poverty and low investment in human capital present another type of self-perpetuating dynamic. Investing in education may be prohibitive for poor households, due to both the direct costs, as well as the fact that all members need to contribute to the family's income, including time-consuming tasks such as collecting water and firewood. Even if returns to education are high, the inability to finance that initial investment means that there is under-investment. Without significant increases in productivity it is difficult for capital to be accumulated, so that returns to unskilled labor are unlikely to grow. Poverty and low education, therefore, reproduce themselves in future generations. (MoFED, 2005)

This on one hand indicates the linkage between education and level of development and clearly explains, on the other hand, the root causes that have to be addressed to bring all children to school using different approaches.

2.1.2 Policy and Strategy Framework

Ethiopia developed the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy" (ETP) in 1994. The policy gives emphasis to expanding primary education, improving its quality, ensuring equity among different groups, and improving its administration through decentralization of power to the lower levels of administrative echelons as its priorities.

The government has also committed itself to international declarations and conventions. Among these are UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, African Charter for the Rights and welfare of the Child, Education For All initiative by 2015, and strives to meet MDG goals which among others include UPE by 2015.

Government has made it clear in its Plan for “Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty” (PASDEP) which has become a guiding strategic document for the period of 2005-2010 that expanding quality education is one of its priorities in addition to road, agriculture, natural resources and health sectors for poverty reduction. A continued increase in the education and skill levels of the workforce and improving productivity of the 50% of women population through improving their access to education are some of the overall strategies for fast and sustainable growth (MoFED 2005:10). PASDEP as a strategy to meet the Millennium Development Goals/MDG in 2015 targets to meet UPE and major efforts are planned to get more girls into, and completing, school, with a target of gender parity by the end of the 5-year period (2009/10).

As an implementation strategy for the PASDEP(2005-2010) and the ETP (1994), the Ministry of Education of the FDRPE has launched an Education Sector Development Program/ESDP as part of a 20 years indicative plan which has been translated into a series of national ESDPs-ESDP I (1999-2000),ESDP II (2003-2005) and ESDP III (2005/06-2010/11).

The overall goals and priorities of ESDP III are in line with the priorities of PASDEP and the MDGs that include development goals such as good quality primary education by 2015, meeting qualitative and quantitative demand for human power, etc. In general the sector strategic plan has five major goals for the general education component: produce responsible and competent citizens, achieve UPE by the year 2015, improve quality of education, enhance efficiency and use resource wisely, address equity issues to narrow

down the gap between male and female, rural and urban and among regions.

Furthermore, ESDP III stipulates maximizing the use of available and scarce resource, encouraging NGOs and community involvement and alternative approaches such as low cost schools, one classroom, multi grade classroom, stronger and wider role of non-formal education and other alternatives, empowering communities for managing and financing of education, strengthening the role of woredas in governance and management of education, improving academic and ethical values of teachers and providing citizenship education as main strategies (MoE, 2004).

As part of its national commitment to bring all out of school children in schools, government has clearly recognized the role of alternative approaches to education. To this end, the Ministry of Education of FDRE has been organizing various consultative meetings with various actors to develop a national alternative basic education strategy for out of school children (MoE: 2006). This draft strategy realizes that Ethiopia can not achieve UPE by 2015 by providing education through the formal system alone. Therefore, it has designed and been implementing alternative basic education as an alternative route to deliver basic education with particular emphasis to pastoralist and semi pastoralist communities.

According to MoE (2006), the working definition of ABE reads as "non-formal education delivered as an alternative to the formal education in order to provide basic primary education for all" (MoE: 2006:16). This goes along with the broader definition of NFE which according to Coombs and Ahmed is defined as " any organized and systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, adults as well as children" (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974:11).

2.1.3 Current Status of Primary Education in Ethiopia: Access/Enrolment, Equity, Quality, Relevance, and Internal Efficiency

Access and Equity

The GER for lower and complete primary education in 2005/06 was 117.60% (123.9% for males and 111.20% for females) 91.30% (98.60 for males and 83.90% for females) respectively. This enrolment rate also included children in the ABE program. With regard to regional disparity, the highest GER was registered for Addis Ababa (148%) followed by that of Gambella(137.10%) and Benshangul-Gumuz (109.70%). On the other hand, Afar Region registered the least GER among the regions (21.90%) and Somali the second with 30.30%). Therefore, Regional and gender disparities are still critical problems in terms of maintaining equity (MoE 2007).

Status of Quality Indicators

One of the indicators of quality of education is the availability of trained teachers in acceptable proportion. Thus the achievements in this regard as of 2005/06 academic year were:

- The proportions of trained teachers (at a national level) in the first and second cycles were 97.60 and 59.40 percent respectively.
- Pupil student ratio at primary level for the years 2001/02-2005/08 were 63,64,65,66 and 62 respectively, showing a relative decrease of efficiency over the years.
- Pupil-section ratio was 69 per class in 2005/06 academic year, showing relatively higher average class size as compared to the target of ESDP III (66.20 per class)(ibid).

Internal Efficiency

Internal efficiency in this case refers to rates of repetition (appearing for a second time in a specific grade level) and drop out of students. Thus, repetition rate in primary education 2004/05 was about 3.8%, almost the same for both sexes. Drop out in the same year, on the other hand, was 11.80 % (12.80% for males and 11.30% for females).

Therefore in all cases, access/equity, quality and efficiency considered there seems a lot to be done to realize UPE by the year 2015.

2.1.4 Amhara and Oromia Regions

2.1.4.1 Amhara Region

Amhara National Regional State is the second largest federal state covering 157,076.74 square kilometers and accounts 14% of the country. It is subdivided into 11 zones and 150 woredas. The altitude ranges from 500 to 4,620m above sea level. In 2003/04, the population of Amhara Regional state was estimated to be 18.6 million with an annual growth rate of 2.73%. From the total population, 80.6% accounts below 15 years implying the vast majority are children (ANRSBoE, 2005/06).

Regarding the settlement pattern, out of the total population, 11% lives in urban and 89% lives in rural areas. The livelihood of about 89% of the population of the region is based on agriculture. The per capital income was estimated to be about 724 Birr in 2005 and this is below national average. The health coverage was estimated to be 55% and safe drinking water coverage was 36% (31% in rural and 78% in urban areas) (ANRSBoE, 2005).

The status of primary education in the region is described below in terms of access, equity, quality and internal efficiency.

Access:

According to the regional education sector strategic plan (2005/06-10/11), the regional primary enrolment has exhibited an increasing trend. The number of schools has been increasing with annual average of 9.2% and the number of teachers showed 21% increase. However, this is found to be lower compared to the high rate of increase in enrolment. According to Amhara National Regional State Annual Educational Statistics (2006/07), the primary school gross enrolment rate in Amhara region was 86.3% with a gender parity index of 0.93 (ANRSBoE, 2006/07). This achievement

compared to that of the previous year (80.7%) is relatively high. The establishments of more than 800 additional primary schools, training and employment of more than 10,000 primary school teachers, 3,974 ABE facilitators and establishment of 2,241 Alternative Basic Education Centers (ABECs) have contributed to the increment. However, this achievement is still inadequate when it is analyzed in terms of net enrolment. The net enrolment rate of the region is only 71.2%, (71.4% boys and 70.9% for girls) leaving 29% of the eligible school age children out of school. Most of these out of school children are from marginalized groups both in rural and urban areas.

Equity

Generally it can be concluded that there is an improved trend in narrowing down disparity among various groups of children. Gender parity index has improved from 0.86 in 2003 to 0.93 in 2006/7 academic year in primary (SCD, 2008). According to the regional strategic plan for 2005/6-10/11, improved community awareness, improved access, guidance service to girls and improved school facilities are some of the factors for the improvement. However, there is a very high disparity between urban and rural areas, among woredas. For instance, there were 20 woredas with lower enrolment rate than the regional average (SCD, 2008).

Quality

Regional education bureau has taken major steps such as minimum quality standards for educational inputs such as student textbook ratio, student teacher ratio student section ratio based on national standards. It has also developed profile of students at each level. However, the regional annual statistical report indicated that there is still a long way to go to improve pupil teachers' ratio, pupil section ratio which was 66:1 in both cases in 2004/05 though there is slight improvement in trend from previous academic years. Besides various reports such as ABE quality study report (SCD, 2007, Joint Review Mission, 2005) indicated that the capacity of teachers need improvement as students of both formal and ABE program

performed low in English and Math subjects in a standardized exam .This is exacerbated by the low supervision capacity of woreda education offices and the school cluster system which is meant to bring closer school level supervision. In fact there is a concern that the high enrolment rate achieved may be at the expense of quality education (JRM, 2005).

Internal Efficiency

Dropout rate was about 5.98% (6.41% for boys and 5.44% for boys). On the other hand, repetition rate was about 3.43% (3.25% for boys and 3.71% for girls) in 2006/07. The highest repetition rate (17.73%) was recorded in grade 8, at primary school leaving examination. The survival rate at grade 8 is 66.8% (65.5% for boys and 68.2% for girls). The study conducted on quality of ABE in Amhara region indicated that there is poor academic performance of the learners in ABE (Mellese and others, 2007). The literacy rates for rural and urban areas account 17.9% and 57% respectively. All these concrete data warrant that there are still a lot of challenges in the education system.

The region in its strategic plan has put constructing, upgrading and expanding of primary schools, improving community participation, encouraging the private sector and non governmental organizations, using low cost models as overall strategies to improve access. Moreover, in areas of sparsely populated modalities such as low cost schools, multi grade classes and one classroom schools will be used. Improving capacity of teachers through continuous teacher development programs, basic educational inputs such as textbooks etc are emphasized as priorities. As a means to narrowing down disparity, making schools more girls'-friendly, improving awareness, increasing number of female teachers, using alternative basic education in under served woredas, expanding access to special need education etc are being applied.

As a summary, although big achievements are recorded in improving the access to primary education, various reports indicate that there is a challenge of poor quality of education. Net enrolment rate is still very low

indicating that large proportion of the eligible age group for primary school is still out of school. The low completion rate and drop out rate also undermines the scarce resource of the region.

2.1.4.2 Oromia Region

Oromia national regional state is one of the nine federal states of Ethiopia with an estimated area of 353,690 square km accounting 32% of the country's size. Oromia is subdivided into 19 administrative zones and 265 woredas. According to CSA (2002), the population of Oromia was projected to be 25,817,126 (12,934,306 female) in 2006. Out of the population, 12.3% and 87.7% live respectively in urban and rural areas of the region and the school age population is estimated at 20% of the total population. Over 87% of the population lives on agriculture.

The status of primary education in the region is described below in terms of access, equity, quality and internal efficiency.

Access

As depicted in the regional strategic plan of the regional education bureau (2005/6-2010/11), there has been an increasing trend of enrolment in the last academic year. Primary enrolment reached 85.4% in 2004/5. The number of primary schools reached 6,466 in 2004/5 with an average increasing rate of 12%. More than 4.5 million students are recorded to be in primary schools in the same academic year with annual increase rate of 15.4%. However; the net enrolment rate was 73.4 % for both sexes and was only 66% for girls in 2004/5 academic year (ONRSBoE, 2006). Similar to the Amhara region, the average annual increase of teachers has been lower (9%) than that of number of students and schools. As a means to overcome the serious shortage of teachers, communities have been employing more than 2,000 teachers annually. The regional government claims that 361, 915 (50.87% girls) school age children have been enrolled in 2004/5 in the region through ABE program with the support of NGOs. This had a contribution of 6.8% to the regional gross enrolment rate in 2004/5.

Equity

The gender parity index was 0.74 in 2004/5 indicating that there is still a high level of disparity between boys and girls. The regional education bureau estimates that there are 10-20% children with special needs in the region and recognized that MDG goals will not be achieved without addressing this group. The efforts made in this regard are insignificant. There were only 1,216 (488 girls) enrolled in primary schools. There is also very high disparity among woredas where 8 woredas had enrolment rate lower than the regional average.

Quality

Teachers' training, improving relevance of curriculum, providing textbooks and other inputs were the priorities of the regional bureau of education in the period of ESDP II. Emphasis to enhance the training capacity of teachers training colleges was top priority. As a result of which there has been increased % of trained teachers for lower primary 97% and 43% for upper primary which is still very low. Efforts were also made to review primary school curriculum, develop and review ABE curriculum and finalizing curriculum for multi grade programs. The pupil textbook ratio was reported to be 2:1 and 3:1 for lower primary and upper primary cycles in 2004/5. Quality of education is however challenged in the region by the high student section ratio (74.1 through out the period of 2001/2-2004/5) despite efforts made to renovate, and expand classrooms in the region. Similarly, the teacher pupil ratio posed a challenge as it stood at 78:1 with little or no improvement.

Internal Efficiency

Maintaining internal efficiency is still a challenge for the region. It is recorded in 2003/4 that the drop out rate was 14.9% (14.3% for girls) with the highest rate in grade one, 22.75%. Low income of parents, need for child labour, unattractive school environment, distance of schools and harmful traditional practices are some of the factors affecting the efficiency of the program.

2.2 ABEP/ NFE for Children in Ethiopia and Study Regions

This discussion does have two parts. The first section deals with clarifying the concept of ABE or NFE for children and its basic principles. The second section briefly assesses the status of the program at national level in general and in the study regions in particular.

2.2.1 ABEP/NFE for Children: Concept and Principles

It is understood that the concept of non formal education is as old as man and that it supersedes formal schools (Sara, 2004). Conventionally education falls into three continuum based on the mode of delivery: informal, non formal and formal. According to Carron and Carr-Hill(1991:5-6), "formal education is the institutionalized, chronologically graded, and hierarchically structured education system, running from lower primary school to the upper reaches, generally fulltime and sanctioned by the states; non formal education comprises all education activities organized outside the formal system and designed to serve identifiable clientele and educational objectives. All other forms of education activities are categorized as informal education. Informal education is the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experience and exposure to the environment."

Unlike the lifelong informal education, NFE is organized, planned, designed, structured and managed to attain clearly defined educational objectives, and to serve identifiable target groups. This makes it more similar to the formal education.

Rogers (1996:33) offers the following comparison between formal and non formal education:

Table 1: Difference between Formal and Non-formal Education

Variable	Formal education	Non-formal education
Target group	Mainly young, universal, compulsory, selective	mainly adults, those interested, voluntary, open
Time scale	full time ,primary activity of participants	part time, secondary activity of participants
Relevance	separate from life, in special institutions, in sole purpose building	integrated with life, in the community, in all kinds of settings
Program	run by professionals, excludes large part of life	Participatory, excludes nothing
Curriculum	one kind of education for all,, set curriculum, compartmentalized, subject centered, controlled by teacher	education to meet learner defined needs, open curriculum, integrated, problem-centered, controlled by the learners
Methods	teacher-centered, mainly written	learner-centered, much is oral
Objectives	conformist, set by teachers, competitive, individualist	promotes independence, set by learners, collaborative, collective
Orientation	Future	Present
Relationships	Hierarchical	Egalitarian
Validation	terminal at each stage, validated by education, profession	continuing, validated by learners

Source: Rogers, A (1996) "NFE, development and learning", University of London/IEC Cambridge.

As some critics put it, the characteristics given to NFE are ideal and more of goals than reality. One can argue that even some of these characters given to the non formal education can also work for formal education. The issue of relevance is critically important to the formal school. The learner-centred teaching methodology is equally important to the formal system. As such the difference looks very blurred when it comes to formal and non formal in many ways.

This category some how goes with the definition given to NFE by various authorities such as Coombs, Pressor and Ahmed (1973). According to these authors, NFE can be identified by its flexibility, diverse and practical orientated styles and programmes such as adult education, lifelong education and skills training programs are examples.

The Non-formal education accreditation and equivalency system (Philippines) describes several interdependent factors such as flexibility, alternative delivery models, focused learner target group and linkages and

articulation agreement (with government) as key factors to the success of NFE system.

MoE of the FDRE (2006:10-12) describes linkage and integration, equal access, gender and equity, inclusive education, learner orientation and relevance to learners' situation, flexible delivery, involvement of stakeholders and cost effectiveness as principles to guide the national ABE strategy. According to the same document, ABE will not only be linked to the formal schools but will be managed by multi-sectoral approach. ABE is also meant to address those who are less served and used to maintain gender equity. Equally important justification for making ABE learner-centred is that those out of school children have faced various barriers preventing them from going to school and hence need to address their educational needs accordingly. Flexible mode of delivery and methodology of the ABE program will assist to address the different challenges that the children have in their life. An important aspect of the principle of ABE is its cost-effectiveness. It encourages the use of local resource potential in as much as it doesn't affect the quality of the work and the wellbeing of the beneficiary.

Hence, alternative basic education is one form of NFE which is designed to address the basic education needs of out of school children through various modes of delivery, flexible time table, cost-effective, and participatory school management.

2.2.2 Historical Evolution and Status of ABEP in Ethiopia and study Regions

The non-formal education program has been clearly put as one of the educational approaches in addition to the formal system in the education policy of Ethiopia (MoE: 1994).

Particularly, the alternative basic education program or non formal education for children has a recent history. Until recently, this program was left to non governmental organizations or external organizations and communities. Action Aid Ethiopia started an innovative program called

ACCESS with the purpose of addressing out of school children (Birhanu 2000). In almost a similar period (1997), another innovative approach was implemented in the Amhara region-alternative basic education or ABE by Save the Children Norway in collaboration with the regional government.

Based on the experience of SCNE, various local and international actors begun to use this new innovation in different parts of the region. The Amhara regional government took the lead to mainstream this new approach which was found to be cost-effective, flexible, and participatory through developing and ratifying a regional ABE strategy (ANRSBoE, 200) based on the extensive experience especially by INGOs such as SCNE, SCD, AAE, Plan Ethiopia and local NGOs such as Amhara Development Association. This was followed by developing operational guideline (ANRSBoE, 2005) to facilitate smooth implementation of the program. It is worth mentioning here that a regional basic education forum of GO and NGO was established which has contributed to the process of mainstreaming through evidence-based advocacy and lobbying.

With the support of SCNE and SCD, the regional bureau of education has scaled up the ABE program which was only implemented in selected zones of the region into a region-wide program as an important mode of delivery to reach out of school children in the rural areas. It showed its commitment to the program through allocating budget for salary of teachers and textbooks provision among others. As a result of which, more than 1,800 ABECs were established in the region catering basic education to more than 200,000 out of school children (47% girls) in the region through more than 4,000 ABE facilitators as of 2004 (SCNE, 2006, SCD, 2007).

Subsequently, the Amhara region took the initiative of establishing school cluster system as a strategy to enhance school level supervision system and included the ABE centers into this system which has contributed a lot in mainstreaming the ABE program. It has also clearly put the ABE program as an important strategy to reach more school age children in its ESDP III

(2005/6-10/11). ABE curriculum is condensed form of the formal school curriculum so that equivalency is maintained. There is also an initiative to institutionalize the program through integrating human power training in the teachers' training colleges.

In the Oromia region, though various studies indicate that it started at the same time as on the Amhara region (Feye, 2006; Birhanu 2000), the program was almost left to external actors-Local NGOs, INGOs and communities. According to the regional strategic plan, more than 300,000 out of school children were addressed through NFEC in the region in 2004/05. The role of the government was limited to developing regional ABE curriculum and regional NFE strategy. In its ESDP III program the regional bureau of education has made it clear that it will use this innovative program to achieve MDG goals and address education need of pastoralist communities (ONRSBoE, 2006).

According to SCD (2006), one of the challenges of the ABE programs run by NGOs is absence of clear regional strategy and guidelines which not only challenges the smooth implementation of the program but also endangers sustainability of activities after projects phase out. In many areas, the fate of the program after project completion has become to transform them into formal schools. This, on one hand, may deny the opportunity of children who could not go to formal schools for various reasons and, on the other, comes with schools with sub-standards (SCD, 2006, 2007).

2.3 Education Project Management and Sustainability: Concepts and Practices

There is no one standardized definition for a project. Baum and Tolbert (1985:333) defined project as a discrete package of investments, policies and institutional and other actions designed to achieve a specific development objective within a defined period. Other authors such as Wysocki and others (2000) define project as sequence of unique, complex and connected activities having one goal or purpose and that must be completed within time and budget, and according to specification. Kerzener (2000) defines

project as an endeavour that has a definable objective, consumes resources, and operates under time, cost and quality constraints.

From the above definitions, it is possible to extract out some common elements about projects. Projects have certain definite objective(s) which are implemented within budget and time limit guided by a certain strategy and sequence. Likewise, education projects can also fall into similar definition: education projects are designed to meet certain educational objectives implemented within a known budget and time limit guided by a clear educational policy, strategy and acceptable standards.

According to Baum and Tolbert (1985), education project objectives fall into the following areas: creating access, maintaining equal opportunity, improving internal and external efficiency, enhancing and maintaining institutional capacity.

Various factors are considered to gauge whether projects are successful or not in achieving their anticipated objectives. Some of these factors are timely implementation, standards of deliverables or outputs, number of beneficiaries and their level of satisfaction, cost, and sustainability of activities. Kerzner (2000:31) in support of this classifies success factors of projects into two: primary and secondary factors. Primary factors include on time, within cost and at the desired quality. Secondary factors are accepted by the customers, customers allow the customers' name as a reference. Another author by the name Wysocki (2000:65) describes scope, quality (of products and process), cost, time and resources as the five constraints that operate on every project.

Various project review and evaluation reports indicate that sustaining education projects (after handed over to local governments) remain a challenge. According to NORAD (2000), "an organization is deemed sustainable if it has the strength to survive and develop to fulfil its functions on a permanent basis with decreasing levels of external support". Similarly,

sustainability is defined as "continuation of benefits after major assistance from a donor has been completed"(Feye: 2006:26). Sustainability is similarly defined as "The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed (Dereje 2006:77).On the other hand The Evaluation Center of Western Michigan University defined sustainability as "The state where the major activities involved in the program continue even after the grant expires." According to Operation Evaluation Department (OED) of The World Bank, Sustainability reflects the resiliency to risks of a project as measured by the likelihood that its estimated net benefits will be maintained or exceeded over the project's intended useful life. Key points to note in these definitions are:

- The focus is on sustaining the flow of benefits into the future rather than on sustainable programs or projects. Projects are by definition not sustainable as they are a defined investment with a start and finish date. The concept of sustainable benefits does not necessarily mean the continuation of donor-funded activities.
- Managing sustainability is a process aimed at maximizing the flow of sustainable benefits. It should be an ongoing process and needs to be reviewed and updated.
- Maintaining benefit flows after major external funding is completed assumes that the stakeholders (government, community groups, or others) will provide an appropriate level of financial, technical and managerial resources.

Sustainability has various aspects: technical, institutional, social, financial, economic, environmental and educational aspects (Baum and Tolbert, 1985).

As the paper focuses on the institutional and financial prospects of ABE projects, the discussion will tend to centre on these two aspects.

An institution or organization must be looked as a "system" not only the human resource, its guidelines, financial resources, strategies, etc but also its environment with which it interacts as a whole. This is because of the fact that what happens in the environment outside the organization will certainly have an effect on its functioning. In support of this, NORAD (2000) and Baum & Tolbert (1985:501) put individual (individuals and groups of actors), organizational (strategy, management, finance, culture, etc) and systems (overall policies, rules and norms governing the mandates, priorities, mode of operation, etc), as levels of institutional development. If all levels and dimensions of institutional developments are not addressed, the potential of sustainable development might not be realized to the fullest level.

Baum & Tolbert (1985:499), clearly states that developing strong institutions is vital for efficient implementation of project activities and for safeguarding the hard-won national and international resources committed to them. NORAD (2000) assumes an organization or institution deemed sustainable if it has the strength to survive and develop to fulfil its functions in a permanent basis with decreasing levels of external support. The same agency puts the following factors for an institution to be sustainable: to be able to secure the necessary inputs and support; to provide efficiently and effectively a continuing stream of activities and outputs that are valued by its stakeholders (members, clients, and/or supervisors) for as long as the institution is needed.

Financial sustainability can be seen from the aspect of recurrent costs of educational activities. One of the challenges of projects is neglecting or failure to foresee the post investment phase. Recurrent costs such as school maintenance costs, salary of teachers, and provision of basic educational inputs require careful consideration before any project is implemented.

2.4 Background Information: International Non-governmental Organizations and their Contribution

Non governmental organizations are playing significant role in supporting government in the area of education. There were more than 120 educational projects run by both local and international NGOs in Oromia region providing primary education (formal and non formal) and skills training services. Out of these, 37 of the projects were non formal education projects targeting more than 100,000 out of school children with a total outlay of Birr 92,134,632 in more than 50 woredas of the region (ONRSBoE, 2007). Some of these NGOs operating in the region include SCD, AAE, PE, Pact Ethiopia, and various local NGOs. Likewise, there were various projects managed by both local and international organizations including SCNE, SCD, AAE, PE, ADA, Pact Ethiopia etc in the Amhara region. The various projects were serving more than one million children in the region (AFSCDPO, 2007). Below is a brief description of the sampled INGOs for the study.

2.4.1 Action Aid Ethiopia (AAE)

According to its strategic plan (2005-2009), Action Aid Ethiopia has been operating in different parts of the country since 1981 with the mandate of fighting poverty, inequality and discrimination. AAE has overall strategies such as rights-based development approach, participation or involvement, community based- policy advocacy, capacity building, partnership and networking. It has five basic strategies: food security, good governance, women and girls' rights, HIV/AIDS and education. According to the same strategic plan, AAE operates in many parts of the country with regional offices: southern region, northern, central, and Benishangul regional offices.

Action Aid Ethiopia's education interventions include the following three main components to accessing basic education: Appropriate Cost-effective Centers for Education within the School System /ACCESS which is one alternative approach to opportunities for disadvantaged and marginalized out of school children, literacy programs for illiterate adults to enhance

development initiatives at grass root level; and support to Formal Schools to establish linkage between formal schools and ACCESS centres.

The principal education intervention of Action Aid Ethiopia has been the alternative basic education approach, which is widely known as ACCESS and that aims to provide basic education opportunities to out of school children in rural and remote areas of the country. Various documents and researches indicate that Action Aid Ethiopia is one of the pioneers of alternative basic education through introducing ACCESS as an innovative approach in Jimma zone of Oromia and North Shewa of Amhara region (Birhanu: 2000).

AAE in partnership with local governments and NGOs has been engaged in direct provision of ACCESS service to out of school children in many parts of the country. AAE believes that engagement in policy advocacy through networking and alliance with like minded organizations and CBOs gradually leads to sustainable changes. To this end, it has been involved in various advocacy activities at national and regional levels. It has played key roles in enhancing the capacity of basic education networks at national level and regional forums such as Amhara region's forum for basic education. It has been engaged in policy dialogues jointly with other international alliances such as Save the Children Alliance and basic education network and has contributed a lot in the development of national and regional ABE strategies and its implementation.

In terms of enrolment, AAE has ensured access opportunity to more than 55,000 (47% girls) out of school children through ACCESS program in various parts of the country apart from bringing policy and practice changes. In its long term engagement, it has brought the following impacts among others:

- Contribution to increased recognition for alternative basic education programs by the government and other development actors.

- Creation of the opportunity for replication/adaptation of programs such as ACCESS by government and other NGOs.
- Empowered poor local communities and enhanced capacity of education committees to actively participate in the management of learning centres.
- Contribution to gender equity has enabled many girls and women to get the opportunity to basic education and became literate.
- Increased enrolment in formal schools due to the linkage with ACCESS.
- Contribution to a growing sense of ownership by the community due to their active and full participation in managing education programs at grass root level.
- Increased awareness among the community on the value of education especially changed perceptions favouring girls' education.

AAE foresees high staff turnover of local governments and the limited financial capacity as challenges for alternative basic education after project handover.

2.4.2 Plan Ethiopia (PE)

Plan Ethiopia has been operating in various parts of the country. It has started its operation in Bugna woreda of the Amhara Region and made expansion to Addis Ababa, the Southern Regions and Oromia regions. PE uses community-centred child development approach/CCCD. It uses integrated development approach and intervenes in basic education, health, poverty alleviation, water and sanitation and gender and HIV/AIDS as cross cutting domains. It is self implementing agency and uses partnership with local NGOs as implementing modality (Plan Ethiopia, 2006).

Its main education intervention areas include provision of access, improving quality, enhancing capacity of government and communities. Accessing

primary schools has been done through constructing primary schools, upgrading existing primary schools, and constructing ABE centers. It has also established pre-schools in the project areas: Addis Ababa, Lalibela and Shebedino. Plan Ethiopia trained and/or provided refreshers for over 1,000 people who had direct or indirect functions related to UPE as a strategy to improve quality education. Several support activities were also undertaken to respond to the direct and indirect educational costs such as provision of school supplies and uniforms.

Due to Plan Ethiopia's interventions alone, enrolment in Bugna has increased fourfold. According to data collected in 2005, enrolment reached 82% (16,978 students [14,593 in formal and 2,465 in non-formal schools]) in Lalibela operational areas of Plan Ethiopia. Local authorities also confirmed that the 10 Plan Ethiopia assisted schools alone constituted more than 50% of the total enrolment in the Bugna Woreda. This experience tells us that focusing on both formal and non-formal approaches of schooling helps to boost enrolment rate (PE, 2007:10-11).

Another key lesson that has been obtained from the previous Country Program Outline (CPO) is the success related to the creation of genuine partnership spirit between NGOs, communities and government institutions and this need to be further strengthened in this new CPO (Plan Ethiopia, 2007:11).

The sustainability of the Basic Learning Development (BLD) programme in terms of politico-legal, socio-cultural and management capacities were well addressed. However, economic and financial sustainability is questionable, especially in the areas of pre-primary, ABE and adult functional literacy sub-programmes. This means that the sustainability of ECCD, ABE and AFL calls for mainstreaming these sub-sectors in terms of recognition, budgetary subsidies and/or income-generating mechanisms (Plan Ethiopia, 2007).

2.4.3 Save the Children Norway (SCNE)

Save the Children Norway has been operating in Ethiopia for a long period with a wider coverage in terms of geographical areas. It is one of the pioneers of alternative basic education in Ethiopia especially in Amhara region where ABE is first piloted. SCNE uses capacity building, service provision and advocacy as overall intervention approaches. SCNE as a child rights-based organization is guided by child rights programming approach which puts child rights principles at the center of planning and implementing its development works. SCNE priority areas for the strategic period are fulfilling the right of children to education, the rights of children affected by armed conflict and disaster, the rights of children to protection against violence and sexual abuse, the rights of children to protection against the impact of HIV/AIDS and Strengthen implementation and monitoring of children's rights. It works through collaboration with local governments and local NGOs in the area of education. It puts access to primary education, improving quality and supporting pre-primary (SCNE, 2006).

SCNE has been supporting basic education since 1997 and 251,753 children were enrolled in alternative basic education in Amhara region, 2004/2005 (more than 50% girls). In Hamer Woreda, SNNPR, 7% of school age children were enrolled in primary education, and in Enderta Woreda, Tigray, and 68% were enrolled. By the end of the 2004/2005 school year 250 teachers and 25 college lecturers were involved in SCNE's Quality Education Project. The enrolment of children with disabilities in regular schools in Chilga and Lay Armachiho was practically nil, with the exception of a few children with physical disabilities. The SCNE-supported ECD programmes supported 850, 1,050 and 1,100 children, respectively, in Ada'a, Chilga and Lay Armachiho woredas (SCNE, 2006).

According to its strategic plan SCNE has been focusing on making schools inclusive to children with special needs education. SCNE will continue on supporting disabled and OVC children participating in existing schools of

Chilga and Lay Armachiho in particular and the other education projects in general, as well as in terms of influencing the government to make use of the lessons of the inclusive schools pilot in teacher training (SCNE, 2006).

SCNE continues the development of a more holistic ECD model that facilitates the development of children to their fullest potential. The results will be documented and children participating in the programmes will be followed to document their success in primary schools. This documentation will be used to advocate for government responsibility for ECD (SCNE, 2006).

2.4.4 Save the Children Denmark (SCD)

Save the Children Denmark (SCD) in Ethiopia began its operation in 1997 by establishing ABE centers for out of school children in Kobo and Habru woredas of North Wollo zone, Amhara Regional state. The support in Ethiopia focuses on rural areas, particularly on drought prone areas and marginalized populations. SCD's established strategies are capacity building, service delivery and advocacy. The basic thematic areas of intervention were Basic Education, CRC, and HIV/AIDS.

SCD was operating in five administrative woredas of North Wollo (Kobo, Habru, Gubalafto, Meket and Gidan) and has established ABE centers and supported primary schools (including renovation, expansion and construction) to strengthen the opportunity for children to complete primary education. It has managed to establish 34 ABECS and supported upgrading and construction of 21 new schools.

That is, out of the 187 ABE centers 34 of them (18.18%) were established by SCD. Besides, the CRC and HIV/AIDS components of the project, run by local partner NGOs, were integrated with the basic education provision. Clubs and committees on CRC and HIV/AIDS were established for the ABECs/schools children and the community respectively.

SCD based on its experience in North Wollo has been engaged in similar endeavour in North Shewa, Oromia Region since 2004. It has helped the zone in establishing 42 ABE centers that have created an access to more than 8,500 out of school children (SCD, 2008).

In addition to the immediate provision of basic education to out of school children in the zone, SCD has been engaged in capacity building to woreda education offices and has been involved in advocacy activity with regional bureau of education to revise its ABE strategy.

A range of project progress reports and review reports indicated that SCD has helped the two regions in addressing a significant proportion of out of school children in the rural areas with particular emphasis to girls. Through collaboration with Save the Children Norway and other NGOs, has advocated for the mainstreaming of the program in Amhara region in which more than 200, 000 out of school children have got an access since 2004 in the region (SCD, 2004,2006).

2.5 Experience of other Countries in Non-formal Delivery Approaches

Many developing countries have been using various educational alternatives as a strategy to meet Education for All with the support of local and external support and governments. An attempt is made in this paper to briefly see experiences and lessons of some countries from Latin America, Asia and Africa as this may help us to understand our practices in light of lessons and experiences of other countries.

2.5.1 Non-Formal Education in Latin America

Among the various successful programs in the region, Colombia's Escuelas Nueva (the new school), Chile's Programa de las 900 Ecuelas (Programme of the 900 Schools) and Mexico's Cursos Comunitarios (Primary Education for Rural Children) are some.

The New School of Colombia has its roots in the Unitary School System of 1960s. This NFE program was designed to reach disadvantaged children in the rural areas of Colombia since 1975 with fund from USAID. The program has managed to expand and establish 500 schools in four years time and had 8000 schools at the end of 1985 across the country. The government of Colombia then decided to use the program as one strategy to achieve universal primary education (Torres 1992:3) and succeeded to establishing 20,000 schools in 1991.

With the goal of ensuring quality and equitable education, the programme of the 900 schools of Chile was launched in 1990 with initially funded by Swedish and Danish governments and later on by the World Bank. The initial idea was initiated by two local NGOs of Chilean origin. The program concentrated on the first four grades in selected schools both in rural and urban areas (UNICEF 1992).

Community Courses of Mexico is a primary education program for rural children targeting especially hard to reach children funded by the government of Mexico.

The innovative approaches explained above indicate that the programmes started in specific places through external support and gradually developed or scaled up with time. The scaling up process which was made possible was done through governments' commitment and involvement. This not only ensured wider coverage but also clears the way to financial and institutional sustainability. All the programmes have targeted children who could not be addressed through the formal school system for various reasons. All programmes used what is called integrated approach. This according to Sara (2004: 34) includes "all the elements of education: from the actors (learners, teachers and communities), to curriculum and pedagogical issues and to other support mechanisms." Regarding making curriculum relevant to the learners, an important lesson is that there is a need to strike balance between achieving both national equivalence and retaining local relevance

(Sara 2004:34). This also helps to make transition of pupils from NFE schools to formal schools. According to Psacharopoulos in (Sara 2004:36), efforts were made by the different program in making the education learner centered with a shift from "teaching to learning". The programmes have also used flexible timetable and maintained community participation as important strategies. As a means to maintain cost-effectiveness, paraprofessional teachers were used and emphasis was given to teacher preparation to ensure quality.

Among other things, financial sustainability of the program was challenged by the limited capacity of government after hand over. Some of the possible reasons could be limited resource and reluctance of governments not to include the programs in budget plans.

2.5.2 Non-Formal Education in Asia

Similarly, the driving force for using NFE in Asia is the large number of out of school children (UNESCO: 1991). Those out of school children included girls, working children, rural children and children from minorities. Among these NFE programs, BRAC of Bangladesh, PROPEL of India, Home Schools of Pakistan, Mobile Tent Schools of Philippines and Hill Areas Project are some.

According to UNICEF (1992), the Home Schools of Pakistan target girls in slum areas while the Mobile Tent Schools of Philippines address ethnic minorities. Promoting Primary and Elementary Education Project (PROPEL) is a national government project in India. Bangladesh Rural Advancement committee (BRAC) is an initiative by a local NGO in Bangladesh (UNICEF, 1992)

Asian programs are part of a larger integrated community development programme that includes health, adult classes, pre-schools (Home School), and BRAC contains a variety of rural development, credit and Health programmes (Sara, 2004).

Like the Latin American programmes, emphasis is given to ensuring equivalency with the formal system and curricula is made to cover grades 4-5 of the formal schools so that children can smoothly transfer into formal system. The programmes in Asia use multiple of delivery systems, child centered methodologies, and multi grade classrooms. Efforts are also made to enhance the capacity of teachers through induction training followed up by various capacity building efforts. Programmes are made flexible and responsive to the local situation which makes it more relevant to communities

School management requires genuine involvement of communities. Government bodies need to be part of the whole process right from the beginning. In this regard programmes like BRAC have succeeded in maintaining community ownership and management of schools and involvement of governments.

2.5.3 Non-Formal Education in Sub Saharan Africa

There are various forms of NFE programmes implemented in Africa as a strategy to embrace more out school children to achieve the MDG goals. More discussion will be made with particular focus to experiences in Sub Saharan African Countries.

The Development of Non-formal Basic Education in Kenya

In the early 1990's the Kenyan Ministry of Education set up a non-formal education desk which has subsequently been upgraded to a non-formal education unit. Under the support of the Government of Kenya – UNICEF Program of Cooperation in Non-Formal Education, Non-Formal Schools and Centers have received various types of support towards quality provision of education (SCNE: 2007).

Under the aegis of the GTZ assisted post-literacy project, a study of eighty-eight non-formal schools and centers was conducted in three urban areas. The findings of the study have been widely disseminated and are being used

to advocate for policy in favor of NFE, and to take programmatic action to respond to the learning needs of the NFE clientele (Ekundayo Thompso, 2001). The findings on the following two programs are also informative about the nature of the alternative approaches in Kenya.

Undugu Basic Education Program (UBEP), Kenya Urban

A number of studies have identified the following factors which have accounted for UBEPs success.

- a) The learners are able to use the skills which they acquire to earn a living.
- b) UBEP contributed to the reduction of wastage in the education system, and to the rehabilitation of street children.
- c) The similarity of UBEP's core curriculum and the formal school curriculum facilitates entry to formal education for those who desire to do so.
- d) The teaching of functional literacy and numeracy provides a foundation for vocational training. Vocational education and training equip the learners with skills to earn a living. Learning is linked to production, and production-oriented functionality increases motivation for learning.
- e) The apprenticeship or learner ship system provides a link between learning and work, and facilitates transition from learning institutions to working life. The apprentices serve as vital links between the community (informal sector of the economy) and non-formal institutions of learning.

Lessons Learned

- a) The success of Undugu Basic Education Program has shown that education which is relevant and oriented to the needs of the learners can contribute to the rehabilitation, and change in the behavior of street children.
- b) Alternative Approaches to Basic Education and Non-formal Education should not be seen as cheap alternatives to formal basic education. Vocational training, for example, requires certain inputs which may require capital expenditure. This could increase the cost of education.

- c) When developing AABE-NFE programs it is important to establish horizontal and vertical links with formal education in order to facilitate movement between the two sub sectors.
- d) AABE-NFE programs for disadvantaged children are, in general, more relevant and sustainable when they include a skills development component in their curricula.
- e) AABE-NFE programs for disadvantaged children are, in general, more relevant and sustainable when they include a skills development component in their curricula.
- f) Provision of lunches for the children greatly improved their health and nutritional status
- g) Education and training enhance the chances of learners to participate in the processes of socio-economic development.

Lchekuti (Shepherds') Program, Kenya Rural

In response to the felt need for education expressed by the pastoralist community in Samburu District action was initiated by the community members themselves to provide educational opportunities for their out of school children. Thus, identified success factors of the program were:

- a) Homegrown solution to the problem and needs of out-of-school children and youths. The community saw a need and took action to address it.
- b) Flexibility of timing and short duration of classes leaving adequate time for the learners to attend to domestic chores. This is the essential feature of NFE.
- c) Strong commitment to the principle of voluntarism. Volunteer teachers are members of the community.
- d) Utilization of Multi-grade and Multi-shift approaches. Learners of different ages and levels of cognitive ability are catered for.
- e) Involvement of the learners in the processes of curriculum development and preparation of curriculum support materials.

Basic Education in Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA) of Uganda

BEUPA aims to improve the life perspectives of out-of-school children and adolescents between the ages of 9 and 18. The essential features of BEUPA include;

- Mother-tongue education;
- Integrated approach to learning;
- Similarity between the primary school curriculum and the BEUPA curriculum. The core curriculum of BEUPA is a condensed version of the primary school curriculum (Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and English). There is also instruction in psycho-social life skills, and living values education.
- The close relation between BEUPA and formal primary school facilitates interaction between the two. If they drop out from one sub-sector they can drop in the other.
- The delivery of the curriculum is shortened to 3 years from 5 years. The curriculum contents are organized into learning areas, a learning area is equivalent to one term's instruction.
- Utilization of expertise from the community in skills training provides a vital link between the school and the community, and makes the school a part of the community.
- Learning takes place three hours a day leaving the rest of the day for the learners to engage in other survival activities.

Identified Success Factors

- a) Facilitation of learning through child-centered and flexible approaches.
- b) Focus of curriculum on life after school. Transition from school to work is organized through career guidance.
- c) Collection of relevant data for planning. NFE has been included in the Education Management Information system (EMIS). This ensures that planning is informed by relevant and accurate data.

- d) Involvement of the community in the implementation of BEUPA with regard to
- Community mobilization
 - Identification and registration of children for the learning centers
 - Pre-selection of instructors from the community
 - Monitoring of the processes of learning
 - Provision of community own Resource Persons (CORPs)
 - Facilitation of pre-vocational skills by members of the community.

Lessons learned from the Program

- a) Learner-friendly pedagogical processes and learning environments contribute a great deal to facilitating learning acquisition.
- b) Utilization of the services of community facilitators harmonizes the relationship between the school and the community. Instead of being apart from the community the school becomes a part of the community thus enhancing school community relations.
- c) The integrated nature of the curriculum enhances the holistic development of the learner in terms of intellectual, physical, emotional and social development.
- d) Provision for entry into formal education through the organization of the curriculum promotes interaction between the formal and non-formal sub-sectors, and accords the latter parity of esteem.

As a summary from the experiences of other countries, relevance of curriculum to the local needs, equivalence with the formal school, flexibility of mode of delivery, community involvement, collaboration with government, integrating program with other development interventions etc are common factors or principles of alternative basic education program. The target of ABE program could be school age children in urban and rural settings who could not go to the formal system for various social, cultural and economic factors. It includes rural children, girls, children from minorities, children in

urban areas, youth and etc. It is clear from the experiences of the countries that innovative approaches should be piloted in small scale level with the involvement of relevant stakeholders such as government before any scaling up. The sustainability of such programs depends on the level of involvement of stakeholders. External actors or INGOs should work towards preparing governments to develop relevant policies and strategies and allocate budget.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN and METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Study Design

The study design used was descriptive survey method since it dealt with current or existing problem in relation to the topic under discussion. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected, organized and analyzed using various relevant instruments and techniques.

3.2 Study Subjects and Sampling Techniques

The subjects of this study were both government and non-governmental organizations in Amhara and Oromia regions. They were regional education authorities, zonal and woreda education officers, woreda chief administrators, woreda capacity building heads, woreda Finance and Planning officers of the Amhara and Oromia regions. Four international non-governmental organizations including Save the Children Denmark, Save the Children Norway, Action Aid Ethiopia and Plan Ethiopia were purposefully selected based on their implementation strategy (the first two work through partnership with local government and the last two as self-implementing NGOs) and for the fact that they are engaged in alternative basic education.

Below is the profile of INGOs operating in the area of ABEP/NFE in the two regions based on data from the two regional education bureaus.

Table 2: List of INGOs operating in Amhara and Oromia Regions in the area of Education (Source: Amhara and Oromia Education Bureaus: 2007)

No.	Name of INGO	Implementation Modality	Project Name	Location Woredas/zones	Duration (starting...)
	Oromia Region				
1	Christian Children's Fund Ethiopia (CCF Ethiopia)	Self Implementation	Non-formal and Pre-school education	Shashemene/West Arsi	4 years (22/06/05)
2	GOAL Ethiopia	Self Implementation	NFEC construction	Yabelo and Teltelle/Borena zone	1 years (06/03/07)
3	Menschen Fiir Menschen Foundation	Self Implementation	NFE support and training	Babile/West Harergie	3 years (08/06/05)
4	Save the Children Denmark	Collaboration with regional government	Alternative Basic education	7 woredas of North Shewa	3 years (16/12/04)
5	Action AID Ethiopia	Self Implementation	Alternative Basic Education	2 woredas of Oromia	2005
	Amhara Region				
6	Save the Children Norway	Collaboration with regional government	Basic education projects (2 projects)	Chilga, Lay Armacheho	Three years (2003-2007)
		Same	ABE Scaling up project	All Amhara woredas	3 years (2007-2009)
7	Save the Children Denmark	Collaboration	Alternative Basic education	4 woredas of North Wollo	3 years (2005-2007)
		Same	ABE Scaling up support	All Amhara woredas	3 years (2004-2007)
8	Plan Ethiopia	Self Implementation	Child centered basic learning	Bugna woreda	5 years (July 2003-June 2008)

A total of four INGOs (60%) were sampled out of seven of the INGOs operating in the two regions for the study. Two woredas were randomly selected from each region (22%) out of the 16 woredas in which the sample INGOs operate. The INGOs were purposely selected for their implementation modality-one self implementing and one working through government collaboration in each region.

The study samples were 49. It is to be noted that the sample is selected using availability sampling technique in order to get the relevant respondents for the study.

Table 3: List of Sample Types and Size

No	Respondents	Sample Size
1	Regional Education Bureaus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education programs and supervision department heads ○ Project management and planning department heads ○ NFE panel experts 	1 2 3
2	Zonal Education Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NFE experts ○ Planning experts ○ Education program heads 	3 2 2
3	Woreda level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Woreda Education Office heads ○ Woreda Finance and Economy office heads ○ Woreda Capacity Building Offices ○ Woreda Education Office, education programs team leader ○ Woreda Education Office, planning expert s ○ Woreda Education Office NFE expert s ○ Woreda Chief administrators (4) 	3 2 2 3 2 3 4
4	INGOs Country Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Country office education program directors ○ Country office, education program coordinators ○ Country office, education advisors ○ Country office, program officers 	2 2 2 2
5	INGOs Project/program offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project office managers/coordinators ○ Education project officers 	2 6
	Total	49

3.3 Instruments of Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaires, review of secondary data, interview and focus group discussion were the instruments used for data collection. In order to generate as much and reliable data as possible three types of questionnaires were administered for i) woreda education heads ,woreda NFE experts,woreda planning experts, ii) zonal education officers, NFE experts ,zonal planning experts, regional NFE experts, iii) INGOs program and project officers located in project sample woredas.

Regional NFE experts, program department heads, INGOs program directors, INGOs education program coordinators were interviewed to get in-depth understanding on the purpose of the study especially in the area of policy and strategy matters, project design and partnership.

Focus group discussion was used to generate relevant information from woreda chief administrators, capacity building officers and finance and planning officers for the fact that they are knowledgeable in the area of budget issues, strategic planning and sustainability of projects.

Secondary data review was undertaken to cross-check the data generated through the above methods. Major documents including national and regional education sector development plans (ESDP III) , annual regional education statistical bulletins, joint review reports, INGOs strategy documents, annual project reports, project evaluation reports were thoroughly scrutinized. For this study purpose, the year 2004 was used as the baseline year for data collection considering the fact that ABE program was recognized as one strategy by regional governments in their strategy documents and basic guiding strategies and implementation manuals were developed and used.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results of the Study

4.1.1 Background of Respondents

The total sample size was 49, out of which 19, 13, 16 were respectively from woreda, zone/region and INGOs staff. Twenty nine of the respondents were subjects of questionnaires and the rest 12 and 8 were subjected to interview and focus group discussion respectively. The profile of the study respondents looked as follows.

Table 4. Profile of Respondents by Educational Level

Type	Diploma	BSC/BA	M.A/SC	Total
Woreda	10	9		19
Zone/Region	4	8	2	13
Program/project staff of NGOs	1	8	7	16
Total	15 (30.6%)	25 (51.02%)	9 (18.37%)	49 (100%)

Most of the respondents, 52% have B.SC and BA degree, 68.75% have degree and above. 15 of the respondents (31%) were diploma holders.

Table 5. Profile of Respondents by Years of Experience

Service in years	Woreda education offices	Zonal and regional education offices	Program/project staff of INGOs	Total
< 5	3		3	6(16%)
6-10	1	1	4	6(16%)
11-15	3			3(8%)
16-20	3	2	2	7 (18%)
21-25		5	5	10(25%)
26 and above	1	3	2	6(15%)
Total	11	13	16	38 (100%)

From Table 5, it is clear that majority of the respondents have served above six years. The assumption is that the more an individual is experienced, the more resourceful he/she will be in the area.

4.2. The Research Findings

The finding of the study is summarized under the major topics of major achievements, capacity building, policy and practice, partnership, stakeholders' involvement, sustainability and major challenges based on the basic questions of the study.

4.2.1. Major Achievements

Improved Access:

INGOs namely Action AID Ethiopia, Save the Children Norway and Save the Children Denmark have played a leading role in the introduction of the new innovative delivery strategy, ABE program, in the two regions. According to many of the respondents, the INGOs have contributed to improved access opportunity of many children who could otherwise have been left out of school through:

- Constructing ABECs where there is no formal school

- Training, and employment of ABE teachers where government was not ready
- Community awareness raising and mobilization
- ABEP contributed to 5-10% of gross enrolment in basic primary in the two regions (Ormia 6.4%, and Amhara 9.1%)
- At woreda level it contributed from 20-30% (Bugna, Chilga, Seru and Were Jarso and woredas)
- Supporting/upgrading formal schools to prepare them for ABE completers through school upgrading and expansion

Improved Quality of Teaching Learning:

- In-service and on-job training of ABE teachers
- Provision of ABE textbooks and other educational inputs
- Capacity building on teachers' training to TTCs, etc
- Supporting school cluster system as a means to enhance school-based supervision system

Capacity Building:

The INGOs under discussion have contributed to improved capacity of regional, zonal and woreda education offices in many aspects. Some of the contributions according to the information from regional, zonal and woreda education respondents were the following:

- Improved enrolment through establishing alternative basic education centers and training and deploying of ABE facilitators
- Improved awareness of parents, communities and stakeholders
- Improved skills and knowledge building of actors through supporting development of regional ABE implementation strategy
- Financial, material and technical support to woreda education offices to manage the ABEP
- Supported regional governments in ABE curriculum development
- Undertake relevant researches on quality of the program for the purpose of advocacy

- Coordinating networking and cooperation among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders of the program
- ABE teachers' in-service training and training manual development
- Most of the trainings are given to higher level authorities not addressing training needs of frontline staff who are directly and indirectly involved in the program management

ABE Policy Improved through Advocacy

INGOs have contributed through evidence-based advocacy to the development of the following major policy documents in the two regions.

In Amhara Region:

- ABE curriculum development ,
- ABE Strategy and ABE Implementation Manual development
- Inclusion of the ABE centers into the school cluster system meant for close supervision
- Placement of responsible body under national, zonal and woreda education structure
- ESDP III (2004) document clearly put ABEP as one strategy to improve access to primary education
- Mainstreaming of the ABE teachers into government system
- However, ESDP III does not clearly support the program in budget in its ESDP III plan of action

In Oromia Region:

- ESDP III (2004)clearly puts ABE as one strategy to access basic education to children and has been in the process of developing a strategy
- ABE strategy document developed and approved
- ABE curriculum development
- However, ESDP III documents at regional and national level do not clearly specify or support the ABE program with budget.

Partnership/ Collaboration Features Observed:

According to the data collected, the INGOs under discussion operated with different modalities. Some of these were

- INGOs worked through partnership with local NGOs. Action Aid Ethiopia and Plan Ethiopia work through partnership with local NGOs such as ORDA, REST, Agri-service Ethiopia, RCWDA, Action for Development, ADA, ERSLA, Ethiopian Moslem Relief, ADA etc-in many parts of the country.
- SCD and SCNE work through collaboration with local or regional governments.
- The same organizations, Plan Ethiopia and Action Aid Ethiopia also work as direct implementers.
- The need for collaboration not only with education offices but other collaborating departments such as Finance and Administration/local councils who have direct influence on the program
- Limited level of involvement with communities in project management-planning, implementation, monitoring and appraisal
- Limited level of involvement of woreda administrations or councils, woreda capacity building offices, finance and economic development offices
- INGOs lacked clarity in their plans of action, do not involve communities in planning, and failure to comply with schedules and plan
- INGOs do not involve communities in planning , monitoring, financial management, and review of project progress

Support to INGOs from Regional Education Bureaus:

It is also understood that regional education offices gave the following support to INGOs as collaborators.

- Project proposal appraisal
- Information and data support and provision
- Encouragement and support
- Oromia education Bureau, with 25% of out of school children, calls up on NGOs for support to meet MDG goals
- Scaled up of the ABE program to regional levels
- Commitment through curriculum development, strategy development, and playing coordination role

Sustainability Issues:

Sustainability is a broader concept. It includes institutional, financial, social, environmental etc. For the purpose of this study, however, only institutional and financial sustainability were addressed for the fact that many project evaluation reports indicated the others are not significant problems of the program (SCD, 2004, 2006, SCNE, 2007).

A. Institutional Sustainability Indicators

- Development of policy framework-regional strategies, ESDP III, Implementation manuals
- Mainstreaming of the ABE teachers into the formal education system
- Action Aid has handed over many of its ABECs to the regional government
- Linking of ABE program with the formal system
- Local governments have the awareness that they take over project outputs after project phases out
- Community awareness and understanding on the program improved

- Staff turn over affects institutional sustainability-the need to train institutionally
- Supervision system-cluster system initiative, NFE supervision

B. Financial Sustainability Constraints

- Budget not allocated to the ABE program from government
- Quality of program has problems due to limited input supply
- Some of the centers can also be converted into formal schools where government can assign trained teachers as a possibility
- Woreda cabinets have the power to allocate budget for the program
- The program is found to be cost-effective and is used in areas where there is no formal school support
- There is a commitment from governments to establish and expand the program through using local resources
- Construction is done in a good way the challenge is limited resource for running cost after projects phase out including provision of textbooks, salary of teachers, supervision costs
- Limited resource of woreda education offices may affect the program
- The prevailing poverty demands the need for flexible and cost-effective approaches so that children can support their families-stationery support
- Due to the limited budget allocated and the high demand for running cost of the formal schools system, the program may face quality problem hence the need for sustained support of INGOs and community support is mandatory
- The need for putting ABE teachers in government payroll
- will the government maintain the quality of the program after hand over from the INGOs? What is the practice in this regard? The need to use local resources
- The need for minimum standards and competencies

4.2.2. Major Challenges of the ABE Program

A. Access and Quality of ABE program

The interviews with the respondents indicated the following results:

- capacity of teachers is not satisfactory- quality study shows lower performance of students in certain subjects
- Job-insecurity of ABE facilitators
- ABE teachers are recruited above their knowledge (imbalance of capacity and expectation)
- Distance of formal schools from ABECs resulting in 30% of drop out especially for girls
- Shortage of curricular materials
- Limited school inputs and facilities
- Turn over of ABE facilitators and high drop out rates of ABE students
- Absence of suitable classrooms for the teaching learning process
- Lack of strong supervision system due to budget shortage

B. Policy and practice challenges

- Lack of clear policy on the fate of the ABE program
- Negative perception of communities towards the ABE program
- There is a feeling that success of the program is due to NGO support
- High turn over of government staff demanding repeated trainings and efforts
- Government have not allocated proportional and adequate budget for the program
- Government's preference of formal education to the ABE
- Zonal and woreda authorities do not have clear direction on the program

C. Community participation and involvement

- Unavailability of local materials

- Communities do not respect and implement their roles and responsibilities
- Limited community support
- Low awareness of parents

4.3. Discussion of the Findings

Major findings generated through focus group discussion, secondary data review and interview of various respondents are discussed and cross-checked with data summarized from questionnaires. The discussion is made for convenience under the basic questions.

4.3.1 Major Achievements

As it is discussed under 4.1 the INGOs have significantly contributed mainly in improving access to primary education in the two regions. Statistical information from the regions and sample woredas showed that the ABE program had a contribution to the regional primary enrolment rate by 6-10% by the year 2005/06. Similarly, in those woredas where the INGOs operate the contribution of ABEP to the primary enrolment rate goes as high as 30%.

All respondents agreed that ABEP supported by INGOs has significantly contributed towards accessing basic education to children especially due to establishing centers in areas where there is no primary school.

4.3.2 Capacity Building

Capacity building in most cases is considered as “training” of staff with the assumption that all organizational problems can be solved through training. However, it goes far beyond that. An Institution or organization must be looked as a "system" not only the human resource, but also its guidelines, financial resources, strategies, and its environment with which it interacts as a whole.

Accordingly, capacity building should address all the key gaps that affect smooth implementation of projects and their sustainability. This requires other interventions in addition to training. Among these, the study gave priority to policy and strategy issues, basic technical capacity issues and awareness on cross-cutting issues. Under policy and strategy, knowledge of government staff on existing policies and strategies is examined. Likewise, confidence of education staff on having basic skills in supervision techniques, student assessment techniques, active learning methods, monitoring and reporting are scrutinized. Knowledge and skills on cross-cutting issues such as project proposal writing, child rights and needs, and monitoring and evaluation skills are considered as well.

Capacity building efforts are also examined in terms of assisting education stakeholders in developing and using ABE strategies and implementation manuals.

According to the table below , respondents from woreda education offices felt that contribution of capacity building intervention by INGOs in improving their knowledge on policy and strategies, procedures and guidelines is not observed to be adequate despite the fact that INGOs have supported regional governments in policy and strategy development.

**Table 6. Response of WoE, ZoE and RBoE to Capacity Intervention
by INGOs**

Areas of Capacity building	Summary of Responses									
	Very low		Low		To some extent		High		Very High	
	WoE	ZOE/BoE	WoE	ZOE/BoE	WoE	ZOE/BoE	WoE	ZOE/BoE	WoE	ZOE/BoE
Knowledge										
On policy and strategy	0	0	5	1	3	3	2	5	1	0
On ABE procedures and guidelines	0	0	3	1	6	3	1	5	1	0
On project cycle management	2	0	5	2	2	3	2	3	0	0
On child rights and needs	1	0	2	2	3	2	4	5	0	1
On supervision types and approaches	0	1	5	0	2	2	4	5	0	0
On active learning approaches	1	0	3	2	2	2	3	4	0	1
Skills										
Planning skills	1	1	4	2	5	5	2	1	0	0
Reporting skills	1	1	2	1	5	2	2	5	0	0
Supervision techniques	1	1	4	1	4	4	3	3	0	0
Project proposal preparation skills	3	2	4	1	3	3	1	3	0	0
Monitoring and evaluation skills	0	1	4	2	4	2	2	4	0	0
Total										

Quite similarly, they have the same opinion that contribution towards capacity improvement in basic supervision skills and techniques, active learning methodology, project proposal writing, project management and other aspects ranges from “low” to “to some extent”.

On the other hand, respondents from zonal and regional education offices have slightly different opinion from woreda education respondents. They expressed that INGOs have contributed to improved knowledge on policies and strategies. Their response ranges from “to some extent” to “high level” in many of the issues including knowledge on policies and strategies, procedures and guidelines, project management, supervision and etc.

4.3.3 Sustainability

Sustainability of the intervention in terms of institutional and financial aspects was one of the basic questions of this study. Accordingly, discussions were made with the respondents to find out relevant indicators to reach at concluding remarks.

Coordinating Body or Structure

Most of the respondents from woreda education offices (7) and INGO project staff (6) reflected that there is no strong structure or unit at woreda level that can effectively coordinate the ABE program. On the other hand, respondents from zonal and regional education offices expressed that there is appropriate coordinating structure at woreda level.

Almost all respondents from woreda education offices agreed that low salary scale, limited number and low level of qualification of staff, less priority to the program as main problems of the existing structure.

Financing to the ABE Program:

Respondents were requested to give their opinion on the possibility of financing the ABE program in the absence of support from the INGOS. The result indicated that there is a lot to do in this regard.

Table 7. Opinion of Respondents on Possibilities of Financing the ABEP

Was budget allocated to the following Budget lines?	Budget source								
	WoE			ZoE/RBoE			INGOs project staff		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
Salary of ABE teachers	4	6	1	3	6	1	0	7	1
ABE textbooks	2	8	1	5	3	2	5	1	2
ABE supervision	1	9	1	6	3	1	0	7	1
ABE vehicle running cost	1	9	1	2	7	1	0	6	2
Salary of NFE experts	5	5	1	7	0	3	2	5	1
Construction of ABECs	1	9	1	3	6	1	0	7	1
Pedagogical and co curricular materials	2	6	3	5	5	0	2	4	2
ABECs maintenance costs	1	9	1	1	7	3	0	6	2

According to education office respondents, except for the salary of NFE experts, budget allocated for running ABECs is indicated as inadequate. Specifically, inadequate budget is allocated for basic educational inputs such as textbooks, salary of teachers and construction of centers and their maintenance. Except for the ABE textbooks, the opinion of the regional and zonal education respondents followed the same trend. The response goes along with findings of interviews with key informants from regional education offices.

Utilization of Locally Available Resources:

One of the strategies for sustaining project activities is the use of locally available materials. This helps to minimize cost of establishing schools and makes maintenance cost lower and affordable for the local communities and authorities after hand over. The following table shows the extent of the use of local resources by INGOs in running ABEP.

Table 8: The Use of Locally Available Resources by INGOs

Activity	Responses									
	None	%	Very low	%	Low	%	Sufficient	%	Not Applicable	%
Construction of classrooms	0	0	1	4	4	15	21	81	0	0
Production of learning and teaching materials	7	27	2	8	8	31	9	33	0	0
School furniture production	6	27	3	14	5	19	8	40	0	0
Training of ABE teachers using local expertise	1	4	1	4	6	27	14	65	0	0
Classroom maintenance	1	4	2	8	7	28	15	60	0	0

It is apparent from the above table that INGOs were using locally available resources for school construction. 81% of those who had responded believed that local materials are utilized for constructing and maintenance of classroom, (60%), and used local trainers for ABE teachers training, 65%. The challenge remained on the use of local resources for learning and teaching aids where 67% of the respondents felt that the degree of using local materials for teaching learning ranges from none to low and the same in school furniture production, 60%. This may affect the smooth running of ABECs after INGOs withdraw.

Stakeholders Involvement

One of the contributing factors for sustaining project activities is maintaining ownership through involvement of stakeholders in this case woreda education offices and communities. Respondents reacted as follows to the level of involvement in key project management phases.

Table 9. Level of Involvement of WoE, ZoE and RBoE Respondents in ABE Project Management

Areas of Involvement	Responses WoE, ZoE and RBoE					
	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know/no answer	%
The INGOs working in ABE program involves the WOE						
○ Project planning	15	71	3	14	3	14
○ Project implementation	14	66	3	14	4	19
○ Project monitoring	15	71	2	9	4	19
○ Project evaluation	16	76	3	14	2	9
○ Annual report preparation	15	71	2	9	4	19
○ Purchase of educational materials	16	76	3	14	2	9
○ Recruiting ABE teachers	14	66	2	9	5	24
○ Construction bid process and management	10	47	4	19	7	33

All INGOs project staff and government officials responded that they involved woreda education offices in project management activities starting from project planning up to evaluation. Their response ranges from minimum 66% up to 76% in most of the aspects of project management. The level of involvement looked lower in construction management, 47%, which may require further improvement.

4.3.4 Opportunities and Challenges of ABE Program by INGOs

Based on literature review and preliminary discussions with INGOs and regional education authorities, the researcher identified the commonly encountered challenges and opportunities of ABE projects and generated the opinion of different respondents through administering questionnaires.

A. Opportunities for the ABE Program

Table 10: Opportunities for ABEP as per the Responses of the Regional, Zonal, Woreda and INGO Representatives

Possible Opportunities	Responses of all WoE, ZoE/REBs and INGOs					
	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know/ no answer	%
Government policy is supportive to the program	29	97	1	3	0	0
Regional education bureau gives the necessary support to the program	17	60	7	25	4	15
Local administration is supportive to the program						
o There are experts assigned to the program	20	65	6	19	5	16
o Woreda allocates budget to the program	9	32	17	61	2	7
o The ABE centers are clustered with the formal schools	21	70	5	17	4	13
o The woreda provides local materials	19	63	6	17	5	20
o There is clear guideline on ABEC-community relationship	15	50	8	27	7	23
The ABE program is flexible in terms of program schedule	13	43	16	53	1	4
The community provides land for the establishment of ABE center	23	77	2	6	5	13
Community participates on center management	25	83	2	6	3	11
The community has sense of ownership of the ABE center	23	77	3	10	5	13
The ABE program is cost effective(It is based on local resources)	24	80	1	3	5	17

N.B. The sum of respondents is not the same for some did not give responses to some items.

The interviewees agreed that there is conducive policy environment, 97%, and 60% of them felt that regional governments provided necessary support to the ABEP. Similarly, there is obvious support from local administration authorities for the program in terms of assigning human resource, 65%, mainstreaming the program to the school cluster system, 70%, providing local materials, 63%, and community mobilization, 50%.

Majority of the respondents also reported that the communities are providing the necessary support for the program, 77%. The types of support included such as land for school construction and participating in center management.

Most of the respondents (more than 60%), however, indicated that local authorities (woredas) did not allocate budget for the program and there is a general challenge of making the program flexible and responsive to the needs of the respective communities,53%. This could be the current trends in community participation in ABE center management.

Challenges for ABE Program:

Possible challenges which are commonly encountered by the program are put forth as follows. Table 11 below summarizes the responses as follows.



Table 11. Challenges as Expressed by WoE Respondents

Possible Challenges	Yes	No	I don't know
Children do not want to go to ABE program	1	10	0
The children joining the ABE program are too young for the curriculum	4	7	0
There is a high drop out rate in the ABE program	5	6	0
There is a high repetition rate in the ABE program	1	9	1
There is a high irregular attendance of students	3	7	0
Parents are not willing to send their children to the ABE program	3	7	1
Parents are not willing to participate in ABE			
o Management	3	8	0
o Resource contribution	4	7	0
o Resource improvement	2	9	0
o Students' learning	4	7	0
The community representatives have busy schedules to participate in ABE affairs	6	5	0
There is no formal school in a reasonable distance for the ABE students to continue their education	6	5	0
There is high staff turn over in the:			
o ABE centers	2	9	0
o WoE	6	5	0
The quality of the ABE education is perceived as sub standard (compared to the formal one)	5	3	3
Shortage of materials such as textbooks is acute problem	6	4	1
ABE centers do not have specified sites	3	8	0
Most ABECs have no play grounds	8	3	1
The ABE program is not flexible in terms of program schedule	5	6	0
The students from ABEP are not competent enough to learn at grade five	5	2	4
Absence of potential ABE teachers with minimum qualification	6	3	1
Poor technical(subject mastery and pedagogical) capacity of ABE teachers	10	1	0

According to the response from woreda education offices (Table 11), high drop out rate, lower performance of students when they joined formal schools coupled with the occurrence of under aged children were reported to be the challenges. On the other hand, high staff turn-over of education staff, absence of potential teachers with minimum grade level and poor technical capacity of ABE teachers, and most importantly failure to make the school scheme more flexible. Absence of play grounds in the center compound is also one of the problems.

Table 12. Challenges as Expressed by ZoE and RBOE Respondents

Possible Challenges	Yes	No	I don't know
Children do not want to go to ABE program	1	7	2
The children joining the ABE program are too young for the curriculum	4	5	1
There is a high drop out rate in the ABE program	1	8	1
There is a high repetition rate in the ABE program	2	7	1
There is a high irregular attendance of students	6	3	1
Parents are not willing to send their children to the ABE program	5	4	1
Parents are not willing to participate in ABE			
o Management	3	6	1
o Resource contribution	2	6	1
o Resource improvement	4	5	1
o Students' learning	4	5	1
The community representatives have busy schedules to participate in ABE affairs	9	0	1
There is no formal school in a reasonable distance for the ABE students to continue their education	1	8	1
There is high staff turn over in the:			
o ABE centers	2	7	1
o WoE	4	4	2
The quality of the ABE education is perceived as sub standard compared (compared to the formal one)	6	4	0
Shortage of materials such as textbooks is acute problem	6	4	
ABE centers do not have specified sites	3	6	1
Most ABECs have no play grounds	6	4	0
The ABE program is not flexible in terms of program schedule	3	6	0
The students from ABEP are not competent enough to learn at grade five	4	4	1
Absence of potential ABE teachers with minimum qualification	5	5	0
Poor technical(subject mastery and pedagogical) capacity of ABE teachers	6	2	2

Irregular attendance of children, unwillingness of parents to send children to ABECs, busy schedule of local leaders preventing them from participating in ABECs management, perception of stakeholders on the quality as sub-standard, lack of play grounds in ABECs, absence of potential ABE teachers and poor technical capacity of ABE teachers were identified as common challenges from the above table.

On the other hand, project staff of INGOs has identified woreda staff and ABE teachers' turn over as the only major challenge.

Table 13. Challenges as Perceived by INGOs' Project Staff Respondents

Possible Challenges	Yes	No	I don't know
Children do not want to go to ABE program	0	7	1
The children joining the ABE program are too young for the curriculum	1	6	1
There is a high drop out rate in the ABE program	0	6	2
There is a high repetition rate in the ABE program	0	6	2
There is a high irregular attendance of students	1	6	1
Parents are not willing to send their children to the ABE program	0	7	1
Parents are not willing to participate in ABE			
o Management	0	7	1
o Resource contribution	1	5	2
o Resource improvement	1	6	1
o Students' learning	2	5	1
The community representatives have busy schedules to participate in ABE affairs	0	7	1
There is no formal school in a reasonable distance for the ABE students to continue their education	1	5	2
There is high staff turn over in the:			
o ABE centers	4	1	3
o WoE	5	0	1
The quality of the ABE education is perceived as sub standard compared (compared to the formal one)	2	4	2
Shortage of materials such as textbooks is acute problem	0	7	1
ABE centers do not have specified sites	0	6	2
Most ABECs have no play grounds	3	3	2
The ABE program is not flexible in terms of program schedule	2	3	3
The students from ABEP are not competent enough to learn at grade five	0	5	1
Absence of potential ABE teachers with minimum qualification	1	6	1
Poor technical(subject mastery and pedagogical) capacity of ABE teachers	3	4	1

One of the indicators of sustainability is the perceived effectiveness of the program with respect to staff turn out and student dropout rates. Other wise, high staff turnover and student dropout will imply low public trust on the program and low transfer of experience to bring the required development in the program and thereby ensure program sustainability.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION and COMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The title of the research is “challenges and prospects of ABE program established by INGOs: The case of Amhara and Oromia Regions”. Accordingly, the study attempted to answer the following basic questions:

1. What are the overall contributions of the ABE projects for reaching more out of school children?
2. To what extent are the INGO projects contributing to enhance the capacity of woreda education offices to effectively manage the ABE program?
3. How sustainable are the ABE program interventions in terms of institutional and financial capacity?
4. What are the major opportunities considered and challenges encountered by INGOs in the process of planning and implementing the ABE programs in the two regions?

The study employed a descriptive survey method. It used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and analysis techniques.

Both purposive and random sampling techniques were applied. Purposive sampling was used to identify the INGOs relevant to the study in the two regions suitable to the nature of the topic. Four woredas were randomly selected from among those in which the selected INGOs operated. Purposive sampling is then used to look for those appropriate respondents from woreda, zone and regional education and other relevant offices. Four types of data collection methods were applied in the

study. Those were secondary data review, questionnaire, focus group discussion and key informant interview as appropriate.

Relevant documents such as strategic plans, annual progress reports, annual statistical bulletins of regional education offices and its operational structures at zone and woreda level was reviewed to learn about government policies, plans, opportunities and challenges in relation to ABEP. Similarly strategic plans, survey and assessment reports, project documents, project evaluation reports, research outputs and annual project progress reports of INGOs were assessed for similar purpose.

Three types of questionnaire was designed and administered for three groups including woreda education office, zone and region level and project and program officers who were closer to the nature of the topic with the purpose of generating more data and put in such a way that they cross-checked each other.

Focus group discussion was organized with woreda administrators, woreda finance and economic development offices, woreda capacity building offices. The purpose was to extract data about local governments' long term plans with regard to the program and their opinion about the level of involvement of woreda stakeholders in project management.

Finally, key informant discussion was undertaken with regional education authorities and program directors of INGOs at higher level to get their opinion on the nature of collaboration, strategic plans, challenges and opportunities, policy and practice etc.

The major findings were summarized under the following key topics based on the basic questions that the study is intended to answer. These were achievement of the ABE program, status of capacity building, level

of involvement of stakeholders, sustainability, opportunities and challenges of the program.

The major findings were the following. The ABEP program supported by INGOs contributed significantly to the improved gross enrolment of primary both at region and woreda levels. Capacity building efforts were undertaken at woreda and higher level. Some of these helped to enhanced knowledge and skills of woreda education offices on related policies and strategies, supervision techniques etc. However the capacity of ABE teachers indicated that there is still a lot to do in this regard. There seemed to be better capacity at region and zonal level according to the responses.

Under sustainability, institutional and financial sustainability were investigated in this study. Regional governments have formulated relevant policy frameworks to enhance the program in both regions. It is included as a strategy to universalize basic education and as part of five year development plans in the regions. The ABE program is put under the management of NFE panel at woreda level. But, the opinion of woreda education and project/program respondents indicated that the program does not seem a priority area for no adequate budget is allocated for it. In terms of financial sustainability, the program faced serious problems. No adequate budget was allocated for key educational inputs such as textbooks and supervision costs.

The findings showed that the level of involvement of key stakeholders is better. On the other hand, reports indicated that there is varying degree of participation from woreda to woreda. Some of the challenges such as irregular attendance and drop out, and lack flexibility of the program reflected that there might be a need for further investigation in this regard. INGOs used local resources in some aspects of the program such as construction of centers and training of teachers. However, the use of

local materials for teaching learning improvement persisted to be a challenge.

Existence of enabling policy and strategy framework, willingness of local authorities to support and takeover the program, and willingness of communities to involve in the program management were the major opportunities. On the other hand, relatively poor quality of education in the centers, limited implementation of policies into practice by government, shortage of budget and less priority given to the program, etc were the major challenges encountered by the program.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn. Federal and regional governments have shown their commitment towards achieving UPE by 2015 in the various policy and strategy documents. The progress made in terms of gross enrolment in primary education is in support of this. Both formal and non formal approaches have been used in achieving the good results.

Intervention by NGOs in general and INGOs in particular have contributed significantly in expanding the access to primary education for especially those children who could have been left out of school due to the limited capacity of government and due to the nature of the formal school system. INGOs have also supported regional governments in enhancing the capacity of woreda education offices in many ways.

Achieving UPE by 2015 still requires concerted efforts of both government and NGOs. It can be said that it is difficult and challenging to bring especially those school children who are out of school despite the efforts made so far. It is necessary to use both formal and alternative basic education approaches through addressing the various policy and

practical challenges that are explained above and through maximizing the available resource of both government and NGOs.

5. 3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions arrived at the following recommendations are given.

The fact that there are out of school children considering the low net enrolment rate for primary education demands continuous support from INGOs in supporting the ABE program with priority to un-reached children, girls, and marginalized communities.

Considering the low quality of the program, INGOs may give priority to improving the quality like the leading role they played in introducing the ABE program.

In relation to capacity building, there may be a need for institutionalizing the interventions through assisting regional education authorities develop user-friendly training manuals, linking capacity building to Teachers' Training Institutions.

Apart from technical support to woreda education offices, it may be useful to assist woreda education offices in improving their efficiency and effectiveness to ensure wise use of available resources through improving their operation systems.

It may be useful to engage in advocacy at woreda level specifically at woreda council level as it is the highest body to allocate budget for the different sectors. This may be done coupled with capacity building on budget analysis and related matters. This leads to gradually to ensuring accountability of authorities to local councils.

INGOs in addition to closely working with education authorities should ensure involvement of other key stakeholders such as woreda administrators, woreda Finance and Economic Development offices right from the beginning for their important role in maintaining sustainability.

The utilization of local resources is a key for sustainability. INGOs and local education authorities need to come up with different options of center construction that fulfills two issues-the use of local resources and durability so as to minimize maintenance costs.

The main challenge that manifested in relation to the above issue is the use of local resources for teaching learning. All stakeholders should come up with innovative ideas in this regard and maximize the available skills in formal school teachers and education experts.

The level of involvement of communities in project management may need further systematized work. There may be a need for entering into clear contract with clear roles and responsibilities. There is a need to give a room for parents to decide on school time table as per their need.

INGOs shall engage in further advocacy with regional education offices in areas such as improving the institutional capacity of NFE coordinating body in terms of salary, qualification and allocating enough running cost.

There seems a need for better understanding on the ABE program and its basic principles among all stakeholders. INGOs and Woreda Education offices should work hand in hand to ensure this apart from the development of strategies and working manuals.

As a means to sustain project outputs, there may be a need to enhance the capacity of woreda education offices and regional education experts

on project management particularly project proposal writing, report writing, monitoring etc.

Finally, INGOs shall ensure that their education project/program officers have the basic knowledge and skills in managing the program to assist woreda education offices.

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Annexes: Data Collection Instruments

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MANAGEMENT

Checklist for key Informant Interview with Regional Education Bureau department heads and INGOs

Regional Education Bureau

- How does the region rate the contribution of ABEP in improving the status of enrollment in the region
- Prospects of ABE program in the region in the on-going strategic period
- What challenges are faced by the region in managing ABE program
- What measures have been taken to institutionally sustain ABE program run by INGOs in terms of policy, strategy and developing guidelines
- What are the challenges faced by local governments to effectively takeover ABE centers from INGOs
- What supports are given to INGOs implementing ABE program in the region
- How often and to what degree is the bureau supervising ABE program implemented by INGOs
- If no close support is given, what are the reasons given?
- What supports are provided to the region from INGOs

INGOs Country Offices

- What supports are provided by the region in the area of ABEP program
- What efforts are made in the area of advocacy to institutionally sustain ABEP
- What policies and strategies are in place at region level to facilitate the program
- What achievements are made by the organization in supporting the region in relation to improving enrolment, capacity of government, and involvement of stakeholders
- What are the major challenges in effectively managing ABEP

Woreda Cabinets (chief administrators, heads of capacity building, heads of Finance and capacity building offices)

- How do they see the contribution of the INGO in improving the enrolment at primary?
- How do they see the capacity building support of the INGO to the woreda education office? What suggestions do they have for future improvement?
- How do they review the involvement of their office in the ABE project supported by the INGO? In what types of activities or project phases are they involved (planning, monitoring, implementation, reviewing etc)?
- What preparations are made by your government to take over the ABE program after project phases out? What challenges do you foresee to fully takeover after project phases out?
- Do you see ABE strategically useful to address out of school children in your woreda and meet UPE by 2015? How is then addressed in your strategic plan? What components are put in place such as salary of facilitators, textbooks, construction of centers etc?
- How do they see the quality of the ABE program and what are the problems in this regard?

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Questionnaire Set for Regional Education Programs and Supervision Department Heads, Planning and Project Department Heads, Planning Experts, NFE Panel Heads, NFE Experts, ABE Experts, Zonal Education Department Heads, Zonal Education Program Heads, Zonal NFE Experts and Planning officers

Objective of the Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect primary data for the work of master's thesis on the study titled **Prospects and challenges of international non governmental organizations /INGOs working in alternative basic education: The case of Amhara and Oromia Regions**. *I kindly request you to filling in this questionnaire with objective and honest information as it would be of high value for the study.*

General Direction:

1. It is not necessary to write your name on the questionnaire.
2. Please follow the instruction when filling out the questionnaire.
3. Please encircle your response to question with alternatives.
4. Please write short answers in the space provided for question items that require opinion or completion.

1. Bio -data

1.1 Sex: a) Male b) Female

1.2 Age: (years)

a) Below 18 b) 18-30 c) 31-40 d) 41-50 e) 50 and above

1.3 Qualification:

a)TTI b) Diploma c)BA/BSC Degree d)Masters' Degree e)Other
(please specify)___

1.4 Job:

Position: _____

1.5 Service (Years):

In current position: ___years, service in the region or zone: ___years and total service: ___years

2. Opportunities for INGO supported ABE programs

2.1 How do you rate contribution of alternative basic education supported by non-governmental organizations in accessing basic education to children in your region?

- a) Very low b) Low c) High d) Very High e) I don't know

2.2 What kinds of support do you provide to the INGO engaged in implementing ABE projects in your region?

2.3 How often do you visit ABE project sites supported by INGO?

- a) Once in a month b) Once in a quarter c) Twice in a year d) Once in a year b) Not at all

2.4 Do you think that your office gave adequate support to the INGO supporting ABEP in the last few years?

- a) Yes b) No c) I don't Know

2.5 If you think that the support provided is limited, what are the possible causes for this limited support?

Cause	Response		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Budget shortage of bureau or zone			
Vehicle shortage			
Limited Human power of your office			
Lack of focus on the side of the bureau			
Lack of technical capacity and exposure of staff			
Lack of willingness and support on the side of the INGO			
Others (list down)			

2.6 What are the opportunities for the Alternative Basic Education Program in your area? Give your responses by putting tick marks (“√”) on the appropriate column. Please, note that there is no **right or wrong** answer to the questions. Your opinion is valued.

No	Issue	Responses		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	Government policy is supportive to ABE program			
2	Regional bureau gives the necessary support to the program			
3	Local administration is supportive to the program			
	• There are experts assigned to support the program			
	• The Woreda allocates budget for the ABECs			
	• The ABE centers are clustered with the formal schools			
	• The Woreda provides local materials			
	• There is a clear guideline on ABE center–community relationship			
4	The ABE program is flexible in terms of program schedule			
5	The community provides land for the establishment of ABE centers			
6	The community participates in the management of the ABE centers			
7	The community has ownership feeling on the ABE centers			
7	The ABE program is cost effective (It is based on local resources)			
8	The INGO working in ABEP involves the WEO in			
	• Project planning			
	• Project implementation			
	• Project monitoring			
	• Project evaluation			
	• Annual report preparation			
	• Purchase of educational materials			
	• Recruiting facilitators			
	• Construction bid process and management			

2.7 If you have any additional idea on the opportunity of the ABE program in your area, please write down.

3. Challenges of ABE projects supported by INGOs

What are the challenges to ABE program in your area?

No	Issue	Responses		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	Students do not want to join ABE centers			
2	The children joining the ABE centers are too young for the curriculum			
3	There is a high dropout in the ABE centers			
4	There is a high repetition rate in the ABE centers			
5	There is a high irregular school attendance of students			
6	Parents are not willing to send their children to the ABE centers			
7	Parents are not willing to participate in ABE			
	• Management			
	• Resource contributions			
	• Resource improvement			
7	• Students' learning			
8	The community representatives have busy schedules to participate in ABE affairs			
9	There are no formal schools (at reasonable distances) for the ABE students to continue their education			
10	There is high staff turnover in the:			
	• ABE centers			
10	• WEOs			
11	The quality of ABE education is perceived as sub standard (compared to the formal one)			
12	Shortage of materials such as textbooks is acute problem			
13	ABE centers do not have specified sites			
14	Most of ABE centers have no adequate space or compound			
15	Most of ABECs have no play grounds			
16	The ABE program is not flexible			
17	The children of ABE are not competent to learn at grade 5			
18	Absence of potential ABE teachers with minimum qualification			
19	Poor technical (subject mastery and pedagogical) capacity of ABE facilitators			

List down other challenges to the ABE program in your area (if any)

What has to be done to improve the program?

4. Capacity Building Efforts by the INGO

The capacity building efforts by the INGO have contributed to the enhancement of the following skills and knowledge and development or improvement of guidelines and procedures?

Skills and knowledge	Responses				
	Very Low	Low	To some extent	High	Very High
Knowledge and skills					
Knowledge on ABE policy and strategy					
Knowledge on ABE procedures and guidelines					
Knowledge on project cycle management					
Knowledge on child rights and needs					
Knowledge on supervision types and approaches					
Knowledge on active learning approaches					
Planning skills					
Reporting skills					
Supervision techniques					
Project proposal preparation skills					
Monitoring & evaluation skills					
Guidelines and Procedures development					
ABE implementation manual/guideline					
Students' transfer policy					
Students' assessment technique					
ABE facilitators' training manuals					
Guideline for linkage between formal and non formal education programs					
Other (please specify)					

4.2 If capacity building efforts by the INGO is not to the expected level, what are the possible causes?

4.3 What recommendations do you suggest improving the situation?

5. Sustainability Issues

5.1 Do you think that there is appropriate coordinating unit in the organizational structure to manage ABE program at woreda level?

- a) Yes b) No c) I don't know

5.2 If your answer is "No", what is the problem in the existing structure?

No.	Possible problems	Response		
		Yes	No	I don't Know
1	Low level of qualification			
2	Low salary scale			
3	Low number of human power			
4	Less priority given to the program			
	Others (specify)			
5				
6				

5.3 Do you think that adequate budget is allocated to the following ABEP costs in the last few years from government?

Activity	Response		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Salary of ABE teachers			
ABE Textbooks			
ABE supervision costs			
ABE vehicle running cost			
Salary of NFE experts			
Construction of ABE centers			
Pedagogical and co curricular materials for ABECs			
ABECs maintenance costs			
ABE furniture and equipment			
Play grounds and materials			
Fencing			

5.4 How do you rate the trend of budget allocation to ABEP in the last four years in the woreda by the government?

- a) Decreasing b) No change c) Increasing d) No budget allocated

5.5 Does the INGO use local resources in establishing ABE centers in the woreda?

- a) Yes b) No c) Not applicable

5.6 If the answer to 5.5 is "yes", in which of the following is it reflected and to what extent?

Area	Level of using local resources and materials				
	None	Very low	Low	Sufficient	Not applicable
Construction of classrooms from local materials					
Production of learning and teaching materials using locally available resources					
Furniture production using local resources					
Training of ABE facilitators using local expertise					
Classroom maintenance using local skills and resources					

6. What challenges were faced when ABE program is handed over to Government from INGO?

Possible challenges	Response		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Paying Salary of ABE facilitators			
Provision of textual materials			
Provision of learning materials to children from needy families			
Provision of co curricular and pedagogical materials			
Maintenance of classrooms and furniture			
Accessing second cycle schools to ABE completers			
Maintaining of quality of teaching learning			
Provision supervision support			
Shortage of running cost			

7. ABE program according to regional ABE strategy is characterized by flexibility, cost-effectiveness, involvement of stakeholders, use of local potential, and integration with other programs. How would you rate the ongoing INGO supported ABE programs in relation to the above criteria?

Criteria	Response				
	Very low	Low	Medium	Good	Very good
Flexibility					
Cost-effectiveness					
Involvement of stakeholders					
Use of local resources					
Integration with formal system					
Using condensed curriculum					

7. Please put under here if you like to provide additional ideas and suggestions

Thank You Very Much for Unreserved Cooperation!

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Questionnaire Set for Woreda Education Office Heads, Program Team Leaders, NFE Experts, Planning Experts

Objective of the Questionnaire

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1.2 Age: (years)

a) Below 18 b) 18-30 c) 31-40 d) 41-50 e) 50 and above

1.3 Qualification:

a)TTI b) Diploma c)BA/BSC Degree d)Masters' Degree e)Other
(please specify)___

1.4 Job:

Position:_____

1.5 Service (Years)

In current position: ___years, service in the region or zone:___years and total service:___years

2. Opportunities for INGO supported ABE programs

2.1 Is non- formal education for children or alternative basic education practiced in the woreda to address access to primary education for children apart from the formal school system?

a)Yes b)No

2.2 When did ABE program started in your woreda?
 Month _____ Year(EC) _____

2.3 What are the opportunities for the Alternative Basic Education Program in your area? Give your responses by putting tick marks (“√”) on the appropriate column. Please, note that there is no **right or wrong** answer to the questions. Your opinion is valued.

No	Issue	Responses		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	Government policy is supportive to ABE program			
2	Regional bureau gives the necessary support to the program			
3	Local administration is supportive to the program			
	• There are experts assigned to support the program			
	• The Woreda allocates budget for the ABECs			
	• The ABE centers are clustered with the formal schools			
	• The Woreda provides local materials			
	• There is a clear guideline on ABE center –community relationship			
4	The ABE program is flexible in terms of program schedule			
5	The community provides land for the establishment of ABE centers			
6	The community participates in the management of the ABE centers			
7	The community has ownership feeling on the ABE centers			
7	The ABE program is cost effective (It is based on local resources)			
8	The INGO working in ABEP involves the WEO in			
	• Project planning			
	• Project implementation			
	• Project monitoring			
	• Project evaluation			
	• Annual report preparation			
	• Purchase of educational materials			
	• Recruiting facilitators			
	• Construction bid process and management			

2.4 If you have any additional idea on the opportunity of the ABE program in your area, please write down.

5. Challenges of ABEP Projects Supported by INGO

What are the challenges to ABE program in the area?

No	Issue	Responses		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	Students do not want to join ABE centers			
2	The children joining the ABE centers are too young for the curriculum			
3	There is a high dropout in the ABE centers			
4	There is a high irregular school attendance of ABE students			
5	There is a high repetition rate in the ABE centers			
6	Parents are not willing to send their children to the ABE centers			
7	Parents are not willing to participate in ABE			
	• Management			
	• Resource improvement			
	• Resource contribution			
	• Students' learning			
8	The community representatives have busy schedules to participate in ABE affairs			
9	There are no formal schools (at reasonable distances) for the ABE students to continue their education			
10	There is high staff turnover in the:			
	• ABE centers • WEOs			
11	The quality of ABE education is perceived as sub standard (compared to the formal one)			
12	Shortage of materials such as textbooks is acute problem			
13	ABE centers do not have specified sites			
14	Most of ABECs have no play grounds			
15	The ABE program is not flexible in terms of program schedule			
16	The children of ABE are not competent to learn at grade 5			
17	Absence of potential ABE teachers with minimum qualification			
18	Poor technical (subject mastery and pedagogical)capacity of ABE facilitators			

List down other challenges to the ABE program in your area (if any)

What has to be done to improve the program?

3.4 . Any other additional idea with regard to the opportunities and challenges of the ABE program.

6. Capacity Building Efforts by the INGO

The capacity building efforts by the INGO have contributed to the enhancement of the following skills and knowledge and development or improvement of guidelines and procedures?

Skills and knowledge	Responses				
	Very low	Low	To some extent	High	Very High
Knowledge and skills					
Knowledge on ABE policy and strategy					
Knowledge on ABE procedures and guidelines					
Knowledge on project cycle management					
Knowledge on child rights and needs					
Knowledge on supervision types and approaches					
Knowledge on active learning approaches					
Planning skills					
Reporting skills					
Supervision techniques					
Project proposal preparation skills					
Monitoring & Evaluation skills					
Guidelines and Procedures development					
ABE implementation manual/guideline					
Students' transfer policy					
Students' Assessment Technique					
ABE Facilitators' Training Manuals					
Guideline for Linkage between formal and non formal education programs					
Other (please specify)					

4.2 If capacity building efforts by the INGO is not to the expected level, what are the possible causes?

4.3 What recommendations due you suggest improving the situation?

5. Sustainability Issues

5.1 Do you think that there is appropriate coordinating unit in the organizational structure to manage ABE program at woreda level?

- a) Yes b).No c) I don't know

5.2 If your answer is "No", what is the problem in the existing structure?

No.	Possible problems	Response		
		Yes	No	I don't Know
1	Low level of qualification			
2	Low salary scale			
3	Low number of human power			
4	Less priority given to the program			
	Others (specify)			
5				
6				

5.3 Do you think that adequate budget is allocated to the following ABEP activities in the last few years from government?

Activity	Response		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Salary of ABE teachers			
ABE Textbooks			
ABE Supervision costs			
ABE Vehicle running cost			
Salary of NFE experts			
Construction of ABE centers			
Pedagogical and co curricular materials for ABECs			
ABECs Maintenance costs			

5.4 How do you rate the trend of budget allocation to ABEP in the last four years in the woreda by the government?

- a) Decreasing b) No change c) Increasing d) No budget allocated

5.5 Does the INGO use local resources in establishing ABE centers in the woreda?

- a) Yes b) No c) Not applicable

5.6 If the answer to 5.5 is "yes", in which of the following is it reflected and to what extent?

Area	Level of using local resources and materials				
	None	Very low	Low	Sufficient	Not applicable
Construction of classrooms from local materials					
Production of learning and teaching materials using locally available resources					
Furniture production using local resources					
Training of ABE facilitators using local expertise					
Classroom maintenance using local skills and resources					

6. Please put under here if you have other ideas and suggestions

Thank You Very Much!

2.2 Please fill in the following table about ABE program supported by your organization in the project woreda:

Number of Alternative Basic Education Centers/ABECs	Urban_____	Rural_____	Total_____
ABE facilitators	Male_____	Female_____	Total_____
ABE students enrolled in current academic year	Male_____	Female_____	Total_____
Gross enrolment rate of ABE program	Male_____	Female_____	Total_____

2.3 Contribution of ABEP supported by the INGO to the Gross Enrollment in primary in the previous year

- a) Below 1% b) 1-5% c) 6-10% d) 11-15% e) 16-20%
 f) 20% & above

2.4 What are the opportunities for the Alternative Basic Education Program in your area? Give your responses by putting tick marks (“√”) on the appropriate column. Please, note that there is no **right or wrong** answer to the questions. Your opinion is valued.

No	Issue	Responses		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	Government policy is supportive to ABE program			
2	Regional bureau gives the necessary support to the program			
3	Local administration is supportive to the program			
	• There are experts assigned to support the program			
	• The Woreda allocates budget for the ABECs			
	• The ABE centers are clustered with the formal schools			
	• The Woreda provides local materials			
	• There is a clear guideline on ABE center –community relationship			
4	The ABE program is flexible in terms of program schedule			
5	The community provides land for the establishment of ABE centers			
6	The community participates in the management of the ABE centers			
7	The community has ownership feeling on the ABE centers			
7	The ABE program is cost effective (It is based on local resources)			
8	The ING Involves woreda education office in the following ABE project activities			
	• Annual project activity planning			
	• Annual project financial planning			
	• Annual project review			

• Annual project progress report writing			
• Periodic project monitoring			
• Selection, recruitment and employment of ABE facilitators			
• Training of ABE facilitators			
• Purchase of textbooks and other educational materials			
• Construction bid process			
• Signing Contractual agreement of procurements and construction activities			
• Approval of payments			
• Identification of capacity gaps			

2.5 Do you have any additional idea on the opportunity of the ABE program in your area?

7. Challenges of ABEP Projects Supported by INGO

What are the challenges to ABE program in the area?

No	Issue	Responses		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	Students do not want to join ABE centers			
2	The children joining the ABE centers are too young for the curriculum			
3	There is a high dropout in the ABE centers			
4	There is a high repetition rate in the ABE centers			
5	There is a high irregular school attendance of students			
6	Parents are not willing to send their children to the ABE centers			
7	Parents are not willing to participate in ABE			
	• Management			
	• Resource contribution			
	• Resource improvement			
7	• Students' learning			
8	The community representatives have busy schedules to participate in ABE affairs			
9	There are no formal schools (at reasonable distances) for the ABE students to continue their education			
10	There is high staff turnover in the:			
	• ABE centers			
	• WEOS			

11	The quality of ABE education is perceived as sub standard (compared to the formal one)			
12	Shortage of materials such as textbooks is acute problem			
13	ABE centers do not have specified sites			
14	Most ABECS have no play grounds			
15	The ABE program is not flexible in terms of program school			
16	The children of ABE are not competent to learn at grade 5			
17	Absence of potential ABE teachers with minimum qualification			
18	Poor technical (subject mastery and pedagogical) capacity of ABE facilitators			

List down other challenges to the ABE program in your area (if any)

What has to be done to improve the program?

8. Capacity Building Efforts by the INGO

The capacity building efforts by the INGO have contributed to the enhancement of the following skills and knowledge and development or improvement of guidelines and procedures?

Skills and knowledge	Responses				
	Very low	Low	To some extent	High	Very high
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Knowledge on policy and strategy					
Knowledge on procedures and guidelines					
Knowledge on project cycle management					
Knowledge on child rights and needs					
Knowledge on supervision types and approaches					
Knowledge on active learning approaches					
Planning skills					
Reporting skills					
Supervision techniques					
Project proposal preparation skills					
Monitoring & Evaluation skills					
Guidelines and Procedures					
ABE implementation manual/guideline					
Students' transfer policy					
Students' Assessment Technique					
ABE Facilitators' Training Manuals					
Guideline for Linkage between formal and non formal education programs					
Other (please specify)					

4.2 If capacity building efforts by the INGO is not to the expected level, what are the possible causes?

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5.1 Do you think that there is appropriate coordinating unit in the organizational structure to manage ABE program at woreda level?

- a) Yes b).No c) I don't know

5.2 If your answer is "No", what is the problem in the existing structure?

No.	Possible problems	Response		
		Yes	No	I don't Know
1	Low level of minimum qualification			
2	Low salary scale			
3	Low number of human power			
4	Less priority given to the program			
	Others (specify)			
5				
6				

5.3 Do you think that adequate budget is allocated to the following ABEP activities in the last few years from government?

Activity	Response		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Salary of ABE teachers			
ABE Textbooks			
ABE Supervision costs			
ABE Vehicle running cost			
Salary of NFE experts			
Construction of ABE centers			
Pedagogical and co curricular materials for ABECs			
ABECs Maintenance costs			

5.4 How do you rate the trend of budget allocation to ABEP in the last four years in the woreda by the government?

- a) Decreasing b) No change c) Increasing d) No budget allocated

5.5 Does the INGO use local resources in establishing ABE centers in the woreda?

- a) Yes b) No c) Not applicable

5.6 If the answer to 5.5 is "yes", in which of the following is it reflected and to what extent?

Area	Level of using local resources and materials				
	None	Very low	Low	Sufficient	Not applicable
Construction of classrooms from local materials					
Production of learning and teaching materials using locally available resources					
Furniture production using local resources					
Training of ABE facilitators using local expertise					
Classroom maintenance using local skills and resources					

6. Please put under here if you have other ideas and suggestions in relation to opportunities and challenges

Thank You Very Much!

Addis Ababa University
Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management

Gross Enrolment -primary

Geographic Area	Gross Enrolment by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda(sample)												

Gross Enrolment -ABE (Government+ NGOs)

Geographic Area	Gross Enrolment by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda(sample)												

Gross Enrolment -ABE (sample INGO)

Geographic Area	Gross Enrolment by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda												

Gross Enrolment Rate-primary

Geographic Area	Gross Enrolment by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda(sample)												

Gross Enrolment Rate-ABE (Government+ NGOs)

Geographic Area	Gross Enrolment Rate by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda(sample)												

Gross Enrolment Rate-ABE (sample INGO)

Geographic Area	Gross Enrolment rate by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda(sample)												

Drop out rate ABE Government

Geographic Area	Drop out rate by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda(sample)												

Drop out rate (ABE supported by sample INGO)

Geographic Area	Drop out rate by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Region												
Zone												
Woreda												

ABE Centres by Woreda

Type	Gross Enrolment by Academic Year											
	2004/5			2005/6			2006/7			2007/08		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Government												
INGO												
Total												

Budget Allocation By Woreda (in thousands in Birr)

Type	Budget Year							
	2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/08	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Education		Out of woreda Budget		Out of woreda Budget		Out of woreda Budget		Out of woreda Budget
Primary Education		Out of woreda education budget		Out of woreda education budget		Out of woreda education budget		Out of woreda education budget
ABEP		Out of woreda primary education budget		Out of woreda primary education budget		Out of woreda primary education budget		Out of woreda primary education budget

ABE Budget Allocation at Woreda Level by Government

Type	Budget Year			
	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/08
	Total	Total	Total	Total
Salary of ABE Facilitators				
ABE Textbooks				
ABE Center construction				
ABE center furnishing				
ABEP supervision				

ABE Budget Allocation at Woreda Level by INGOs

Type	Budget Year			
	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/08
	Total	Total	Total	Total
Salary of ABE Facilitators				
ABE Textbooks				
ABE Center construction				
ABE center furnishing				
ABEP supervision				



Declaration

I the undersigned declare that the thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Elias Tadesse

Signature: 

Place and Date of Submission: School of Graduate Studies

Addis Ababa University, March 30, 2009.

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Advisor.

Name: Dr Zenebe Baraki

Signature: 

Date of Submission: March 30, 2009

