

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALTERNATIVE BASIC
EDUCATION CURRICULUM BY SAVE THE
CHILDREN DENMARK AND USA IN
NORTH SHOA AND SOUTH WEST
SHOA ZONES OF OROMIA**

BY

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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
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**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS'
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

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**JULY, 2007
ADDIS ABABA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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ACRONYMS

ABE	Alternative Basic Education
ACCESS	Appropriate, Cost-effective, Center for Education with in the School System
BEUPA	Basic Education in Urban Poverty Area
CMC	Community Management Committee
CORPs	Community Owned Resource Persons
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
CSTCs	Community Skills Training Centers
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KKS	Kishor-Kishori Schools
ManaBU	Mana Barnoota Ummataa (Community School in Oromo Language, named by Community – based Basic Education Improvement Project)
MOE	Ministry of Education
NFBE	Non-Formal Basic Education
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NFPE	Non-Formal Primary Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OEB	Oromia Education Bureau
OEE1	Oromia Education Expert One
OEE2	Oromia Education Expert Two
POSCD	Program Officer of Save the Children Denmark
PTA	Parents and Teachers Association
RMSDS	Regional Minimum Service Delivery Standard

SC/D	Save the Children, Denmark
SC/USA	Save the Children, United States of America
SMC	School Management Committee
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TTI	Teachers Training Institutes
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund; formerly, United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
US \$	United States Dollar
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
WEO	Woreda Education Office
WNFBEB	Woreda Non-Formal Basic Education Board
ZEO	Zonal Education Office

ABSTRACT

NGOs in collaboration with Oromia Education Bureau were involved in implementation of ABE curriculum with the intention of expanding access to education and attaining equity towards access to educational opportunity towards the realization of universal primary education. But, the situation of curriculum implementation of NGOs supported ABE centers in maintaining quality education has not been significantly furnished with adequate study. To this effect, this study aims to assess the situation of curriculum implementation of ABE in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia in terms of practice and constraints by taking the experiences of supporting NGOs.

This study has briefly analyzed and systematized relevant information as well as research findings of others in the review of related literature. A descriptive survey research method was employed to conduct this study. Eight centers were selected purposefully from two zones of Oromia; and a representative sample of 100 (62.5%) of respondents were involved in the study. Data were collected from informants through questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion. The data collected through questionnaire were analyzed using percentages, and that of interviews were analyzed in narration.

Results of the study showed that there were improvements in curriculum materials preparation and provision. Beside, community participation was observed in supporting ABE centers. In contrary, female facilitators were not adequately represented in implementation, and there was inadequacy of training and supports for facilitators. Furthermore, administrators and coordinators lacked commitment in implementation, and there was lack of involvement by concerned body as a team in preparation of curriculum.

It is suggested that stakeholders of ABE in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia should identify factors affecting the implementation of ABE curriculum and plan to address them during implementation.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH

1.1. Background of the Study

There is a universal agreement on the fact that education is the basic tool to enhance a country's development. This is mainly true because education and training increases and strengthens the creative and productive capacity of human beings. The information and knowledge provided by education can also facilitate people to understand the principles and laws that govern their social and natural environment. At the same time, the skills and capabilities obtained through trainings will have power to strengthen and enrich the active, creative, productive and management capacities of people. In short, education motivates and encourages socio-cultural changes and facilitates people's tendency to change their ways of thinking and behavior towards change. It nourishes people's ability to accommodate changes and promote development. This positive tendency to accept changes and the well-built capacity to increase productivity and development in turn enhance people's commitment and strengthen their acting power to alleviate poverty by improving social services (Oromia Education Bureau, 2005).

Regarding the realization of UPE goals, UNESCO (2004) states the goal of achieving universal primary education (UPE) has been on the international agenda since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirmed, in 1948, that elementary education was to be made freely and compulsorily available for all children in all nations. Hence, this objective was restated subsequently on many occasions, by international treaties and in United Nations conference declaration. But, there was a big gap between declared principles by the United Nations and actual performance by governments to achieve Universal Primary Education.

In accordance with the above view, among many international treaties and United Nations conference declarations, looking into the two most recent United Nations international conference declarations focusing on education is important to get some insights in Education for All (EFA). These are: The Jomtien Declaration in 1990 and The Dakar Framework for Action in 2000.

To begin with the former, The Jomtien Declaration in 1990 by the WCEFA, took place in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand looked for review of international community's commitment to basic education as a fundamental human right. The Jomtien Declaration held under guidance of UN in order to enable countries move towards achieving EFA goals by the year 2000 (Hailesilassie, 2002). The Jomtien conference declaration was placing the emphasis upon assuring access for all; because, the international pressures make governments to emphasize on the expansion of schools but not on the quality of education provided (Derebssa, 2002). However, UNESCO (2004) states that the achievement of universal participation in education will be fundamentally dependent up on the quality of education available. For instance, how well students are taught, and how much they learn, can have a crucial impact on how long they stay in school and how they attend.

In similar manner, the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000, by the WCEFA took place in Dakar, Senegal. This was a conference where countries assessed the extent to which they had achieved the EFA goals. The assessment reports clearly showed that the Third World Countries in general and African Countries in particular were far from meeting the EFA goals set at the Jomtien Conference (Hailesilassie, 2002). However, the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000; particularly, recognized the quality of education as a prime determinant of whether education for all is achieved. More specifically than earlier pledges, the second of the six goals set out in the Dakar Framework commits nations to the provision of primary education of good quality. Moreover, the sixth goal

includes commitments to improve all aspects of education quality so that every one can achieve better learning outcomes, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. This shows the growing consensus about the need to provide access to education of good quality. This also indicates that, United Nations international conference declaration in Dakar emphasized importance of quality as a dimension of education (UNESCO, 2004).

In line with the above views, the Federal Government of Ethiopia puts considerable importance on education. Particularly, the expansion of quality primary education has received considerable attention in the various policies and strategies of the government. The Federal Government of Ethiopia has also set to achieve universal primary education by the year 2015 (Education Sector Development Program, 1998). However, relevance, equity, access and quality are the major problems in Ethiopian education. These problems and the means to reduce them were discussed in different parts of education sector development programs and research papers. TGE (1994), states that our country's education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity.

On the other hand, the rapid quantitative expansion of educational opportunities is the keystone to accelerated socio-economic development. In addition, universal primary education would enhance the opportunities for social mobility of the poor and the underprivileged (Derebssa, 1999). Beside maintaining quality of education, ESDP III focuses also on expanding access to education, attaining equity towards access to educational opportunity and improving efficiency of the education system as gateways towards the realization of universal primary education (Oromia Education Bureau, 2005).

Regarding, Ethiopian education structure, with the introduction of the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy in 1994, primary school extended up to grade 8 with two cycles; the first cycle is the lower primary school which includes grades (1-4) and second cycle is the upper primary school, which

includes grades (5-8). The lower primary school is self-contained classroom where teachers teach all subjects for one class. On the other hand, the second cycle is departmental classroom where teachers teach one subject across all grades.

Non-formal education is provided with and parallel to the basic education and at all levels of formal education. Non-formal education is concreted in its content, focusing on enabling learners develop problem-solving attitudes and abilities (TGE, 1994). Regarding kinds of NFE, Hailesilassie (2002) states that NFE has two types of programs: community skill training and non-formal basic education for adults and children. He added that, NFBE is functioned in many regions of Ethiopia and conducted by governments and NGOs cater for out-of-school children and adults. Tekeste (1996) in "Rethinking Education in Ethiopia" noted that non-formal education is an appropriate strategy to address development issues. Hence, along with formal education, placing focus on alternative delivery modes has great value for development.

MOE (2006) indicates that in Ethiopia the gross enrolment ratio of primary education which was 79.8% in 2005 was increased to 85.8% in 2006. In Ethiopia about 14.2% school age children are still out of school. Whereas, in Oromia the gross enrolment ratio that was 85.4% in 2005 has been reached 87.8% in 2006. Again in Oromia 12.2% school age children are out-of-school (Oromia Education Bureau, 2006). In order to bring the rest 14.2% of out-of-school children in Ethiopia so as to achieve universal primary education, due attention should be given to non-formal education as alternative modes of delivery. Mammo (1990) confirms that it is not possible to provide basic education to all those who need it through the formal system alone in a short time. Thus, it is imperative that an alternative, innovative, relevant and flexible means of providing basic quality education to the large educationally unreached children should be sought and used.

Based on the above description, alternative basic education is the component of non-formal education in the state that is designed to provide education opportunity for out-of-school children aged (7-14) and could not attend the formal primary education (Oromia Education Bureau, 2005). To realize this program, many NGOs in collaboration with Oromia Regional Government have made much effort to expand this program in underserved areas of region; however, still further expansion of the program requires equal understanding and strong multidimensional collaboration among all stakeholders and the government (Oromia Education Bureau, 2005). Along with alternative basic education expansion too much attention is required to its quality in implementation process. Because an essential means by which any nation can achieve optimum development is through the provision of quality education from the primary to the tertiary level (Yalokwu, 2002). To ensure this, the preparation of curriculum is based on the stated objectives of education, ensuring that the relevant standard and the expected profile of students (TGE, 1994). Notwithstanding the provision of clear policy and strategy regarding the preparation and implementation of curriculum in schools at all levels, it is still difficult to implement it at school level in maintaining quality education.

1.2. Background Information of Oromia Region

As OEB (2005) the background information of Oromia National Regional State was discussed below briefly.

Location:- Oromia is one of the nine National Regional States in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Oromia region borders Afar and Amhara regions in the North, Somali region in the East, the Republic of Sudan and Benishangul Gumuz regions in the West, the State of Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples', Gambella regions and Kenya in the South.

Area:- Based on the 1994 population and housing census, the estimated area of Oromia region is about 353,690km², and accounts for almost 32% of the country's area coverage.

Topography and Climate:- Oromia is a region of great topographic diversity. Its landscape includes high and rugged mountain ranges, undulating plateaus, panoramic gorges and deep incised river valleys, and rolling plains, rising from less than 500 meters above sea level to high ranges that culminate into Mt. Batu (4607m), the highest peak of the region. Oromia is also endowed with varied relief features, which inturn accentuate varied and amiable climatic condition and other rich natural resource bases.

The Great Rift Vally divides the region into two parts. Awash, Wabe-Shebele, Genale, Gibe, Baro, Dedessa and Gudar are the major rivers in the region. River Awash, which is the longest river in Ethiopia, is a source of great agro-industrial and hydroelectric power.

The Crater lakes Green lake, Bishoftu, Kuriftu, Bishoftu-Gudo, Hora-Kilole, Hora Arsedi, and the rift valley lakes Ziway, Abiyata, Shala, and Langanu are found in Oromia region. They have immense potential for recreation and fishery development.

Large number and diverse species of wild animals make the region very much attractive and suitable for tourism industry. The climatic condition of the region consists of 0.2% of cold high land, 14.5% of high land, 42.3% mid-land, 42.7% of low land, and 0.3% dry low land.

Population:- According to the projection of CSA of 2002, in the year 2003 the population of the region was estimated at 23,704,000 (11,830,000 males and 11,874,000 females) which accounts for 35% of the country's total population. In the year 2006, the CSA projects that the total population of the region will be 25,817,126 (12,882,820 males and 12,934,306 females). Out of the total population 12.3% is living in the urban areas, whereas 87.7% is living in the rural areas. In addition, school age children accounts for 12.2% of the total population, which shows the presence of a large number of children demanding educational service.

Major Economic Activities:- Over 87.7% of the people of Oromia live in the rural areas, and agriculture has remained the source of livelihood for the overwhelming majority of the people.

Language and Culture:- The Oromo people have the language and culture of their own. The people have a long history and tradition of solving social problems through discussions and common understanding. In the past, the Oromo people were known for transmitting these good social values and cultural heritages from generation to generation through oral literature. However, recently the social values and heritages are recorded in written form and serving for different purposes. The language of people, Afan Oromo serves as the medium of instruction and official working language in the region.

In line with the above stated background of the study, in the following section the statement of problem is treated thoroughly in order to give direction to the research process.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

In Ethiopia, specifically in Oromia, a new curriculum of alternative basic education is on the process of implementation. Thus, the contents, mechanisms and procedures of its implementation could influence the quality of education. In accordance with the plan and attempt made to expand educational access in Oromia, the gross enrolment ratio of primary education (1-8) increased to 87.8% (Oromia Education Bureau, 2006). But, maintaining quality in the process of implementation still requires intensive research study. Derebssa (2002), states that the issue of quality in curriculum implementation is linked to how efficiently learning takes place. Quality also based on the pedagogical skills of teachers, availability of textbooks and other learning materials.

Based on the above idea, it seems that alternative basic education curriculum implementation lacks proper attention and appropriate organization. The

curriculum of ABE is not well coordinated with the formal school system, and this resulting in inefficient utilization of facilities and other inputs in ABE centers. Moreover, the issues of co-ordination, facilities and teachers in alternative basic education centers have not been critically studied. Thus, the purpose of this study is then to identify the practices and constraints in implementing alternative basic education curriculum in some selected centers in Oromia.

Based on the above descriptions, the research problem to be investigated by this study specifically can be stated as follows:

First, to ensure the implementation of alternative basic education curriculum, adequate training for facilitators and other stakeholders is essential. Facilitators and other stakeholders need more training to get enough skills and knowledge of alternative basic education curriculum prior to implementation. But, it seems difficult to be certain that the concerned body provide adequate training for facilitators and other stakeholders that equips them with necessary skills and knowledge on how to implement the curriculum.

Second, improving textbooks and other curricular materials provision for the learners was one of the activities that have given top priority regarding quality improvement in Education Sector Development Program – II Plan to ensure effective implementation (OEB, 2005). The provision of curricular materials is another key input in the implementation of curriculum. Thus, many curricular materials are prepared and distributed to alternative basic education centers in different woredas of Oromia (OEB, 2005). However, there is a condition of uncertainty regarding the availability of curricular materials for the ABE learners due to poor system of textbooks and other learning materials distribution.

Third, coordinators, supervisors, education bureau officials (including all levels of offices), community management committee, program coordinators and

officers are playing major roles in the process of implementation. The reason is that, curriculum implementation requires involvement of stakeholders in order to play their roles in implementation (Derebessa, 2004). But, there is a doubt whether adequate involvement is being made by all stakeholders in implementation of alternative basic education curriculum.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to assess the situation of curriculum implementation of alternative basic education in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia in terms of practices and constraints, and analyze its implication on the quality of education by taking the experiences of the supporting NGOs.

The Specific Objectives of this Study are:

1. To assess the preparation and provision of curricular materials for alternative basic education centers;
2. To identify facilitators' knowledge and skill in order to implement the ABE curriculum;
3. To assess the adequacy of trainings and supports provided to implementers in order to implement the curriculum effectively; and
4. To assess the strengths and weaknesses that observed during the implementation of ABE in the zones.

1.5. Basic Research Questions

The central focus of this study was on the implementation of alternative basic education curriculum in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia, and more specifically, through this study an attempt was made to answer the following basic research questions.

1. How is the preparation and provision of curriculum materials for the ABE centers?
2. Are alternative basic education center facilitators knowledgeable and skillful to implement the curriculum? And how?
3. Have all implementers got adequate trainings and supports to implement the curriculum effectively? If so, what kind?
4. What are the major strengths and weaknesses that observed during the implementation of alternative basic education in the zones?

1.6. Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study may contribute for the improvement of the implementation of alternative basic education curriculum with respect to facilitators' training, quality of curricular materials and their provisions. So, the researcher believes that this study will have the following significance:

1. The findings provide valuable information to policy makers and curriculum planners;
2. It can help primary school teachers and facilitators to reflect up on factors that affect quality in educating children;
3. It will help Oromia Education Bureau experts and alternative basic education experts of Woreda Education Offices to give more attention to quality;
4. It will help supporting NGOs' to reflect on how to improve their cooperation with the required education experts for the provision of ABE; and
5. The study could serve as resource material and encourages other researcher to undertake further study in the implementation of curriculum for alternative basic education.

1.7. Scope of the Study

The research problem has to be delimited in scope as well as in depth. This means, it must be delimited to manageable size. Hence, the researcher has delimited the study to:

1. The implementation of alternative basic education curriculum in line with teachers training, quality of curricular materials and their provisions in level two centers.
2. This study is delimited to ABE programs provided by NGOs for out-of-school children (age 7-14) in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia.
3. There are 42 alternative basic education centers in 42 Kebeles that are operating by Save the Children Denmark and 16 alternative basic education centers in 16 Kebeles that are operating by Save the Children USA in South West Shoa Zone. But, this sample is delimited to only 8 centers out of the total of 58 centers of alternative basic education programs operating in the two Zones of Oromia Regional State.

1.8. Limitations of the Study

Even though this research is carefully designed and planned, there are certain constraints that restrict the researcher. Limitations are those conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations. The following points are some of the major limitations of the study:

1. Geographical locations and distributions of sampled alternative basic education centers were not conducive for data collection.
2. Although the researcher managed to carryout the study, the insufficient amount of fund provided and the long process taken by the School of Graduate Studies of AAU to reach on the financial decision of the

proposal, and lack of interest to participate in focus group discussion by some community management committee members were some of the major problems faced.

1.9. Operational Definition of Terms

- 1. Alternative Basic Education for Children:-** is the component of non-formal education program that serves as an alternative approach to complement the formal education program in the effort to increase access to basic primary educational opportunity to those out-of school children in the age range of 7-14 (Oromia Education Bureau, 2005:49).
- 2. Basic Education:-** refers to the very minimum of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable individual to operate with a reasonable expectation of success in their community (Haggis, 1995:2).
- 3. Curriculum Implementation:-** is a process of putting change into practice. It focuses on the extent to which actual change in practice occurs and those factors that influence the extent of change or new program (Derebessa, 2004: 220).
- 4. Curriculum:-** is what students should know, be able to do and be committed to (content), how it is taught (instruction), how it is measured (assessment), and how the educational system is organized (context). It is a practical reference source for teachers containing the range of strategies that can be utilized to achieve course outcomes (Derebssa, 2004:220).
- 5. Facilitators:** - Trained or non-trained teaching staff for the non-formal basic education (OEB and JICA, 2005: 152).
- 6. Gross Enrolment Rate:** - is the proportion of total number of pupils (irrespective of age) in a particular level expressed as percentage of the corresponding school age population (MOE, 2005: 226).
- 7. Out-of-School Children:** - Children in the official school age group who are not enrolled in school (Mputu, 2001: 85).

- 8. Partnership:** - A formal relation between individuals or groups in which experiences and commitments are agreed beforehand and which has a shared profit, risk element and a relation built upon fulfilling an obligation or completing a task (Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum in MOE, 2002: 16).
- 9. Stakeholders:** - refers to those who have a vested interest in education, its process and outcomes (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1992:5).

1.10. Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introductory section. Under this section, the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, basic research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study, and operational definitions of terms are treated. The second chapter deals with the review of related literature, which provides detailed information related to curriculum implementation of alternative basic education. The third chapter comes with research methodology, such as, research method, population and sampling techniques of the study, instruments for data collection, procedures of the study and methods of data analysis. The fourth chapter deals with the data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Finally, the last chapter presents summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In the review of related literature, analyzing and systematizing of relevant information as well as research findings of others was basically carried out. However, the major purpose of this review of the related literature was to gain adequate knowledge and insights into various aspects of ABE programs. It also helped the researcher in defining the research problem, and developing appropriate instruments and methods of data collection.

2.1. Modes of Educational Delivery

Education is defined from a functional point of view as a continuous process of learning needs (Coombs and Ahmed 1974) in which three modes of education can be distinguished as: (1) Formal; (2) Informal; and (3) Non-formal education. Each of the three modes can be treated below briefly.

2.1.1. Formal Education

Formal education is defined as the institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured education system running from lower primary to the upper reaches of the university, generally full-time and sanctioned by the state (Coombs and Ahmed 1974).

According to Bock and Papagiannis (1983) there are four major characteristics of formal education which include: (1) the way students are 'recruited' - students enter schools in age-grade cohorts; (2) the way staffs are recruited - staff enter contractually as trained professionals; (3) the school's bureaucratic structure; and (4) the responsibility that the school officers have toward their clientele and to the public constituency.

2.1.2. Informal Education

Informal education is defined as "the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposures to the environment" (Carron and Carr-Hill 1991).

2.1.3. Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education is defined as education comprising all educational activities organized outside the formal system and designed mostly to serve identifiable clientele and educational objectives (Carron and Carr-Hill, 1991).

It is thus understood that the purposes of learning, the curriculum, the instructors, the learners, the place and time of learning are completely different in non-formal education. Simkins (1977) states the diversity and complexity of non-formal education as non-formal education activities are untidy mélange that oppose simple description, or the diagnostic and measurement of systematic planning in contrast to the relative neatness and coherence of the formal education system.

It may seem difficult to categorize and apply the usual measuring devices when one looks at the multitude nature of non-formal education with respect to different target groups, program types and other characteristics (Mammo, 1999). However, non-formal education uses diverse curricula, reaches wide and diverse target groups, utilizes instructors drawn from different sources and is flexible in its use of time and place; the end result remains the same as the formal provision of education and training. Ahmed (1975) confirms that non-formal education as an economic activity is a process of using resources to produce something of value, and is not fundamentally different from formal education. That means, both formal and non-formal education consume resources, such as: the time and skill of instructors and learners, physical space and structures, including equipment and books. In addition, the yields

they produce are also more or less similar since both modes of education increase skills, knowledge, and understanding of successful learners (Ahmed, 1975).

In supporting the above idea, Coombs (1985) says both formal and non-formal modes of education have been evolved, organized and improved upon the informal learning. Both are designed to promote and facilitate certain valuable learning skills that individuals can not readily or quickly acquire through the informal learning process. The difference between formal and non-formal education exists in their institutional arrangements, sponsorship, procedures, and mainly in their objectives, subject matter, and target groups (Coombs and Ahmed, 1973; Coombs and Ahmed, 1974; Coombs, 1985). In addition, the simple ideal type model developed by Simons (1977) cited in Jones (1984) distinguishes formal and non-formal education in their purpose, timing, content, delivery system and control.

In similar manner, Ahmed (1975) and Cummings (1986) argue that the difference between formal, informal and non-formal education is made only for analytical purposes to investigate and analyze organized educational activities that fall outside the conventional jurisdiction of schools. All educators revealed that it should not be taken as an endorsement of the separation of these modes of education. However, the major concern should be on how to the intended objectives of a program can be achieved most efficiently through formal, non-formal means or through some hybrid means.

In summary, Coombs (1985) states that notion of viewing education as life long process accommodating the formal, informal and non-formal modes of education has many merits in conforming education to the real world. Among these wide and flexible concept of lifelong learning the following merits can be illustrated as follows:

(1) It helps not only to undertake a world wide study, but also to assess the overall educational situation and prospects of individuals; (2) It helps to accommodate the highly diverse and constantly growing and changing learning needs and interest of all members of the population from infancy to their old age; (3) It is useful to timely respond to growing and changing learning needs and human resource requirements of a whole society; (4) As these wide range and diverse educational mode and forms of educational activities are present in every corner of the world, all nations can make use of them in the pursuit of addressing the educational needs of their country without much trouble (Coombs, 1985: 27).

As clearly stated by Coombs and Ahmed, 1973; Coombs and Ahmed, 1974; Coombs, 1985; Bishop, 1986; Bishop, 1989 none of the three modes of educational delivery alone can meet all the important life long time learning needs of an individual, much less of a whole society. Hence, it should be neither of them has a monopole of merits or flaws on the other. They should not be seen as competing systems, but as complementary branches supporting and reinforcing each other.

2.2. Purpose of Non-Formal Education

The purpose of non-formal education is supporting the formal school in achieving education for all goals. UNICEF (1993) states that non-formal basic education programs are aimed at out-of-school children or youth covering both the non-enrolled and dropouts, commonly in rural areas. It has checked its potential to serve gender or regional disparities addressing very specific groups (girls, working children, street children, orphans, refugees and nomads, etc). In most cases, non-formal basic education draw experiences from adult education programs and attempting to establish links with conventional systems and other community development programs.

In line with the above idea, different scholars such as Coombs and Ahemd (1974), Bishop (1989), Ranaweera and Sutton (1990) have given several reasons

for considering non-formal education in many countries. These educators confirm that non-formal education has four major reasons that countries have to consider that basically deals with its purposes. The following ideas are dealt with purposes of NFE in general.

1. Non-formal education designed to reach those not reached by the formal system. That means to reach large number of people where they live and work. Its objective is to impart knowledge, skills and recreation without removing people from their normal environment and responsibilities;
2. Provide access in education as human right issues;
3. Contributes much for human capital formation and economic growth. This means, it is designed to play its own role through increased employment, productivity and social participation; and
4. To meet, as an alternative means, the growing demand for education, because the objective of non-formal education is to make learning a national life-long learning experiences compatible with the interest of the individuals and communities, for all economic levels of the society.

OEB and JICA (2005) specifically stated alternative basic education as one part of NFE which has four broad objectives. These are:-

- Creating improved access to quality education for out-of-school disadvantaged children (aged 7-14) by establishing an innovative cost-effective and community based basic education;
- Enhancing and promote the participation of girls children in basic education and there by reducing gender disparity in the education system;
- Promoting direct involvement and participation of local communities in decision making processes related to the planning, implementation and management of alternative basic education program at village level; and

- Reinforcing and strengthening the existing formal primary school by establishing a feeder system of village-based alternative basic education centers.

2.3. Alternative Basic Education

As mentioned in previous section, basic education is a right to be enjoyed by all citizens. In Ethiopia, the universal primary education policy requires that all children from 7-14 years old receive basic education.

A basic education curriculum includes literacy, numeracy and basic life skills (civic education, environmental protection and sanitation, family planning, health and nutrition among others). Alternative basic education is a basic education for children who have no access to formal education. It is also known as non-formal basic education for children and is widely considered to be the alternative to formal basic education for children, for first cycle primary education for grades 1 to 4 (OEB and JICA, 2005).

In accordance with above description, alternative basic education refers to a system of learning which is characterized by flexibility, capacity to recognize and creatively utilize diversity, and transparency in terms of the degree of openness – open access, open learning, and limitless opportunity to release the creative potential of the learners. Alternative approaches are applicable to both formal and non-formal learning situations and in time could be the means to harmonize the two in an integrated system of education which brings both formal and non-formal education together with parity of esteem, and with due regard to diversity in life long learning framework (Thompson, 2001).

In addition, alternative basic education is the component of non-formal education program in the effort to increase access to basic educational opportunity to those out-of-school children (age of 7-14). It helps the children to attend first cycle primary education (Grade 1 to 4) in three levels and join 5th

grade in the formal school education (OEB, 2005). This program serves as an alternative approach to complement the formal education program and it increases enrolment at primary level and plays a great role in providing educational opportunity to all school age children (OEB, 2005).

Similarly, the directive for Non-Formal Basic Education by the Oromia Education Bureau, defines non-formal basic education for children as "a curriculum prepared to strengthen human creativity by equipping the learner with general awareness and preparing them for further education" (OEB, 2005). The Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia that was issued in 1994 specifies that formal education offered from first up to fourth grade is basic education. In the same manner, education offered from fifth to eighth grade is considered to be general education (TGE, 1994).

Regarding the curriculum, the non-formal basic education curriculum that Oromia Education Bureau has prepared covers the Minimum Learning Competency requirement of the formal basic education in three years, while the formal primary school completes theirs in four years (OEB, 2005).

Table 1: The Difference between First Cycle Primary Education and Alternative Basic Education Curriculum

	Formal First Cycle Primary Education	Alternative Basic Education
Curriculum	Primary education curriculum	Non-formal basic education curriculum for children, adopted by OEB
Duration	4 years	3 years
Subjects taught	- Afan Oromo - English - Mathematics - Science - Aesthetics	- Afan Oromo - English - Mathematics - Environmental Science
Teaching staff	- Certified teachers (TTI graduates) - Uncertified teaching staff, only when supervised by certified teachers	- Uncertified teaching staff, trained and non-trained
Venue	Primary schools, required the government standard facilities and equipments	- Primary schools, community skill training centers (CSTCs), common meeting places, such as Kebele office, Co-orporative offices, and Tree shades
Grades	Grade 4	Level 3
	Grade 3	Level 2
	Grade 2	-
	Grade 1	Level 1

Source: OEB and JICA (2005)

2.4. Characteristics of Alternative Basic Education

When compared to the formal school program alternative basic education has some distinguishing characteristics. Mammo (1999), OEB (2005), OEB and JICA (2005) have stated the characteristics of alternative basic education. However, the most common characteristics of alternative basic education are illustrated by the following features:

1. Community participation in curriculum implementation and center management;

2. Facilitators' selection, training and supports provided to them;
3. Orientation of Instruction regarding curriculum and medium of instruction;
4. Supervision and supports to centers;
5. Center program arrangement and organization;
6. Partnership and collaboration in implementation; and
7. Cost-effectiveness of the program.

In the following successive paragraphs all the above mentioned characteristics are presented briefly.

2.4.1. Community Participation in Curriculum Implementation

OEB and JICA (2005) states that the community is the main actor of the alternative basic education program implementation. Evidence shows that the effective alternative schools are those that are governed by Community Management Committee (CMC) or Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

In supporting the above idea, evidences are drawn from different countries by Rugh and Bossert (1998); and UNICEF (1993) in promoting innovative or alternative models suggest that the success of alternative primary education mainly depends on strong grass-roots participation at all phases of the program, from design to implementation and evaluation of results-community participation in need assessment, planning, organizing, monitoring and evaluation as well as decision making is crucial, not only in terms of ownership but also for its continuity and sustainability. Thus, creating and coding authority to local people with a productive link to technical experts with clearly identified strategies becomes necessary in such endeavors.

Furthermore, the Guideline for Organization of Educational Management, Community Participation and Educational Finance of Ethiopia by MOE (2002) states the roles of community participation in the implementation of curriculum as follows:

(1) the community has the right to involve in the expansion of education, improvement of quality of education and to administer the schools in a sense of ownership; (2) the community has right to evaluate the efficiency of teachers on their work. They also evaluate how students participate in teaching learning – process; (3) the community should work together to overcome the overcrowded classrooms; (4) the community takes part in designing the curriculum and preparation of curriculum materials; (5) members of the community have the right to share their experiences to schools for the improvement of school programs; and (6) the community plays a role in the contribution of money, labor and ideas etc. for the betterment of schools (MOE, 2002: 47-51)

From the above descriptions, every one can conclude that community participation in school management has many advantages. Shaeffer (1994) explains some of the advantages of community participation in curriculum implementation. These include: (1) collaboration will facilitate the gathering of more resources for education, not only from parents and local communities but also from external donors and governments; (2) collaboration enhances the involvement and greater support of more actors in education (parent, community organization, private enterprise and NGOs); (3) it will result in an improvement in the quality and relevance of education which means more useful for educational content and school based innovations; (4) It will help to develop greater school efficiency and high students achievement which will have higher enrolment and attendance rates, greater pupil creativity and pride and better academic results; and (5) it will lead to an increase in the supply of education, leading itself to more districts being covered, more teachers trained, more materials produced and 'clients' served.

2.4.2. Facilitators Selection, Training and Supports Provided to Them

Educators point out that teachers training is one of the preconditions for effective implementation of curriculum. For instance, Rubin (1976) and Howey (1978) called for adjustment and expansion of both pre-service and in-service training programs for teachers. This is very important due to the fact that new approaches, contents and teaching methods adapted for the various subjects in the school curriculum.

In similar way, many writers such as Cohen and Hill, 1997; Wiley and Yoon, 1995, explain that professional development of teachers grounded in contrast to specific pedagogy linked to the new curriculum they are learning to teach. Besides, both the kind and extent of professional development mattered for teaching practice and for student's development. As writers indicate, pre-service teacher training includes education in subject matter, exposure to the curriculum, its objectives, methods, evaluation and strategies appropriate for that curriculum as well as classroom management techniques and opportunities for student teaching.

In addition, Shulman (1987) confirms that pedagogical – content knowledge is the key to the possibility of achieving meaningful learning in students since it identifies the distinctive bodies of knowledge for teaching. Besides, it represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are regionalized, represented and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction.

As OEB (2005) teachers are recruited from within the community and are trained locally for 15 working days accompanied by 5 working days every quarters of the year while they are on – job. Facilitator training is more or less structured as initial training and refresher training. The major focus of the

initial training is to equip facilitators with the basis of facilitation skills necessary for each subject, such as Afan Oromo, English, mathematics and Environmental Science Education. Especially, for first year, introduce them with the goals, objective and principles of alternative basic education. However, more attention is given to the refresher (continuing training) whose main focus is helping the facilitators to deal with the problems and difficulties they encounter from day to day after they start their job and to help them increasingly grow with the necessary facilitation skills to effectively cope up with the increasing complexity, depth and breadth of each subject as they proceed to year 2 and year 3.

In addition, OEB (2002) confirms that facilitators are required to pass through a minimum 15 days training on such topics as behaviors of different groups of learners (children and adults), preparation and utilization of teaching aids, teaching methodologies, lesson planning and its implementation, organization and management of different data, techniques of arousing public interest to participate in education. Experts from respective educational bureaus/offices at woreda level usually facilitate the training.

An active role by facilitators in alternative basic education is essential for the successful realization of the objective of the program. Teachers are para-professions including part-time and volunteers selected from within and by the respective community. The required level of qualification to be considered for non-formal education varies, with the minimum qualification being 8 years of education (OEB, 2002 and action aid-Ethiopia, 2004). All the necessary care for the recruitment process is essential for the selection of competent facilitators. Priority should be given to the applicants from the community where the ABE center is situated. If it is not possible due to lack of an educated person, the second option need to be from neighboring village/kebele, followed by a person from the entire district as the final option. Other essential qualities that are required of the candidates for facilitators are knowledge of and respect for the

culture and the norms of the community, being free from harmful practices, interest to serve the community, ability to shoulder responsibility, ability to communicate with clarity and effectiveness, love and respect to children and the teaching profession, and priority to female facilitators (as long as they fulfill minimum requirement (OEB, 2002).

2.4.3. Orientation of Instruction Regarding Curriculum and Medium of Instruction

Oromia Education Bureau uses condensed and integrated curriculum. To this effect, alternative basic program has a three year cycle curriculum. As directive for non-formal basic education of Oromia Education Bureau (2005), the curriculum is largely drawn from the national government formal school curriculum but further adapted and modified by Oromia Education Bureau to suit the objectives, approaches and principles of ABE program and to make it relevant to local contexts. The curriculum package comprises a variety of documents including flow chart, year-based subject syllabus, facilitators guide or manuals, textbooks for children and other supplementary books.

The ABE curriculum in Oromia focuses on four core subjects such as, Afan Oromo, English language, Mathematics and Environmental science education. Regarding methods of teaching, the ABE curriculum mainly emphasizes learner-centered, activity-based and problem solving approach with opposed to teacher-centered. The emphasis is here on learning than on teaching, and the child is supposed to be at the center of the process and should learn through an enquiry and discovering things for themselves. This evidently needs that facilitators require to be trained on how to take children through learning process than they themselves become the main actor and make children passive listeners (OEB, 2005).

On the other hand, another important consideration is the medium of instruction. TGE (1994) states "cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the

child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages." In supporting this view, Derebssa (2002) confirms that primary schooling should instill in children a strong sense of national identity. During their primary schooling, they should also acquire a good understanding of their regional and national language, which is very important in a country where there is a considerable cultural heterogeneity. In addition, primary schooling should acquaint individuals with the basic social and cultural rules of society. Students should develop habits appropriate to at least some of their society's customs and norms.

2.4.4. Supervision and Supports to Centers

As Derebssa (2002) support and supervision that include any academic advisory session is being held at schools with teachers. The woreda supervisory units should provide academic assistance to facilitators regarding implementation of alternative basic education. TGE (1994) states educational managements are decentralized to create the necessary condition to expand and improve the relevance, quality, accessibility and equity of education and training. So, effective alternative modes have benefited from supervision and support that are provided through regular visits.

The education office at the woreda level plays a key role in overall planning, implementing and monitoring activities of the ABE program. Due to the recent decentralization system, woreda education offices are expected to direct the overall yearly activities of planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating the ABE program. Regular supervision includes involvement in the recruitment process of facilitators, ensuring the availability of relevant and adequate educational materials, building the management capacity of ABE center management committee members, facilitating the link between formal and non-formal schools and creating a legal environment for the smooth operation of

teaching learning process are among the major expected duties and responsibilities of the woreda education office (OEB, 2002).

2.4.5. Center Program Arrangement and Organization

The ultimate goal of the alternative approach to basic education is to create access to education for the out-of-school children and adults due to many reasons. The inability of the formal school system to address the growing basic education need for which all citizens are entitled has led the government and the international community to seek alternative approaches. The success of the non-formal approach to basic education is, hence, determined by the flexibility of timing and the short duration of classes, leaving adequate time for the students to attend to domestic chores (Thompson, 2001).

As stated in the directive of alternative basic education of Oromia (2002), the three levels of the program are required to be completed in three years. One level is covered within 12 months and 254 working days. 230 days can be used for non-formal basic education for children. All four subjects are taught for 40 minutes, 5 days a week (OEB, 2002)

2.4.6. Partnership and Collaboration in Implementation

OEB (2005) states that maximum efforts have been made to make all school – age children complete their primary education by the year 2015 through expanding primary education opportunity by opening alternative basic education centers, implementing multi-grade classes in the government owned regular schools, expanding NGOs and community owned primary schools especially in the pastoral areas where there is no infrastructure and facility. Many NGOs in collaboration with the Oromia Regional Government have made much effort to expand ABE program in underserved areas of the region. Particularly, the contribution of NGOs to expand ABE program was remarkable. However, further expansion and implementation of the program requires equal

understanding and strong multi-dimensional collaboration among all partnerships and government (OEB, 2005).

2.4.7. Cost-Effectiveness of the Program

Alternative basic education was given to the disadvantaged and underserved groups of people such as those living in isolated places and inaccessible, nomadic, poor and undeveloped areas. Thus, alternative basic education is offered with promise of feasible and low-cost methodologies for reaching that growing group of people who are now being served by formal education and who had little prospect of being served in the near future (Evans, 1981).

Mammo (1999) cited Bishop (1986) indicates that the huge task of providing basic education through the formal school system alone as, "to provide primary education for all would mean building about 1000 new classrooms every day and training about a third of a million teachers every year from now until the end of the century" (Mammo, 1999).

As any one can understand from the Mammo's idea, the implications of these figures are very large even without going into the calculation of the finance. Hence, providing primary education for all through ABE is the best modes of delivery since ABE uses cost-effective local resources, that is, for construction of centers, to training teachers and to prepare educational materials pertinent to the environment (OEB and JICA, 2005).

2.5. Review of Some Selected Experiences of Non-Formal Basic Education

2.5.1. Escuela Nueva: An Alternative Learning Program for Rural Children in Colombia

According to MOE (2000) 'Escuela Nueva' means "New School" is an educational innovation initially developed and put into practice in Colombia in 1975 and later transferred to Guatemala and elsewhere in Latin America. The Escuela Nueva (the New School) program of Colombia has become one of the standard references of innovative primary education program throughout the world in counterbalancing the growing tide and criticism and skepticism about the formal school system (UNICEF, 1993).

As stated by Rojas and Castillo (1989), Schiefelbein (1991), Psacharopoulos et al. (1992), Levin and Lockheed (1993), Escuela Nueva is a proof that flexible, non-conventional education can get rural children into school and keep them there. In addition, Escuela Nueva has been identified as an integrated and comprehensive system of curriculum development, teachers training, administration and community mobilization.

The primary purpose of the Escuela Nueva is to seek feasible solutions to the problems of rural primary education in Colombia which was characterized by low access, poor quality and irrelevant curriculum (Rojas and Castillo, 1989; Psacharopoulos et al., 1992).

Escuela Nueva has gone from local experiment to national policy, by introducing innovations within the formal school network to serve rural children and expanding to other Latin American countries in two decades of its existence (Rojas and Castillo, 1989; Schiefelbein, 1991; Psacharopoulos et al., 1992; Levin and Lockheed, 1993). The attempt to depart from the conventional teaching-learning practice (top-down management, authoritarian leadership, rote and passive learning and the attainment of higher levels of achievement

than in the traditional schools have been crucial and constant elements that credits Escuela Nueva in its development.

Furthermore, one of the major factors that make the new school program special is the ability to create a supportive environment that enables pupils in small rural schools that have been established in areas of low population density to complete all the four grades of primary education (Shaeffer, 1994 cited in MOE, 2000).

As MOE (2000) states, to achieve the above stated purpose of the new school program the following main task are accomplished. These include:

- Revised the curriculum in such a way that it encourages critical and creative thinking on the parts of pupils;
- Develop self-instructional materials and study guides based on the revised curriculum;
- Adopted a student-centered teaching methodology;
- Established a horizontal and collaborative relationship among students, between students and teachers, among teachers, between school parents and other community members;
- Created an innovative system of school of government that enables pupils to develop democratic values and a sense of responsibility as they actively participate in school management;
- Established a flexible time of learning and a promotion mechanism in which pupils:
 - Are allowed to have the school temporarily in order to assist their parents in agricultural activities or for any other good reasons and return to school and resume their studies from where they stopped.

- Learn at theirs' own pace and so they are promoted when ever their successful completion of a grade is verified by their teachers.

The success factors for Escuela Nueva is the results of a number of innovations including multi-grade teaching, detailed teachers' guides and lesson plans, continuing teacher training and supervision and involvement of the community. Besides, through its innovative approach, Escuela Nueva has turned the traditional disadvantages of rural areas into advantage and has proved to be a model system for improving the lives of rural children (Rojas and Castillo, 1989; Schiefelbein, 1991; Psacharopoulos et al., 1992; Levin and Lockheed, 1993).

In supporting this idea, Wanna (1999) stated the major factors that contributed to the success of the New School programs are:

- Relevance of the curriculum;
- Flexibility of the programs;
- Participation of stakeholders in school management;
- Low cost of instructional materials;
- Good quality of teachers; and
- Close monitoring and evaluation.

Regarding lessons learned from the New School Program, Schiefelbein (1991) indicated the following:-

- Escuela Nueva was found to be both economically and educationally feasible to raise quality in public schools working in deprived areas.
- The strategy and activities required for succeeding in a future similar experience must be carefully planned and experimented.

2.5.2. Basic Education in Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA) of Uganda

As Thompson (2001) indicates the primary aim of Basic Education in Urban Poverty Areas of Uganda is to impose 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 instruction and integrated approach to learning;
- Similarity between the primary school curriculum and 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 dropout 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; and
- Learning takes place three hours a day leaving the rest of the day for the learners to engage in other survival activities.

Thompson (2001) revealed that, the main factors that contributed to the success of Basic Education in Urban Poverty Area (BEUPA) of Uganda are:

- Facilitation of learning through child-centered and flexible approaches;

- Focus of the curriculum on life after school. Transition from school to work is organized through guidance;
- Collection of relevant data for planning. Non-formal education has been included in the Education Management Information System (EMIS). This ensures that planning is informed by relevant and accurate data; and
- Involvement of the community in the implementation of BEUPA with regard to:
 1. Community mobilization;
 2. Identification and registration of children for the learning centers;
 3. Pre-selection of instructors from the community;
 4. Monitoring of the processes of learning;
 5. Provision of Community Owned Resource Persons (CORPs); and
 6. Facilitation of pre-vocational skills by members of the community.

Experience of Basic Education in Urban Poverty Areas of Uganda shows us:

- Learner- friendly pedagogical processes and learning environments contribute a great deal to facilitating learning acquisition;
- 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;
- The integrated nature of the curriculum enhances the holistic development of the learner in terms of intellectual, physical, emotional and social development; and
- Provision of 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 (Thompson, 2001).

2.6. Alternative Basic Education in Ethiopia

To realize the goal of universal primary education by the year 2015, ESDP III of Ethiopia envisaged provision of basic education through alternative modes of delivery. To this effect, several alternative basic education centers have been established in the regions (MOE, 2006).

The gross enrolment rate in the alternative basic education program for first cycle primary education is 10% (females 9.7% and males 10.3%), and for primary (1-8) is 5.5 (females 5.4% and males 5.6%). If we include this in the 2005/2006 enrolment, the gross enrolment rate for first cycle primary education (107.6) will increase to 117% (MOE, 2006).

In fact, this data for alternative basic education is incomplete, because, Somali, Afar, Gambella, Harari regions and Dire Dawa city administration did not report about alternative basic education to Ministry of Education. This data actually collected from the regions Tigray, Addis Ababa, Benishangul Gumuz, SNNPR, Oromia and Amhara (MOE, 2006). If the four regions and one city administration reported about alternative basic education, the GER for alternative basic education which is 10% for primary first cycle will be much higher than that (MOE, 2006). However, the rise of gross enrolment rate of primary education (1-8) to 91.3% clearly indicates that resulted from a great contribution of non formal education (MOE, 2006).

On the other hand, looking into details of the performance of Oromia Region in alternative basic education, virtually all zones have been promoting ABE either by government or with the support from NGOs (Oromia Education Statistics Annual abstract, (2003/04). In this connection, the enrolment, which was 3.5% in 2001/02 increased to 6.8% in 2004/05. Many NGOs in collaboration with regional government have made much effort to expand this program in underserved areas of the region. Particularly, the contribution of NGOs to expand this program was remarkable. The objective of the Regional Minimum

Service Delivery Standard (RMSDS) for basic education regarding infrastructure development is establishing at least one ABE center along with one primary school in each kebele. To this end, over 450 ABE centers were constructed in 30 UNICEF assisted woredas in the region (OEB, 2005).

2.7. Curriculum Implementation

2.7.1. The Nature of Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum Implementation can not achieve its aims unless it is implemented or taught in the way it is intended to be implemented. It is a critical phase in the cycle of planning and teaching a curriculum. Thus, careful planning and development are evidently important, but they count for nothing unless teachers are aware of the product and have the skills to implement the curriculum in their classroom. Hence, curriculum implementation is a process of putting the developed or planned curriculum into effect. The process is also developmental and occurs at different levels. Hence, it focuses on the extent to which actual change in practice occurs and on those factors which influence the extent of change. Changes can be in the form of externally developed innovations or one, which locally or indigenously developed (Derebssa, 2004).

In addition to the above idea, implementation has become a major educational concern because many of the curriculum projects involving huge costs failed on various counts. However, effective implementation of innovations requires time, personal interaction and contracts in-service training and other forms of people based support. There is no substitute for the primacy of personal contact among implementers, between implementers and planner or consultant if the difficult process of unlearning old ones and learning new ones to occur. Therefore, for implementation of a program or process to occur, changes must be made in the behaviors of affected parties. Teachers must be clear about the purpose, the nature and benefits of the innovation. Implementation attempts to influence behavioral change in a direction or directions deemed necessary. It

occurs in stages and takes time to win people over to an innovation (Derebssa, 2002).

2.7.2. Dimensions to be considered in implementing the Curriculum

According to Derebssa (2004) implementation is an interaction process between those who have created the program and those who are to deliver it. The implementation process to be successful it needs to consider the following dimensions. These include: (1) planning; (2) communication; (3) cooperation; and (4) support.

2.7.2.1. Planning

A careful planning is a necessary precondition for implementation; which would address the needs, changes necessary and resources required for carrying out the intended actions. It involves establishing and determining how to administer a policy that will govern the planned actions. Thus, to ensure that the process of planning and implementation are effective and meaningful, the relationship between the two must be carefully considered. Effective planning must relate to a desired and identifiable change that is to be implemented. Thus, planning focuses on three major factors: people, programs and organizations. Even though these factors seem to be inseparable, educators view them differently with respect to implementation. Some feel that educators must deal primarily with the people to facilitate implementation of a change because if people change, program or organization will change. Others consider that the primary focus should be the program. People will adapt if they are furnished with different ways to meet the objectives of schools' programs. As to some other, attention should center on the organization within which people work. If departments are reorganized, if spaces are remodeled, then people will adjust in the directions necessary for successful implementation (Derebsa, 2002). It may happen that curriculum leader over-emphasizes factors but

should not ignore any one factor altogether. There have been cases where schools have failed to implement their programs because they ignored the people factor and spent time and money modifying only the program or organization. In similar manner, implementation may fail by ignoring any other factor. It is better to consider all the three factors-people, programs, and organization in an implementation process (Derebssa, 2002).

2.7.2.2. Communication

Whenever a new program is designed, communication channels must be kept open so that the program does not come as a surprise to the people. Continuous discussion about a new program among teachers, principals and curriculum workers is a key to successful implementation. Communication has been expressed as the transmission of facts, ideas, values, feelings and attitude from one individual or group to another. Simply, communication deals with message processing between the sender and the receiver of the message. The receiver can respond to the message by way of either accepting or rejecting the message. However, the modes of communication depend upon the nature of message or the piece of information to be communicated. If curriculum leaders only want to communicate facts about a new program being implemented, they can communicate such facts by means of letters, memos, articles, books, bulletins, research reports, or speeches. Sometimes they need to communicate to staff the underlying assumptions, values and points of view associated with a new curriculum. If the new program is a major change from the existing program, then the curriculum leader can profitably use such communication vehicles as workshops, meetings, role playing situations, demonstration sessions (Derebssa, 2004).

The key to communication is the individual communication that involves messages among people, not hardware. Hence, a leader needs to create a climate conducive for effective communication among all members of the educational staff and community, person to person through mass

communication media. Besides, all persons or parties concerned in the process need to know the avenues established for communication, and feel that their 'views are welcome and that all have a responsibility to participate' in sending and processing messages (Derebssa, 2004).

2.7.2.3. Cooperation

Cooperation between all people who are to be involved with program implementation must occur if a change is to be successful and to become institutionalized. The teachers' full cooperation is required in practicing the new ideas and programs that will find expression in their classrooms. In many ways, teachers are the experts and so their commitment depends heavily on how active they have been in conceptualizing and developing the new program. If teachers actively participate in curriculum development and implementation, it is likely that implementation would be effective. This may be so because people's emotion as well as rationality is inevitably the elements of change. People require involvement of their total beings – their feelings, sentiments, and values- if they are to accept, tolerate, or support change. To this effect, for effective implementation of the curriculum, adequate training prior to implementation, and support and monitoring during implementation is a standard approach. Thus, effective implementation requires time, personal interaction and training. The role of teachers is critical in the implementation process, for there would be no curriculum implementation without teachers and students. Teachers need to feel that the change under process has professional value to them and they should be motivated to implement the program. Educators need to consider teachers' needs, level of commitment and skills while determining when and how to involve teachers in implementation. Sometimes, by involvement the teachers may like to have their inputs or say in the decisions (Derebessa, 2004).

Other participants in curriculum development also need to cooperate in the process. Those who favor learner-centered designs want to involve the students

in the curriculum development and implementation processes. They wish to incorporate students' ideas about how to test and modify the program. Those who advocate reform in the schools raise the issue of involving community members in the development and implementation of programs. Sometimes, various minority groups would like to be involved in the development and implementation stages in order to ensure that their views are represented and their children are not discriminated against in the initial implementation of the new program (Derebssa, 2002).

2.7.2.4. Support

Curriculum designers need to provide the necessary support for their recommended programs or program modifications to facilitate their rapid implementation. Desirable support in terms of both money as well as materials would help building self-confidence among those affected in the change (Derebssa, 2002). In-service training program for teachers, administrators and such other personnel, acquainting them with the new program and its practice aspects can be a necessary support activity. In-service training programs must reach the intended audiences and should be accessibly scheduled for curriculum implementers. Open discussions on the new programs should be scheduled throughout the implementation process. Such discussions allow implementers to voice their objections or concerns, and consequently reduce opposition. The in-service programs must also evaluate how far they are achieving the objectives. Money is also required for materials and equipment in order to institutionalize a new program and also to have human support for the implementation effort. A trusting relationship must exist among all administrators and teachers. The School Principals or Head teachers can be a key party in the school especially the guarantor of successful innovation and implementation. Successful principal's knowledge of and commitment to the curriculum, can help him/her serve as 'curriculum leader' there by encouraging other staff in the implementation effort (Derbessa, 2004).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the research study dealt with research method.

3.1. Research Method

As already mentioned, this study is aimed at assessing the situation of curriculum implementation of alternative basic education in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia in terms of practices and constraints and to analyze its implication on the quality of education.

A descriptive survey method was employed for the study since this method enables gathering relevant information on the curriculum implementation of NGO- supported ABE centers. A descriptive survey research method also helps to reveal the current situation of curriculum implementation of ABE in the selected centers. Best and Kahn (1998) stated a descriptive survey research method focuses on investigating the issues and practices by addressing the large size of the population. In addition, the data collection instruments were designed in a way to provide the description of the current situation of ABE curriculum implementation.

3.2. Data Source

Data sources in this study were both primary and secondary. Primary data were collected from OEB experts, Zonal training experts, NGOs' program officers, ABE board members, program supervisors, facilitators and community management committee members. Secondary data were collected from National Policy documents; for example from Ministry of Education and Regional Education Bureau of Oromia guidelines and directives for alternative basic

education program; and from relevant literature pertaining to national and international perspectives.

3.3. Sampling Techniques and Sample Population

Based on the data obtained from the Oromia Education Bureau, there were more than 20 local and International NGOs supporting NFBE in Oromia Regional State (For detail information see appendix D the lists of those NGOs). However, the purposive sampling technique was employed to identify two supporting NGOs based on continuous discussions with alternative basic education experts of Oromia Education Bureau.

The reasons for using purposive sampling techniques in determining the sample size was to avoid the probable focus in certain geographic area so that the conditions in different areas were reflected and the study becomes representative.

Specifically, the rationale for selecting the two NGOs in two zones was mentioned below.

- Save the Children Denmark and USA run ABE programs with similar curriculum implementation procedures.
- Both NGOs implemented the program for two and more consecutive years and their level of program maturity was better.
- Save the Children Denmark was found in North Shoa and Save the Children USA was found in South West Shoa Zone. Thus, the two zones were accessible for data collection.

In addition, the Woredas were considered due to availability of infrastructure like road, electricity and telecommunication service. In this case Garar Jarso Woreda was ranked first, Kuyu Woreda was ranked second, and Yaya Gulale Woreda was ranked third in North Shoa Zone. Beside, Woliso Woreda was

included in the sample by using availability sampling technique since it was the only Woreda in South West Shoa Zone where SC/USA implementing ABE program.

There are 58 ABE centers in 4 Woredas that run by Save the Children Denmark and USA. From above mentioned Woredas, 8 ABE center out of the total of 58 (13.8%) were selected by using random sampling technique since the population are relatively large in each Woreda. Accordingly, the following centers were included in the sample (for detail information see appendix E and F).

Table 2: Sampled Centers

No	1	2	3	4
Woredas	Grara Jarso	Kuyu Woreda	Yaya Gulale Woreda	Woliso Woreda
Centers	- Salale ale - Elamu	- Sombo Cheka	- chemeri - sadden Biyu	- Maru Sombo - Handura Maru - Tiki Doyo

Regarding the respondents, purposeful and availability sampling techniques were employed to determine sample size of informants (for detail information see Table 3). Thus, out of the total population of 160, a representative sample of 100 (62.5%) of respondents were included in the study.

Table 3: Sample Distribution of Respondents at Different Level

No	Respondents	Implementing Organizations											
		SC/D and USA		OEB		ZEO		WEO in Two Zones		Total Population	Sampled Population	Data Collection Instruments	Sampling Techniques
		P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S				
1	Woreda Non-Formal Education Board							28	16	28	16	Questionnaires	Purposeful
2	Facilitators							39	39	39	39	Questionnaires	Availability
3	Community Management Committee (CMC)							64	24	64	24	Focus group discussion	Purposeful
4	ABE Experts					2	2	4	4	6	6	Questionnaires	Availability
5	Program Supervisors							6	4	6	4	Questionnaires	Purposeful
6	Training Coordinator					2	2	4	2	6	4	Questionnaires	Purposeful
7	Project Coordinator (in two Zone)	2	2							2	2	Questionnaires	Availability
8	Program Coordinator (SC/D and USA)	4	2							4	2	Questionnaires	Purposeful
9	Program Officer (SC/D and USA)	2	1							2	1	Interview	Purposeful
10	ABE Department Experts at Region			3	2					3	2	Interview	Purposeful
Total		8	5	3	2	4	4	145	89	160	100		

Source: Save the Children/ Denmark and USA 2006

Key p= population S= sample

3.4 Instruments for Data Collection

The main data gathering instruments for this study were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

3.4.1. Questionnaires

As the major data-collecting instrument close-ended and open-ended questionnaires were employed. Closed-ended questionnaires consists questions that offer respondents a set of answers to choose the one that reflects their views. Open-ended questionnaire consists of questions which invite respondents to write their attitudes and views. Both types of questionnaires were developed to be used in providing clear understanding to the knowledge of sampled respondents related to specific practices and problems regarding implementation.

The content of each questionnaire was composed of statements related to provision of curriculum materials, facilitators' selection and training, and potential implementation practices of organizations. In each questionnaire the respondents were asked to identify the curriculum implementation practices.

3.4.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were employed as the second major research instruments for the study. The reason for conducting semi-structured interviews was that, they could permit the exploration of issues of implementation, which might be too complex to investigate through questionnaires, for example, views and attitudes of officials. Patton (1990) states the data from interviews consists of direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. Hence, in order to conduct such interviews, an interview guideline is developed specifically to address the issues. Patton (1990) says an interview guide is a list of questions with issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview. An interview

guide may help the researcher to be free to explore and asked questions that can make clear the implementation practices and supports of higher educational officials. Hence, semi-structured interviews are conducted to collect the required in-depth data from alternative basic education department experts at region, and program officers of supporting NGOs. Similar types of interview guides were developed for the groups of informants mentioned above.

The interview guides were developed to answer the same research questions addressed under statement of the problem. The questions were focused on investigating the practices and constraints of curriculum implementation in different contexts.

3.4.3. Focus Group Discussions

In the proposal, the researcher planned to collect data through focus group discussions from level two students. However, due to maturity level of students in terms of age and thinking capacity, they have limited knowledge and could not generate adequate ideas regarding ABE curriculum implementation from different angles. Therefore, the researcher forced to change informants from students to Community Management Committee Members in order to gather pertinent information about implementation through focus group discussions. The focus group discussions were based upon the general practice and problem of curriculum implementation of alternative basic education centers.

The aim for conducting focus group discussion with Community Management Committee was to strengthen the opinions obtained from informants by other data collecting instruments. That means, focus group discussions could maximize the possibility of generating answers to the basic research questions. Laws (2003) states focus group discussions are group interviews, where 6 to 12 people are brought together for discussions. Therefore, the total

number of CMC who took part in the focus group discussion was 24, and 4 centers were taken purposefully from 8 sampled centers.

Generally, questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were developed to collect data in order to supplement each other and to maximize the possibility of generating answers to the basic research questions.

3.5. Procedures of the Study

3.5.1. Pilot Study

The draft questionnaire, which was prepared in English language translated into Afan Oromo so as to increase the clarity of the questions and enable the respondents easily react to the questionnaire without any language barriers. Items from original translation were distributed to four teachers who taught in Gara Jarso Woreda, in Eyata and Dige Doyu centers for pre-test to ensure language clarify and appropriateness of the items. Then, the questionnaires were revised depending up on suggestions and comments collected during the tryout.

Finally, the modified questionnaires were distributed to 73 sampled respondents. The principal researcher and research assistants distributed the questionnaires personally. The distributed questionnaires were collected after seven days from respondents. All the questionnaires were returned with full information from 73 respondents. Thus, the data collection through questionnaire was highly successful.

3.5.2. Data Collection

Two male research assistants were employed for data collection. Regarding their educational background both of them completed grade twelve. Before they went to data collection they were given one-day training on the overall conduct of data collection and instruments of the study. The research

assistants collected relevant data under close supervision of the principal researcher.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed by utilizing descriptive techniques. Form responses, frequency tables were constructed, data tallied and grouped. Thus, the resulting frequencies were computed and expressed as percentages which were utilized for interpretation of data.

The data from interview and focus group discussion were analyzed in narration under each category in the tables that relevant to the issues addressed through questions.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

As already mentioned, the purpose of this study was to assess the situation of curriculum implementation of alternative basic education in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia in terms of practices and constraints, and analyze its implication on the quality of education by taking the experiences of supporting NGOs. For this, 8 centers in two zones were used. The primary information was gathered from educational officials at different levels, coordinators, CMC and facilitators using questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews.

In this part, data from the above mentioned participants were presented in tables followed by major descriptions of results.

4.1. Characteristics of the Respondents

The researcher examined the characteristics of respondents' in terms of sex, age, educational background and years of experiences. However, the characteristics of respondents who participated in interviews and focus group discussion were not included in table 1. The reason is that during interviews and focus group discussion writing down all the characteristics of the respondents was time consuming activities. Thus, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted depending up on procedures set for each data collection instrument and the characteristics of 27 respondents were excluded from table 1 since the characteristics of those respondents were not collected during field work.

Therefore, the objective of this section of the study was to provide basic background information about the target population of the study. The target groups of this study were educational officials at different levels in the region, coordinators and center facilitators.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents in Sex, Age, Education Level, and Years of Experiences

Item	Respondents	
	No	%
Sex		
Male	63	86.3
Female	10	13.7
Total	73	100
Age		
30 and below	45	61.6
31-40	21	28.8
41 and above	7	9.6
Total	73	100
Education		
Grade 8 and below		
Grades 9-12	33	45.2
12 th complete	2	2.7
12 + TTI	17	23.3
Diploma	13	17.8
Degree and above	8	11.0
Total	73	100
Years of experiences		
1-5 years	50	68.5
6-10 years	3	4.1
11-15 years	10	13.7
Above 15 years	10	13.7
Total	73	100

As it can be seen in Table 1 above, most of the respondents, 63 (86.3%) of respondents who involved in the program of ABE curriculum implementation were found to be males, while only 10 (13.7%) of respondents were females. Here, one can understand that, under the study areas, females were not adequately represented with regard to principles of alternative basic education in curriculum implementation that put emphasis on giving priority to female facilitators.

Regarding age characteristics of the respondents, 45 (61.6%) of them were 30 and below years. Whereas few number of respondents, 21 (28.8%) were found between 31-40 years. With regard to the respondents whose age is 40 and

above were very small, i.e. 7 (96%). From this result, we can understand that all the respondents were found to be matured with respect to age level.

Concerning respondents' educational background, the data indicated that all respondents were above grade 8. However, the data revealed that considerable number of respondents, 33 (45.2%) were found to be between grades 9-12, but only 2 (2.7%) of respondents completed grade 12. Moreover, 17 (23.3%) of respondents took one year teacher training course. In addition, 13 (17.8%) of respondents were diploma gradulators and only 8 (11.0%) of respondents who have degree and above qualification. From the data we learn that educational backgrounds of the respondents were found to be adequate to implement the ABE curriculum.

The final item relates to years of experiences. The great majority of respondents, 50 (68.5%) were found to be in the years of experiences that range from 1-5 years. While 3 (4.1%) of respondents had service years which range from 6-10 years. Respondents who had 11-15 service years were 10 (13.7%). And lastly, those respondents who were above 15 years of experiences are 10 (13.7%). From the data we can understand that the experiences of the respondents were found to be adequate in order to provide enough information regarding ABE curriculum implementation.

4.2. Issues Related to Curriculum Materials Preparation and Provision

Table 2: Nature of Curriculum Development and its Appropriateness

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Yes		No		No	%
		No	%	No	%		
1	Are the curriculum materials relevant to the practitioners' needs?	65	89.1	8	10.9	73	100
2	Is the curriculum drawn from the national or regional government formal school curriculum?	58	79.5	15	20.5	73	100
3	Are the Minimum Learning Competencies (MLC) stated in curriculum in terms of literacy, numeracy and basic essential life skills ?	62	84.9	11	15.1	73	100
4	Is the curriculum realistic in terms of what the students expect to learn	65	89.1	8	10.9	73	100
5	Is the curriculum realistic in terms of the amount of contents it expects to cover ?	70	95.9	3	4.1	73	100

The first item of Table 2 deals with the curriculum relevance to the practitioners' needs. As it depicted in the Table 2 above, the percentage in yes column, 65 (89.1%) suggests that the majority of the respondents are generally satisfied with the relevance of curriculum materials to the practitioners' needs. This result shows that the curriculum materials are well organized in order to satisfy the practitioners' needs.

Item two is concerned with the origin of level two alternative basic education curriculum in the region. As it indicated in Table 2 above, the great majority of respondents, 58 (79.5%) revealed that the curriculum for level two program was drawn from the regional government formal school curriculum.

The finding confirms the idea mentioned in the related literature that the curriculum for alternative basic education was largely drawn from the regional formal first cycle primary school with modification. Oromia Education Bureau adapted and modified it so as to suit the objectives,

approaches and principles of alternative basic education program to make it relevant to local context (OEB, 2005).

Item three relates to the minimum learning competency (MLC) whether stated in curriculum for level two students in terms of literacy, numeracy, and basic essential life skills. As it depicted in Table 2 above, most of the respondents, 62 (84.9%) supporting this question. From the result one can understand that the developed curriculum clearly specified what minimum learning competencies children should acquire in terms of literacy, numeracy, and basic life skills during their stay in the school. This result supported by related literature, that the sixth goals set out in Dakar framework commits nations to the provision of primary education of good quality and it includes commitments to improve all aspects of education quality so that every one can achieve better learning outcomes, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (UNESCO, 2004).

Item four is concerned with alternative basic education curriculum and its exactness in terms of contents that student to learn. As indicated in the Table 2 above, the great majority of respondents, 65 (89.1%) answered in yes column. This result shows that the curriculum is realistic in terms of the amount of the contents the students to learn.

Item five deals with alternative basic education curriculum whether it is realistic in terms of the amount of the contents it expects to cover. As it depicted in Table 2 above, almost all respondents, 70 (95.9%) supported the question.

The findings from item four and five indicate that all respondents appreciated the amount of contents organized in curriculum for learners and teachers to be covered according to intended schedules. In regard to the percentages given to item four and five, one can notice that the contents organized in the alternative basic education curriculum are realistic.

Table 3: Concerned Body in the Development of Level Two Curriculum of Alternative Basic Education

Options	Respondents	
	No	%
A) Ministry of Education	13	17.8
B) Oromia Education Bureau	56	76.7
C) Supporting NGOs	4	5.5
Total	73	100

As it depicted in Table 3 above, the great majority of respondents 56 (76.7%) stated that the curriculum of alternative basic education for level two students was developed by Oromia Regional Education Bureau. The finding indicates that Oromia Education Bureau was the concerned body for the development of the curriculum. In addition, as discussed in related literature, the curriculum of alternative basic education was largely drawn from Regional formal first cycle primary school by Oromia Education Bureau (OEB, 2005).

Regarding curriculum materials provision, the interviewee OEE₁ (May 2, 2007) stated that, "both the government and the NGOs have their own contribution. The Oromia Education Bureau has to write a letter to printing house for NGOs so as to reprint the prepared and published learning materials. The supporting NGOs allocate their own budget and reprint the learning materials for learners in all alternative basic education centers."

Table 4: Subjects Offered in Level Two with Regard to Weekly Period Allotment and Academic Calendar

Options	Period allotted		
	Officially allocated	Actually Implemented	
		SCD	SC/USA
1. Subjects offered			
A. Afan Oromo	5	5	5
B. English language	5	5	5
C. Mathematics	5	5	5
D. Environmental Science Education	5	5	5
2. Academic Calendar			
A. Number of school days in a year	230 days	201-203	201-230
B. Number of school days in a week	5 days	5days	5 days
C. Number of school periods in a day	5 periods	5 periods	5 periods
D. Number of minutes in a period	40 minutes	40 minutes	40minutes

As depicted in Table 4 above, the alternative basic education program providers in the region have included core subjects such as Afan Oromo, English language, Mathematics and Environmental Science Education. The major subjects were offered in alternative basic education program in all centers with respect to weekly period allotment. Similarly, the academic calendar for the alternative basic education was implemented in line with the officially allotted academic calendar. Table 4, revealed that the curriculum implementation process in all centers was smoothly going on regarding subjects offered, period allotment and academic calendar. As stated in the directive for alternative basic education of Oromia Education Bureau (2005), one level of the alternative basic education program was covered within twelve months and 230 working days can be used for alternative basic education for children, and all four subjects were taught for 40 minutes, 5 days a week.

Table 5: Classroom Organization for Level Two

Options	Respondents	
	No	%
A) Departmentalized (where facilitators teach one subject for one grade)	35	47.9
B) Self-contained (where facilitators teach all subjects for one grade)	20	27.4
C) Mixed of self-contained and departmentalized	18	24.7
Total	73	100

As it can be seen in Table 5 above, regarding classroom organization in level two, the majority of respondents, 35 (47.9%) indicated that the classrooms were organized departmentally, where facilitators teach one subject for one grade, while other respondents, 20 (27.4%) stated that the self-contained classrooms were used in centers where facilitators teach all subjects for one grade. But, the rest of respondents, 18 (24.7%) revealed that the mixed type of self-contained and departmentalized classrooms were organized in centers.

From the results we can understand that departmentalized, self-contained and mixed type of classroom organization was employed in both supporting NGOs' ABE centers. This also indicates that there were variations among the alternative basic education centers in implementing the same curriculum. Beside, self-contained instructional method of classroom organization was not started in the majority of the ABE centers.

Table 6: Pedagogical Approaches Organized in ABE Program

Options	Respondents	
	No	%
A) Teacher-centered	3	4.1
B) Learner-centered	70	95.9
Total	73	100

As it can be seen in Table 6, the teaching-learning process and pedagogical approach utilized in alternative basic education centers was presented. From

the Table 6, almost all of the respondents, 70 (95.9%) stated that the learner-centered method was used in the centers. This finding indicates that the necessary pedagogical approaches are organized and materialized in alternative basic education centers. This finding also supported by the related literature that described the methods of teaching – learning process in the alternative basic education curriculum mainly emphasizes learner-centered, activity based and problem solving approach in contrary to teachers-centered. Here, the emphasis is on learning than teaching, and the children are supposed to be at the center of the process and should learn through discovering things for themselves (OEB, 2005).

Table 7: Evaluation Mechanism

Items	Options	Respondents	
		No	%
How is the students' progress measured ?	A) Achievement test	1	1.4
	B) Continuous assessment	70	95.9
	C) Others	2	2.7
	Total	73	100

In Table 7 item 1 deals with, evaluation mechanism for students' progress. The majority of respondents, 70 (95.9%) revealed that as there was clear evaluation mechanism to measure students' progress. Here, the finding indicates that the continuous assessment mechanism was employed in alternative basic education curriculum in order to measure students' progress. It can be said that the curriculum implementation of supporting NGOs' alternative basic education program was implemented inline with the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy of 1994. As indicated in Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994), continuous assessment in academic and practical subjects could be conducted to ascertain the formation of all round profile of students at all levels. Beside, in order to get promoted from one level to the next, students could be required to have a minimum of fifty percent result.

Table 8: Major Factors that Affect Quality of Alternative Basic Education

No	Item	Ranks given by respondents
1	Facilitators' training	1
2	Community participation	7
3	Student-textbook ratio	2
4	Student – teacher ratio	3
5	Large class size	4
6	Number of qualified facilitators	5
7	Educational facilities (equipment and furniture)	8
8	Support provision system for facilitators	9
9	Curriculum material preparation	6
10	Others	

As it can be seen in Table 8, the major factors that affect quality of education in implementing the alternative basic education curriculum was ranked by respondents of Oromia Education Bureau Officials and supporting NGOs representatives.

As shown in Table 8 above, item 1, i.e. facilitators' training was given top priority than any other items by the government officials as well as supporting NGOs representative. In other words, item 1 received the highest frequency both by respondents from government and NGOs as the main factor that affect quality of ABE. Thus, facilitators' training need much attention since it is important due to the fact that new approaches and teaching methods adapted for various subject in curriculum.

The item which was given second priority order was student textbook ratio in the case of supporting NGOs' ABE in order to improve quality of education. However, the provision of textbook got due attention and provided adequately for learners so as to enhance quality of education. Thus, the provision of textbook for students by the supporting NGOs was one of the encouraging activities.

The 4th item, i.e. student –teacher ratio was given a third rank by government and the supporting NGOs' officials. However, student- teacher ratio was given equal emphasis by the government and NGOs so that it was one of the factors that could affect quality of education depending upon the ratio. To this effect, the provision of teachers by supporting NGOs was available and can not be taken as factors in affecting quality of education.

The item which was given 4th priority in order was large class size. As interview conducted with, OEE2 (May 2, 2007) revealed that, "the supporting NGOs of the two zones operating under the double shift system and use the existing classrooms for more number of students in a day. The number of students in classroom was small and below the indicator that used to measure class size in a conventional school classroom in the region." Based on this idea, the class size for students was appropriate and can not be taken as the factors that hinder maintaining quality of education.

The 6th item, i.e. number of qualified teachers was given a 5th priority order. Shortage of trained teachers against the policy standard is a critical problem that can hinder quality of education.

However, the Regional Education Bureau of Oromia and supporting NGO made much effort in employing adequate number of teacher in order to improve quality of education.

The other items that ranked from 6th -9th were curriculum material preparation, community participation, educational facilities, and support system for teachers respectively. However, the government and the supporting NGO in collaboration gave much emphasis to those items in implementing alternative basic education curriculum so as to maintain quality of education.

From the above ideas, it is possible to conclude that even if the government and supporting NGO made much effort to improve quality of education in implementing ABE curriculum, but the quality of education being offered was not to the level desired because it is related to many factor. For instance, it related to teacher-student ratio, textbook student ratio, curriculum materials, facilities, and educational processes like instructional time, method of teaching and evaluation mechanisms.

Table 9: Adequacy of Educational Input

Options	Ratio
A) Student-teacher ratio	1:40
B) Student – textbook ratio	1:1

As it can be seen in Table 9, the ratios were reported by the respondents from NGOs' representatives. The student-teacher ratio in both supporting NGOs was 1:40 in most alternative basic education centers, and student-textbook ratio was 1:1. As discussed under Table 8, improving textbook provision for alternative basic education was one of the activities must be given much attention concerning quality improvement. Table 9 also indicates that the supporting NGOs greatly concentrate on reducing large class size and provision of textbooks.

The findings showed that the condition was getting best in alternative basic education program of supporting NGOs. The kinds, qualities and quantities of educational inputs are essential. With regard to educational inputs as indicated above, supporting NGOs (SCD and SC/USA) adequately provide the inputs in line with regional standard indicator. From the results, one can understand that as continuous efforts had made both by the Regional Government and supporting NGOs. The supporting NGOs allocated enough budget for textbook reprinting.

4.3 - Issues Related to Facilitators Recruitment, Knowledge, Training and Supports Given to Them in Facilitating Implementation of Curriculum

Table 10: Major Criteria Used to Recruit Facilitators for the Alternative Basic Education Center

Options	Respondents	
	No	%
A) Knowledge of the culture of the community	40	54.8
B) Selecting from among the community, then proceed to kebele, next proceed to neighboring kebele or woreda	55	75.3
C) Minimum qualification set by the government, i.e. 8 years of education	15	20.5
D) Recommendation given by the community for the acceptance	35	47.9
E) Giving priority for females	5	6.8

As it can be seen from Table 10, regarding the criteria for facilitators' recruitment, the data shows that the minimum criteria for facilitators were flexible. One of the criteria for facilitators selection in both supporting NGOs include that facilitators should have knowledge of the culture of the community. Regarding this option, 40 (54.8%) of respondents supported the idea. In addition, 55 (75.3%) of respondents stated that selecting the facilitators from among the community as the major important issue in implementation. But, due to lack of skilled manpower some of facilitators recruited from the near by villages and town dwellers. As indicated in Table 10, some of the respondents, 15 (20.5%) revealed that facilitators selection was carried out according to the minimum qualification set by the government being 8 years of education and above. Besides, recommendation given by the community for the acceptance also used in recruitment process and this option supported by 35 (47.9%) of respondents. Finally, 5 (6.8%) of respondents stated that there were few opportunity for giving priority to females during facilitators selection. This finding shows that both supporting NGOs failed to apply the criteria of giving priority for females as center

facilitators. But considerable number of female facilitators who would have played a role model particularly for girls' participation would be affected.

Table 11: Terms of Employment for Facilitator

Option	Respondents	
	No	%
A) Permanent	16	21.9
B) Part time	3	4.1
C) Contract for a year	50	68.5
D) Others	4	5.5
Total	73	100

As indicated in Table 11 above, the term of employment for facilitators based on contract and working full time, 50 (68.5%) of respondents reported that the term of employment for facilitators was contract for a year.

As per interview discussions with interviewee, POSCD (May 4, 2007), the interviewee revealed that, "the terms of employment in the form of contract leads facilitators to job-dissatisfaction. This also influences the provision of quality education. Beside, it leads facilitators to look for other possibilities of earning better and increases facilitators' turnover."

Table 12: Facilitators Payment

Items	Options	Respondents	
		No	%
Who pays salary for facilitators?	A Government	2	2.7
	B) Community	6	8.2
	C NGO	65	89.1
	Total	73	100

As it can be seen from Table 12, the salary payment of facilitators was covered by supporting NGOs of alternative basic education program. As the data show, 65 (89.1%) of respondents stated that the supporting NGOs were the responsible body to pay the salary for facilitators.

The result of questionnaire shows that the contribution of supporting NGOs in implementing the alternative basic education curriculum was worth-while. From this result, one can understand that there was strong collaboration among supporting NGOs and government. But, as it was checked during field work the amount of payment given to teachers was very low. That mean, 180:000 birr was paid for facilitators taught in the program of SCD. Whereas, for those taught in the program of SC/USA the amount of payment was 240:00 birr. Interviewee, POSCD (May 4, 2007) stated that, "alternative basic education centers were working in double shifts and requiring teachers to work full time. But, the payment for teachers was very low. As a result, present economic constraints necessitating decline in facilitators' living condition." From the interview discussion, we can understand that salary increment for facilitators could be a necessary precondition for responsible implementation of ABE curriculum.

Table 13: Facilitators Knowledge about the Curriculum, Training and Duration of Training

No	Items	Options	Respondents	
			No	%
1	Are all facilitators got sufficient knowledge of the curriculum prior to implementation?	A) Yes	30	41.1
		B) No	43	58.9
		Total	73	100
2	Are all facilitators provided with sufficient training to implement ABE curriculum?	A) Yes	25	34.2
		B) No	48	65.8
		Total	73	100
3	How often and how long are facilitators trained?	A) Initial training (for 15 working days)	25	34.2
		B) In-service training (for 5 working days)	30	41.1
		C) The training is not enough	18	24.7
		D) There is no training		
		Total	73	100

As it depicted in Table 13, item 1 deals with facilitators' knowledge of the curriculum prior to implementation. The majority of respondents 43 (58.9%)

Revealed that the facilitators lacked adequate knowledge about the curriculum prior to implementation.

This result shows that facilitators were not well equipped with enough skills and knowledge of curriculum before committing to implementation. Hence, for effective curriculum implementation, facilitators need more face-to-face communication on curriculum sufficiently prior to implementation so as to get enough skills and knowledge necessary for the implementation.

Another concern was that facilitators training to implement the ABE curriculum (item 2). As indicated in Table 13, 48 (65.8%) of the respondents did not agree with that facilitators have been given sufficient training and preparation for responsible implementation. This was also crosschecked with interview discussion with OEE1 and OEE2 that conducted (May 2, 2007). The interviewees confirmed that, "even though the facilitators were taken training, the training was not adequate for facilitators' knowledge and pedagogical skills to implement the curriculum effectively and this initial training should be supported by refresher training every three months while they were on-job."

As mentioned in related literature, facilitator training is one of the major preconditions for effective implementation of curriculum. The adjustment and expansion of both pre-service and in-service training programs for teachers are very important due to the fact that new approaches, contents and teaching methods adapted for various subjects in school curriculum (Howey, 1978).

As indicated in Table 13, item 3 deals with the kinds and duration of training provided for facilitators. Regarding this item, most of respondents, 25 (34.2%) stated that facilitators were trained for 15 working days on average initially before committing to implementation, 30 (41.1%) of respondents indicated that facilitators were trained for 5 working days on average while they were on-job. Some respondents, 18 (24.7%) stated that some facilitators did not

take enough training which equips them with the necessary pedagogical skills.

As interviews conducted with OEE1 (May, 2007), the interviewee revealed that, "the initial training should be supported by refresher training every three months for teachers while they were on-job. However, facilitators were trained for 5 working days on average every six months of the year."

As indicated in related literature, officially in-service training was intended to provided for 5 working days on average every quarters of the year (OEB, 2005), but actually the facilitators got in-service training every six months of the year. From the results we can conclude that, the in-service training duration was not enough in order to help the facilitators to deal with the problems and difficulties they encounter from day to day and to help them increasingly grow with the necessary facilitation skills.

Table 14: Facilitators Commitment, Supports and Feedback Provision Mechanisms for Facilitator

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Yes		No		No	%
		No	%	No	%		
1	Are all facilitators strongly committed to implementation?	40	54.8	33	45.2	73	100
2	Are there adequate supports given to facilitators?	22	30.1	51	69.9	73	100
3	Are all facilitators satisfied with supports provided to them?	20	27.4	53	72.6	73	100
4	Is there any plan in the future to support facilitators during implementation?	33	45.2	40	54.8	73	100
5	Are facilitators got opportunity to provide feedback related to implementation?	30	41.1	43	58.9	73	100

As it can be seen in Table 14, item 1 relates to facilitators commitment to implementation. 40 (54.8%) of respondents revealed that facilitators have a strong commitment in implementation to make the curriculum work

effectively. The result shows that in different situations the curriculum implementation was a part of facilitators' responsibility and dealt with facilitators' role.

Item 2 relates to supports provided to the facilitators in implementation. Table 14 presented the data that show, the great majority of the respondents 51 (69.9%) answered the questionnaire in no column. This result shows that there was not enough support provision system for facilitators. Interviewee, OEE₁ (May 2, 2007) mentioned that, "In order to attract the facilitators towards curriculum implementation, the government organization and supporting NGOs were responsible to curriculum implementation and they should provide facilitators with sufficient support during implementation."

As depicted in Table 14, item 3 refers to facilitators satisfaction with regard to supports provided to them. The majority of the respondents, 53 (72.6%) revealed that the satisfaction of facilitators with the support given to them received high value in no column. The result suggests that facilitators did not get adequate support in order to facilitate the implementation of curriculum. As indicated in related literature, desirable support in terms of both money and materials would help building self-confidence among those involved in the implementation (Derebssa, 2004).

Another most important area of concern in Table 14 was that of a plan in the future to support facilitators during implementation (item 4). As reported in Table 14, 40 (54.8%) of respondents did not agree with question of a plan in the future to support facilitators for responsible implementation. From this result, we can understand that even if facilitators know their role in the process of implementation, such a plan of support and incentive system has not been communicated to the facilitators. But it needs due attention to plan in the future to support facilitators during implementation, and open discussions with facilitators regarding supports. As indicated in related

literature, open discussions allow implementers to voice their objections or concerns and consequently reduce opposition in implementation (Derebessa, 2004).

The area of greatest concern represented by this data relates to opportunity to facilitators to get feedback in implementation (item 5). As indicated in Table 14, 43 (58.9%) of respondents stated that facilitators have little opportunity for feedback regarding implementation of the alternative basic education curriculum. The majority of respondents also mentioned under open-ended questionnaire that head teacher of the center attended the meeting held at woreda level, and the head teacher shared the information for facilitators at the centers regarding ABE curriculum implementation.

From the above result, it seems that Oromia Education Bureau and supporting NGOs present the prepared curriculum for implementation and facilitators have the feeling that their input in terms of reaction or feedback is not required.

4.4- Issues Related to Potential Implementation Practices of Government and NGOs in Curriculum of ABE

Table 15: Potential Implementation Practices of Government and NGOs

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Yes		No		No	%
		No	%	No	%		
1	Are there clear and consistent guidelines regarding implementation?	22	30.1	51	69.9	73	100
2	Are the available guidelines reaching the implementers at the right time?	41	56.2	32	43.8	73	100
3	Are all implementers got adequate knowledge through training prior to implementation?	36	49.3	37	50.7	73	100
4	Does the community know the purpose of ABE program?	53	72.6	20	27.4	73	100
5	Are supporting NGOs and Oromia Education Bureau supported facilitators during implementation?	19	26.0	54	74.0	73	100
6	Are administrators and coordinators strongly committed to the implementation of the curriculum?	33	45.2	40	54.8	73	100
7	Is the institutional structure and center organization flexible enough to meet the requirement of the curriculum?	51	69.9	22	30.1	73	100
8	Are all concerned body participated in the preparation of ABE curriculum?	33	45.2	40	54.8	73	100
9	Are facilitators, coordinators, administrators, principals and community management committee sufficiently involved as a team in planning for implementation?	29	39.7	44	60.3	73	100
10	Is there sufficient time in planning for implementation?	38	52.1	35	47.9	73	100
11	Is there adequate communication between education office experts, coordinators and facilitators related to curriculum implementation?	28	38.4	45	61.6	73	100

As indicated in Table 15, item 1 shows that, 51 (69.9%) of the respondents answered in no column as there are no clear and consistent guidelines used for implementing the curriculum. The result shows that the guidelines did not

adequately provided by Oromia Education Bureau and supporting NGOs. It seems that the available guidelines lacked two-way communication between officials and facilitators at centers in the implementation process.

Item 2 concerns with the availability of the guidelines that reach the implementers. As it can be seen in Table 15 above, the great majority of respondents, 41 (56.2%) supported this item as the available guidelines reach the implementers at the right time. This finding is normal because without any guidelines the facilitators could face difficulty with processes and procedures used for implementing the curriculum.

The third area of concern is that of knowledge need to implement the curriculum (item 3). Some of respondents, 37 (50.7%) stated that all implementers did not get adequate skills and knowledge through training prior to implementation. The result shows that nearly less than one half of the respondents revealed as there is some opportunity to learn about the curriculum prior to implementation. Data from the open-ended questionnaire under weaknesses of program also confirmed that some of the implementers did not get adequate training prior to implementation. Beside, there was not sufficient information about the role of each implementer in the implementation process. From this we can conclude that if such information is not available, it is difficult to see facilitators, head teachers and coordinators preparation and commitment for effective implementation.

Item 4 concerns for knowledge of the community on the purpose of ABE program. As it depicted in Table 15, this item was expressed by 53 (72.6%) of respondents that the community know the purpose of alternative basic education program. This finding is genuine since curriculum implementation of alternative basic education has been identified as a major function of the surrounding community. Thus, they should be given clear awareness on the purpose of the program in order to perform this task. As indicated in review of related literature, the purpose of alternative basic education was

first about taking education closer to children in order to solve the problem of the distance from home to the school which in turn leads to high opportunity cost. It also creates a flexible and more responsible learning environment for children. If the purposes of alternative basic education program clearly communicated to community, then they initiated to implement the curriculum properly (Bishop, 1989; Ranaweera and Sutton, 1990).

Item 5 in Table 15 relates to supports provided for facilitators by concerned body. The majority of the respondents, 54 (74%) revealed that the supporting NGOs and Oromia Regional Education Bureau were not supported facilitators during implementation. The related literature suggested that regular supervision and support include involvement in the recruitment process of facilitators, ensuring the availability of relevant and adequate educational materials, building the management capacity of alternative basic education committee members and creating a conducive environment for the smooth operation of learning-teaching process are among the major expected duties and responsibilities of the woreda education office (OEB, 2002). However, this was crosschecked from open-ended questionnaire under weakness of the program that it was difficult to see that the woreda education offices discharge their duties and responsibilities due to shortage of qualified manpower.

Item 6 in Table 15 deals with the commitment of administrators and coordinators in the process of implementation, 40 (54.8%) of respondents expressed their feelings in no column regarding commitment of administrators and coordinators in implementation process. The result indicates that there was not strong commitment by administrators and coordinators to make the curriculum work effectively. From the result, we can notice that administrators and coordinators have not genuinely accepted responsibility for curriculum implementation.

A glance at Table 15 above, item 7 shows that institutional structure and center's organizational flexibility to meet the requirement of the curriculum. As it can be seen in Table 15 above, the concern was expressed in this regard by the result of item 7, where 51 (69.9%) of the respondents showed their satisfaction. This finding indicated that the administrators and coordinators view organizational structure and center organization as flexible enough to meet the requirement of the curriculum.

Item 8 concerns for the participation of concerned body in the preparation of alternative basic education. As indicated in the Table 15, the preparation of alternative basic education curriculum represented the area of least concern by the majority of the respondents. Approximately, 33 (45.2%) of respondents revealed that they were participated in the process of alternative basic education curriculum preparation. This result is similar with the trend in last fifteen years in developing curriculum at different educational levels in our country. However, facilitators, coordinators and administrators at all levels have a major responsibility for preparation of the curriculum. But, much acceptance was not evident at this center level. Perhaps few of woreda education officials could be involved in the development of the curriculum. Based on this finding, it is also interesting to note that lack of participation in the preparation of alternative basic education curriculum can be seen as a major problem to implementation since the implementers lacked knowledge in regard to the preparation of alternative basic education curriculum.

Item 9 relates to the involvement of implementers as a team in planning for implementation. As indicated in Table 15, mainly 44 (60.3%) of respondents stated that there was lack of opportunity to involve as a team in planning for implementation. This finding supports the idea of item 8, however, as indicated in the related literature, for effective implementation requires time, personnel interaction, involvement and training. So, people require

involvement of total beings, their feelings, sentiments and values if they to accept, tolerate and support the implementation (Derebssa, 2004).

Item 10 relates to time in planning for implementation. Table 15 shows that, 38 (52.1%) of respondents indicated that there was sufficient time in planning for implementation. From this result, it is obvious that more time is required between the delivery of curriculum and expected actual implementation. If procedures for implementation are specified then sufficient time would be incorporated. Data from open-ended questionnaire under weakness of the program also showed that some of the respondents feel that they are expected to be implementers of prepared curriculum and have little input into decision making to the continued use or revision of the curriculum.

As we can see from Table 15, item 11 concerned with existence of sufficient communication between all implementers. The majority of the respondents, 45 (61.6%) revealed that communication between implementers was weak as it received high value in no column. This finding indicates that the existence of breakdown in communication between education experts, coordinators and facilitators in regard to the curriculum and its implementation. However, communication is important dimension for the implementation process to be successful. The related literature suggested that curriculum leaders need to create a climate conducive to effective communication among all members of educational staff and community (Derebssa, 2004).

Table 16: Potential Implementation Practices of Government and NGOs

No	Items	Options	Respondents	
			No	%
1	How frequent do woreda education office monitor and supervise the center?	A) Once in a week	1	1.4
		B) Twice in a month		
		C) Once in a month	8	10.9
		D) Once in 3 months	14	19.2
		E) Once in 6 months	50	68.5
		Total	73	100
2	Do members of the CMC ever receive any training relevant to their duties and responsibilities in the implementation?	A) Yes	55	75.3
		B) No	18	24.7
		Total	73	100
3	Is their adequate community participation in curriculum implementation?	A) Yes	52	71.2
		B) No	21	28.8
		Total	73	100

Item 1 in Table 16 refers to monitoring and supervision systems that conducted during implementation. As it can be observed from Table 16 above, the woreda education office supervisors and experts actually supervise alternative basic education centers once every three months 14 (19.2%), and once every six months 50 (68.5%) of respondents indicated respectively. But, few of respondents, 8 (10.9%) revealed that woreda education supervisors visited the alternative basic education centers once in a month. In some centers, it was noticed that the woreda education supervisors supervise the alternative basic education centers once in a year as some of the respondents stated by writing on the blank space of the paper. The results indicate that at the woreda level there was weak monitoring and supervision systems in all ABE centers which could contributing to the deterioration of quality education in implementing the alternative basic education curriculum. As stated in related literature, the major purpose of alternative basic education was to provide education opportunity for out-of-school children as alternative modes of delivery under close supervision of concerned body. Beside, the directive for alternative basic education of Oromia Education Bureau (2005) stated that the woreda education office is expected to supervise the

alternative basic education centers once every two weeks. However, when we compare the actual supervision conducted in all centers, it contradicts with the directive of ABE of Oromia Education Bureau.

As interview discussions conducted with OEE1 and OEE2 (May 2, 2007), the interviewees stated that, "periodic monitoring and supervision was important for the program improvement. The committee established at all stages, experts of alternative basic education and woreda education supervisors should monitor and supervise the alternative basic education centers and contribute to the improvement of curriculum implementation."

Item 2 deals with community management committee training in relation to their duties and responsibilities in implementation. As indicated in Table 16, the majority of the respondents 55 (75.3%) stated that the community management committee got training that enables them to carryout their duties and responsibilities in the implementation. From this result, we can say that the community management committee took enough training in order to discharge their duties and responsibilities.

As indicated in the Table 16 item 3 deals with the adequacy of community participation. The great majority of respondents, 52 (71.2%) stated that there was adequate community participation in the curriculum implementation. The finding indicates that community participation in all centers was adequately observed in curriculum implementation in line with the strategy developed to encourage the community participation.

As discussed in the related literature, one of the major qualities of the alternative basic education program was high level of community participation. To this effect, the Ethiopian Government has also developed the strategy of encouraging the community participation in promoting

collaborative efforts of all concerned stakeholders to realize the achievement of universal quality primary education (MOE, 2002).

In addition, as per focus group discussions with community management committee, and interviews conducted with POSCD (May 4, 2007), communities have made remarkable contributions through coordinating school committee established at each centers. As interviewee stated that, "most of communities' contributions included site selection for construction, land provision, and time tabling. The communities also ensure learning and providing feedback regarding the implementation." The involvement of communities is essential, because communities are the basis for the promotion of educational chances where NGOs are not able to run the program.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter of the study consists of summary, conclusions drawn from major findings, and recommendations.

5.1. Summary

The Present Government of Ethiopia puts considerable importance on education. Particularly, the expansion of quality primary education has received considerable attention in the various policies and strategies of the government. The rapid expansion of quality primary education opportunities is the keystone to accelerate socio-economic development. Thus, the Federal Government of Ethiopia has set a goal to achieve universal primary education by the year 2015. Universal primary education would enhance the opportunities for social mobility of the poor and the underprivileged.

The main aim of this study was to assess the situation of curriculum implementation of ABE centers in North Shoa and South West Shoa Zones of Oromia in terms of practices and constraints and analyze its implication on the quality of education by taking the experiences of the supporting NGOs.

The basic research questions were:

- How is the preparation and provision of curriculum materials for the ABE centers?
- Are ABE center facilitators knowledgeable and skillful to implement the curriculum? And how?
- Have all implementers got adequate training and supports in order to implement the curriculum effectively? If so, what kind?
- What are the major strengths and weaknesses that observed during the implementation of ABE curriculum in the zones?

A descriptive survey method was used to conduct this study. Eight centers were selected purposefully from two zones; and a representative sample of 100 (62.5%) of respondents were involved in the study as source of data.

Questionnaires, semi-structured interview and focus groups discussion were used to collect data in line with the research questions. The collected data from the questionnaire was tallied, grouped, and analyzed utilizing percentages. The data collected through interviews were analyzed in narration under each category in the tables.

The major findings of the study were the following:

1. The study depicted that the curriculum materials for level two learners is well organized and relevant to the practitioners' needs;
2. The study revealed that the curriculum of ABE program covered the minimum learning competencies requirement that children should acquire in terms of literacy, numeracy and basic life skills during their stay in the school. The minimum learning competencies focuses on four major subjects, such as: Afan Oromo, English language, Mathematics and Environmental Science Education;
3. The study showed that the supporting NGOs allocate their own budget and reprint the learning materials for learners which were prepared and published by the Regional Education Bureau;
4. The study indicated that academic calendar was flexible and determined by local community;
5. Self-contained instructional methods of the classroom organization in which facilitators teach all subjects for one grade was not stated in some centers;

6. The study indicated that, the learner-centered methods of teaching were implemented in all centers, and the students' progress was measured through continuous assessment in all alternative basic education centers;
7. The study revealed that the major factors which affect the quality of alternative basic education if ABE curriculum was not well organized, coordinated, and implemented properly in the centers. These factors include: Facilitators' selection; student-textbook ratio; student-teacher ratio; large class size; number of qualified facilitators; curriculum preparation; community participation; educational facilities (equipment and furniture); and support provision system for facilitators;
8. Educational inputs (textbook provision, and teacher-student ratio) were found to be adequate in both supporting NGOs. The supporting NGOs adequately provided the inputs inline with the regional standard indicators;
9. The study showed that both NGOs used similar criteria to recruit facilitators. The criteria for facilitators' selection were:
 - Facilitators' knowledge of the culture of the community;
 - Selecting facilitators form among community, then proceed to kebele, next proceed to neighboring kebele or woreda;
 - Minimum qualification set by the government being 8 years of education;
 - Recommendation given by the community; and giving priority for females.

Even though both stakeholders followed similar criteria to recruit facilitators, but female facilitators were not adequately represented in implementation of ABE curriculum;

10. Terms of employment for facilitators were based on contract for a year and working full time, and the study found that the contribution of supporting NGOs in paying salary for facilitators was worth-while in implementation of ABE curriculum. But, as responded by (98.6%) of respondents of the questionnaire payment for facilitators was found to be inadequate. The already existing teachers leave the profession to search for a better job;
11. The trainings were inadequate for equipping facilitators with necessary pedagogical knowledge and skills to implement the curriculum effectively;
12. Facilitators have a strong commitment in implementation to make the curriculum work effectively, but the support to facilitators was inadequate. The support for facilitators was not materialized due to poor support provision system by stakeholders;
13. The study indicated that facilitators have little opportunity for feedback regarding implementation. The head teacher of the center attended the meeting held at woreda level related to implementation, and the head teacher shared the information for facilitators at the centers;
14. The study found that there were not clear and consistent guidelines used for implementing the curriculum. The available guidelines lacked two-way communication between officials and facilitators at centers regarding the implementation process of curriculum. However, the available guidelines reach the implementers at the right time;
15. There was not adequate skills and knowledge for all implementers through training prior to implementation. Adequate information was not given through training about the role of each implementer in the implementation process;

16. The supporting NGOs and woreda education office didn't give adequate support to facilitators. They ascribed this failure mainly due to shortage of qualified manpower;
17. The study revealed that there was lack of commitment on the parts of administrators and coordinators;
18. The institutional structure and center organization of ABE was found to be flexible enough to provide the alternative basic education curriculum;
19. Some crucial stakeholders were not participated in the development of ABE curriculum;
20. Community Management Committee and Principals of the centers provided adequate learning materials required for implementation which they got from Oromia Education Bureau and supporting NGOs;
21. The study indicated that supervisors from woreda education offices visit the centers once every six months;
22. The study found that the community management committee got training that enables them to carryout their duties and responsibilities in the implementation of ABE curriculum; and
23. The community participation in all centers was adequately observed, especially in the area of scheduling, site selection and constructing centers.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the data analysis and major findings, the researcher drew the following conclusions.

1. The result of this study suggested that the relevance of the curriculum for level two students, and the fact that it is drawn from regional first cycle primary education has created sense of equitable access among the learners and the community. Based on this idea, when the curriculum for ABE centers considered and prepared, it seems the curriculum experts might have taken the students' needs and exposure into consideration;
2. The findings of the study indicated that flexibility of the academic calendar has encouraged the participation of children in the educational provision at the alternative basic education, especially that of girls' participation;
3. The findings of the study indicated that, investigating factors affecting quality of education in implementing alternative basic education was a very wide topic. The issue of quality is related to many factors such as inputs like teacher-student ratio, textbook-students' ratio, curriculum materials, facilities, and educational processes like instructional time, methods of teaching and evaluation mechanisms. Based on the above ideas, even if it is very difficult to conclude from this study about quality of ABE, all the above mentioned factors directly or indirectly affect quality of education in implementing ABE curriculum;
4. Although there were common criteria for teachers' recruitment in both supporting NGOs, female facilitators were not adequately represented in the implementation of alternative basic education curriculum. Thus, it can be concluded that this situation might have affected considerable

number of female teachers who could have played a role model particularly for girls' participation;

5. The effort of implementing alternative basic education curriculum by stakeholders in recruiting, employing and paying salary for teachers was found to be encouraging. But, the inadequacy of salary payment for teachers obliged them to lead poor living standard condition, which could in turn challenge the provision of quality basic education. It can be concluded that this poor living standard condition forced the already existing teachers to leave the profession to search for a better job;
6. Lack of adequate training and support for teachers resulted in poor teaching-learning process. Based on this idea, it can be concluded that lack of adequate training and support for teachers could be the major factors that negatively influence quality of education;
7. Lack of adequate involvement of all stakeholders in planning and implementation of alternative basic education curriculum led to weak communication among them on the one hand, and contributed to weak monitoring and supervision on the other; and
8. The provision of adequate training for the community management committee contributed to the fact that the alternative basic education centers remained active even though there were several problems in the process of curriculum implementation.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the major findings and conclusions with regard to the implementation of alternative basic education curriculum, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. In the study it was found out that the curriculum for level two ABE was better in its relevance and appropriateness. Thus, it may be useful if the curriculum experts in Oromia Education Bureau study the curriculum of each level of ABE program in relation to the students' previous knowledge and exposure so that the curriculum would be more relevant and appropriate to the needs and background knowledge of the students;
2. It was found out in the study that the majority of the centers carryout the teaching- learning process in double shifts. So, full day school is useful and the Regional Education Bureau too better work towards it. However, some additional incentive should be provided for teachers that commensurate with their role in the implementation of ABE curriculum;
3. The provision of quality education is the key to economic development. Hence, the researcher recommends that the Regional Education Bureau of Oromia ought to provide feed back on quality levels of education and curriculum implementation of ABE for teachers after any sound supervision and monitoring are made;
4. The problem of quality of education is not such an easy issue that to be critically studied by beginner researcher. Thus, the researcher would like to recommend that, other researcher had better to carryout deeper and wider research work to search for better and wider solutions that can significantly alleviate the existing problems in ABE curriculum implementation;
5. Clear means of communication between stakeholders at all levels is essential to minimize the misunderstanding between the curriculum

planners and other stakeholders of ABE program. Thus, it may be useful to provide clear guidelines to all stakeholders for more successful activities at the ABE centers;

6. The findings of the study indicate that lack of involvement in the preparation of ABE curriculum and planning for implementation as a team can be seen as one of the major problems that the implementation of the ABE curriculum in the two zones of Oromia faced. Therefore, it is advisable if participatory approach will be encouraged by the Regional Education Bureau of Oromia as well as the supporting NGOs in order to facilitate implementation of ABE curriculum;
7. During the process of teachers recruitment for ABE centers, encouraging and giving priority to female teachers could increase girls' participation at ABE centers. So, it is advisable to encourage the recruitment and selection of more female teachers who could serve as a role model to increase girls' participation at the ABE centers;
8. In the study it was found out that lack of adequate training and payment for teachers in the schools was one of the major problems in curriculum implementation of ABE. The already existing teachers also leave the profession to search for a better job. Hence, to solve this problem the Regional Education Bureau in collaboration with the supporting NGOs are recommended to take the following measures:
 - 8.1. Provide teachers with more adequate training so that the teaching-learning process could be improved;
 - 8.2. It may be useful to motivate the already existing teacher by providing various incentives to minimize turnover;
 - 8.3. It necessary to give teachers certain opportunities to improve their qualification through training. For instance, by training

them at Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) and through distance programs;

9. In order to enhance the effort made by supporting NGOs in implementing alternative basic education curriculum in the region, it requires strong collaboration among all stakeholders and the government. Therefore, it is advisable if Oromia Regional Education Bureau encourage the development of further partnership with NGOs and private investors to strengthen the ABE curriculum implementation at alternative basic education centers and to ensure the sustainability of ABE; and
10. It may be useful if Woreda Education Offices encourage the participation of development agents of the Ministry of Agriculture and health care workers of the Ministry of Health to contribute for the effective implementation of ABE curriculum.

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX – A

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

***Department of Curriculum and Teachers' Professional
Development Studies***

Form – A : Questionnaire to be filled by Facilitators, Woreda and Zonal Education experts, Training Coordinators, Program supervisors, Woreda officials, as well as Coordinators, and Woreda ABE board members.

Dear Respondents:

This questionnaire is to survey views on the practices and problems of curriculum implementation of alternative basic education program for level two. Its aim is, therefore, to collect relevant data for the subject under study. The success of this study, to a great extent, relies on your genuine responses. Thus, you are kindly requested to be honest in your responses to all the items provided in this questionnaire.

In responding to the questionnaire, please note the following important points.

1. All the questions raised here are of equal importance to attain the objectives of the study. Failure to complete any of them will negatively affect the overall study results.
2. You are not required to write your name.
3. All your responses will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

4. Put 'X' marks in boxes or blank spaces given for questions with options, and write your own opinion for questions with open-ended.

Lastly, I would like to thank in advance for your cooperation.

Section One:

Part – I – General Information about the Respondents

- 1.1 Zone _____ Wereda _____ Center _____
- 1.2 Sex: a) Male ☐ b) Female ☐
- 1.3 Age: a) 30 and below ☐ b) 31-40 ☐ c) 41 and above ☐
- 1.4 Educational background _____
- 1.5 Total years of service _____
- a. ☐ 1-5 years b. ☐ 6-10 years
- c. ☐ 11-15 year d. above 15 years
- 1.6 Name of your organization _____
- 1.7 Date of the responses _____

Section Two: Assessment of Issues Related to Curriculum Materials Preparation and provision

- 2.1 Are the curriculum materials relevant to the practitioners' needs?
- a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.2 Are the curriculum materials specifically developed for the ABE program?
- a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.3 If your answer for question No. "2.2" is "yes", is the curriculum drawn from the national or regional government formal school curriculum?
- a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.4 Is the curriculum covered the Minimum Learning Competency (MLC) requirement of the formal basic education?
- a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

- 2.5 If your answer for question No. "2.4", is "yes", are the Minimum Learning Competencies (MLC) stated in curriculum in terms of literacy, numeracy and basic essential life skills?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.6 Is the curriculum of ABE for level two condensed version of the primary school curriculum?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.7 Is the curriculum realistic in terms of the amount of contents the students to learn?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.8 Is the curriculum realistic in terms of the amount of content it expects the teacher to cover?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 2.9 Who developed the ABE curriculum for the program?
a) Ministry of education ☐
b) Oromia education bureau ☐
c) Supporting NGO ☐
d) Others (please specify) _____
- 2.10 What type of curriculum is utilized in the ABE center?
a) Different curriculum prepared by the government ☐
b) Different curriculum prepared by NGO ☐
c) Formal 1st cycle primary education curriculum ☐
d) Condensed 1st cycle primary education curriculum ☐
- 2.11 What are the major subjects offered in connection with the level two curriculums? And write weekly period allotment
a) _____ period allotted _____
b) _____ period allotted _____
c) _____ period allotted _____
d) _____ period allotted _____
- 2.12 Please write the academic calendar for the ABE center?
a) Number of school days in a year _____

- b) Number of days in a week _____
- c) Number of periods in a day _____
- d) Number of minutes in a period _____

2.13 How is the classroom organized?

- a) Departmentalized (where facilitators teach one subject for one grade) ☐
- b) Self-contained (where facilitators teach all subjects for one grade) ☐
- c) Mixed of self-contained and departmentalized ☐
- d) Others (if any) _____

2.14 What types of pedagogical approaches are organized in the curriculum?

- a) Teacher – centered ☐
- b) Learner-centered ☐

2.15 Is there an appropriate and clear evaluation mechanism for students' progress?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

2.16 If your answer for question No. "2.18", is "yes", how is the students' progress measured?

- a) Achievement test ☐
- b) Continuous assessment ☐
- c) Others (if any) _____

2.17 Please, rank the main factors that are contributing to the deterioration of quality education in implementing the ABE curriculum, put according to their priority orders.

No	Possible Factors	Order of Priority
1	Facilitators' training	
2	Community participation	
3	Student-textbook ratio	
4	Student-teacher ratio	

5	Large class size	
6	Number of qualified facilitators	
7	Educational facilities (equipment and furniture)	
8	Support provision system for facilitators	
9	Curriculum material preparation	
10	Others (write if any) _____	

2.18 What is the average class size for the ABE center? Please write properly _____

2.19 Please write the following mentioned ratios related to teachers and curriculum materials

2.19.1 Student-teacher ratio 1: _____

2.19.2 Student – textbook ratio 1: _____

2.20 What are the major factors affecting learner to dropouts in level two?
(Please write specifically) _____

Section Three: Assessment of Issues Related to Facilitators Recruitment, Knowledge, Training and Supports given to them in Facilitating Implementation of Curriculum

3.1 What are the major criteria used to recruit facilitators for the ABE center? (More than one response is possible)

- a) Knowledge of the culture of the community ☐
- b) Selecting from among the community, then proceed to kebele, next proceed to neighboring kebele or woreda ☐
- c) Minimum qualification set by the government, i.e.8 years of education ☐
- d) Recommendation given by the community for the acceptance ☐
- e) Giving priority for females ☐

3.2 How is the term of employment for facilitator

- a) Permanent ☐
- b) Part-time ☐
- c) Contract for a year ☐

- c) Other (please specify) _____
- 3.3 Who pays salary for facilitators?
a) Government ☐ b) Community ☐ c) NGO ☐
d) Other (please specify) _____
- 3.4 How much is being paid for facilitators? _____
- 3.5 Are all facilitators got sufficient knowledge of the curriculum prior to implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 3.6 Are all facilitators provided with sufficient training to implement ABE curriculum?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 3.7 How often and how long are facilitators trained?
a) Initial training ☐, duration in days _____
b) In-service training ☐, duration in days _____
c) The training is not enough ☐
d) There is no training at once ☐
- 3.8 Are all facilitators strongly committed to implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 3.9 Are there adequate supports given to the facilitators?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 3.10 If your answer for question No. "3.16" is "yes", who provided the supports for the facilitators? _____

- 3.11 Do you believe that all facilitators satisfied with the supports given/ provided to them?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 3.12 Is there any plan in the future to support facilitators during implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

3.13 Are facilitators got opportunity to provide feedback related to implementation?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

3.14 If your answer for question No. "2.22" is "yes", please write the mechanisms used to provide feedback for facilitators regarding implementation.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

Section Four: Assessment of Potential Implementation Practices of Government and Non-government Organizations in Curriculum of ABE

4.1 Are there clear and consistent guidelines regarding implementation?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4.2 Are the available guidelines reaching the implementers at the right time?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4.3 Are all implementers got adequate knowledge through training prior to implementation?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4.4 Does the community know the purpose of ABE program?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4.5 Are supporting NGOs and Oromia Education Bureau supported facilitators during implementation?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4.6 Are administrators and coordinators strongly committed to the implementation of the curriculum?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4.7 Is the institutional structure and center organization flexible to meet the requirement of the curriculum?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

- 4.8 Are all concerned body participated in the preparation of ABE curriculum?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 4.9 Are facilitators, coordinators, administrators, principals and community management committee sufficiently involved as a team in planning for implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 4.10 Is there sufficient time in planning for implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 4.11 Is there adequate communication between education office experts, coordinators and facilitators related to curriculum implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 4.12 Are community management committee and principals provided enough learning materials required for implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 4.13 How frequent do Woreda education office monitor and supervise the center?
a) Once in a week ☐
b) Twice in a month ☐
c) Once in a month ☐
d) Once in three months ☐
e) Once in six months ☐
- 4.14 Do members of the community management committee ever receive any training relevant to their duties and responsibilities in the implementation of the curriculum?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐
- 4.15 Is there adequate community participation in curriculum implementation?
a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Major strengths and weaknesses of the program during implementation

A. What are the major strengths that are observed during the implementation of ABE curriculum:

B. What are the major weaknesses that are observed during the implementation of ABE curriculum;

C. What steps are to be taken to improve the situation of the implementation of ABE curriculum?

APPENDIX - B

Form B: Interview Guidelines with Oromia Education Bureau ABE Department Experts, and Program Officers of NGOs

Researcher's ethical consideration during conducting interviews

Thank you for accepting to participate in this research, the implementation of the ABE curriculum. My purpose is to conduct research as a requirement for MA qualification at Addis Ababa University. The issue of curriculum implementation at ABE centers has not been adequately studied in connection to improving quality of education. Hence, through this research I want to understand how the curriculum implementation process is going on. I will also try to understand major problem areas in implementing the curriculum.

Principles and Procedures for the Research

The following framework consists of researcher ethical principles and procedures. The researcher wants to discuss these principles with you in pursuit of an agreed upon and amended framework. Do not feel any thing to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time you are participating.

1. Participation in the research is voluntary;
2. information given to me will be treated as belonging to you; and it can be used only with your permission;
3. I will seek your permission to create or use audio records. You have the right to refuse;
4. Full anonymity of your identity and confidentiality of the information you share with me will be maintained (codes will be used);
5. Except for the purposes of professional collaboration in the study, no data arising from interviews will be disclosed in any form to third groups without your explicit and prior consent.

Questions to be raised during the interview with a research participants mentioned above.

- Who developed and provided the curriculum of ABE for level two learners?
- What kind of curriculum utilized in ABE centers?
- How do you evaluate the provision of curriculum materials for learners in terms of availability?
- How do ABE centers operate regarding shift systems and duration of working time?
- What are the bases of agreement for terms of employment for facilitators?
- How do you evaluate the adequacy of payment for facilitators?
- How do you get the trainings of facilitators in terms of adequacy and consistency?
- How do you describe the trainings and supports given to all implementers in order to implement ABE curriculum?
- How do you get collaboration among education office experts, coordinators and facilitators in implementation?
- How do woreda education monitor and supervise the ABE centers?
- How do you get community participation and contribution at grass root level?
- What are strong and weak sides that are observed during implementation?
- What steps are to be taken to improve the situation of curriculum implementation of ABE?
- Additional comments, opinions and recommendation (if any)

APPENDIX - C

Form C: Focus Group Discussion Guidelines with ABE Center Community Management Committee Members

The objective of focus group discussion is to gather relevant information on curriculum implementation of ABE at centers. The task of the focus group discussion members is to focus on the questions raised by the researcher and actively participate in the discussion.

All your comments and ideas will be kept in absolute confidentiality. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give your genuine comments on the implementation of ABE curriculum in the center.

- How do you get the provision of curriculum materials for centers?
- Have the committee members ever got any training on managing ABE centers?
- How do you see the trainings of committee and facilitators in terms of adequacy?
- How often do committee members meet to discuss on issues pertinent to ABE centers?
- How are all committee members committed to ABE curriculum implementation?
- How do you evaluate the supports given to centers and facilitators by the committee?
- Is there any financial incentive for committee members?
- How do you get community participation in ABE curriculum implementation?
- What are the major strengths and weaknesses that are observed during the implementation of ABE curriculum?

APPENDIX – D

Names and Lists of Local and International NGOs in Oromia Regional State for NFBE

No	List of NGOs
1	Abebech Gobana Orphanage and School
2	Action for Development
3	Adult and Non-Formal Education Association
4	Africa Development Aid Association
5	Education for Development Association
6	Ethiopia Rural Self-Help Association
7	Ethiopian Community School Extension Bob Marley Community School
8	Generation in Africa Development Association
9	Goal Ethiopia
10	Gudina Tumsa Foundation
11	Hibir Integrated Community Development Association
12	International Rescue Committee
13	Kangaroo Child and Youth Development
14	Kind Heart Child Aid Development Organization
15	Light of Hope Ministry Development Association
16	Meserete Kiristos Church Relief and Development Association
17	Rift Valley Children and Women Development Association
18	Save the Children Denmark
19	Save the Children USA
20	Selam Hiwot Street Children Prevention and Rehabilitation Organization
21	The Hunger Project Ethiopia
22	VISION-Organization for Community Development

Source: Oromia Education Bureau

APPENDIX – E

Basic Education for Children in North Shoa, Oromia, Lists of Woredas and Centers Selected for Study in ABE Program

No	Wereda	ABE Centers in Kebeles					
1	Abichu Nga'e	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Amonte gamo	Lemendeda akababi	Nasri tiriya	Mute	Adare ejersa	Salaysh
2	Grar jarso						
		Eyeta	Dige doyu	Ono gino bonoya	Selale ale	Torben ashe	Elamu
3	Hidebu Abote						
		Adea nacho	Alkochi	Adea bonoya	Kobi godete	Yaya dera bona	Sire Morese
4	Kimbibit						
		Endod washa	Baso	Tukana karweha	Baruga	Etasa ena enjifeno	Gode Bitayo
5	Kuyu						
		Dero birbirsa	Sombo Cheka	Tamsasa rogie	Dayu wilinchi	Dila kerensa	Dawicha kerensa
6	Wara Jarso						
		Sintu wolragi	Kola borsu	Kola jomo	Bochis selale	Hossiee	Nunu Gondini
7	Yaya Gulele						
		Chemeri	Dire daleti	Wakene	Saden Biyu	Tumano	Dede gara

Source:- Save the children Denmark, 2006