

An Assessment of NGO-Assisted Alternative Basic Education Projects in North Wollo Zone

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABE: Alternative Basic Education

ABEC: Alternative Basic Education Center

ADA: Amhara Development Association

ADEA: Association for Development of Education in Africa

AU: Africa Union

BEA_E: Basic Education Network in Ethiopia

BoFED: Bureau of Finance and Economic Development

CBO: Community-Based Organization

CMC: Center Management Committee

EFA: Education for All

EMIS: Educational Material and Information System

ESAA: Educational Statistics Annual Abstract

ESDP: Education Sector Development Program

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FE: Formal Education

GER: Gross Enrolment Ratio

ICED: International Council for Educational Development

JRM: Joint Review Mission

MDG: Millennium Development Goal

MoE: Ministry of Education

NER: Net Enrolment Ratio

NFBE: Non-formal Basic Education

NFE: Non-formal Education

NGO: Non-Government Organization

OAU: Organization for African Unity

PADET: Professional Alliance for Development in Ethiopia

PE: Primary Education

SCD: Save the Children Denmark

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Education Fund

UPE: Universal Primary Education

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WCEFA: World Conference on Education for All

ABSTRACT

North Wollo zone, one of the zones in Amhara Region, is ecologically degraded, climatically unstable and food insecure area. Moreover, it is an area where harmful traditional practices are dominantly exercised. On top of that, it is an area where educational disparity was the highest and enrolment rate in primary education was the lowest. To alleviate these interrelated problems, NGOs are currently implementing ABE projects as an alternate way to the formal education system. Whether this alternate route provides promise in this aspect or not becomes a timely issue that requires assessing their performance. Thus, this study tried to objectively assess NGO-assisted alternative basic education projects in North Wollo zone having specific objectives of identifying factors that constrain the implementation of ABE, indicating contribution of NGOs in ensuring coverage, quality and equity, scanning the sustainability of the projects in addressing the parity of ABE and FE. To address its specific objectives, basic questions, regarding factors that constrain the delivery of ABE, access, equity, quality, transformation of projects after the phase out period, network and partnership among ABE stakeholders, and parity and nexus between ABE and FE, were formulated. Descriptive survey method was employed to address the issues. To gather the relevant information regarding the basic questions, both primary and secondary resources were involved using Quota, availability and stratified random sampling. The data collecting process was a mixed approach type where questionnaire, interview, observation checklist and discussion were used. Out of the total of 86 questionnaires distributed, 79 were filled and returned. The data gathered through questionnaire were exposed to statistical analysis using frequency distribution, t-test, Chi-square and Spearman rank order correlation. After analyzing and interpreting both qualitative and quantitative data, the following findings were obtained. A number of factors that constrain delivery of ABE were identified (caring for animals, caring for siblings, collecting firewood and fetching water, etc.). Achieving some of the goals of EFA seems to fail owing to low level of quality and high disparity. ABE has got official recognition and parity of esteem; the partnership among stakeholders seems promising and a preparatory action was being taken by the project owners and implementers in order to bring about transformation safely. Based on the findings, the mobilization of resources, raising funds from different actors, devising income generating mechanisms for the community, recruitment of facilitators including female facilitators in male-dominated learning centers and training them are recommended.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH

This part of the study deals with background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, basic questions of the study, methodologies used in the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, significance of the study, operational definition of terms and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Education for All (EFA) is an important goal for individuals and society in particular, and the nations and the world in general. In its essence, it encompasses a wide range and multi-featured sub-goals to be achieved. All the benefits of education supposed to be accrued depend on achieving these goals.

Regarding the benefits of education, it is a key to sustainable development, peace and stability within and among countries. The role it plays as a means for active participation in the rapidly globalizing society and the economic development of the twenty-first century is also worth mentioning.

Behaviorally, education, particularly the primary one, benefits a child in preparing for continued learning and better chance for a full, healthy and secure life (Anderson, 1992:5). It helps individuals make more informed choices about fertility and other matters important to their welfare which are serious concerns for countries suffering from the consequences of high birth rate and pandemic diseases. For example, according to the findings of one study mentioned in EFA Global Monitoring Report 2000, education reduces the exposure to HIV/AIDS: the cognitive gains being the most important factor in protecting teenagers. Educating girls also adds further benefit. Studies show that children whose mothers are educated are healthier and better nourished, and this leads to reduced infant mortality and lower reproduction rate.

Economically, it is also a known fact that the productivity and the distribution of personal incomes in society are strongly related to the amount of education people have had. Studies show that a farmer with only four years of education can have as much as 8.7 percent higher productivity rate than a farmer with no education. With other inputs added, which the more educated farmer knows how to use, the returns can be 13 percent higher (Anderson, 1992:6).

Also important are the social benefits to be accrued. One study found that the social returns to investment in primary education are 28 percent higher than the returns in most other areas.

To guarantee these and many other benefits, as a matter of coincidence, education has become a human right since 1948. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26) assured that the provision of basic needs including food, education, health, water and security of life and property is an obligation of the state. Following this declaration, many countries have started to realize this right. Towards this end, in the 1960s discussions had been initiated on the Development of Education in Africa. The Addis Ababa Conference on “The Development of Education in Africa” discussed strategies to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 1980. Twenty one years after the Addis Ababa Conference, the pledge to universalize primary education was examined at the Conference of African Ministers of Education and those responsible for Economic Planning, in Harare, Zimbabwe. The Harare declaration which summed up the conclusions of the conference contained a number of strategies to solve the multifarious problems which had complicated the development of education in Africa. An impressive gain during the period between 1960 and 1985 was that enrolment rate of primary school children in Africa doubled from 33 percent to 66 percent (Anderson, 1992:8).

The 1990 Education for All Conference which was held in Jomtien, Thailand, was to set the stage for a rethink of the “why” and “how” of basic education. The EFA Declaration and Framework for Action provide the general principles and modalities which are expected to guide the efforts to achieve EFA. They issued a statement

declaring that EFA is among the most urgent of the world's priorities. They pledged their nations to work towards a future in which all children, every where, will have access to quality basic education both as a matter of right and as an essential element in the efforts to achieve broad social and economic development around the world (Anderson, 1992:5).

In line with these global and continental declaration and commitment to universalize primary education, the Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia (FDRE) set a Constitution that states “the fundamental rights and freedoms specified ... shall be interpreted in a manner conforming to the principles of universal declaration of human rights, international covenants on human rights and international instruments adopted by Ethiopians”.

Based on this Constitution, the New Ethiopian Education and Training Policy and its strategy of 1994 stated that primary education is compulsory and free up to 10th grade.

Accordingly, for the successful implementation of the policy and its strategies, a five-year Education Sector Development Program I (ESDP I) was initiated, prepared and implemented between 1997 and 2002. This program aimed at improving quality of education, expanding access with special emphasis on primary education in rural areas as well as promoting education for girls. The ESDP II has also been prepared as a continuation of ESDP I for the period 2003-2005 with the aim to ensure quality education. The third ESDP, which is in series with the previous ones, has been launched to enhance good quality Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015 for the period of 2005/06-2010/11.

Despite all these commendable endeavors and commitment, and progress made globally and nationally, universalizing primary education by the year 2015 seems to face a challenge. The EFA 2000 Assessment and EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 detect that this challenge is more pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (Anderson, 1992:9) points out as a distressing failure that worldwide 130 million

children do not have access to primary education. According to the International Consultative Forum on EFA 2000, there were more than 113 million children in the world with no access to primary education, out of which 42 million live in Sub-Saharan Africa. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 reduces the number of out-of-school children to be 103.5 million in 2001. This same report forecasts that if past trends continue Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) across the world will be 85 percent in 2005 and 87 percent in 2015. This means the system will leave some 13 percent of 103.5 million children out-of-school by 2015. The case is not exceptional for Ethiopia, if not worse.

In Ethiopia, though the pace seems to increase at a faster rate, from a national GER of 20.3 percent in 1992/93 to 57.4 percent in 2000/01 and from a national NER of 17.7 percent in 1994/95 to 48.8 percent in 2000/01 (MOE, EMIS, 2001), in actual case it is much lower than the Sub-Saharan averages which are 70 percent and 60 percent respectively (International Consultative Forum on EFA 2001). An assessment made in 2006 on NGOs Working on ABE in Ethiopia (BEA_E, 2006) discloses that out of 14.3 million primary school age (7-14) children in 2004/05, 2.9 million were without access to primary education. The number of school age children is estimated (according to the projection of Central Statistics Authority cited in this same study) to reach 16.5 million in the year 2009/10. This figure will increase to 19 million by 2015 (Sitotaw, 2005: 2). This is the upcoming challenge to the achievement of EFA.

With all these facts, the pace to make quality education accessible for all by the set time remains too slow and undoubtedly a lot more need to change. Regarding this, Haileselassie (2001) and ESDP III (2005:35) have noticed that the task that awaits ahead is quite a challenge and requires acceleration of efforts to achieve UPE by the year 2015.

According to UNICEF (1992:12-13), girls, rural and poor children are at the forefront to mention as to who is left out of education. With regard to elementary schooling a study conducted by FAO (2003) has identified 16 factors that persist in constraining the education of younger rural children and thus hindering progress

towards EFA at the very basic level. Although these factors are clearly identified, many countries have still not dealt with them adequately, so that they remain obstacles to EFA goals.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As already explained, the journey to achieve some of EFA goals by 2015 has been entangled with problems. The issue of access, quality and equity has remained to be a great concern of the days. The existing formal education system does not fully lend itself to reach and teach the out-of-school children.

When considering the region in focus, Amhara National Regional Government, the coverage of the first cycle primary school (grade 1-4) as measured by GER was below the national average and the disparity was high within the region, with the highest being in Bahir Dar (Tamiru, 2004).

Being aware of this fact and based on the Dakar Framework for Action, and as a collaborative body with the Ethiopian government, many international and local non-governmental organizations are involved to share the common goal of working toward EFA. According to Berhanu (2004) about 550 local and 365 international NGOs were involved in diversified development sectors in Ethiopia. Out-of the total 915 NGOs, 35 percent were involved in education which was the highest next to the number of NGOs in social welfare sector (39.6 percent).

The involvement of these NGOs largely with the alternative mode of educational approach has been believed to bring a change. It is revealed that the GER share of the ABE was 2.8 percent in 2003/04 at national level (ESAA 2003/04, MoE, 2005). During the same year, there were 1863 ABE centers, 4,122 facilitators and 253,750 enrolled children with a total enrolment share of 8.3 percent in basic primary education in Amhara Region (JRM, 2006: 29). This puts the region at the lead in the number of centers and children served.

This is an indication that many NGOs are working in the region, and ABE programs are being popularized. However, North Wollo zone is one of the most economically deprived and food insecure area (BoFED, 2001:3), ecologically degraded and climatically unstable. It is also an area where harmful traditional practices such as early marriage and induced child prostitution are common SCD (2003). A study conducted by Basic Education Association in Ethiopia (BEA_E, 2006: 25) also points out that, on the general prevailing condition of Ethiopia, community resistance and engagement of the children in the livelihood activities are the main constraints to access primary education through ABE. This diverse context of the zone particularly the socio-economic condition causes high disparity (Ayalew, 1989:27) and enrolment rate to be affected highly (UNESCO, 1998:17) even with this new alternative mode of education delivery.

To check whether such was the reality, this study tried to objectively assess NGO-assisted ABE projects in ensuring quality, coverage, equity, sustainability and the necessary relationship among stakeholders in overcoming the said constraints.

Moreover, in the zone, there was no such a comprehensive study made so far in this aspect. Few studies made in other settings focused on innovative features, feasibility, sustainability and the relevance of curriculum of ABE, and others focused only on the contribution of NGOs in the FE system approaches. Thus the specific objectives of this study were to:

- a) identify factors that constrain the implementation of ABE in the zone;
- b) indicate the contribution of NGOs in ensuring coverage, quality, equity and relevance as EFA and MD goals;
- c) scan the sustainability of ABE projects being undertaken by NGOs;
- d) define the type of link and supportive relationship between different stakeholders of ABE projects; and
- e) address the equality and vertical relationship of ABE approach and the FE system.

Based on these objective frameworks, the study attempted to address the following guiding questions.

- a) What are the factors that still persist in constraining the delivery of ABE from the supply and take-up sides?
- b) To what extent are the critical issues of access, equity and quality addressed in the zone towards the achievement of UPE by 2015?
- c) Who is going to take over ABE projects at the end of the project period?
- d) What does the network and partnership among ABE project stakeholders look like?
- e) How can the issue of parity and nexus between ABE and FE systems be described?

1.3 Significance of the Study

It was the researcher's belief that the findings of the study would be significant in the following ways.

- a) It would help create positive awareness in the society about the alternative approach to basic education delivery.
- b) It would also help replicate similar educational projects in other areas of Ethiopia which have similar settings.
- c) It would help initiate and advocate the formulation of clear and strong educational policy in favor of ABE mode of delivery so that it will be possible to take ABE to a level of national and regional movement.
- d) The result of the study would be useful in pinpointing/ tracing environmental and cultural factors that constrain the implementation of ABE projects.
- e) It will initiate other researchers for further and deep study in the area.

1.4 Delimitation of the Study

There are a number of education providers (community, private investors, government, NGOs, etc.,) and assessing every aspect and mode of delivery of education will be too vast to manage. Thus the topic delimited itself to the assessment of alternative basic education projects of NGOs in north Wollo zone.

This was because as previously discussed the researcher believed that there are a number of factors that may hinder the provision of education even though alternative ways are used as children from such environment are expected to forfeit education. The study was further delimited to:

- a) the investigation of the contribution of NGOs in providing basic education through alternative ways to realize the goals of EFA and the environment under which they are operating; and
- b) look at the supportive structure and relationship of stakeholders in ABE projects and connection between ABE and FE system.

However, the study did not deal with the financial aspect and project concepts rather with the effects or outcomes of these projects.

1.5 Research Design and Methodology

1.5.1 Methodology

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of ABE projects assisted by NGOs. The study also sought to identify factors that hinder the performance of these projects in the zone. It also tried to picture how NGOs can help speed up the EFA through ABE approach and how this approaches are scaled up. Since the methodology of any research is based on the purpose of the study, the researcher, thus, reasonably selected the descriptive survey method.

1.5.2 Sources of Data

The study used primary and secondary sources of data. The major sources of primary data were project owners and implementing agencies, members of CMC, government education officers, the project target groups and facilitators. Moreover, official statistical data of education complied at local level were used as major sources of data.

1.5.3 Sampling Technique

There were five programs having 77 ABECs with duration of two years and above. The projects under study operate in six woredas of the zone. The projects are being implemented by five NGOs, namely; Save the Children Denmark, PADET, WSO, ADA and Plan Ethiopia. The study was designed to be conducted in the six woredas that include the five programs on the assumption that it would exhibit the total image of the zone. Out of the total (77) ABE centers, representative samples of 31 (with sampling ratio of 40 percent) were included in the study with stratified random sampling technique. Since the experience and financial capacity of the NGOs differ, all the five NGOs were considered in the study. Save the Children Denmark has ABE projects in four woredas. Hence, it was further stratified at woreda level as each woreda differ in many ways.

Regarding the respondents, 69 (31.8 percent) facilitators were randomly selected from a total of 217. Supervisors and coordinators were selected by availability sampling technique. Sample respondents of CMC members from the centers were selected using quota sampling. From each NGO operating in each woreda, one Center Management Committee out of four was considered. Since each Center Management Committee consists of five to seven members, two members were taken from each center. In this manner a total of 34 CMC members were included in the study.

Table 1: Sample Respondents by NGO and Operating Woreda

No	Name of the NGO	Woreda	Sampled Facilitators	Sampled Supervisors	Sampled NGO Officials	Sampled WEO Officials	Total
1	SCD	Gubalافتو	4	-	-	1	5
		Habru	8	1	-	1	10
		Kobo	9	1	-	1	11
		Woldia	3	-	1	1	5
2	Plan Ethiopia	Lasta	15	1	1	1	18
3	PADET	Gubalافتو	12	2	1	-	15
4	WSO	Habru	8	1	1	-	10
5	ADA	Gidan	10	-	1	1	12
Total			69	6	5	6	86

1.5.4 Data Collecting Instruments and Procedures

The researcher developed close-and open-ended questionnaire which were appropriate to gather information/ data from the education department of the implementing agencies, project coordinators, facilitators, supervisors and woreda education officers.

Interviews and discussions were also held with woreda NFBE experts, children's parents/families, CMC members and NGO project coordinators to assess the overall picture of the program. On top of that existing documents and information on the projects were reviewed first. The related literatures were reviewed to find out what have been already written and researched on the assumption that they render knowledge and background information for the researcher.

All data collecting tools were checked for their validity by the advisor. The questionnaires were also made reliable through the administration of a pilot test using respondents of similar character outside the study settings. This was to ensure whether the tools serve adequately for the purpose they were designed.

A pilot study was conducted prior to administering the questionnaire in three project centers and two woredas to check the reliability and validity of the questionnaire items. Accordingly, in part IV, Item number 1, kebele education office was included and removed finally. The researcher also learned from one of the project owners' head office the presence of level IV in ABE structure. However, it was checked that there is no level IV in ABE structure. Thus, based on the pilot test, it is avoided from item number 2 of part V.

While the duty of preparing and organizing data collection tools was carried out by the researcher alone, the distribution and collection of the questionnaires were conducted through the use of assistant and contact person in the zone. The interviews and discussions were done by the researcher himself. The researcher

involved in the coordinating and communication activities related to questionnaire distribution and data collection.

1.5.5 Data Analysis

The responses obtained through data collecting instruments were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Thus to analyze such data different methods were used which would be relevant to each variable.

The responses obtained were tallied and computed with the appropriate technique in the following ways.

- a) Prior to doing the computation, the reviewed project documents and the responses obtained through related questions were analyzed, and compared.
- b) The researcher prepared a five point Likert-type scale and marked the test scores which were rated by respondents. This would help analyze and interpret the scores.
- c) Mean scores were computed and the mean in turn were computed through standard deviation, t-test and Spearman rank order correlation for the level of significance and probabilities of sureness of prediction.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Though there were shortcomings in conducting this research, it was not as such a major one to the extent to affect the outcomes and reliability of the result of the study. While proposing the study, it was assumed that data gathering process from each project center and concerned offices would be accomplished between 25 and 30 days. However, it took more than fifty days. This created exhaustion that in turn deteriorated the quality of data obtained through interviews. The other limitation was that official data were not available readily in organized and summarized form. The major factors that contributed to the limitations include:-

- i. The uncomfortable topography of the land in the zone that made the trip on foot very tiresome and time consuming.
- ii. Lack of adequate and up-to-date information and detailed knowledge and experience on ABE project on the side of woreda education officials.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Basic Education: It refers to learning outcomes, i.e., knowledge and skills, acquisition and application, positive attitude formation, internalization and exhibition of values for a variety of life and work-enhancing purposes and for the good that is inherent in knowledge itself (Thompson, 2001:4).

Assessment: The process by which one attempts to measure the quality and quantity of learning and teaching using various techniques (Thomas, et al. 1978: 26).

Alternative Basic Education: A system of learning which is characterized by flexibility, capacity to recognize and creativity to utilize diversity, and transparency in terms of open access, open learning, and limitless opportunities to release the creative potential of the learners which is applied to non-formal learning situation (Thompson, 2001:4).

Gross Enrollment Ratio: is the ratio of total enrollment, regardless of age, in a given level of education to the population age group that corresponds to the official age of this level of education (World Bank, 1995: 34).

Partnership: is a formal relationship between individuals or groups in which expectations are agreed beforehand and which has at its heart, a shared profit, risk element and a relationship built upon fulfilling an obligation or completing a task (The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum in Holloway, 1998).

Basic Learning Needs: is defined as the need comprising both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the

basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings (World Declaration on Education for All, Article 1, Paragraph 1).

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study consists of four chapters. Chapter one deals with the problem and its approach in which background of the problem, statement of the problem, significance of the study, research design and methodology, definition of terms, limitations of the study and organization of the study are included. Chapter two reviews related literature to lay the conceptual framework for the study and to give background information. The third chapter deals with presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. The last chapter, chapter four, is concerned with presentation of the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Finally, in the appendix part, list of reference materials used for the study, sample questionnaire, interview guide and observation checklist are attached.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Concepts and Definitions

The perception of what the concept of education entails determines the extent of identifying and understanding what educational needs should be fulfilled through one means or another. The ever emerging diversified educational demands and needs of a society through time that makes a living on one side, and the development of educational philosophy since the crisis of global education in the late 1960s and early 1970s on the other, has changed the concept of education.

Before the 1970s, education was viewed as related to schooling only whose effect was measured by the number of years of classroom exposure and by the type and level of credentials earned (Coombs, 1985). The realization of the limitation of this concept and its consequence together with the educational crisis has revolutionized educational thoughts. Since then, in contrast to the previous view of education, education can no longer be perceived as a time and place bound activity, rather as a learning with wide latitudes in methodological approach, location and timing. The major actions taken by World Bank, UNICEF and ICED in the early 1970s, have brought land mark gains.

When formal education had been the focus of sustained criticism, the most influential thinking dimension was introduced by Paulo Freire in 1974.

2.1.1 Basic Education

Most of the general population assume that education and schooling are interchangeable terms. Many educators seem to feel that any education that happens outside of school is somehow inferior, usually dubious, and certainly uncontrolled. Other educators and philosophers point out that learning takes place inside and outside of classrooms.

This later concept acknowledges the presence of three modes of education in which the learning experience can be equally powerful in each of those settings. The three modes distinguished are formal education, non-formal education and informal education.

However, today, education is defined from a functional point of view as a continuous process of satisfying the learning needs of society and individuals.

Basic education refers to the learning outcomes, i.e. knowledge and skills acquisition and application, positive attitudes formation, internalization and exhibition of values for a variety of life-and-work-enhancing purposes and for the good that is inherent in knowledge itself (Thompson, 2001:24). One of the purposes of basic education is to meet basic needs and to facilitate and enhance the exercise of basic rights (ADEA, 2001: 4).

The rights-based approach to basic education is predicted on the conviction that, for the sustainable exercise of basic rights, duty bearers are expected to fulfill their duties and obligations not only in providing opportunities for the exercise of the rights but also in taking appropriate measures to ensure that they are exercised (ADEA, 2001: 4-5). The objectives of basic education, therefore, must facilitate the exercise and enjoyment of basic rights and fulfillment of basic needs. Towards this end, education for all is the necessary requirement.

At this juncture, it will be important to conceptualize the definition of basic education vis. primary education. As Philips (1975) put it, the term basic is defined as having two meanings.

i) The bottom part of a structure which is adequate to support the parts above it; and ii) something that exists in a form adequate to meet functional needs. Applied to education, according to Phillips (1975:1) the definition is complicated by the fact that the term “basic education” has little currency in standard classifications in the levels of education. However, as an attribute to other forms of education the term is now coming into ever increasing use by educators and statesmen (Berhanu, 2000: 22).

According to Phillips (1975: 1-4) six principal usages can be given to define basic education: i) the kind of elementary education in view of fulfilling the minimum right to education ii) minimum mass education necessary for continuing development strategy; iii) the kind of initial education necessary for continuing education; iv) pre-employment education required for the life of work; v) the basic cycles of studies in life-long education; and vi) the minimum essential learning needs of identified groups. The last usage corresponds to the 1972 ICED-Faure Report, the 1974 World Bank Working Paper in Education Section (in Phillips: 1975), and signify what Coombs et al. (1973), WCEFA (1990), and UNESCO (1995) tried to commonly define (as cited in Berhanu, 2000:22).

The term basic education in Ethiopia includes primary education (1-8) of the formal system; the Non-formal Basic Education (NFBE) provision of the Regional Education Bureau for the age group of 7-14 as well as the Alternative Basic Child Education Program of the NGOs (MoE, 2000:1).

Basic education focuses on literacy, numeracy, environment, agriculture, crafts, home science, health services and civics.

Thus, for the purpose of this study, basic education as referred to in ABE, the following UNESCO definition can be taken “The very minimum of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable individuals to operate with a reasonable expectation of success in their community or society” as cited in Berhanu (2000:22).

2.1.2 Non-Formal Education

The use of the term Non-Formal Education will be restricted to systematic learning opportunities which are organized outside the framework of the formal system of education, and address the learning needs of specific target groups (ADEA, 2001: 4).

Non-formal education has been defined (Kleis, 1973: 6 as cited in Journal of Agricultural Education) as any intentional and systematic educational enterprise

(usually outside of traditional schooling) in which content is adapted to the unique needs of students (or unique situations) in order to maximize learning and minimize other elements which often occupy formal school teachers (i.e. taking role, enforcing discipline, supervising study hall, etc.,) (Journal of Agricultural Education, 1993:73).

NFE has, in general, been an expression of the desire to provide education and facilitate learning through alternative modes of delivery for children and youngsters who have been unable to access formal education opportunities. But the descriptor, meaning forms of education provided outside the mainstream formal system, has unfortunately rendered the concept negative. It would seem that the term is at best unattractive and at worst opprobrious. To those schooled in the formal school tradition and who are charged with reproducing and perpetuating the dominant mode of education, i.e. formal education, non-formal education would seem unwelcome and even a threat to the status quo (ADEA, 2001:3).

While formal and non-formal education are different, they are not opposites. Both emphasize organized and intentional learning. Both involve structure, professional educators, and choices by learners. Responsibility for learning is shared among educators and learners. The differences are more a matter of degree in each of these types of education (Journal of Agricultural Education, 1993:74).

The difference arises when spelling the nonformal education, i.e. 'non-formal' and 'nonformal' are different in meaning. The prefix "non-" means "not; absence of; the opposite of". But nonformal education is not the opposite of formal education. In many ways they are similar. Since nonformal education has a definition and unique philosophy; "nonformal education" is the more accurate spelling. Although you will find both forms of spelling, the most common usage in current literature is nonformal education (Journal of Agricultural Education, 1993:75).

As to its characteristics NFE focuses on practical skills and knowledge while schools often focus on information which may have delayed application. Overall NFE has a

lower level of structure (and therefore more flexibility) than schools (Journal of Agricultural Education, 1993:73).

Yet the phenomenon of change which NFE implies is dictating the modes of operation every where including situations in which decisions on formal education are made. Undoubtedly change is an imperative that is pervading all aspects of human endeavors, education not excluded (ADEA, 2001:3). The discourse on NFE which was initiated by Coombs et al. (1973, 1974) has continued to influence the change agenda in the domain of education and training. Not only is the need for change recognized, now more than ever before, the effects of the unwillingness to change are also starkly in evidence.

As clearly put by Coombs et al. (1973) and Coombs and Ahmed (1974) none of the three modes alone can meet all the important life-time learning needs of an individual, much less of a whole society. Therefore, it should be noted that, neither of them (formal, non-formal and informal) has a monopoly of merits on the other. They should not be seen as a competing or rival systems, but as a complementary branches supporting and reinforcing each other.

2.1.3 Universal Primary Education

Education is the basic right of human beings. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) declared that primary education shall be given free and be compulsory. As seen from the angle of human rights, education has some benefits. Education:

- gives meaning and values to lives;
- helps to advocate other human rights;
- is a message for good health, security and human needs.

Hence, children denied of access to primary education have already been far from the global right (UNESCO, 2001).

Being aware of the above fact, many developing countries showed their commitment towards primary education. In that, following the Jomtein World Conference for Education in 1990, the world revised its commitment for UPE and EFA in Dakar 2000 Summit (World Education Forum). The countries in this summit at Dakar in Senegal produced the Dakar Framework of Action to which all of them committed to ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality (UNESCO, 2000).

Following the commitments, many countries have realized the goal of UPE or have been stretched towards it. Though some countries were successful in achieving UPE, many countries are still on track to attain UPE and even some have given their back to it. It is evident that more than 100 million children are still besides the broken bridge of age to primary education. Furthermore, an overwhelming number of out-of-school children live in developing countries, and the majority of them are girls (UNESCO, 2001).

The hindrances in the effort to universalize primary education are many and diverse. Different writers indicated the major hindrances entangling developing countries to be: lack of need-oriented and well designed educational policies, demographic problems related to fast population growth and unfair resource allocation especially for primary education (Coombs et al. 1973; Bishop, 1989).

The availability of essential resources in the formal schooling system cannot satisfactorily solve the problem of the primary education system unless some other modes of primary education provision is innovated and practiced. Moreover, achieving UPE only through formal schooling had been proved to be impotent in the past decades. Hence, it became a must to modify the more traditional educational trend in a new fashion so as to respond to the demands of the twenty first century (Coombs, 1985; Bishop, 1986).

2.1.4 Alternative Basic Education

The inadequacies of the formal education in relation to the needs of certain sectors of the population constitute a source of justification for NFE and ABE. Another source of justification stems from the right of everyone to education that implies the right to determine how education shall be given in conformity with social, legal and cultural values of both providers and beneficiaries. In order to reach this goal, non-formal and Alternative Basic Education initiatives have been designed.

According to Befekadu (2006:18), Alternative Basic Education refers to learning which is characterized by flexibility, capacity to recognize and creatively to utilize diversity, and transparency in terms of the degree of openness-open access, open learning and limitless opportunities to release the creative potential of the learners.

The assumption in Alternative Basic Education is that all people can be educated and that it is in society's interest to ensure that all are educated to at least basic or primary education in the case of Ethiopia.

In pursue of the goal of Education for All by the year 2015, ABE is designed as an important strategy and being implemented for out of school children and adults who are denied of access to basic education for various reasons in the past.

2.2. An Overview of the Current Basic Education

2.2.1 Access Issues

Schools must be nearby, safe, healthy and affordable, and scheduled at convenient times. Regarding this, Anderson (1992:22) points out that the place where schooling is offered-especially its proximity and safety (physical accessibility), and the timing of school schedules-especially the way in which this affects children's work (technical accessibility) and, therefore, education costs (economic accessibility) determine to a great extent whether children attend and stay in school.

While place and time affect the school participation of all children, experience shows that they are most important for the groups that have been disadvantaged-girls, rural children, children of poor families and children in other especially difficult circumstances.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as discussed above, proclaimed once and for all the right of 'every one' to education. Children are the main beneficiaries of this declaration owing to the design of systems and techniques of the education and their relevance to inherit, preserve and enrich cultural heritage.

The 1948 Universal Declaration was followed by another Child Right Declaration which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 November, 1959. Since then this declaration served as a corner stone in the history of the right to education. The 1959 Child Right Declaration reflects the concept of 'all the best to the child' which is restated as 'mankind owes to the child the best it has to give'. Making education accessible to children is the best offer more than any thing else.

With respect to Africa, the previously named 'Organization of African Unity' (OAU) underlined the need to jointly promote educational and cultural heritage in order to achieve its basic objectives. Moreover, the OAU Charter of Addis Ababa which was held in 1963, reaffirmed the support of members for UN declaration (Anderson, 1992: 32).

The UNESCO (2002) summary report on EFA forums held at regional and sub-regional levels points out the findings from forum presentations as to include:

- i. authorities give inadequate emphasis to EFA in spite of the recommendations of the Dakar Framework for Action;
- ii. most country teams for EFA do not have enough commitment and experience;
- iii. equipment for smooth communication is lacking or inadequate;
- iv. local actors involved in the EFA process lack coordination of their efforts;
- v. some countries lack human resource to support the elaboration of EFA;

- vi. certain countries face difficulties in raising funds from international donor agencies; and
- vii. partnership at the country level is at a low ebb, as exemplified by the absence of civil society in the EFA process.

All UN member countries have promised to achieve UPE by 2015 as MDG. Ethiopia, as a signatory body of the UN, has set its own goals which are more ambitious than the MDGS. It is aiming to provide eight years of primary education for all, rather than the five years target of the MDGs (Sitotaw, 2005:1).

The agreed international indicators, as Sitotaw states (2005:1), are net enrolment ratio (NER) and proportion of pupils starting grade one who reach grade five. In 2004/05 out of 14.3 million primary school age (7-14) children, 11.4 million were enrolled in formal primary school (BEA_E, 2006).

An assessment made on NGOs working on ABE in Ethiopia (BEA_E, 2006: 25) highlights the following as general problems that NGOs face to access basic education to the community:

- i. limitation to meet the high demand for education from the community;
- ii. lack of curriculum for primary level;
- iii. lack of awareness of the community on education;
- iv. community resistance to girls' education;
- v. shortage of school materials;
- vi. poor attendance and absenteeism due to engagement in livelihood activities;
- vii. lack of flexibility in ABE programs;
- viii. lack of skilled human resource to implement ABE programs; and
- ix. lack of infrastructure.

2.2.2 Quality Issues

The AU Commission (2005) in its evaluations of the decade of education in Africa (1997 - 2006) set quality of education as one of the four priority areas of the decade.

According to the World Declaration on Education for All, as cited in UNESCO (2000:17) and UNESCO (2005:16), improving every aspect of the quality of education is one of the six goals of EFA. Quality education is one that satisfies basic learning needs, and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experiences of living (UNESCO, 2000:17). Quality is at the heart of education, and what takes place in classrooms and other learning environments is fundamentally important to the future well-being of children, young people and adults.

The World Declaration on Education for All elaborates the need for active role playing involvement by governments and other EFA partners to ensure basic education of quality for all regardless of gender, wealth, location, language or ethnic origin.

EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2002:20) has set a number of indicators that reflect the quality of education and that have been accepted for education for all monitoring and evaluation. These include, among others, completion of primary schooling, low repetition and dropout rate and the percentage of qualified teachers. The definition of 'qualified' varies from country to country, with substantial number of qualified primary school teachers having themselves only completed primary schooling or two years of secondary education.

With regards to gender of teachers, some research has shown a correlation between higher quality of education and more women teachers (UNESCO, 2004:48), probably indicating education systems which have become stabilized. On the contrary, however, there are generally more male teachers in conflict and remote rural areas (UNESCO, 2002:20).

Increasing the proportion of women teachers, which often means staffing a school with at least one female teacher, has two main effects on girls schooling. First, the presence of women teacher helps to promote the perception of a safer and more protected school environment for girls. Second, women teachers provide visible, immediate role models of educated women for girls attending schools (a thematic study on girls' education by UNESCO, 2000:31). In this scenario the concern is expressed that children should see and have teachers of their same sex as role models. However, to date there is no evidence of parents forbidding sons to enroll in schools with all women teachers, whereas parents do keep their daughters out of school if no female teachers, are present (UNESCO, 2004: 49). Perceptions and reassurances of safety are critical for girls, and the presence of woman teachers in a male dominated teaching force-women teachers who value girls and boys equally-must take high priority.

Increasing the proportion of trained teachers is widely accepted as one of the main ways in which the quality of education could be improved. It should be, however, noted that the contents as well as the duration of teacher training programs vary widely from one country to another influencing the quality of teachers trained under these programs.

Building on the lessons of the decade between 1990 and 2000, the World Declaration of EFA has formulated critical strategies for the achievement of quality education.

UNESCO (2000:17) points out eight key factors that are required for successful quality education program.

- i. Healthy, well-nourished and motivated students.
- ii. Well-trained teachers and active learning techniques.
- iii. Adequate facilities and learning materials.

- iv. A relevant curriculum that can be taught and learned in a local language and builds upon the knowledge and experience of teachers and learners.
- v. An environment that not only encourages learning but is welcoming, gender-sensitive, healthy and safe.
- vi. A clear definition and accurate assessment of learning outcomes, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.
- vii. Respect for and engagement with local communities and cultures.

One of the most fundamental problems involved in dealing with the issues of quality in education is the lack of well defined and commonly accepted parameters of what constitutes quality (UNICEF, 1994: 54). There is no shortage of useful indicators such as examination results, teacher pupil ratios, percentage of trained teachers and availability of instructional materials (UNICEF, 1994: 54).

2.2.3 Equity Issues

Gender-based discrimination remains one of the most intractable constraints to realizing the right to education. Without overcoming this obstacle, Education for All cannot be achieved. Girls are a majority among out-of-school children and youth. An international agreement has already been reached to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005.

The ratio of girls to boys in primary education has been agreed as an indicator of MDGs, as cited in Sitotaw (2005:1). In Ethiopian context, in 2004/05 out of 14.3 million primary school age (7-14) children, 11.4 million were enrolled in formal primary schools (55.9 percent male and 44.1 percent female).

Community and family empowerment and participation in school management and other activities are keys to ensuring that girls enroll, attend, and stay in school. Family and community participation contribute to the process of decentralization and the institutionalization of community involvement in education. This, in turn,

increases project quality and sustainability. Community ownership of schools, (management, control, financing and organization) is an important building block in promoting the educational participation of girls, particularly among populations that have traditionally had low female participation rate. Raising community awareness and responsibility for addressing some of the barriers to education has had impressive results in places like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Mali (according to the International Consultative Forum on EFA 2000 Assessment).

Once communities are empowered to create and manage schools near their homes, with teachers they can trust and a curriculum they believe in, resistance to sending girls to school and keeping them there past puberty appears to melt away.

2.3 A Glimpse of Alternative Basic Education

NGOs involvement in taking massive action in education is a recent phenomenon as the agenda for many NGOs that came to Ethiopia in the 70s and 80s was to avoid the humanitarian crises caused by natural disasters and civil strife.

The presence of NGOS in Ethiopia is as old as the beginning of modern Education in Ethiopia. The evolution of NGOs participation, however, has its roots operating in traditional religious community institution. It was in the 1950s and 1960s that new civil society organizations like self-help associations and faith-based institutions emerged. The first law that recognized and codified civil society groups in Ethiopia was passed in 1960. It is under this same law that NGOS are operating in the country today. Until 1991 only few local NGOS operated in Ethiopia (BEA-E 2006: 11)

2.3.1 The Commencement of ABE in Ethiopian Context

As cited in MoE (2000:4), Ethiopia had considerable experience with alternate modes of education. In the recent past, there has been a wide range of alternative approaches to education. The nomadic tribes were provided with special mobile

schools for basic literacy during the Emperor's regime. During the Dergue government, non-formal education was given a high priority to the extent of establishing a large department at the Ministry of Education. The researcher himself is the result of this basic education campaign during the Dergue government. After the collapse of the Dergue government, the approach by the now existing government changed. The decentralized political and administrative system gave the greatest responsibility to regions to develop their own distinctive approaches to primary education to materialize UPE.

2.3.2 The Rationale for ABE Provision

The AU Commission in its Evaluation of the Decade of Education in Africa (2005:5) points out that to succeed education will need to go beyond the narrow confines of the conventional education system, combining formal and nonformal modalities to achieve a high level of life-long education for children.

To reach the needs of children in specially difficult circumstances and those who failed to complete the primary cycle, attention is now being focused on alternative patterns of providing primary level education.

According to a discussion paper presented at 2001 Biennial Conference of ADEA, the current forms of alternative approaches are the result of the following phenomena:

- i. the dysfunction of a de-cultured mainstream formal education;
- ii. the desire of communities and groups to decide what and how their children must learn;
- iii. the developments at the regional and global levels e.g. the Education for All initiative and other regional initiatives which have implications for education; and
- iv. the impact of educational philosophical thoughts.

Anderson (1992:10) stresses the failure of the formal education system to reach or to teach some children. This is read as, "... in some places no schools exist, in

others, an overcrowded classroom or an overworked teacher discourages new children from entering ...". A schools' schedule can also make it impossible for some children to attend. A child who has daily responsibilities in the household such as caring for younger siblings or collecting fire wood and fetching water that the family needs, may not finish his/her chores in time to get to school.

An additional insight on the failures of formal education (UNICEF, 1992: 16), as related to fund and innovative idea in education, points out that when funds are not available, people don't devote their attention to education; if good ideas are lacking education seems mired in failure, funds are diverted to other 'more promising sector'. In such circumstances innovative and low cost education programs can improve access to and quality of education and at the same time generate new sources of funds and support.

A research paper by Save the Children Organizations clearly stipulates the rationale for their initiatives in ABE programs. According to the study paper, the NGOs initiate ABE program after the Ethiopian government disclosed that only 30 percent of school-aged children were enrolled in schools. Further rationale were:

- i. low primary school participation rate for pastoral, rural, urban poor children and a desire to reach more children with low cost education program;
- ii. disparity in enrolment between urban and rural population and between boys and girls;
- iii. absence of child-centered focus and curricula relevant to rural children;
- iv. high drop out rate in formal schools; and
- v. conflict between formal school calendar and farming activities involving children.

In strengthening this idea, the proceedings of the National Conference held in Adama in 2001 elaborates as to why countries, like Ethiopia, have to consider the alternative approaches to the provision of basic education. Some of the reasons,

according to this proceeding, are to provide access in education as a human right issue, to contribute to human capital formation and economic growth, and to meet the growing demands for education.

A further critical view by Berhanu (2003:4-5) in his analysis of the why of ABE in Ethiopia clearly illustrates the following justifications.

- i. ABE is a tested avenue for quickly boosting the current low participation rate of the country and reaching EFA by 2015.
- ii. It is cost-effective as compared to the formal system of schooling.
- iii. It reduces resource burden on the government.
- iv. It is relevant to the diverse context of Ethiopia.
- v. It has high potential for closing gender gap in education.
- vi. It has better potential for addressing drop out issues.
- vii. It fits with the government's policy of decentralization and democratization.
- viii. It provides opportunity for reaching disadvantaged urban and rural children that the formal system of education is bypassing so far.

Recognizing the big requirement of the goal of eight years of primary education for all children (enrolment to increase to 19 million children by 2015) (Sitotaw, 2005:11), and the challenge of catering for over-age children who missed out on schooling at the same time catering for the current school age group, the Ethiopian Government also places ABE program as its strategy (ESDP III).

2.3.3 The Situation of Alternative Basic Education in Ethiopia

NFE is expected to provide a wider range of learning services which in a number of cases, could be complementary to and even substitute formal education. In many countries these may be the only available learning opportunities for most people and effective means of rectifying the distortions created by mainstream formal schooling. A number of writers have examined the question of NFE relative to EF.

For many, NFE is expected to provide greater opportunity of innovation in education (as cited in ADEA, 2001: 26).

According to Berhanu (2003:3) ABE contributed to promoting the implementation of the ETP of Ethiopia through:

- resolving the problem of distance;
- reducing family and parents fears on sending girl-children to school;
- reducing opportunity cost for families;
- contributing gender equality in education;
- contributing to faster educational coverage;
- reducing dropping out rates, resources and capacity for expanding education;
- reducing the cost of education;
- saving time covering a four year education in three-yeers; and
- contributing to the grassroots community empowerment and decentralization.

According to JRM (2006:29) Amhara region ABE centers have flourished throughout woredas. During the year between 2002/03 to 2005/06 there were 1, 863 centers and 4,122 facilitators enrolling 253,750 children with a total enrolment share of 8.3 percent in basic primary education.

Nevertheless, it was reported that there was no common understanding about the concept of ABE at regional as well as woreda levels (ESDP II, JRM 2004-Final Report: 9 as cited in JRM 2006). This may have a negative effect in coordinating efforts and working for a common goal at different level of the educational management.

2.3.4 Some Critical Issues and Concerns - Mainstreaming and Integrating

As to the importance of linkage between formal schools and ABECS (Save the Children's experience in ABE) suggested that formal school teachers and facilitators need to visit each other, the NGOs at stake need to trace students who complete

the ABE and join formal schools or who drop out, and woreda education offices need to give an orientation to students who complete the ABE program when they join the formal school.

The UNICEF report on EFA (1994:66) shows that out-of-school and NF education program do not have adequate links with the mainstream of formal education, in spite of extensive efforts being made in several countries to forge links.

Berhanu (2003:6) points out as a challenge that strong links between ABE and formal schools have yet to be established.

BEA_E study (2006: 25) found out that non-formal center students are not admitted to the formal schools, government does not recognize teachers trained and employed by the organizations and there is lack of cooperation on the part of education officials.

According to JRM (2006: 33), in Amhara region, transitions between ABECs and the formal schools take place on a regular basis. Though the transition to and from ABEC to formal primary education is somewhat smooth, variation was observed from woreda to woreda. Some WEOs/schools allow ABE learners to join formal primary schools at any time on the basis of special testing arrangement to determine the grade level he/she should join. Others tend to accept ABE learners only after completion of level three.

Supportive policy is needed for non-formal education programs concerning the structures, curriculum, recruitment and training of facilitators and the linkage with formal education program (Save the Children's Experience).

It also needs to be more flexible in terms of entry requirements to allow the freedom of choice and smooth flow of learners to and from ABE to formal schooling at any point below grade five. This could be done by offering competency tests to determine the grade level to which the child should be admitted (JRM, 2006: 34).

Moreover the formal education system curriculum from grade 1-4 is condensed into 3 years curriculum to ensure vertical linkages.

The 2001 Biennial Conference of ADEA (2001:26) felt that the distinction between 'formal' and 'non-formal' ought to be removed. NFE, in which ABE is one form of it, should be recognized as an integral part of education system with functional routes of access between the two. However, the qualitative development of NFE was seen as a prerequisite for system integration.

JRM report (2006:33) indicates that ABE students perform well in their education except for the English language. This will have a promising effect in maintaining equivalency between the two sub-sectors -ABE and FE.

Regarding the mainstreaming of ABE centers with the formal governmental education system, the JRM report shows, in Amhara region, the ABECs are incorporated in the cluster resource system which provides them with the same supervisory services as the formal schools (JRM, 2006:34).

The perspective of mainstreaming as integration suggests that both the formal and non-formal sub-sectors should be integrated in unified system of education with routes of access between the two based on a system of equivalency (ADEA, 2001:25). This way, a mutually beneficial relationship would be established with advantages for both. Formal education would benefit by incorporating non-formal attributes in its modes of operation and set it on the way to both structural and methodological transformations. In the case of non-formal education it could be accorded parity of esteem.

Besides, the marginal nature of their clients is a constraint to their development into the mainstream. Even its nomenclature was questioned because it is the only sub-sector, which is described, by what it is not - 'non-formal' (ADEA, 2001: 25).

The issue of mainstreaming NFE and ABE should be discussed in terms of provision of accessible, equitable and effective learning opportunities for all. Towards this

end, mainstreaming could be perceived as formal recognition of innovative provision and practice in ABE. Calls for the inclusion of NFE and ABE in the legal framework of basic education will have a number of implications for achieving the goals of Education for All. Firstly, the learners in the non-formal sub-sector will be counted in the national education statistics. Currently they are not included in many countries. Secondly, learners may be availed opportunities to move between the formal and non-formal sub-sectors within a unified, albeit, diversified education system. Thirdly, minimum standards with regard to provision and practice, and assessment of learning outcomes will be set and maintained. This could be a step towards quality control and assurance. Fourthly, administrative, curricular, financial and other forms of support may be provided on the basis of diversity of needs (ADEA, 2001: 25).

The concept of mainstreaming suggests inclusion of ABE in the mainstream formal education system. This suggestion seems to be justified on the grounds of equity and quality of provision, and in the context of the achievement of the goals of Education for All. It is assumed that the mainstream formal education system is better placed in terms of its inputs and processes to deliver quality basic education. Consequently, mainstreaming could remove NFE and ABE from the periphery and contribute to solving the problem of social exclusion and marginalization (ADEA, 2001: 24).

Linking the formal and non-formal education for mainstreaming the marginalized groups into a life-long learning system is identified as the priority area of focus of the Dakar Forum to improve quality of education.

2.3.5 Partnerships between Stakeholders

From the conceptual and operational definition of partnership, the following major attributes can be deduced. Primarily, partnership takes at least two parties to establish a partnership. In this aspect when the term applies to education, the potential partners are many. They include “teachers, local educational officials,

FAO (2003) highlights eight key principles for successful partnerships which will be applied with equal force to partnership between two individuals, between two or several agencies, and between agencies and less formal communities of interest such as the parents concerned with primary schools.

- i. Agreeing in detail a common vision, joined objectives and mutual benefit.
- ii. Identifying complimentary contributions that will clearly create new value.
- iii. Distributing roles in alignment with comparative advantages and without duplication.
- iv. Openness to learn from others.
- v. Trust and transparency in shared decision making.
- vi. Promoting informal personal connections to cement formal institutional links.
- vii. Fairly sharing work, problems, recognition and rewards.
- viii. Shared monitoring and evaluation of synergy, efficiency, productivity, diversity, openness, flexibility, adaptability, security of relationships and legitimacy.

Realities indicate that it is impossible for a government to achieve EFA without designing alternative strategies and encouraging participatory approaches. More over, accessing education in an equitable manner, for female school age children, children in rural settings and children who are disadvantaged to various circumstances still requires a concerted effort, cooperation and commitment from government, NGOs, communities and private sectors.

The major contribution and support areas in relation with ABE, as pointed out by Berhanu in BEA_E (2006:8) include: setting guidelines, improving access, equity, and quality, ensuring community participation and empowerment and improving efficiency.

BEA_E (2006:25) suggested areas that need relationship/collaboration between NGOs and government as follows:

- i. registration and signing of program and project contract agreement;
- ii. evaluation of the programs or project;
- iii. co-planning and implementation;
- iv. cooperation in the selection of the needy;
- v. providing technical assistance;
- vi. provision of land for construction of schools and sanitary areas;
- vii. conducting joint committee meeting; and
- viii. partnership with district education and capacity building and horizontal relationship with government at woreda levels to give non-partisan support to governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Effective relationships seen are (BAE_E, 2006: 25) both the government and the NGOs cooperate in development of education for children and adults. Governments need to establish and strengthen positive relationship and participatory approach with NGOs and other stakeholders.

As Berhanu (2004:25) indicated in his study of “Assessment of NGOs /CSOs Participation in the Education Sector Development Program of Ethiopia”, effective partnership, in support of NGOs, facilitates and accelerates the goal of achieving UPE as envisaged in the ESDP and EFA. Nevertheless relationships with the government are not always smooth BEA_E (2006). The research finding shows that NGOs face some problems despite their efforts to promote the goals.

There is a powerful correlation between low enrolment, poor retention and unsatisfactory learning outcomes and the incidence of poverty. Experience in the post-Jomtien decade, however, has demonstrated that significant progress can be made towards the goals of EFA where there is a strong political commitment, backed by new partnership with civil society and mere strategic support from funding agencies.

2.3.6 Sustainability of Educational Projects

A study conducted by Haileselassie (2001) cultural barriers, economic dependence, drought, distance of NFE centers from home and home responsibility are the major factors that constrain the learning atmosphere. For the sustainability of the projects these barriers should be avoided or overcome.

According to Berhanu (2003), sustainability issue is one of the challenges to ABE in Ethiopia. When the supporting NGOs withdraw their hands, financing these projects will become a double burden for the government. On the other hand, those children under difficult circumstances of living might forfeit their education. Hence, the problem is on both sides.

2.3.7 Challenges and Opportunities to ABE

Berhanu (2003:5) has pointed out four points as the opportunities of ABE in Ethiopia as expressed by the sign of awareness increment on the need for supporting ABE, increasing involvement of NGO, CBO and local government in ABE program, increased collaboration of GO-NGO in undertaking ABE at regional level and increased international concern and support. Absence of clear and adequate support and involvement of the government, the inclination of the government to adult literacy program, shortage of appropriate learning and reading materials quality and curriculum issues not yet addressed and insufficient popularization of ABE to attract donor support are mentioned as the challenges of ABE.

More recently, Mohammed, cited in BEA_E (20006:8), stressed three major challenges to the implementation of ABE program in the country as follows:

- i. lack of coordinated activity among government, NGOs, and concerned parties;
- ii. regions have insufficient awareness on ABE program and problem to adequately and properly budget the program; and
- iii. very limited experience of ABE intervention in the country.

The report of Joint Review Mission (2005:34) clearly put the concern on financing ABECs as a matter of sustainability. Many woredas are highly dependent upon NGOs for the financing of ABECs. This could be seen as inability to contribute in cash or material as the NGOs primarily address these groups.

There is a need for covering the running cost of ABEC. This is particularly essential when NGOs intervention is phased out. REBs are expected to take preparatory actions in this regard (Save the Children's Experience).

2.3.8 Suggested Actions to be Taken

To overcome the challenges to ABE in Ethiopia some actions should be taken in areas where the challenges are prevalently dominant. With regard to this, Berhanu (2003:7) suggested some actions to be taken in the following areas: community participation, education cost, facilitators' professional development, school organization and management, and scaling up and sustainability.

JRM (2005:35) has also suggested some actions to be taken by the MoE; the guidelines and strategies to be defined at the regional level, all relevant information to be disseminated at the woreda level through workshops, the national strategy regarding the scope of ABE and its position within the educational landscape and in relation to the formal system to be elaborated, ABE activities in the planning process to receive adequate emphasis, partnership between government, NGOS and community to be strengthened and synergy between ABE programs and the formal education system to be strengthened. Supportive policy is needed for NFE programs concerning the structures, curriculum, recruitment and training of facilitators (Save the Children's Experience).

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This part of the study deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaires from facilitators, supervisors and project coordinators; group discussions with CMC members and interviews with NGO and WEO officials. In the study, the characteristics of the subjects, factors that constrain the delivery of ABE, the extent to which access, equity and quality are addressed, the sustainability of the projects, the degree and availability of partnership between ABE project stakeholders, the equality and connection between ABE and FE systems are presented.

3.1 Characteristics of Respondents

Based on the type of questions responded to, respondents were categorized into two groups: NGO and WEO officials (in the first grouping) were taken as two independent groups in order to compare their responses; the facilitators on one side and coordinators (project coordinators, supervisors, NFBE experts of WEO) on the other (in the second grouping). All the respondents included in the study were expected to be knowledgeable in regard to ABE projects in their respective level of involvement.

As depicted in Table 2, out of a total of 86 questionnaires distributed to these respondents, 79 (91.86 percent) of them were filled and returned. Out of these respondents, 12 (15 percent) were females and 67 (85 percent) were males.

Concerning their age category, 4 (5 percent) were below 20 years, 41 (51.9 percent), 14 (17.7 percent), 4 (5 percent) and 13 (16.5 percent) were at age groups of 21-25, 26-30, 31-35 and 36-40 years respectively. Only 2 (3.8 percent) were over 40 years. That is 72 (91 percent) of them were in age ranges of 20-40 years. Looking into the details, almost half (47.1 percent) of the coordinators were in the age

range of 36-40 years while 62.9 percent of the facilitators fall in the age range of 20-25 years.

With regard to their educational level 6 (7.6 percent) completed grade 10 or 12, 30 (38 percent) completed 10th or 12th grade and have got induction training and all of them, i.e. 36 (45.6 percent) were facilitators, 23 (29.1 percent) were TTI graduates and 16 (20.2 percent) were diploma holders. All the remaining, 4 (5 percent) had B.Sc./BA degree. There were no respondents with a qualification of Masters degree and above.

Table 2: Characteristics of Respondents

Attribute	Item	Respondents					
		Facilitators		Coordinators		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
Sex	M	51	82	16	94.1	67	85.0
	F	11	18	1	5.9	12	15.0
Age	Below 20	4	6.5	-	-	4	5.1
	20-25	39	62.9	2	11.8	41	51.9
	26-30	13	21	1	5.9	14	17.7
	31-35	-	-	4	23.5	4	5.1
	36-40	5	8	8	47.1	13	16.4
	Above 40	1	1.6	2	11.8	3	3.8
Educational Level	10 th or 12 th complete	6	9.7	-	-	6	7.6
	10 th or 12 th + training	30	48.4	-	-	30	38.1
	10 th or 12 th + certificate	22	35.5	1	5.9	23	29.1
	Diploma	4	6.4	12	70.6	16	20.2
	B. Sc. Degree	-	-	4	23.5	4	5.1
	M. Sc. Degree	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work Experience	0-5 years	56	90.3	6	35.3	62	78.5
	6-10 years	4	6.5	2	11.8	6	7.6
	11-15 years	-	-	3	17.6	3	3.8
	Above 15 years	2	3.2	6	35.3	8	10.1

When looking into the specific group of respondents the largest proportions of the coordinators (which accounts for 70.6 percent) were diploma holders. On the other hand, 62 (78.5 percent), 6 (7.6 percent) and 3 (3.8 percent) had work experiences between 0-5, 6-10 and 11-15 years respectively. The remaining 8 (10 percent) of the respondents were with work experiences of more than 15 years.

3.2 General Information about the Project

All ABE projects, situated in North Wollo zone, are being implemented in six woredas: namely, Habru, Woldia, Gubalafto, Kobo, Gidan and Lasta. Table 3 below shows the distribution of NGO - assisted ABE projects in the six woredas with a total of 77 live ABE project centers. SCD has ABE projects in the four woredas, two of which overlapped with PADET and WSO. Whereas the WSO and PADET programs are being phased in, SCD program at Gubalafto is being phased out.

There are a total of 217 facilitators in the six woredas out of which 66 were females. The total number of children in all the three levels is 11, 648: 4, 059 in level I, 3,596 in level II and 3,993 in level III. Looking into the proportion of female students in each level, the 2006/07 data seems relatively to drop slightly from the previous two years. This may be due to a large gap created in the participation of male and female students in SCD projects at Habru and Kobo woredas. The general proportion of female students' participation in ABECs was found to be encouraging.

Table 3: Distribution of NGO-Assisted ABE Projects in North Wollo Zone: Summary of Data from Documents

No	Name of the NGO	Woreda	No of ABECs	No. of Facilitators			No. of Children Served												Sub Total	Grand Total									
				M	F	T	Level I			Level II			Level III																
							M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T														
1	Save the Children Denmark	Guba-lafto	4	9	3	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	562	396	958	958	4961												
																		23	12	35	364	247	611	312	275	587	448	468	916
Kobo	9	18	11	29	323	276	599	265	253	518	312	310	622	1739															
Woldia	1	1	2	3	26	28	54	28	27	55	16	25	41	150															
2	Plan Ethiopia	Lasta	22	36	20	56	493	498	991	458	463	921	412	474	886	2798	2798												
3	PADET	Guba-lafto	10	22	4	26	315	296	611	295	300	595	-	-	-	1206	1206												
4	WSO	Habru	10	16	4	20	277	288	565	169	170	339	-	-	-	904	904												
5	ADA	Gidan	12	26	10	36	311	317	628	293	288	581	283	287	570	1779	1779												
Total			77	151	66	217	2109	1950	4059	1820	1776	3596	2033	1960	3993	11648	11648												
Proportion of Female			30.4%			48%			49.4%			49.4%			48.8%														

3.3 Center Facilities and Project Context by Providing NGO

Table 4 below summarizes the project context. All ABE project owner NGOs in the woredas are legally registered and are local (ADA, PADET and WSO) and international (SCD and plan Ethiopia) organizations. The climatic condition of operating areas varies from hot (Afar boarder of Kobo and Habru) to extremely cold (Gidan). In addition to running projects, these NGOs are involved in family health and reproduction, women affairs, HIV/AIDS prevention programs, etc. Since under the new decentralized political and administrative system the responsibility of managing primary schools is given to woreda education offices; these projects are agreed with woreda education offices and with the exception of PADET and WSO all projects are implemented by WEO.

Project supervision is conducted either by WEO supervisors every three months, project owner NGOs or supervisors from cluster centers at a regular interval. Table 5 illustrates project center facilities and program arrangement. The researcher has learnt during observation that those centers supported by SCD and Plan Ethiopia are in a better condition in the type of construction and furniture and accommodation of facilitators' living rooms.

Concerning center child feeding program, the two international NGOs were providing food as a means of attraction for children during the start of the project in most areas. However, this trend seems to be neglected currently mainly for three reasons. In the first case, centers have got children to their fullest capacity, hence no need of attracting more children. In the second place, the projects handled by these NGOs are just to phase out. Lastly, administering the feeding program incurs financial and administration cost. Nevertheless children taught in those centers assisted by the international NGOs had an added benefit.

Table 4: Project Context

Items		Project Owner				
		ADA	PADET	PLAN Ethiopia	SCD	WSO
Legal status		Registered	Registered	Registered	Registered	Registered
Origin		Local	Local	International	International	Local
Climatic condition of operating area		Extremely cold(Highland)	Cold to warm(Semi highland to highland)	Warm(Semi highland)	Cold to hot(Semi highland to highland)	Warm(Semi highland)
Involvement in other development sectors and social affairs		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Project implementer		WEO	Own	WEO	WEO	Own
Project agreement		With WEO	With WEO	With WEO	With WEO	With WEO
Frequency of supervision	WEO supervision	Every 3 months	Every 3 months	Every 3 months	Every 3 months	Every 3 months
	Project owner's supervision	Very frequently	Very frequently	Scheduled	Scheduled	Very frequently
	Supervision from cluster centers	Scheduled	Scheduled	Scheduled	Scheduled	Scheduled

Table 5: Center Facilities

Item	ADA	PADET	PLAN Ethiopia	SCD	WSO
Types of center construction and furniture	Block and equipped with furniture	Grasstached house in some centers and furnished with logs of wood and stones	Block and well furnished	Block	Trees and dases when starting and gradually converted to sheet roof
Average class size	45-50	40-50	45-55	55-65	40-50
Facilitator's living room	Self rent	Self rent	Provided in some centers	Provided in almost all centers	Self rent
Centers' child feeding program	Not provided	Not provided	When project started in some selected centers	During project start in almost all centers	Not provided
Stationary materials support	Not available	Not available	Provided	Provided	Not available
Curriculum used	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD
Facilitators' training manual	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD, later improved by PACT Ethiopia	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD, later improved by PACT Ethiopia	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD, later improved by PACT Ethiopia	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD, later improved by PACT Ethiopia	Regionally developed in collaboration with SCD, later improved by PACT Ethiopia
Text books used	Regionally prepared in collaboration with SCD	Regionally prepared in collaboration with SCD	Regionally prepared in collaboration with SCD	Regionally prepared in collaboration with SCD	Regionally prepared in collaboration with SCD
Center cluster	Clustered	Clustered	Clustered	Clustered	Clustered
Duration of a given cycle	September to June (formal school schedule)	September to June (formal school schedule)	September to June (formal school schedule)	September to June (formal school schedule)	September to June (formal school schedule)
School days in a week	5	5	5	5	5
Learning hours in a day	4	4	4	31/2-4	4
Class conducted	Usually in the morning	Usually in the morning	Usually in the morning	Usually in the morning	Usually in the morning

Children in these centers have been supported with stationary materials. This might serve to retain children in these centers who were attracted previously by the feeding program though the two benefits didn't substitute each other.

All project centers in the woreda regardless of the type of assisting NGOs are clustered. Centers in the same cluster share common resources, receive information, get educational supervision and exchange experiences. Moreover, all projects made use of same curriculum, facilitators' training manual and text books regionally developed in collaboration with Save the Children Denmark. Later on, facilitators' training manual was revised and improved by Pact Ethiopia.

As it was observed physically and also shown in table 5 the size, quality and type of construction of centers vary from merely using of tree shades when project started (in case of WSO and PADET) to using good quality block wall rooms. ADA, Plan Ethiopia and Save the Children Denmark have better established centers because of their financial capacity to provide the necessary resources. However, since WSO and PADET receive only 17,000 Birr to establish a center from their partner organization, they are at all times not in a position to build better classrooms.

The academic schedule and the school days of all ABE centers are inline with the formal school days which begin in September and end in June, usually from Monday to Friday. However, some variation was observed as to the length of daily learning hours. In almost all centers, the class is conducted in the morning. They arranged the morning shift on the assumption that children might asleep on the road going to and coming back from school when the day gets hot.

3.4 Factors That Constrain the Delivery of ABE

As it was reviewed from literature, the role of the NGOs is to support the national and regional government in expanding access to primary education for those children in hard-to-reach areas. It was believed that ABE is an appropriate and cost-effective method to ensure accessibility. To this end, it was a burning issue and

important to check whether the NGOs have got acceptance to effectively implement their educational projects.

Table 6 shows the summary of the responses obtained for questions raised to rate the general working environment and acceptance of NGOs. The respondents were grouped into two, the NGOs on one side and the WEOs on the other - to check against their response. The ratings for the five point Likert-type scale weighs very low (1), low (2), average (3), high/good (4) and very high /very good (5). The mean scores of the data were interpreted as follows: 0.05-1.49 as very low (need urgent and major improvement), 1.50-2.49 as low (need major improvement), 2.50-3.49 as average (need significant improvement), 3.50-4.49 as high (acceptable with slight improvement) and 4.50 and above as very high (need to maintain the current level). In general the 2.5 and above mean score was set as an acceptable level for NGOs to operate in the zone. The weighted mean scores were further exposed to higher statistical analysis using a t-test of significance difference between two independent means at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 6: Acceptance and Working Environment of NGOs

No	Item	Respondents				t-test, df = 9	
		NGOs (n=5)		WEOs (n=6)		t	Sig. 2-tailed
		X	SD	X	SD		
1	Working environment of NGOs in the Woreda	4.40	0.548	4.50	0.548	-0.301	0.764
2	Acceptance of NGOs by the target beneficiaries	4.80	0.447	4.50	0.548	0.979	0.327
3	Acceptance of NGOs by WEOs	4.40	0.894	4.50	0.548	-0.228	0.818
	Average Weighted Means	4.53		4.50			

X = weighted meanSD = standard deviationn = number

df = degree of freedomt = calculated value of t

The overall average weighted mean scores of the items were found to be very good (4.53 and 4.50) indicating that the working environment and acceptance of NGOs in the woredas need to be kept at the current status.

On the other hand, acceptance of NGOs by target beneficiaries was rated as very high within the weighted mean score range of 4.50 and above by both the NGOs and WEOs. This rating encourages maintaining the current level as it is.

When observing the significant difference between the responses of two categories of respondents, the t-test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference (at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance) between the weighted mean scores of the two groups of respondents. This indicates that there is an agreement between the responses of the two groups of respondents with respect to working environment and acceptance of NGOs by WEOs and target beneficiaries.

The respondents were also requested to respond, table 7, whether all children have the opportunity to be enrolled and learn in ABE centers. Most of the respondents (62 percent) said all children have the opportunity to be enrolled and learn in ABECs. The Chi-square test result in this same table also indicates that the response to the item indicated is found to be independent of the type of respondents' category (as $X^2 = 1.99 < X^2_{critical} = 3.84$ at $\alpha = 0.05$ significant level). This means facilitators and coordinators commonly share the opinion that all children can be registered and learn in ABE centers when a need arises. This in turn implies that ABE is accessible for all children in terms of physical, economical and technical accessibility with no/minor constraints. However, a discussion made with CMC members and an interview held with WEO and NGO officials contradicts this opinion. What is on ground is different from what the statistics tells, i.e. there are a lot of children whose labor is wanted for the daily livelihood activities or income generation.

Table 7: Accessibility of ABE to All Children

Item	Response		Respondent Groups		Total
			Facilitators	Coordinators	
Do all children have the opportunity to be enrolled and learn in ABECs when a need arises?	Yes	f	36	13	49
		%	58.1	76.5	62.0
	No	f	26	4	30
		%	41.9	23.5	38.0
	Total	f	62	17	79
		%	100	100	100
$\chi^2 = 1.99$		df = 1	$\alpha = 0.05$		

X^2 = Chi-square

Those who said all children have no opportunity to be enrolled and learn account for 38 percent. They have been asked for their opinion. They were also asked to put

their reasons in a priority order; that is, number 1 was given for the main and strongest reason and number 10 for the weakest reason.

As depicted in Table 8, regardless of the type of respondents, child labor /child opportunity cost was ranked 1st by coordinators and 2nd by facilitators that prevent children from being enrolled in ABECs. Parent influence and extreme poverty were also ranked 3rd and 1st by facilitators and 1st and 3rd by coordinators respectively since they constrain children from being enrolled to learn in ABECs. The three factors (child opportunity cost, poverty and parent influence) are ranked from 1-3 by both respondent groups to imply that they are serious factors that need immediate action. And all of them are from the take up side i.e. from the beneficiary side.

However, gender discrimination and quality of education were not given priority (they are ranked as 10th and 9th by facilitators and 10th and 8th by coordinators respectively) to be reasons for lacking the opportunity.

Table 8: Factors That Prevent Enrollment of Children in ABECs

No	Factors	Respondents				d ²
		Facilitators		Coordinators		
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	
1	Distance from home	5.69	4	5.00	4	0
2	Overcrowded class rooms	3.96	8	4.25	6	4
3	Parent influence	7.88	3	9.00	1	4
4	Affordability problem/Poverty	8.85	1	7.25	3	4
5	Child opportunity cost/ child labor cost	8.69	2	9 .00	1	1
6	Poor center facility	4.50	6	5.00	4	4
7	Unfavorable center schedule	4.65	5	4.25	6	1
8	Poor quality of education	3.50	9	3.75	8	1
9	Gender discrimination	3.46	10	2.50	10	0
10	Insufficient ABECs	4.00	7	3.75	8	1
Σd ²						20
ρ = 0.88		α = 0.05		Sig. 2-tailed		n=10

d = difference of means rank

n = number of paired ranks

p = Spearman rank order, where -1≤ p ≤+1

Σ = summation

As it was mentioned in the literature review part, the three factors-excessive distance from home, unfavorable center schedule and poor center facility-are the factors that prevent children enrolment in ABECs from the access side. In Table 8,

these factors are ranked from 4-6 by both groups and these are supply side factors next to the take up side.

In general the Spearman Rank Order correlation ($\rho = 0.88$) shows that there is strong positive relationship between the two groups of respondents in ranking factors that prevent children from enrolment.

A further question was forwarded to the respondents regarding whether children were made to involve in any kind of labour activity. The responses of the two groups (facilitators and coordinators) were put in Table 9. 71 (89.9 percent) of them agreed that children in the respective area of these respondents involve in labour activities. This strengthens the response that children’s labour is wanted and puts its effect on children’s enrollment and attendance.

The Chi-square test result indicates that there is no statistically significant difference ($X^2 = 0.41 < X^2_{critical} = 3.84$ at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance) between the responses of the two categories. This implies that both facilitators and coordinators agree on the opinion that children are engaged in lobour activities.

Table 9: Engagement of Children in Labour Activity

Item	Response		Respondent Groups		Total
			Facilitators	Coordinators	
Do children engage in any labor activity?	Yes	f	55	16	71
		%	88.7	94.1	89.9
	No	f	7	1	8
		%	11.3	5.9	10.1
	Total	f	62	17	79
		%	100	100	100
$X^2 = 0.41$ df = 1 $\alpha = 0.05$					

X^2 = Chi-square

The extent and type of activities for which children’s labour is required determines the level and the way it affects the participation of children in primary education even under surplus supply of education. Table 10 depicts the opinion of the respondents on the type of labor engagement of children. 76 (96.2 percent) of the respondents said that children are usually engaged in caring for domestic animals. Collecting fire wood and fetching water are also the major activities in which most

children are engaged as indicated by 74 (93.7 percent) and 73 (92.4 percent) of the respondents respectively.

Table 10: Activities in Which Children are Engaged

No	Items	Respondent		Total
		Facilitators	Coordinators	
1	Caring for domestic animals	61	15	76
		98.4%	88.2%	96.2%
2	Collecting firewood	61	13	74
		98.4%	76.5%	93.7%
3	Fetching water	60	13	73
		96.8%	76.5%	92.4%
4	Farming	39	11	50
		62.6%	64.7%	63.3%
5	Pity trade	3	3	6
		4.8%	17.6%	7.6%
6	Caring for siblings	52	10	62
		83.9%	58.8%	78.5%
7	Others	2	3	5
		3.2%	17.6%	6.3%

More than one answer was possible

However, less number of respondents, 6 (7.6 percent) and 5 (6.3 percent) said that children involve in pity trade and other activities like cooking, labour wage etc,. This means that the opportunity cost of sending children to school can be identified and is highly linked to caring for domestic animals, collecting firewood, fetching water and caring for siblings. This can be considered as one factor from the take up side that prevents them from learning. The researcher made an investigation through discussion with CMC members that, in Habru woreda there is a harmful traditional practice called ‘Jebata’. Girls at the age of between 12 to 13 years are given to ‘Deres’a where they are disvirgined on the assumption that they will be lucky in securing family once they are disvirgined by Deresa. Owing to this harmful practice, girls tend to drop their schooling at their early age.

Knowing all factors that prevent children from being enrolled in alternative basic education centers, even with this new approach, would enable decision makers and other educational actors to devise mechanisms to alleviate the problem. Regarding

this, NGO and WEO respondents being in the nearby and as one body of a solution, were requested to suggest feasible mechanism to minimize the problem. As depicted in table 11, 3 (27.3 percent) of the total respondents said fostering the awareness of the community and improving quality of education could be alternative mechanisms. Quite a significant number 2 (18.2 percent) of the respondents perceived that improving the livelihood and community participation have equal forces to alleviate the problem. This implies that the task of providing education goes beyond the effort of the education sector.

Table 11: Alternative Mechanisms to Improve Participation of Children in Education

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		NGO		WEO			
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Improve the livelihood of the community	-	-	2	33.3	2	18.2
2	Foster the positive awareness of the community about ABE	2	40	1	16.7	3	27.3
3	Establish additional centers where there is shortage	-	-	1	16.7	1	9.1
4	Improve community participation	2	40	-	-	2	18.2
5	Improve quality of education	1	20	2	33.3	3	27.3
6	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		5	100	6	100	11	100

3.5. The Extent to Which Access, Equity and Quality are Addressed

The most urgent priority in education is to ensure access to and improve the quality of education for girls and women and to remove every obstacle that limits their active participation.

3.5.1 Access Issues

The main aim of searching for the alternative way of basic education is not only to provide access as an alternative to formal schools, but also to make basic education physically, economically and technically accessible as the only alternative. It is believed that establishment area of ABE plays a great role in this regard. As responded by 50 (63.3 percent) of the total respondents, Table 12, ABE centers are located where access to education is denied. This implies that education is made accessible through ABE delivery system to those in hard-to-reach areas of the zone.

As it was well known physical accessibility alone does not guarantee the participation of children in education which would be indicated by GER or NER.

Table 12: Operating Areas of NGOs

No	Items	Respondents		Total
		Facilitators	Coordinators	
1	Mostly in urban areas	6	4	10
		9.7%	23.5%	12.7%
2	In areas where other NGOs operate	2	2	4
		3.2%	11.8%	5.1%
3	In areas where other NGOs do not operate	15	3	18
		24.2%	17.6%	22.8%
4	In areas where there is infrastructure	6	-	6
		9.7%	-	7.6%
5	In areas where there is no infrastructure	15	3	18
		24.2%	17.6%	22.8%
6	In areas where access for education is denied	42	8	50
		67.7%	47.1%	63.3%
7	Others	-	-	-
		-	-	-

More than one answer was possible

Those factors from the take up side and those related to quality of education operate to lower the participation rate. The researcher tried to consult a document to find out the exact GER share of NGO-assisted ABE projects. The GER share of ABE in the lower primary education was found to be 11.89% (2007), 6.17 % (2007), 4.07% (2006), 5.87% (2007) and 10.13% (2007) for Lasta, Gidan, Gubalafto, Kobo and Harbu woredas respectively. There were no data for Woldia woreda regarding the GER share of ABE in separate form.

The data found, with the exception of Lasta woreda, were not as such accurate and reliable for two reasons. In the first case, the actual number of school-age-children is not well known. The only way that data are made available for such consumption is from a prediction made by Plan and Economy Bureau. It is a rough estimation. In the second case, there were no separate and clearly organized data for government and NGO-assisted ABE projects.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children (Article 26/3 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights). Having this

in mind parents’ preference was asked. It was responded that they prefer to send their children to NGO-assisted ABECs as responded by 57 (72.2 percent), of the respondents, this may be due to the nearness of centers to their village and favorable school schedule. This implies that ABE centers are more accessible in terms of their accessibility parameters.

Table 13: Parents’ Preference to Send Their Children

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Facilitators		Coordinators			
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Government formal schools	10	16.1	7	41.2	17	21.5
2	Government ABE centers	3	4.8	-	-	3	3.8
3	NGO-assisted ABE centers	48	77.4	8	47.1	56	70.9
4	Private schools	-	-	1	5.9	1	1.3
5	Others	1	1.6	-	-	1	1.3
Total		62	100	17	100	79	100

3.5.2 Equity Issues

Education should be accessible equally for all out-of-school children in the society. The accessibility could be seen in terms of physical supply, economical, technical and other parameters. The extent to which primary education is addressed to different groups of learners determines the extent that NGOs are playing role in the education sector.

As can be seen from table 14, responses were rated by respondents using five-point Likert-type scale as very low (1), low (2), average (3), high (4) and very high (5). The weighted mean scores of the data were interpreted as follows: 0.05-1.49 as very low (need immediate and serious attention), 1.50-2.49 as low (require serious attention), 2.50-3.49 as average (need significant attention), 3.50-4.49 as high (acceptable with some improvement) and 4.50 and above as very high (need to maintain the current status). The 2.50 and above weighted mean score was set as an acceptable level.

Table 14: Rating Score on Equity in Access

No.	Group of Learners	Respondents				t-test, df = 77	
		Facilitators (n=62)		Coordinators (n=17)			
		X	SD	X	SD	t	Sig. 2-tailed
1	Females	4.02	0.852	3.88	0.697	0.622	0.535
2	Children from poor families	3.66	1.135	3.59	1.121	0.226	0.816
3	Children without parents	2.74	1.355	2.47	1.068	0.758	0.447
4	Disabled children	1.87	1.209	2.00	1.118	-0.399	0.689
5	Children from minority group	2.47	1.228	2.53	1.375	-0.174	0.864
6	Overage students	2.56	1.490	2.41	1.176	0.383	0.702
Average Weighted Mean		2.87		2.81			

X = Weighted mean

SD = Standard deviation

df = degree of freedom

t = calculated value of t

The overall average weighted mean scores of the responses were found to be average calling for the need for significant attention to narrow down the gap. When looking into the specific weighted mean scores, the accessibility of ABE for females and children from poor families rated high. This was proved by the information obtained through discussion held with the CMC members and interviews made with NGO and WEO officials. Parents are forced to send their children to school and punished if they discriminate between their male and female children. Children from poor families are also attracted to school where there is feeding program and stationary materials support.

The weighted mean scores were further exposed to higher statistical analysis using t-test of significant differences between the two independent means of responses of the two categories at a 0.05 significant level. The result shows the non-availability of significant differences between the responses of the two categories.

Looking into the details, the responses obtained for item number 4 was found to be low (1.87 and 2.00) as rated by facilitators and coordinators respectively; this may be due to the unavailability of special needs education. This requires serious attention from the concerned body to minimize the gap. The accessibility of ABE to children from minority groups also rated low and average by facilitators and

coordinators which is an indication of the presence of disparity between minority and majority groups (religious, cultural, language, ethnic minority).

3.5.3 Quality Issues

Achieving UPE without concern to its quality has not been an achievement in the endeavors being made to educate nations. Though specific reference has not been set to the quality of education, it is possible to determine the extent to which quality is addressed through the use of its indicators.

One way of determining as to how the education system is performing to the expected standard is to check the quality of its inputs. As reviewed in the literature review part, the qualification of facilitators, the proportion of women facilitators, classroom size, availability of books and other instructional materials, repetition and dropout rates are the major known indicators in measuring quality of education. Table 15 (a) and (b) present some selected indicators to be used by the researcher as a framework for the analysis as rated by respondents.

Table 15 (a): Rating Score on Quality Indicators

No.	Indicator Items	Respondents				t-test, df = 9	
		NGO (n=5)		WEO (n=6)			
		X	SD	X	SD	t	Sig.2-tailed
1	Number of qualified facilitators	3.40	0.548	3.67	0.817	-0.628	0.529
2	Proportion of women facilitators	3.60	0.548	2.83	1.472	1.099	0.271
3	Availability of instructional materials	3.00	1.225	2.50	1.211	0.448	0.653
Average Weighted Mean		3.33		3.00			

X = Weighted mean
df = degree of freedom

SD = Standard deviation
t = calculated value of t

The five point Likert-type scale ratings weigh very low (1), low (2), medium (3), high (4), and very high (5). The weighted mean scores of the data were interpreted for Table 15 (a): 0.05-1.49 as very low (the need for urgent and major improvement), 1.50-2.49 as low (the need for major improvement), 2.50-3.49 as average (the need for significant improvement), 3.50-4.49 as high (acceptable with some room for improvement) and 4.50 and above as very high (need to maintain the

current status). The 2.50 and above weighted mean score was set as an acceptable level to keep on the current trend.

The overall average weighted mean scores of the indicator items (3.33 and 3.00) were found to be medium calling for significant improvement in some areas. This implies that quality is not well addressed when seen from facilitators and instructional materials supply perspective. Looking into the specific details, Table 15(a), the supply of instructional materials was rated low by both respondent groups which implies that since instructional materials are in short supply major improvement is required in this regard. The proportion of women facilitators was rated unfairly high and medium by NGOs and WEOs respectively in contradiction to Table 3 (30.4 percent).

The weighted mean score of the data for table 15(b) were interpreted as follows: 0.05-1.49 as very low (the need for keeping the current status) 1.50 - 2.49 as low (the need for keeping the current trend with some room for improvement), 2.50 - 3.49 as medium (the need for significant improvement), 3.50 - 4.49 as high (the need for major improvement and 4.50 and above (the need for urgent and major improvement).

Table 15 (b): Rating Score on Quality Indicators

No.	Indicator items	Respondents				t-test, df = 9	
		NGOs (n=5)		WEOs (n=6)			
		X	SD	X	SD	t	Sig. 2-tailed
1	Pupil-teacher ratio	3.60	0.894	3.17	0.983	0.752	0.453
2	Pupil-book ratio	4.20	0.837	4.00	0.894	0.380	0.704
3	Repetition rate	1.60	0.548	1.67	0.817	-0.163	0.872
4	Dropout rate	2.00	1.000	2.33	1.366	-0.448	0.653
Average Weighted Mean		2.85		2.79			

X = Weighted mean SD = Standard deviation
df = degree of freedom t = calculated value of t

The overall average weighted mean scores of the indicator items were found to be medium (as rated 2.85 and 2.79) calling for significant improvement.

Considering the specific items, repetition and dropout rates were rated low by both groups of respondents meaning that keeping the current trend with some room for improvement is required. This implies that quality of education was high viewed from the point of dropout and repetition rate. The low dropout rate may be due to centers retention capacity by providing food and stationary materials. Pupil-book ratio was rated high. This data may be reversed or it may be a past history because of the fact that NGOs supplied adequate textbooks for each center recently. The pupil-teacher ratio was rated high and medium by NGOs and WEOs respectively which is in congruent with the data available in Table 5. This implies also quality of education in ABE suffered from lack of books (though books are made available recently) and overcrowded classroom.

The t-test results prove that the weighted mean score ratings are irrespective of the category of the respondents.

In a multicultural and diversified society, meeting all aspects of the educational demands with a single curriculum content and approach might not be appropriate. The interest and culture of the society is widely varied. On the other hand the policy and decision makers need one thing in common from all groups of learners. These two dimensions are the main concern in curriculum development which in turn governs the quality of education. Primary education must take into account the culture, needs and priorities of the community. Supplementary alternative programs, like ABE, are believed to meet the needs of children with limited or no access for formal schooling provided that they have carefully prepared curricula.

To check whether the interest and culture of the beneficiary groups are reflected in the curriculum, respondents were asked a 'Yes-No' question item. As Table 16 illustrates, 65 (82.3 percent) of the respondents agreed that the culture and interest of the beneficiary groups is reflected in the curriculum. A Chi-square test result($X^2 = 2.06 < X^2_{table} = 3.84$ at $df = 1$ and $\alpha = 0.05$) also shows that there is no significant difference between the weighted mean scores of the two groups of respondents.

Table 16: Curriculum Issue

Item	Response		Respondent Groups		Total
			Facilitators	Coordinators	
Is the culture and interest of the beneficiary group reflected in the curriculum?	Yes	f	49	16	65
		%	79	94.1	82.3
	No	f	13	1	14
		%	21	5.9	17.7
	Total	f	62	17	79
		%	100	100	100
$X^2 = 2.06$		df = 1	$\alpha = 0.05$		

X^2 = Chi-square

Another determinant factor in ensuring quality of education is the aspect of training of facilitators to adapt to the new curricular and classroom approach. In this regard respondents were requested to answer a 'Yes-No' question item. As shown in Table 17, 57 (72.2 percent) said that facilitators were given an induction training to cope with the learning approach of ABE. The Chi-square test result also shows non-significant difference among the responses of the two groups concerning the offering of pre-service training to facilitators. This implies that most respondents of facilitators and coordinators agree on the opinion that facilitators are given pre-service training. The 27.8 percent 'No' answer indicates that there is a possibility of assigning facilitators in teaching positions without giving an induction training. The responses obtained from the interview held with WEO and NGO officials shows that those facilitators trained in TTI were recruited so that an induction training which lasts only about 3-5 days is enough. This shows that the induction training was not adequate to produce facilitators that fit to the new approach.

Table 17: Facilitators' Pre-Service Training

Table 14: Facilitators Pre-Service Training						
Item	Response		Respondent Groups		Total	
			Facilitators	Coordinators		
Are center facilitators given pre-service training?	Yes	f	43	14	57	
		%	69.4	82.4	72.2	
	No	f	19	3	22	
		%	30.6	17.6	27.8	
	Total	f	62	17	79	
		%	100	100	100	
$\chi^2 = 1.07$		df = 1	$\alpha = 0.05$			

To improve the facilitating skill of facilitators and to develop their capacity, in-service training is an appropriate tool. As illustrated in Table18, 65 (82.2 percent)

of the respondents agreed with the idea that in-service training is given to facilitators. A Chi-square test result ($X^2_{\text{obtained}} = 0.51 < X^2_{\text{critical}}$ at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance) also indicates that there is no significant difference between the responses regarding the presence of in-service training. This means that most facilitators and coordinators have agreed on the opinion that facilitators are given in-service training.

Table 18: Facilitators' In-Service Training

Item	Response		Respondents		Total
			Facilitators	Coordinators	
Are center facilitators given in-service training?	Yes	f	50	15	65
		%	80.6	88.2	82.3
	No	f	12	2	14
		%	19.4	11.8	17.7
	Total	f	62	17	79
		%	100	100	100
$X^2 = 0.51$		df = 1	$\alpha = 0.05$		

The researcher made an informal discussion with facilitators and an interview with NGO and WEO officials. Most of the facilitators working in Plan Ethiopia and SCD are being given the chance for further training in government teacher training institutes during summer. This might help facilitators upgrade their subject knowledge and pedagogical skill. However, the active learning methods especially employed in ABE might not be taught. This implies the classroom approach is geared to the formal school approach which is less flexible. They were mentioning that the contents of the subjects (Arithmetic, Environmental Science, Amharic and English Languages) are tough to be handled by facilitators.

Projects by their very nature are time-bound activity; their life-period usually ranges from 2-6 years. Education, on the other hand, is a never ending process that goes far more beyond the life of a project. Recognizing these two basic facts necessitates raising a fundamental question as to who is responsible to take over the ABE projects.

3.6 ABE Project Transformation

There are a number of factors to deal with and that have to do with sustainability; however, it is not the concern of this study to deal with these factors, it is rather to disclose whose responsibility it is to run the projects without adversely affecting the present conditions.

To get a defined answer for such a clear cut concern, the researcher used to gather data from document and through interview from the concerned body. The project agreement document between the NGOs and woreda education offices clearly states that at the end of the project period woreda education office will takeover the projects; whenever conditions arise that are unpredictable, the regional government would intervene with the overall functioning of the project.

The woreda education officers were asked to assure their readiness to take over these projects. According to their response, some of the woredas have good experience and have shown their commitment in handling some aspects of the projects. Moreover they are taking a preparatory action and ABE has got adequate emphasis in their plan. In those woredas where plan Ethiopia, SCD and ADA operate, the transformation process is under way. According to the response obtained from both WEO and NGO officials, the NGOs are taking extensive action in the following area to make the transformation smooth and effective. These are:

- a) extending the project period;
- b) organizing centers with all education supplies, books, furniture, etc.;
- c) undertaking joint project, in collaboration with other rural development programs under taken by NGOs; and
- d) creating a linkage between ABECs and formal education systems through cluster resource centers in collaboration with WEOs.

3.7 The Network and Partnership among Project Stakeholders

Because of the recent trend of a participative approach to education management and NGO goals, a diverse range of stakeholders are involved to promote ABE to

those in need of basic primary education. Each actor has a vital role to play. Missing the contribution of one of the stakeholders creates burden on the other if not hurt the system at all. The NGO and WEO officials as project owners and implementers were asked to rate the level of involvement of the stakeholders in their respective area of interventions (Table 19).

The rating on the five point Likert-type scale are from very weak (1), weak (2), medium (3), strong (4) to very strong (5). The weighted mean scores of the data were interpreted as follows: 0.05-1.49 as very low (need immediate and serious attention), 1.50-2.49 as low (require serious attention), 2.50-3.49 as average (need significant attention), 3.50-4.49 as high (acceptable with some improvement) and 4.50 and above as very high (need to maintain the current status). The 2.50 and above weighted mean score was set as an acceptable level.

The overall weighted mean scores of the rating of the degree of involvement of all stakeholders were found to be high (3.57) to imply the need for some improvement in some areas in the level of involvement of the stakeholders.

When looking into the specific items, the involvement of REB was rated medium (2.60) by NGOs and high (4.00) by WEOs. This variation in rating may be lack of information from the NGOs side as they have no direct contract with the REB concerning the projects. The REB is expected to involve to the extent of executing policies and guidelines concerning ABE on timely basis.

The involvement of women's affair was also rated low (1.60 and 1.83) by both groups and that indicates the requirement of major improvement. Women's affairs are expected to play role in ensuring the provision of equal chance of education for girls as boys.

The researcher is 95% confident to say that there is no significant difference between the weighted mean scores of the two groups concerning the degree of involvement of the stakeholders.

Table 19: Degree of Involvement of Stakeholders

No	Stakeholders	Respondents				t-test, df = 9	
		NGO (n=5)		WEO (n=6)		t	Sig. 2-tailed
		X	SD	X	SD		
1	REB	2.60	1.342	4.00	1.095	-1.908	0.562
2	WEO	4.20	0.447	4.33	1.211	-0.226	0.820
3	CMC	4.20	1.304	4.00	1.095	0.277	0.780
4	Local community	4.00	1.225	3.00	1.549	1.167	0.242
5	Partner organization	4.00	1.414	3.50	1.225	0.629	0.529
6	Formal school leaders and staffs	4.40	0.548	4.33	0.516	0.218	0.826
7	Women's affair	1.60	0.548	1.83	1.169	-0.402	0.688
Average Weighted Mean		3.57		3.57			

X = Weighted mean

df = degree of freedom

SD = Standard deviation

t = calculated value of t

An expanded vision of the UN, the national and the regional government in universalizing access and promoting equity and focusing on learning would not be achievable without conceiving a strong partnership at the heart of it. ABE project stakeholders have their own respective area of involvement. Without this coordinated and collaborated effort, achieving the set goal would have been difficult.

The WEO, CMC, local community, formal school leaders and staff, women's affair in particular, REB, the national government and local and international education provider NGOs in general are at the stake of ABE projects. Though educational authorities at all levels have unique obligation to provide basic education for all, it is not expected to supply all human, financial or organizational support for the task.

Regarding this, NGO and WEO respondents were asked to rank some selected intervention areas in which the stakeholders involve, Table 20. The area of activities which the stakeholders undertake serious and active involvement in terms of its adequacy were given the highest ranks (1, 2,...) and continued to the list ranks (....11, 12). There was a great variation between the mean responses of the two groups (9 and 3) in ranking the financial contribution of the stakeholders. This great difference in the perception of the two groups may be due to the fact that NGOs

take the largest share in financing these projects. No other stakeholders finance the projects. Hence, according to the NGOs there is little/no financial assistance from other partner organizations.

As illustrated in Table 20, the two groups of respondents equally ranked labor contribution, awareness creation, professional assistance and provision of infrastructure as 2, 5, 11 and 12 respectively; there was also variation in ranking female student participation (4 and 8) and supervision (6 and 10).

Table 20: Activity Interventions of Stakeholders

No	Intervention Area	Respondent Groups				d ²
		NGO		WEO		
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	
1	Project center establishment	3.92	3	5.25	1	4
2	Recruiting and selecting facilitators	4.50	1	3.75	4	9
3	Financial contribution	1.92	9	4.67	3	36
4	Labor	4.42	2	5.00	2	0
5	Supply of books and other instructional materials	2.33	8	3.58	6	4
6	Ensuring female student participation	3.58	4	2.83	8	16
7	Awareness creation	3.50	5	3.67	5	0
8	Professional assistance	1.42	11	1.58	11	0
9	Supervision	2.42	6	1.92	10	16
10	Supply of center furniture	1.58	10	3.25	7	9
11	Provision of infrastructure	1.25	12	1.50	12	0
12	Project management	2.42	6	2.08	9	9
Σd ²						103
ρ = 0.64		α = 0.05		Sig. 2-tailed		n = 12

d = difference of means rank

n = number of paired ranks

ρ = Spearman rank order where -1 ≤ ρ ≤ +1

Σ = summation

In general the Spearman rank order correlation shows that there is a positive relationship (ρ = 0.64) between the responses of two groups concerning the ranking of the intervention areas. This indicates that those intervention areas ranked by both NGOs and WEOs reliably imply that there is the necessary partnership among ABE project stakeholders.

3.8 Parity and Nexus between ABE and FE

The disparity in learning outcomes of the two basic education delivery systems-ABE and FE-entails the problem of children’s educational participation, sustainability of the project, vertical integration and scaling up and replication as indicated in the literature.

The ways one can describe the presence of this parity between the two systems are through checking whether there is a recognized transition between ABE and FE, measuring performance after transition, the presence of supporting policy at an ideal level of the education system.

Inline with this, transfer of student from ABE to FE is possible as 96.2 percent of the respondents, Table 21, responded ‘Yes’. The Chi-square test result ($X^2_{obtained} = 1.81 < X^2_{critical} = 3.84$ at $\alpha = 0.05$) also indicates that the response to the opinion question of transition is found to be independent of the categories of respondents. That is both facilitators and coordinators commonly witnessed the possibility of transfer from ABE to FE. This implies that there is parity between FE and ABE.

Table 21: Possibility of Smooth Transition from ABE to FE

Item	Response		Respondent Groups		Total
			Facilitators	Coordinators	
Is the transfer of students possible from ABE to formal education?	Yes	f	45	15	60
		%	72.6	88.2	75.9
	No	f	17	2	19
		%	27.4	11.8	24.1
	Total	f	62	17	79
		%	100	100	100
$\chi^2 = 1.81$		df = 1	$\alpha = 0.05$		

The level at which the transition took place was identified from the responses given in Table 22. As indicated in the table, 53 (67.1 percent) of the respondents said the transition takes place only upon completion of level III which is equivalent to grade 4 of the FE system. During the interview held, it was found that in some woredas there is a practice of administering entry examination upon completion of level III.

Table 22: Level of Transition

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Facilitators		Coordinators			
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Level I	1	1.6	-	-	1	1.3
2	Level II	9	14.5	1	5.9	10	12.7
3	Level III	42	67.7	11	64.7	53	67.1
4	All levels	10	16.1	5	29.4	15	19
Total		62	100	17	100	79	100

As indicated in Table 23, the transition was approved by the REB as 42 (53.2 percent) of the respondents confirmed. The interview held also elicited a response that support the presence of transition guideline prepared at regional level.

Table 23: Approval of Transition

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Facilitators		Coordinators			
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	MOE	10	16.1	-	-	10	12.7
2	REB	33	53.2	9	52.9	42	53.2
3	WEO	11	17.7	6	35.3	17	21.5
4	CMC	2	3.2	2	11.8	4	5.1
5	Agreement between formal school leaders and NGOs	7	11.3	-	-	7	8.9
Total		62	100	17	100	79	100

The performance of students as illustrated in Table 24, after transition to FE, was rated average as responded by (during informal discussion) most of the respondents, 63.6 percent. According to the opinion of most supervisors and woreda education officers the performance of students after transition showed a gradual deterioration/decrease from time to time.

Table 24: Performance of Students after Transition

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		Facilitators		Coordinators			
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Best	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Average	4	80	3	-	7	63.6
3	Below average	-	-	1	16.7	1	9.1
4	Unmeasured	1	20	2	33.3	3	27.3
Total		5	100	6	100	11	100

To bring the performance of students to the expected level enhancing the performance and experience of facilitators could be a good practice. In this regard formal schools and ABEC have a supportive relationship.

As shown in Table 25, almost all (81.8 percent) of the respondents gave their opinion that cluster resource centers were organized (a total of six formal schools and ABECs in one) where teachers of the formal school and facilitators of the ABEC exchange experience in classroom approach, preparation of teaching materials and teaching aids. These practices enabled children from ABECs to cope up with and adapt the formal school teaching-learning situation.

Table 25: Area of Supportive Relationship between ABECs and Formal Schools

No	Items	Respondents				Total	
		NGOs		WEOs			
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	In experience exchanging	4	80	5	83.3	9	81.8
2	In using educational resources commonly	1	20	1	16.7	2	18.2
3	In ensuring quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	others	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		5	100	6	100	11	100

Since the qualification and experience of facilitators can produce more effect on quality than any other factors, this strengthened supportive relationship might have a promising result towards improving quality.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to assess NGO-Assisted Alternative Basic Education Projects in North Wollo Zone. The study emanates from the stand points of ensuring the achievement of EFA goals with this alternative mode of education supply. In view of this, the findings of the study may help educational planners and implementers see the promising aspects of ABE approach and improve weaknesses. It could also serve as a springboard for further in depth study in the area of NGO-assisted ABE projects.

In addressing the basic research questions a descriptive survey method was employed. Questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observation were used as data gathering tools. A total of 79 respondents from 77 ABE centers, 6 woredas and 5 local and international NGO supervisors, coordinators, officials and experts were involved. Focus group discussions were also reviewed to help analyze and interpret the data.

Hence, this last chapter of the study deals with the presentation of the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

4.1 Summary of the Findings

4.1.1 Project Context

- i. All NGOs operating on ABE projects in North Wollo Zone were legally registered local and international NGOs.
- ii. With the exception of PADET and WSO (both are local NGOs) the rest implement their project through WEO.
- iii. ABE centers are supervised by project owner NGOs, WEOs, and cluster center supervisors.

4.1.2 Factors that Constrain Delivery of ABE

- i. The working environment of the NGOs in the woredas and their acceptance by the WEOS and target beneficiaries was found to be highly encouraging.
- ii. ABE was physically, economically and technically accessible for all children which implies that there were no critical constraints from the access/supply side. All the factors (child opportunity costs, extreme poverty and parent influence) that constrain delivery of ABE are from the take up side.
- iii. Specific types of activities that can be caused by the constraining factors were also identified. These were the involvement of children in labour activities such as caring for domestic animals, collecting fire wood, fetching water and farming activities.
- iv. In areas where the economic activity of the society were largely of animal rearing, there was a harmful traditional practice known as 'Jebata' that prohibit girls from attending their education.
- v. The suggested mechanisms to minimize the constraining factors and improve participation of children in ABE were fostering the awareness of the community and improving quality of education. Improving the livelihood of the society and their participation in all aspects of educational activities were also suggested as an alternative mechanism which implies that education goes beyond being a single sector activity.

4.1.3 Critical Issues of Primary Education

Access

- i. Most NGOs operate in areas where access for education is denied, in doing so education was made available to those in hard-to-reach areas of the zone.
- ii. Though there was no evidence as to the exact number of school age children, NGOs contribution in creating access to basic education in the zone reached 7.63 percent of the total enrolment of children at average.
- iii. Parents prefer sending their children to NGO-assisted ABE for various reasons.

Equity

- i. Equity in access has not been well addressed yet, the highest disparity is between disabled children and the rest group of learners. Disabled children were excluded by the ABE approach which does not include special needs education.
- ii. There was also a minority group disparity in educational access; children without parents were also excluded to some extent.
- iii. Girls' participation in ABE was found to be high which requires only slight progress to achieve the goals of EFA.

Quality

- i. The quality of education in ABECs was found to be low when analyzed from its input side calling for major improvement in this area.
- ii. Other indicators of quality (pupil-book ratio and pupil-teacher ratio) from the input side also revealed that quality of education is at its low status calling for major improvement.
- iii. Quality of ABE was found to be high as implied by the low dropout and repetition rates (the process side). The retention capacity of ABECs might not be due to its quality.
- iv. The curriculum aspect in terms of the learning needs reveals that quality was addressed well in ABECs.
- v. Though induction training has been given to facilitators, the duration was not adequate to produce teachers with different qualities than required in formal schools.

4.1.4 Project Transformation

- i. There is official project agreement that makes the WEOs responsible to take over the ABE projects when NGOs withdraw their assistance.
- ii. Despite the project agreement, NGOs observed difficulties in transferring the ABE projects to the woredas. Children have shown the tendency to dropout,

parents/ community participation decreased due to the withdrawal of NGOs along the benefits. Recognizing the situation NGOs designed exit strategies. These are:

- a. extending the project period;
- b. organizing centers with all education supplies, books, furniture etc.;
- c. undertaking joint project, in collaboration with other rural development programs undertaken by NGOs; and
- d. creating a linkage between ABECs and formal education systems through cluster resource centers in collaboration with WEOs.

4.1.5 The Network and Partnership among Project Stakeholders.

- i. The involvement of stakeholders (which is the direct indicator of the partnership) in ABE projects was seen to be high from WEO, CMCs, local community, partner organizations and formal school leaders and staff.
- ii. Women's Affair Council was found to be a passive participant in at least ensuring girls' education.
- iii. ABE project stakeholders are mainly involved in labor contribution, community awareness creation, project center establishment and in recruiting and assigning of facilitators.
- iv. The least involvement of stakeholders was seen in areas of provision of infrastructure, professional assistance, supervision and supply of center furniture.

4.1.6 Parity and Nexus between ABE and FE

Parity

- i. There was a smooth transition only from ABE to FE. This implies that ABE is given recognition of equality in terms of quality and from UPE point of view.

- ii. There is no transition from ABE to or FE below level III. The equivalency of each grade level in the two sub-sectors is not yet defined / determined.
- iii. Parity of esteem was rendered to/approved for ABE by regional education bureau.
- iv. The performance of students after transition was observed medium; this ensures the presence of parity between ABE and FE.

Nexus

Six formal schools and ABECs are clustered into one where formal schools and ABECs create a linkage for mutual benefit. Due to this ABECs receive the same supervision, additional experience, and resources as formal schools.

4.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were reached.

- i. The factors that constrain the delivery of ABE were identified to lie on the take-up side. These factors specifically are child opportunity cost, extreme poverty and parent influence. These factors are similar with those identified by FAO (2003) that constrain younger rural children. The children opportunity costs are directly related to the livelihood activities such as caring for domestic animals, collecting firewood and fetching water. Harmful traditional practices especially in Habru woreda were seen to constrain girls to abstain from attending their education.
- ii. The GER share of NGOs in the zone reached 7.63 percent at average which shows an increment from the national share (5.2 percent) of the 1997 E.C. (JRM, 2006: 29).
- iii. Equity in access has not been addressed well as a wide gap was observed between disabled children, children from poor families, children with no parents and other groups of learners.
- iv. Quality has not been addressed well from the point of view of its inputs, drop out rate and repetition rate.

- v. Quality and equity also suffered from lack of sufficient number of female facilitators.
- vi. According to the project agreement between NGOs and WEOs, the WEOs were seen to accept the responsibility and make preparations. However, signs were observed that children from ABECs are withdrawn due to the absence of support from the project.
- vii. A more or less strong relationship was observed among ABE stakeholders with the exception of Women's Affairs Council. The areas of contribution to the project were more of management and human and material resource supply.
- viii. ABE was given recognition of parity linking ABE and FE so that both mainstreaming and integration become possible.

4.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions reached, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Owing to the low level of living standard of the society, their contribution remains far away from the expected one. Hence, ABE project owners and implementers (both NGOs and WEOs) should increase and strengthen their effort to mobilize resources from different corners so that those constraining factors which are highly related to the livelihood activities will be minimized. This would be possible by designing agricultural integrated projects in collaboration with other development sectors.
- ii. Family reluctance to take the initiative to send their children to school could be seen as lack of clear understanding of the benefits of education. Thus, the woreda education office is advised to take an extensive action through adult education program.
- iii. The equity and quality aspects of the ABECs are at their low level. EFA goals will not be realized fully as two of its major goals are missed. Hence, project owners, implementers and the community should bring a

radical change in the area of facilitators' recruitment, selection and training; inclusion of female facilitators; pulling external resources and devising appropriate income generation mechanisms.

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APPENDIX - A

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Planning and Management

Questionnaire to be filled by Education Program Officers and Project Coordinators of the NGOs, and Woreda Education Department Officials

Dear respondent,

A great effort has been made to realize the goals of Education for All. Alternative basic education projects as one means of achieving these goals are being implemented in different parts of the country largely by NGOs. This study is designed to assess the overall performance and contributions made by these projects.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for the study leading to MA degree in Educational Planning and Management. Thus it does not affect you personally or organizationally and the responses will be kept in absolute confidentiality. The outcome of the study will help the regional government and project implementing NGOs in particular, and all Education for All partners in general. The success of this study is highly dependent on your genuine, frank and timely response. Therefore your honest and responsible cooperation in filling the questionnaire is highly indispensable.

I forward my sincere thanks for your cooperation.

Note: 1. No need of writing your name

2. Give your response by putting "✓" in the box or appropriate space

3. Follow the specific instruction at the beginning of each section and question.

Part I. General Information

1. Personal Data:

1.1 Sex a) ☐ Male b) ☐ Female

1.2 Age group a) ☐ below 20 b) ☐ 20 - 25

c) ☐ 26 - 30 d) ☐ 31 - 35

e) ☐ 36 - 40 f) ☐ Above 40

1.3 Educational level:

a) ☐ Secondary education complete b) ☐ 12 + Certificate

c) ☐ Diploma d) ☐ Bachelor Degree

e) ☐ Masters degree and above f) Others _____

1.4 Field of specialization _____

1.5 Current Position _____

1.6 Work Experience:

1.6.1 Total work experience in years

a) ☐ 0-5 b) ☐ 6-10 c) ☐ 11-15 d) ☐ above 15

1.6.2 Work experience in the education sector in years

a) ☐ 0-5 b) ☐ 6-10 c) ☐ 11-15 d) ☐ above 15

1.6.3 Work experience in the current position in years

a) ☐ 0-5 b) ☐ 6-10 c) ☐ 11-15 d) ☐ above 15

2. About project implementing organizations (* = only for Woreda Education Officers)

2.1 Name of the project implementing NGO(s)

a) _____

*b) _____

*c) _____

*2.2 Woreda _____

2.3 Legal status: a) ☐ Registered b) ☐ Not registered

4. Project areas climatic condition:

a) ☐ Highland b) ☐ Semi-highland c) ☐ Lowland

Part II. This part of the questionnaire deals with identifying factors that constrain children from attending schools in alternative basic education centers.

1. How can you rate the following?

No	Issues	Very good	Good	Average	Low	Very Low
1.1	Working environment of NGOs In the Woreda					
1.2	Acceptance of NGOs by the target beneficiaries					
1.3	Acceptance of NGOs by Woreda education departments					

2. Which one do parents prefer to send their children for education?

- a) ☐ Government formal schools
- b) ☐ Government alternative basic education centers
- c) ☐ NGO-assisted alternative basic education centers
- d) ☐ Private schools
- e) Others _____

3. What would be the reason for the answer given for question number 2?

- a) ☐ Better facility
- b) ☐ Nearness to home
- c) ☐ Program flexibility
- d) ☐ Better teachers
- e) ☐ Traditional influence
- f) ☐ Quality of education
- g) ☐ Sustainability
- h) Others _____

4. Do children engage in any labour activity?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. In which type of social and economic activities do children engage? (More than one answer is possible)

- a) ☐ Caring for domestic animals
- b) ☐ Collecting firewood
- c) ☐ Fetching water
- d) ☐ Caring for siblings
- e) ☐ Farming
- f) ☐ Pity trade
- g) ☐ others _____

6. Do all children have the opportunity to be enrolled and learn in alternative basic education centers when they need?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. If your answer for question number '6' is 'No', what are the factors that prevent them?
(Please put your answer in order of priority beginning from number 1)

No.	Factors	Priority order
7.1	Distance from home	
7.2	Overcrowded classroom	
7.3	Parent influence	
7.4	Affordability problem/ poverty	
7.5	Child opportunity cost/ child labour demand	
7.6	Poor center facility	
7.7	Unfavorable center schedule	
7.8	Poor quality of education	
7.9	Gender discrimination	
7.10	Insufficient alternative basic education centers	

8. If "Parent influence" is one of your answers for question number '7', what is the reason?

- a) ☐ Parents have no thrust on NGO-assisted ABE projects
- b) ☐ Parents lack thrust on ABEC facilitators
- c) ☐ Parents believe the education outcome is irrelevant to their livelihood activities
- d) ☐ Parents want their children labour and time
- e) Others _____

9. How are students admitted to alternative basic education center for learning?

- a) ☐ On the basis of their interest
- b) ☐ On the basis of their proximity to the center
- c) ☐ On the basis of their proximity to center workers
- d) ☐ On the basis of their family economic background
- e) ☐ On the basis of their age
- f) ☐ On the basis of `family quota`
- g) Others _____

10. Where are the operating areas of NGOs? (More than one answer is possible)

- a) ☐ Mostly in urban areas b) ☐ In areas where other NGOs operate
c) ☐ In areas where there is infrastructure e) ☐ In areas where other NGOs do not operate
d) ☐ In areas where there is no infrastructure f) ☐ In areas where access for education is denied
g) Others _____

11. How are center program and schedule arranged?

- a) ☐ In accordance with the interest of project implementing NGO
b) ☐ In accordance with the interest of the community and children
c) ☐ In accordance with the interest of woreda education officials
d) ☐ In accordance with collective agreement among stakeholders
e) Others _____

12. Please write/ indicate the center program arrangement?

12.1 Total number of weeks required to complete a given level _____

12.2 Average number of school days in a week _____

12.3 Average number of learning hours in a day _____

13. Alternative basic education program is conducted

- 13.1 During the morning a) ☐ 6:00AM - 8:00AM b) ☐ 8:00AM - 12:00AM
13.2 ☐ During the afternoon a) ☐ 1:00PM - 9:00PM b) ☐ 2:00PM - 6:00PM
13.3 ☐ During the evening
13.4 Others _____

14. What mechanisms are devised (appropriate to take) to overcome the constraints so as to increase the participation rate of children in education?

- a) ☐ Improve the livelihood of the community
b) ☐ Foster the positive awareness of the community about alternative basic education
c) ☐ Establish additional centers where there is shortage
d) ☐ Improve community participation in the primary education management
e) ☐ Improve quality of education
f) Others _____

15. Any additional comments regarding the factors that prevent children from attending their education in alternative basic education centers and the solutions to be taken

Part III. This part of the questionnaire deals with the examination of education priority issues

A. Equity Issues

1. How could you rate the accessibility of alternative basic education for the following groups of learners?

No	Groups of learners	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low
1.1	Female					
1.2	Children with poor families					
1.3	Children without parents					
1.4	Children with disabilities					
1.5	Children from minority group					
1.6	Overage students (age > 14)					

B. Quality Issues

2. Is sample assessment of learning achievement done at the end of level III?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. How can you rate the following?

No	Indicators	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
3.1	Number of qualified teachers /facilitators					
3.2	Pupil - teacher ratio					
3.3	Proportion of women facilitators					
3.4	Pupil-book ratio					
3.5	Availability of instructional materials					
3.6	Repetition rate					
3.7	Dropout rate					

4. Who did develop the curriculum for alternative basic education?

- a) ☐ Ministry of Education b) ☐ Regional Education Bureau
c) ☐ Woreda Education Department d) ☐ Non-Government Organizations
e) Others _____

5. Is the culture and interest of the beneficiary group reflected in the curriculum?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Issues related with facilitators recruitment

6.1 Who do recruit and assign facilitators?

- a) ☐ Regional Education Bureau b) ☐ Woreda education department
c) ☐ Non-Government Organizations d) ☐ Center management committee
e) ☐ Others _____

6.2 What is the minimum requirement? _____

6.3 Where are they recruited from? _____

7. Terms of employment of facilitators?

- a) ☐ Full - time b) ☐ Part - time c) ☐ Voluntary service
d) Others _____

8. Are center facilitators given pre-service training? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. If your answer for question number '8' is 'yes', for how long is the training given?

- a) ☐ Less than one week b) ☐ One week only c) ☐ Two weeks
d) ☐ More than two weeks e) others _____

10. Are center facilitators given in-service training? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If your answer for question number '10' is "Yes", how frequently is the training given?

- a) ☐ At the end of each month
b) ☐ At the end of each term/ semester
c) ☐ At the end of each year
d) Others _____

12. Average working hours of facilitators

- a) Per day _____ b) Per week _____
c) Extra curricular activities per week _____

13. Any additional comments regarding the critical issues of education such as equity and quality and the measures to be taken to improve this aspect of education.

Part IV. This part of the questionnaire deals with the examination of the level of the existence of the relationship and partnership between project implementing NGOs and other educational stakeholders.

1. How is the level of the involvement of the following alternative basic education project stakeholders in their respective areas of intervention?

No	Stakeholders	Very strong	Strong	Medium	Weak	Very Weak
1.1	Regional Education Bureau					
1.2	Woreda Education Department					
1.3	Center Management Committee					
1.4	Local community					
1.5	Partner organizations					
1.6	Formal school leaders & staffs					
1.7	Women's affair					

2. What are the specific activities these stakeholders involve/ intervene? (Please rank the degree of involvement, 1= for the highest involvement and 12 = for the least involvement)

No	Activities/ area of involvement	Rank
2.1	Project center establishment	
2.2	Recruiting and selecting facilitators	
2.3	Financial contribution	
2.4	Labour	
2.5	Supply of books and other instructional materials	
2.6	Ensuring female student participation	
2.7	Awareness creation	
2.8	Professional assistance	
2.9	Supervision	
2.10	Supply of center furniture	
2.11	Provision of infrastructure	
2.12	Project Management	

3. Any additional comments regarding the relationship and partnership among alternative basic education stakeholders.

Part V. Parity and Nexus Issues

1. Is the transfer of students possible from alternative basic education to formal education?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If your answer for question number '1' is "yes" at which level is the transfer possible?

a) ☐ At level I b) ☐ At level II c) ☐ At level III d) ☐ At all levels

3. How is the performance of ABE - based students after transferring to formal school?

a) ☐ Best b) ☐ Average
c) ☐ Below average d) ☐ Performance unmeasured

4. If your answer for question number '1' is "Yes" who did approve that?

a) ☐ Ministry of Education b) ☐ Regional Education Bureau
c) ☐ Woreda Education Office d) ☐ Center Management Committee
e) ☐ By agreement between formal school leaders and NGOs

5. In which area do the formal schools and alternative basic education centers have supportive relationship so that vertical integration between them will be possible?

a) ☐ In experience exchanging
b) ☐ In using educational resources commonly
c) ☐ In ensuring quality d) others _____

6. Any additional comments regarding the vertical relationship and integration between alternative basic education and formal education systems and the measures to be taken to ensure the parity between them.

APPENDIX - B

INTERVIEW

1. What were the major objectives of the projects?
2. What were made to improve quality of primary education?
3. What were made to improve gender equity in primary education?
4. What was the involvement of the local community with the activities made to promote quality and gender equity in primary education in their localities?
5. What were made with the projects to promote the motivation and working conditions of teachers?
6. What major activities were planned and executed in the school with the assistance of the project to promote gender equity and quality primary education?
7. What were made with the projects assistance to improve quality of management of your schools?
8. What was the involvement of REB, WEO, the local community, Regional and woreda project coordinator, woreda Women Affairs, and other stakeholders?
9. What were the role of the REB, WEO and local community in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of the project activities?
10. What sort of activities had been done in collaboration with other NGOs who had been doing similar activities in the region?
11. What do you think about sustainability of the project activities, who will take over them after the project period?
12. What major problems were encountered during the implementation period of the projects?
13. What possible solutions do you recommend for the problems?
14. How does transition from ABE to FE take place, Is there a guideline to do so?

Thank you

APPENDIX - C

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Name of center: _____

Item	Available	Not available	Constructed	Maintained	Adequacy	
Physical facilities						
Type of center construction						
Facilitators' living room						
Additional classrooms						
Pedagogical center						
Reading room						
Toilet						
Play ground						
potable water supply						
Furniture and other materials						
Desks						
Chairs						
Blackboard						
pedagogical center						
Sport materials						
Type writers						
Materials for minimedia						
Training manuals and guidelines						
Text books						
Teacher guide						
Reference (supplementary books)						
Others						

Appendix – D

STATISTICAL FORMULAE USED

$$1. \chi^2 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

$$2. SD = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \sum (x - \bar{x})^2 f}, \quad n \geq 30$$

$$3. SD = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n-1} \sum (x - \bar{x})^2 f}, \quad n \leq 30$$

$$4. t = \sqrt{\frac{SD_1^2(n_1 - 1) + SD_2^2(n_2 - 1)}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}} \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)$$

$$5. Se = \sqrt{\frac{SD^2}{N}}$$

$$6. \rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where

χ^2 = chi-square

f_o = Observed frequency

f_e = Expected frequency

SD = Standard Deviation

x = Raw score

$\bar{x}$ = Weighted mean score

t = Calculated value of t

Se = Standard error

n = Number of respondents

df = Degree of freedom

χ^2_{crit} = tabled value of χ^2

t_{crit} = Tabled value of t

$\chi^2_{crit} = 3.84$ at $df = 1$ and $\alpha = 0.05$

$t_{crit} = 1.994$ at $df = 77$ and $\alpha = 0.05$

$t_{crit} = 2.262$ at $df = 9$ and $\alpha = 0.05$

ρ = spearman rank order correlation

Σ = summation

DECLARATION

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

Name: Workineh Nigussie

Signature:  _____

Date of Submission: 20th July, 2007

Place: Addis Ababa University, faculty of education, Department of Educational Planning and Management

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University advisor.

Name: Yalew Engidayehu (Ph.D)

Signature:  _____

Date of Submission: 20th July, 2007