



Draft Report – Version3

Research Title:

“Increasing Access to Quality Education for Rural and Marginalised Children in West Africa— A Comparative Study of Accelerated Education and Girls Focussed Programmes in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone”

Out-of-School Mapping Exercise: Sierra Leone

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List of Acronyms

AEP	Accelerated Education Programme
AFC	Associate for Change
BRAC SL	Building Resources Across Communities in Sierra Leone
CSEA	Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa
EFA	Education for All
ELA	Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescent
EMIS	Education Management and Information Systems
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FQSE	Free Quality School Education
FQE	Free Quality Education
GBV	Gender based violence
HHS	Household Survey
HTC	Higher Teachers Certificate
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KIX	Knowledge, Innovation and Exchange
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
NS2	Nursery 2
NS3	Nursery 3
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
CTA	Parent Teacher Associations
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PTTR	Pupil Trained Teacher Ratio
SCI	Save the Children International
SSS	Senior Secondary School
TC	Teachers Certificate
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UIS	UNESCO's Institute for Statistics

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Executive Summary

The Out of School Children (OOSC) Mapping survey is the first primary research under the “Increasing Access to Quality Education for Rural and Marginalised Children in West Africa”. The project focused on gathering data on out of school populations being reached by the alternative education innovations across selected districts and communities in the northern and Southern regions of Sierra Leone. The study gathered data on the profile of OOSC in Pujehun, Kambia and Port Loko districts based on gender, age, disability, and other socio-demographic characteristics. A household survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews were also conducted to help understand the socio-economic, cultural, demand and supply factors that drive the OOS situation in the selected districts. Further, the mapping exercise explored the diverse contexts within which education innovations are being implemented (rural deprived and extremely deprived contexts, socio-cultural and poverty context).

Mapping Design and Methodology

The mapping exercise used a mixed-methods design to triangulate qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative method was utilised for the household survey as well as the community and school checklist whilst the qualitative source was used to generate data from key informant interviews as well as focus group discussions with community AEP facilitators, and out-of-school children (OOSC). The sampling was based on exposure to an AEP programme by either BRAC or Save the Children International, with a focus on intervention regions and districts. The community level selection focused on sampling both intervention and non-intervention communities for the household and school level surveys. This was done to enhance efficiency in data collection. Household surveys were conducted in the three districts including a school checklist survey. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with AEP facilitators and out-of-school children provided qualitative data for the mapping exercise. The mapping study used a stepwise approach to select samples in intervention and non-intervention communities for household and school surveys. This was done to enhance efficiency in data collection. Per district, 400 households were selected for intervention and non-intervention.

Key Findings and Conclusions

Out of school incidence:

- **General statistics on identified children**

In all, 2,992 children aged 4-17 (*age of interest for the study*) were studied across the study communities/households. The identified children were further categorized into age groups using the UNICEF Framework on OOSC. Children ‘currently and fully in school’ (2299), children who are ‘sometimes in school’ (30), children who ‘dropped out of school’ (295) and children who have ‘never attended’ formal school (368), with the ‘never attending’ population constituting the highest proportion of the identified children and providing the needed evidence for AEP interventions.

- **Prevalence of OOSC by age groups**

The sum of children among the 4-17 year olds who have previously been in school (dropped out of school) and those who have never been to school make up the population of children who are out of school. The findings show that 663 (22.2%) children aged 4-17 years make up the whole population of OOSC children from age 4 to 17 or children from Nursery 2 (N2)-senior secondary school (SSS). Children aged 6-17 years or those in primary to SSS make up 495 or 75% of the OOSC population. The fact that nursery 2 and 3 alone make up 25% of OOSC population is reflective of the lack of pre-primary schools in the study area; out of the 168 children who are out of school at that level, only 3 of them have dropped out, compared to 165 who have never been to school. The number of children who have dropped out of school is highest among children aged 15-17 (SSS1-SSS3), followed by those in the JSS level, JSS and pre-school. This is an indication that the higher children move along the educational ladder, the higher the risk of dropping out.

- **Out of school population by sex**

The evidence shows that there are more girls out of school than boys, 349 (53%) and 314 (47%) respectively. This is in line with the Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS) 2019 findings where 49.6% girls and 37.8% boys in rural regions in Sierra Leone are out of school. However, there are more boys who have never been to school 64% compared with 49.3% of girls.

Drop-out situation/context

- **Drop-out numbers by class level and sex**

The findings indicate that there is minimal drop out among children in pre-school; 2% of girls and 1% of boys dropped out. The highest dropout occurs among SSS students, with girls in SSS3 having the highest dropout rate of 23%, followed by boys in SSS1 and SSS3 with 20% and 19% respectively. Overall, 60% of girls compared with 45% of boys dropped out of school in the study area.

Children at risk of dropping out:

The study assessed children who are currently in school but who were at risk of dropping out. Three main criteria were used - over age, frequency of repetition and regularity of attendance.

- **At risk of dropping population – using overage at grade level**

Age at enrollment affects school completion, and there is a risk that children older than the class average may drop out of school. 480 twelve to fourteen year olds who would ordinarily be in JSS and 410 fifteen to 17 year olds who should be in SSS were still in primary and junior secondary school. This is in line with MICS (2017) findings that educational progression is stunted because 45% of JSS aged children are still in primary school. This means that potentially, 890 students in the study area are at heightened risk of dropping out of school.

- **At risk of dropping population – using frequency of repetition**

Grade repetition is seen as one of the factors that lead to dropout in school, especially when it is not accompanied by any potential to improve education performance. The findings show that of the children who have ever repeated a grade from primary school to senior secondary school (SSS), a total of 78 (31%) from intervention areas and another 78 (28%) from non-intervention areas have repeated more than once. This implies that an average of 156 pupils or 29.5% of pupils in the study area could potentially drop out of school because of frequent repetition. On the other hand, there are slightly fewer females (38) than males (40) in nonintervention areas at risk of dropping out due to frequent repetition. In general, more females (83) than males (73) are likely to drop out of school due to frequent repetition.

- **At risk of dropping population – using frequency of attendance**

Truancy has been identified in several studies as a precursor to school drop out (e.g. Fernandez-Suarez et al., 2016)¹. Wilkins and Bost (2016)². The findings indicate that an average of 17% of school children from nursery 2 to SSS 1 in the study area skip school; this makes them likely candidates for dropout. The study shows that girls are more likely to skip school than boys; 200 girls compared with 186 boys. This indicates that about 52% of the 386 children who are likely to drop out of school due to regularity of attendance are likely to be girls.

- **Impact/Achievements of AEPs**

The AEP and girls focused interventions in the communities have been beneficial for them. Prior to the inception of the AEPs in the selected communities, a number of children had dropped out of school due to varying reasons. AEPs have contributed to giving a second chance to those who enrolled. Save the Children's program focused on returning children to formal education. It catered for all categories of people within the communities and that helped many to join voluntarily. The sensitization and awareness-raising component of the AEP has contributed to reducing early marriages among beneficiaries. Messages around types and use of contraceptives have equipped beneficiaries with the information they need to prevent unwanted pregnancy. The skills training component of the BRAC programme promoted self-reliance. Many acquired skills to be able to establish and maintain their own small businesses.

¹ Fernández-Suárez A, Herrero J, Pérez B, Juarros-Basterretxea J and Rodríguez-Díaz FJ (2016) Risk Factors for School Dropout in a Sample of Juvenile Offenders.

² Wilkins, J., and Bost, L. W. (2016). Dropout prevention in middle and high schools: from research to practice. *Interv. Sch. Clin.* 51, 267–275

Recommendations

Actions at the government/policy level

- The government should allocate a specific budget to implement the Government-led/UNICEF-supported OOSC Strategy. The budget should include the strategic rollout of AEPs to guarantee targeted spread across the country so more poor areas may benefit from the programmes and lower the number of school-aged children out of school.
- The government should enforce sexual harassment and child marriage laws.
- Increase access to schools by building more schools, particularly secondary schools, considering individuals with disabilities. Due to the proximity of schools, absenteeism and dropout rates will decrease.
- Recruitment of more trained teachers: It is important that more trained teachers are recruited and incentivised to stay and teach in rural areas so that teaching and learning in those communities will improve. This will boost the confidence that school children and their parents have in education and parents will be inclined to lend more support to their children who are in school and a lot more children will be enrolled in school. It is important that more female teachers are posted to the rural communities to be the role models that the girls need to aspire to be.
- Strengthen the capacity of untrained teachers: During the stakeholder interaction it came up that most of the teachers who teach in the rural communities are untrained. It is important that they are encouraged to improve upon their education and undertake formal training in education by enrolling in the distance education programme so that they will get the right expertise to teach.
- Strengthen strategies to enhance education for children with special needs: It is important that there is an integrated educational system where people with physical and mental challenges will feel safe to attend regular school and will have the same opportunities to learn just as their counterparts who do not have any physical challenge. Special needs education should form part of the curriculum of the teacher training colleges so that every teacher gets to know how to handle children with disabilities. Teachers who are already in the school system should be given regular in-service training to be able to support children with disabilities in the classroom.
- It is important that government give attention to the establishment of pre-primary schools and also train teachers for same. The inadequate number of pre-primary schools in the study area indicates that children start primary school with no foundational skills which will affect the rate at which they learn.
- Regularise the status of trained teachers who are already in the field: It came up during discussions that there are trained teachers who have been teaching for years

but have not been provided with pin code³ and therefore are not on government salary. For this reason many potential educators who are qualified have taken up jobs in other sectors. It is important that the pace of recruitment is increased so that trained teachers who are already teaching will get the appropriate remuneration so that they can give of their best.

Education Innovators

- Government should prioritise education innovators to implement alternative education programs to prepare out-of-school children to transition to formal and informal education and develop quality standards requirements for innovator funding.

Schools and Communities

- Parents' involvement with school officials, regular visits to school, CTA meetings, and community meetings to discuss education-related challenges should be considered.
- Cultivate an In-School Mentoring Relationship: School-based mentorship groups of university students, community members, and teachers to promote learning and discourage dropouts will benefit the education and well-being of children.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts to equip parents to meet additional school requirements
- Discourage school authorities from making illegal requests and encourage teachers

³ Pin code is a number given to government employees indicating that they have been included in the gazette and are eligible to be receiving salaries.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Institute of Statistics (UIS) notes that while many countries show greater promise towards achieving universal primary and secondary education under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), little progress has been made with regard to reducing the global number of out-of-school children, adolescents and youth (UIS, 2019). Governments in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), for example, have made continuous efforts, over the past two to three decades, towards promoting equitable, access to quality education for all children. Notwithstanding, more than one-third of the world's 258.4 million out-of-school children (representing 98 million children) live in sub-Saharan Africa, with majority (53%) of them being girls (UIS, 2019). The UIS estimates that one out of five children between the ages of 6 and 11 in SSA are out of school. Moreover, one out of three youth aged 12 to 14 is out of school. More alarming--about 60% of youth aged 15 to 17 are not in school. The large out-of-school numbers are associated with huge disparities in access to quality education across gender, economic status, ethnicity, and disability. High poverty levels are also closely linked with disparities in access to education and learning achievement across the region, as students from poor, rural households and urban informal settlements often confront hunger, stigma, internal exclusion, and other factors which negatively affect their learning experiences (UNICEF, 2019).

As part of the ongoing global and local level innovations focused on addressing these out of school challenges, the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange/Global Partnership for Education (KIX/GPE) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is supporting "A Comparative Study on Accelerated Education and Girls Focused Programmes in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone". Associates for Change (AfC), Ghana, Dalan Development Consultants, Sierra Leone and the Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa (CSEA), Nigeria, are implementing this. The KIX IDRC research is a cross country study of Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) and Girls' Focused Models (GFMs) that focuses on vulnerable children and youth in rural, extreme poverty and fragile environments across West Africa. The overarching objective of the study is to increase access to learning for children who are out of school through the strengthened use of knowledge on effective AEPs and GFMs to ensure scalability and investments across West Africa.

The study is also a comparative one across innovations in the three countries and seeks to investigate the efficiency, effectiveness, and scalability of the selected Accelerated Education models in rural, fragile and hard- to-reach areas within West Africa. The comparison being done includes investigating the efficiency and effectiveness of these models to reach large populations of out of school children particularly in areas where trained teachers have difficulty working and refuse posting due to conflict and rural remoteness. The study also includes mini studies regarding approaches towards increasing access to education for children in poor rural areas, access to girls' education, access for children with disabilities and the transition and retention of AE children in formal schooling. The research design uses a Collaborative, Learning and Adaptation (CLA) approach as well as

an evaluative mixed-method approach including two longitudinal surveys related to the programme's efficiency and effectiveness.

In all, the consortium is working with seven education innovators across Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, which show a level of evidence for potential scalability and are relevant to the country contexts for the regions, states, and governments with which they are working.

1.2 Sierra Leone Out of School Context

Sierra Leone's children face obstacles in obtaining a good education, staying in school, and graduating from secondary school. Poverty, gender discrimination, long distances to schools, a perceived low value placed on education, and negative social norms practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM – 86.1percent), early marriage (30 percent of women marry before the age of 18), teenage pregnancy, and an unsafe learning environment exacerbate these factors. According to UNESCO's Institute for Statistics (UIS) 2018 database, there were **624,292**, **608,717**, and **719,750** OOSC in Sierra Leone in **2015**, **2017**, and **2018** respectively. At the primary school level, more males than girls are OOS each year, while the opposite is true at the secondary school level. In terms of OOSC, there is a fine balance between boys and girls in junior secondary school, while the research suggests that it somewhat favors females.

Almost one-fifth (18 percent) of children aged 6 to 11 were out of school. Only 45 percent of JSS-age children were in elementary school, and nearly a fifth (19 percent) were not in school at all, with only 36 percent attending JSS in accordance with their age group. More boys than girls were out of school in both age groups, while (36 percent) of senior secondary school age were out of school; and there was a notable urban-rural divide: 8 percent of JSS-aged children in urban regions were out of school, compared to 29 percent in rural areas (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2018).

Several children in Sierra Leone do not complete primary school or make the transition from primary to junior secondary school (JSS) as a result of many of the causes stated above. Primary school graduation rates are 64 percent, JSS (lower secondary) graduation rates are 44percent, and SSS (upper secondary) graduation rates are 22 percent⁴.

1.3 The out of school mapping survey

The OOSC mapping survey is the project's first key study, which focused on gathering data on out of school populations being reached by the alternative education (AE) innovations across selected districts and communities in Sierra Leone. The mapping study gathered data on the profile of the different types of OOSC (gender, age, disability etc.) and also on the demand and supply barriers to their education. The study also explored the diverse contexts in which the innovations are being implemented (rural deprived and extremely deprived

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/sierraleone/education>

contexts, socio-cultural and poverty contexts) and is serving as a baseline for the other research activities to be conducted within the project duration. The mapping of the incidence of OOSC was based on the UNICEF's OOSC framework's measurement of the five dimensions of exclusion:

1. children one year younger than the official primary-school entrance age who are not in pre-primary or primary school;
2. children of primary-school age who are not in primary or secondary school;
3. children of lower-secondary-school age who are not in primary or secondary school;
4. children who are in primary school but at risk of dropping out;
5. children who are in lower-secondary school but at risk of dropping out.

1.3.1 Objectives and research questions

The overarching objective of the out of school mapping was to gather data on the prevalence of the out of school situation in Sierra Leone and to measure the effectiveness and adaptability of the education innovations in relation to the OOSC population (girls in particular) at the programme level. The mapping survey contributed to answering the following research questions:

1. What is the effectiveness, efficiency, and adaptability of the education innovations in relation to the Out-of-School Children (OOSC) population and girls? (RQ:1)
 - a. What is the scale and prevalence of out-of-school girls and boys of different ages and socio-economic backgrounds in selected rural zones across the three countries?
 - b. What are the profiles of the different categories of OOSC?
 - c. What is the drop-out rate across the various innovations, particularly for girls and children living with disability?
 - d. To what extent do AEP graduates transition to formal schools?
 - e. To what extent do OOSC enroll in AEP programmes?

2.0 Mapping Methodology

2.1 Study design

The out of school mapping exercise employed an exploratory mixed-method approach utilizing quantitative and qualitative research methods to answer the research questions. This approach enabled the team to gather numerical data through the quantitative method and to also elicit qualitative data to interrogate, validate and explain the findings of the quantitative data. The quantitative data was generated from structured household interviews/surveys, community and school-level checklists and key informant interviews while qualitative data was generated from focus group discussions and key informant interviews with district education officials, community leaders, head teachers, teachers, AEP facilitators, and students. These approaches provided robust, and reliable data through triangulation of methods and key stakeholder groups regarding out of school children, AEP programming, completion, transition, supply, and demand factors and so forth.

2.2 Sampling Procedure

Dalan adopted a multi-stage sampling approach to generate robust samples at each stage of the survey process (the regional, district, community and household levels). Sampling was based on exposure to either BRAC Sierra Leone or Save the Children International (SCI) AEP programme, focusing on intervention regions and districts. The community level selection focused on sampling both intervention and non-intervention communities for the household and school level surveys. This was done to enhance efficiency in data collection.

2.2.1 Criteria for sampling of regions and districts

The KIX/IDRC Sierra Leone mapping exercises was carried out across three districts in two regions, namely: Kambia and Port Loko in the North Western region and Pujehun in the Southern region. The regions and districts were sampled based on the following criteria:

1. Education Innovators' presence and implementation of Accelerated Education Programmes in those regions and districts over the last 3 to 5 years;
2. Extreme poverty zones - areas with high levels of deprivation;
3. High incidence of out of school children and challenges to girls' education;
4. Regions and districts having AEP and non-AEP communities;
5. Districts that had received interventions from different NGOs in the past.

All three districts sampled are largely rural with high levels of deprivation and poverty and relatively low female participation in education. Education Innovators had an active presence implementing Accelerated Education Programmes in these districts over the last

five to 10 years. BRAC Sierra Leone implemented an Empowerment and Livelihoods for Adolescents (ELA) programme model between 2012-2014 targeting a total of 4800 girls in Port Loko and Kambia districts. Save the Children International implemented an accelerated education programme (AEP) for 700 children (350 boys and 350 girls) between 2016 and 2020 in Pujehun district.

2.2.2 Criteria for sampling of chiefdoms and communities

A step wise approach was applied to the sampling of chiefdoms and communities within each district.

Step 1 -Intervention Chiefdoms and Communities were predetermined by the locations where the Education Innovators were implementing the AEP. The two Education Innovators provided a list of chiefdoms and communities from which beneficiaries were drawn in each intervention district. Only Intervention chiefdoms located in rural areas were considered for the survey. For example in Pujehun District, the Panga chiefdom was not sampled because it houses the district headquarter town and is classified as an urban chiefdom.

Table 1: Distribution of intervention and non-intervention sites

Region	District	Intervention Chiefdoms	No. of intervention communities	Non-intervention chiefdoms	No. of non-intervention communities	Education Innovator
North-West	Port Loko	1. Marampa	18	Masimera	18	BRAC
	Kambia	1. Gbinle Dixon	27	1. Samu	27	BRAC
		2. Tonko Limba	6	2. Masungbla	6	
South	Pujehun	1. Kpaka	1	1. Malen	1	SCI
		2. Barri	1	2. Panga Krim	1	
		3. Sorogbeima	1	3. Mano Sakrim	1	
		4. Galliness Peri	1	4. Sowa	1	
		5. Makpele	1	5. Yakemo-Kpukumu-Krim	1	

Step 2 – Non Intervention Chiefdoms and Communities - In each district a matching number of equally rural/remote non-intervention chiefdoms were selected. For example, in Port Loko (1) Kambia (2) and Pujehun (5) non-intervention chiefdoms were selected. The 2015 population and housing census was used as the sampling frame for selecting the required number of communities within each identified non-intervention chiefdom. This provides a list of villages/communities within each chiefdom.

Sample Allocation and Selection of Localities in Non Intervention Chiefdoms

The number of localities selected in the non-intervention chiefdoms was the same as those selected in the intervention chiefdoms to avoid bias. The procedure for selecting of the community localities involved the assignment of random numbers to each locality in the frame, those selected are detailed in Table 2.

2.2.3 Sampling of Households

▪ **Definition of a Household:**

A household was defined as a person or group of persons related or unrelated who live together and make common cooking arrangements. Simply put a person or group of persons eating from the same cooking pot. Similarly, a household head was defined as the person who makes economic decisions in the household, the breadwinner. MICS 2018

The study was undertaken in both the selected intervention and non-intervention chiefdoms in the study districts, with an overall sample size of 400 households per district.

Table 2: Distribution of Households surveyed in each chiefdom

District	Intervention chiefdoms	No. of households surveyed	Non-intervention chiefdoms	No. households surveyed	Total
<i>Port Loko</i>	1. Marampa	198	Masimera	198	396
<i>Kambia</i>	1. Gbinle Dixon	162	1. Samu	162	
	2. Tonko Limba	36	2. Masungbla	36	
		198		198	396
<i>Pujehun</i>	1. Kpaka	40	1. Malen	40	
	2. Barri	40	2. Panga Krim	40	
	3. Sorogbeima	40	3. Mano Sakrim	40	
	4. Galliness Peri	40	4. Sowa	40	
	5. Makpele	40	5. Yakemau/ Kpumumu	40	
		200		200	400

2.2.4 Selection of key informants and target groups for collection of qualitative data

Qualitative data was collected in fifty percent (50%) of communities in Kambia and Port Loko districts and in all five communities in Pujehun District, all in the intervention communities. Communities surveyed were randomly selected. Target stakeholders, for example head teachers, and members of community-teacher associations (CTAs) were selected in schools within the identified communities.

2.3 Instrumentation

Nine instruments were developed by Associates for Change (AfC), the lead research agency, with inputs from the other members of the consortium. Instruments were adapted to align with the Sierra Leone Context. Three main data collection methods were used for the mapping survey: household survey –structured questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The instruments by type are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Study instruments by type

SN	Instrument Number	Description/Targets
1.	Household Instrument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Household Survey
2.	Instrument 1: KII with District Local Gov't Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KII for District or local government authority officials ▪ Planning Officer ▪ Chief Administrator of local council
3.	Instrument 2: KII with District Education Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KII/FGDs with District Education Officials ▪ Deputy Director of Education ▪ Officers/ Quality Assurance Officers
4.	Instrument 3: KII with community & traditional leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community and traditional leaders' interviews ▪ Chief/queen mother ▪ Councillor
5.	Instrument 4: KII with head teachers & teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers and head teachers' Interviews
6.	Instrument 5: KII with AEP Facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AEP/CBE Facilitators Interviews
7.	Instrument 6: FGD with OOSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide for OOS Children and Dropouts ▪ Girls Separate FGD ▪ Boys separate FGD
8.	Instrument 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SMC/CTA Focal Group Discussion
9.	Instrument 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community and school checklist

2.4 Data collection procedures and data management

2.4.1 Recruitment and Training of Enumerators/ data collectors and Supervisors

Household Survey – Thirty experienced enumerators were recruited to undertake the household survey. Fifteen enumerators were recruited by Dalan and the remaining 15 by the Education Innovators- BRAC (10), and Save the Children (5): Ten enumerators were assigned to each district. Data collectors were selected based on their experience in education research, experience in conducting computer assisted interviews and their ability to speak the languages in the communities under study. Special gender considerations were taken during the recruitment process. There were 27 female and 18 male data collectors to ensure that there were enough females to handle mixed group and female interviews so that female respondents would feel more at ease to participate in discussions.

Training – Both Qualitative and Quantitative Survey Teams were trained over a period of three days from February 10th – 12th, 2022. Training for both groups took place concurrently at Dalan Office premises. Four members of the AEP/KIX research team facilitated each training session, guided by a field training manual.

Data collectors were trained on the administration of the data collection tools, data collection protocols including safeguarding issues on conducting research with children and objectivity during data collection. They were trained on the data collection tools; this included a step by step discussion of the questions after the purpose of the mapping study had been explained to them. The training included practice with the use of digital tablets preloaded with the questions for the survey.

The household survey team piloted the survey instrument and data collection approaches on day 2 of the training in two localities in the Western Area of Freetown. The qualitative team, on its part, was exposed to several practice sessions to deepen their understanding on the use of the tools. The few challenges encountered in the use of the tools were shared with AfC to facilitate timely amendment to the tools.

Qualitative Survey – Fifteen qualitative researchers gathered the qualitative data required using tools 1 to 8. The deployment plan – Kambia (7), Port Loko (5) and Pujehun (3) - was based on the anticipated scope of work in each district. The team was also mixed, representing Dalan (11), BRAC (3) and Save the Children (1). At field level, two District Supervisors were assigned to each district, to coordinate the household survey and qualitative activities respectively. District Supervisors gave daily updates on dedicated WHATSAPP platforms.

The supervisor in each district team was responsible for administering the tools designed for district level stakeholders (tool 1, 2, 5), while other district team members worked in pairs to administer all community level tools (Tool 3, 4, 6, 7, 8).

Each team had a debrief meeting with their supervisor every day after fieldwork to compare notes and to give feedback on their field experiences to ensure that the right thing was being.

2.4.2 Quality assurance processes

The Dalan teams ensured high quality assurance standards at all levels. First, the in-depth training of field enumerators and their data collection rehearsals (including interview skills) in the presence of key members of the research team ensured that the field enumerators understood the nuances of the study. Second, the data was collected using mobile data collection tools, which allowed live data upload of all respondent data in real-time. This ensured that no data was lost during the transmission process between field and data collation; it also enabled the research team to assess the quality of the data being uploaded by each team member. Third, all data collected was thoroughly cleaned to allow consistency in the data used for the analysis. Significant efforts were made to avoid missing data by reframing the questions and probing the respondents further to ensure their full understanding of the question and to elicit the right information.

The debrief meetings also provided another layer in the quality assurance process. Each field team organised debrief meetings to identify gaps and correct such gaps in the subsequent days' work.

At the central level, the Principal Investigator and Country Research Manager, had regular consultations with the Associates for Change (AfC) team to ensure final field work protocols (for example site selection) were responsive to the recommended design.

Data Processing, Analysis and Reporting

Quantitative Data Sets (household survey data and secondary data from records) collected electronically, were cleaned and analyzed by three Data Analysts, guided by an analysis plan. The Data Analysts used SPSS software package to analyze the data.

For the qualitative component, team members worked in pairs and all data were recorded in written notes as well as being electronically recorded, to ensure complete and robust information. Data capture using the electronic platform took place after fieldwork.

Qualitative Data Sets (Semi Structured Interviews and FGDs) - All information gathered using qualitative instruments was entered into the electronic platform after fieldwork and analysed by an experienced qualitative researcher.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

The Research and Curriculum Department of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) gave permission to the Dalan team to conduct the research after providing information about the research objectives, safeguarding issues and research participants. Similarly, in order to access schools and the district education offices, permission was sought from the Directorate of School Quality Assurance, Management and Resource.

Researchers completed a consent form with each research participant, briefing them on the research in a language that they understood, assuring them of anonymity and confidentiality. Research data collected was anonymised and was only accessible to the core research team. Participation was voluntary and there were no financial or other incentives provided for participation in the study.

2.6 Gender, Equity and Inclusion considerations

The OOSC mapping research was informed by important gender considerations. Because issues such as child marriage, traditional beliefs and other sensitive issues could come to the fore during the research, issues of gender and inclusiveness were factored into the planning. There were 2 male and 2 female facilitators (one of whom is a gender specialist) during the training leading up to data collection. More female data collectors than males were recruited to ensure that there would be enough females to lead FGD with females in order for them to feel more comfortable to express themselves. During the data collection, some female-headed households and caregivers were deliberately included to get the perspectives of women in the data collection. In addition, persons with disabilities, including young females, were selected for engagement to ensure inclusiveness.

2.7 Study Limitations

It was discovered during the fieldwork that a few chiefdoms in the selected districts (e.g. Kambia District and Port Loko District) had been re-demarcated or (in some cases) renamed. The negative impact of this on data collection and coverage was, however, mitigated by adjusting the mapping plan provided to the field staff in those areas.

The design of this Out-of-School Mapping survey made provision to gather impact data at the level of Education Innovators. However, it was not possible to obtain the required data sets from officials at the ministries at the time of the survey. Community stakeholders however provided information on the positive impact that the activities of BRAC and SCI had in their communities.

3.0 Analysis and Findings

This section presents the findings from the selected districts, chiefdoms and households on the OOSC mapping.

3.1 Demographic /Background Context and Analysis

This section gives an overview of the demographic characteristics of the study sites. It also analyses the districts, communities and households in relation to enrolment, teacher types, academic qualifications of teachers, and infrastructure, among others. The out-of-school children situation is also analysed in relation to UNICEF’s five dimensions to provide a better understanding of the findings.

3.1.1 District distribution and context

The out of school mapping was done in 3 districts based on the BRAC International and Save the Children International intervention areas (SCI). Table 4 shows the number of districts and the level of deprivation. Among the 3 districts, Port Loko has the highest percentage of extremely⁵ deprived communities (16%), followed by Pujehun with 15.2% communities. Kambia district has the least percentage of extremely deprived communities. **Generally, 56% of the communities in the districts fall within the rural deprived⁶ category and 44% fall within the extremely deprived communities.**

Table 4: Districts by level of deprivation

	Rural deprived		Extremely deprived		Freq
	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Kambia	227	18.9	160	13.3	387
Port Loko	225	18.7	193	16.0	418
Pujehun	216	18.0	184	15.2	400
	669	56	536	44	1205

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

⁵ Extremely deprived: These are communities that are more than 1 hour drive from the district capital, does not have a school nor health facility in or close to, the community and households cook one meal or none in a day.

⁶ Rural deprived: These are communities that are less than 1 hour from the district capital, have a school, have a health facility, and households cook more than 1 meal a day.

3.1.2 Community Context

3.1.2.1 Sources of household income/ household livelihoods

The major source of income for the communities in the study area is farming, as reported by more than 50% of respondents each in Kambia and Port Loko. Less than 50% of respondents in Pujehun on the other hand mentioned farming as a major source of income, whereas 22% mentioned other sources of income, the main one of which is fishing. Trading is also a major source of household income and follows directly after farming; this was mentioned by about 20% of respondents in each of the locations. Other sources of income for the households are mining and hunting.

Information from the FGDs and KIIs also confirm that the predominant economic activity in the communities is farming and rice is the major crop produced by most farmers. Pepper, groundnuts, potatoes and cassava are also cultivated. Petty trading is also undertaken by women. Below are statements made by community stakeholders during qualitative engagements to throw light on the main economic activities in their vicinity.

Farming is the main economic activity in this community, engaged in by both that men engaged in. Community Elder, Kambia

Even though some men are involved in other jobs, most are involved in farming as well. Chief, Kambia

Farming, sand mining and stone mining are activities undertaken in this community. Community Elder, Gobaru, Pujehun district

Figure 1: Source of household income

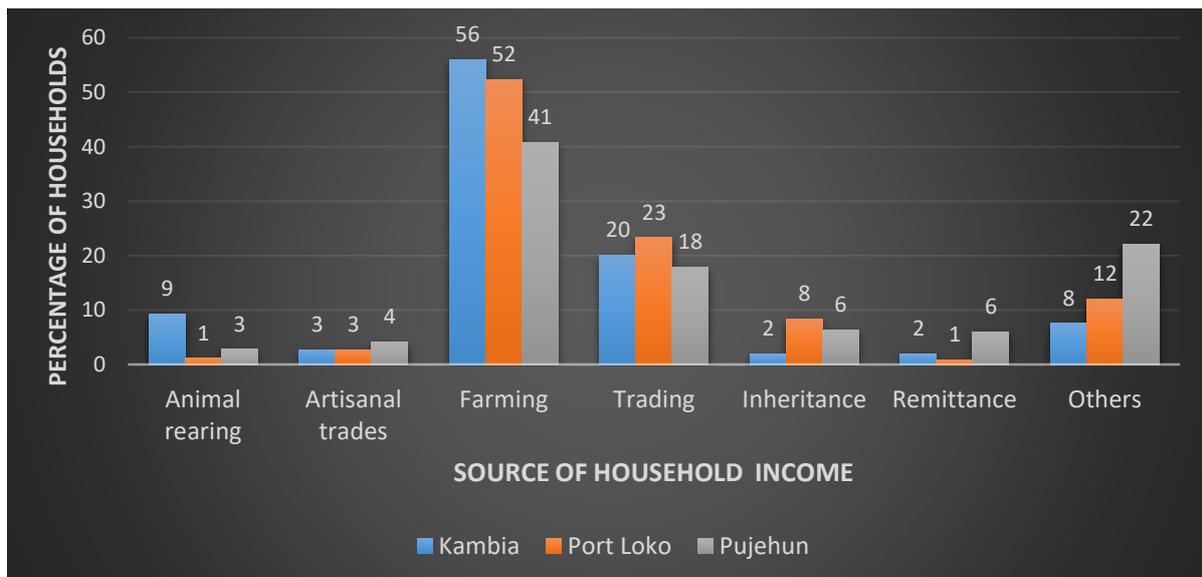


Table 5 indicates that **all family members including children engage in economic activities. There is a gendered division of labour in the activities undertaken. While men and boys engage mostly in farming and farm-related activities such as crop farming and being employed as farm hands, women are more likely to be engaged in a broader range of activities such as trading, vegetable farming and laundry, among others.** In the case of girls, activities are more home-based such as housekeeping or, in the case of communities in Port Loko, babysitting (22%).

Findings from the qualitative discussions held with other community members corroborate the findings from the household survey indicating that men, women and children engage in economic activities.

Children help with the brushing and watering the plants in the farm Queen mother, Bandajuma, Pujehun district

Children help with the farming process, they help in burning the grass after and before harvesting. Community elder, Kambia

Women engage in farming and also trade in groundnuts. Queen mother, Pujehun

Economic activities undertaken by men in this community are farming, trading, commercial motorbike riding and fishing. Community leader, Samu, Kambia district

Table 5: Economic activities undertaken by household members

Adult household females %								
	Caterin g	Food processing	Head pottering	Small ruminant and poultry	Trading	Vegetable farming	Laundry and cleaning	and
Kambia (N=766)	1	18	4	4	38	24	11	
Port Loko (N=486)	0	11	0	0	35	45	7	
Pujehun (N=425)	4	14	1	1	24	48	9	
Other adult household males %								
	Animal rearing	Artisnal trades	Arts and Crafts	Crop farming	Hunting	Fishing	Mining	Trading
Kambia (N=480)	10	7	1	49	1	3	0	28
Port Loko (N=449)	5	1	1	80	1	0	4	8
Pujehun (N=468)	3	1	0	40	2	40	1	13
Female children %								
	Baby nurse	Head Pottering	House help	Pan trading	Crop farming	Others		
Kambia (N=518)	4	6	55	32	2	2		
Port Loko	24	0	48	20	7	2		

(N=551)								
Pujehun (N=458)	2	1	51	17	27	2		
Male children								
	Farm Hand	Head Pottering	Herding Cattle/Sheep	Mining Hand	Trading	Farming	Fishing	Other
Kambia (N=422)	56	9	5	2	22	4	1	2
Port Loko (N=429)	82	1	1	1	11	1	0	3
Pujehun (N=426)	28	0	1	0	7	24	39	1

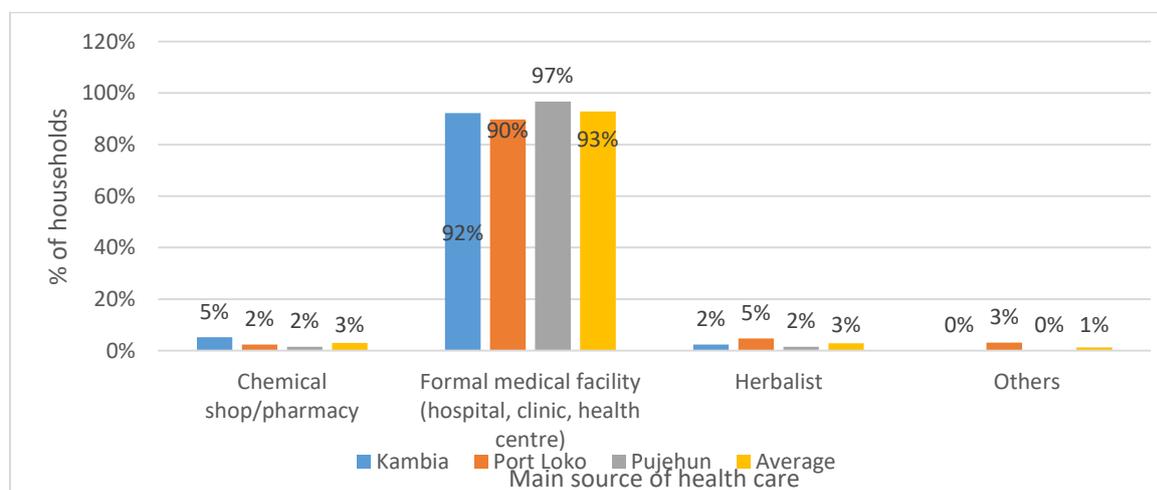
3.1.2.2 Healthcare in the study area

All citizens of the country have the right to access healthcare. The availability of health facilities in communities is important because of their ability to enhance the quality of life.

Main sources of healthcare in the districts

Among the districts, the main source of healthcare are formal medical facilities, mentioned by an average of 93% of the households, with the highest response of 97% reported by households in Pujehun (Fig 2) . Dependence on chemical shops, herbalists and other sources of healthcare is minimal across all the 3 districts.

Figure 2: Source of healthcare by district



Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

Availability of health facilities in the communities

As figure 2 above indicates, the majority of households seek healthcare from formal medical facilities. As part of the assessment, respondents were also required to indicate whether

Table 6: Availability of health facilities

District	Available facility	No facility
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	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Kambia	13	41	19	59
Port Loko	1	11	8	89
Pujehun	6	100	0	0
Average		51		49

they had a health facility within their community. Only 1 person out of 8 people in the communities in Port Loko, 13 out of 19 in Kambia and 6 people in Pujehun responded in the affirmative, giving an indication that few health facilities exist in the communities. Slightly less than 50% of respondents mentioned the availability of

health facilities in their communities.

Source: OSSC mapping, community checklist, 2022

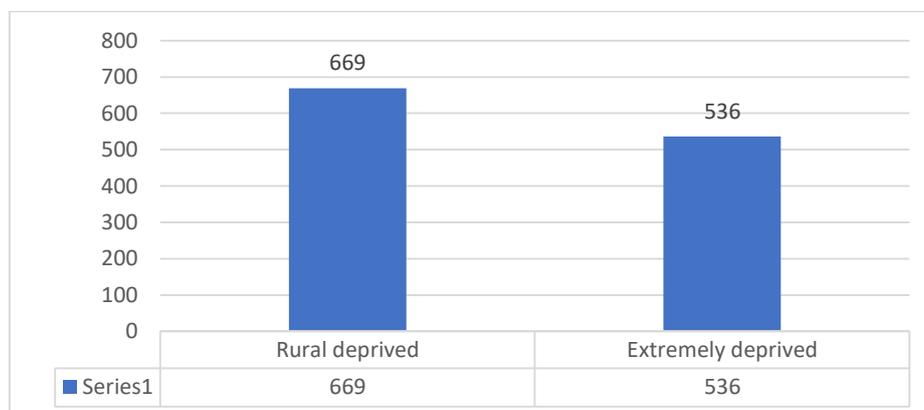
3.1.3 Household contexts

This section of the report discusses household level variables within the sampled communities. These include the number, types and levels of deprivation of households, educational level and economic activities of household heads/primary caregivers, household size and poverty levels. In all, 954 households were covered across the sampled communities.

3.1.3.1 Households by level of deprivation

All the sampled communities are in the rural area of Sierra Leone. As part of the study, communities were further disaggregated by the level of deprivation as shown in Figure 3. The criteria for *rural deprived* is communities that are less than 1 hour drive from the district capital, have a school, have a health facility and households cook more than 1 meal a day. The criteria for *extremely deprived* are communities that are more than 1 hour drive from the district capital, do not have a school nor health facility in or close to the community, and households cook one meal or none in a day. Figure 3 shows that **536 (44%) of the communities under study are extremely deprived and 669 (56%) are rural deprived.**

Figure 3: No. of households by level of deprivation



Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.1.3.2 Profile of household heads

A total of 1205 household heads were interviewed; out of this, 77% (931) were male and 23% (274) were female. This is expected, since in Sierra Leone as in most parts of Africa, tradition dictates that the husband, where he exists, is automatically the head of the household.

Table 7: Household heads interviewed

District	Male		Female		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Kambia	307	79.3	80	20.7	387
Port Loko	343	82.1	75	17.9	418
Pujehun	281	70.3	119	29.8	400
Total	931	77.3	274	22.7	1205

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

Household heads educational level

Table 8 shows that the educational levels of household heads are generally low: only 10% of males in Pujehun have a university/tertiary education whereas 5% and 4% respectively of males in Kambia and Port Loko had such. For women the situation is even less positive: only 3% of female heads of household in both Kambia and Port Loko, and 2% in Pujehun have completed university or any form of tertiary education. For JSS and SSS education, 26% of male respondents in Pujehun, 10% in Port Loko and 16% in Kambia reported that they have completed that level. In female-headed households, 12% in Kambia, 4% in Port Loko and 13% in Pujehun have JSS and SSS education. **The majority of female household heads (67% Pujehun, 82% Kambia, and 83% Port Loko) do not have any formal education; compared to 26%, 45%, and 66% respectively in Pujehun, Kambia and Port Loko for males.** Bearing in mind that there is a negative correlation between out of school children and their mothers' educational level⁷, the fact that an average 77% of female headed households have no education implies that children in these households have higher chances of never going to school or dropping out of school.

⁷ Increasing Access to Quality Education for Rural and Marginalized Children in West Africa— A Comparative Study of Accelerated Education and Girls Focused Programmes in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Comprehensive Analysis – Sierra Leone. May, 2022

Table 8: Household heads educational level by gender

Level of education	District											
	Kambia				Port Loko				Pujehun			
	Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Completion of Koranic school	1	1	70	23	1	1	38	11	2	2	62	22
Completion of Primary school	1	1	27	9	5	7	25	7	19	16	35	12
Completion of Senior Secondary/upper secondary	6	8	27	9	1	1	18	5	6	5	45	16
Completion of JHS/lower secondary	3	4	23	7	2	3	18	5	9	8	28	10
None	66	82	138	45	62	83	225	66	80	67	73	26
Other specify	1	1	6	2	2	2	6	2	1	1	9	2
University/other tertiary level completion	2	3	16	5	2	3	13	4	2	2	29	10
Grand Total	80		307		75		343		119		281	

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

Economic activities of household heads

The major economic activity for household heads is crop farming as mentioned by 55% and 54% respectively of household heads in Kambia and Port Loko districts. Whereas just 34% of household heads in Pujehun engage in crop farming, another 26% engage in fishing. **Overall, 62% of household heads engage in agricultural production for their sustenance** as shown in Table 9, whereas traders, artisans and motorbike riders make up the rest of the household economy.

Table 9: Economic activities undertaken by household heads

	Animal Rearing	Crop Farming	Trading	Artisan	Fishing	Driving/ Bike riding
Kambia (N=557)	14	55	22	3	0	6
Port Loko (N=577)	3	54	25	13	0	5
Pujehun (N=537)	2	34	13	20	26	5
Average	6	47	20	12	9	6

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.1.4 Community profile

3.1.4.1 Household characteristics

The physical characteristics of household dwellings provide insights into their socioeconomic status. Respondents were asked a number of questions about their household characteristics including the number of people in their houses, sources of drinking water, sanitation facilities and materials used for the construction of the walls, roofs and floors of their houses. The findings are presented below.

3.1.4.2 Major materials used for housing

Iron sheet is the major roofing material for houses in all the communities as reported by 96%, 79% and 71% respectively of respondents from Kambia, Pujehun and Port Loko districts (Table 10). The second major roofing material is thatch, which is used by about 13% of all the respondents. Mud brick is the major material used for constructing the walls of buildings in all the communities as was reported by 71% of the respondents; Port Loko has the highest number of respondents (82%) who use mud bricks for wall construction (Table 10).

Table 10: Major materials used for household construction

Major materials used for houses									
Material of the roof (%)									
	Iron sheets	Concrete/ Cement	Thatch/ straw	Tile/slate					
Kambia (N=371)	96	2	2	0					
Port Loko (N=285)	71	8	21	0					
Pujehun (N=529)	79	3	14	4					
Average	81	4	13	2					
Material of the wall (%)									
	Cardboard/Plastics / Cloth	cement blocks	metal sheets	mud bricks	Rammed earth	Straw	Wood	other	
Kambia (N=387)	0	30	2	65	1	0	2	0	
Port Loko (N=418)	0	12	0	82	0	0	1	5	
Pujehun (N=400)	0	28	0	64	0	0	1	7	
Average	0	23	1	71	0	0	1	4	

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.1.4.3 Sources of drinking water in the communities

Different households use different sources of water for drinking (Table 11). The majority of households in the Pujehun district (63%), depend on public taps as a major source of drinking water, whilst another 18% depend on boreholes. Households in Port Loko depend on multiple sources of water - 40% depend on streams, rivers and ponds for drinking, while 43% depend on public taps and protected wells, which are safer sources of drinking water. In the Kambia district, 28% of households depend on unsafe sources (river, stream and pond) for drinking, while 59% depend on safer sources such as public taps, protected wells and boreholes. Households in Pujehun (89%) have the best sources of drinking water as shown in Table 6. **Overall, 68% of households use safe water sources for drinking such as protected wells, public taps and boreholes.**

Latrines are the main types of toilets used by most of the residents in the study area (70%), with 59% using the more hygienic one - covered latrine (Table 11).

Table 11: Access to water and sanitation

District	Sources of water for drinking (%)								%
	Borehole supplied by the PTF	Indoor tap	Protected well	Public taps	River, stream, pond	Unprotected well	Water sellers	Total	
Kambia (N=386)	13	1	19	27	28	7	5	100	
Port Loko (N=412)	16	0	21	22	40	1	0	100	
Pujehun (N=397)	18	2	6	63	10	1	0	100	
Average (%)	15	1	15	37	27	3	2	100	
Type of toilet used by households									
	Bowl bucket	/covered latrines	Flush with sewer	Flush with septic tank	improved latrines	Public toilet	uncovered latrines	Other	None
Kambia (N=387)	4	65	0	1	2	7	17	0	4

Port Loko (N=418)	0	67	0	2	2	0	12	12	5
Pujehun (N=415)	4	47	1	3	0	12	14	19	0
Average (%)	3	59	0	2	2	6	14	11	3

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.1.4.4 Household size

Table 12 shows that household members aged 18 and above make up almost 50% of household members⁸. Those between the ages of 0-17 in total, form the majority of household members and indicates that households under study have a higher dependency population meaning that fewer people are economically engaged to provide for the rest of the household members. In some circumstances where the earning power of the working population is not strong enough, older children are relied upon to provide additional economic support, which could have negative effect on school output and retention in school - one of the precursors to dropping out of school.

The average household size for the districts is 5.7, which is the same as the rural household size and is slightly lower than the national household size of 5.6 mentioned in the SLIHS (2018).

Table 12: Distribution of household members by age

District	% of household members by age					Average household size
	0-4	5 - 9	10 -14	15-17	18+	
Kambia	12	18	15	8	47	5.64
Port Loko	10	15	16	8	51	5.64
Pujehun	11	15	18	11	45	5.83
Average	11	16	16	9	48	5.7

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

⁸ See annex 2 for frequency of the distribution

3.1.4.5 Household assets

Analysis of assets is a way of gauging the economic status of the communities under study; Table 13 gives a broad range of assets. In Kambia, the major asset owned by households is livestock, which was reported by 22% of respondents. The availability of metal pots and crockery as well as beds was reported by 12% and 15% respectively of respondents in the district. In Port Loko, as in Kambia, basic household items such as beds and metal pots were mentioned. The availability of metal pots and beds in Pujehun was reported by 15% and 21% respectively of respondents. The only modern equipment reported consistently by communities in all three districts were cell phones and radios; as many as 39%, 27% and 30% of respondents respectively of Pujehun, Kambia and Port Loko had these at home. Gadgets of modern convenience such as iron, fridge and air conditioners classified under 'other', were available in just a fraction of homes. The predominance of livestock as major assets in Kambia and Port Loko depicts the rural nature of the communities under study

Writing tables and chairs form a fundamental part of items required by children at home for studies; fewer than 10% of respondents in all the three districts reported that they have these at home. The absence of writing chairs and tables at home could be a pointer to the fact that school children do not study at home or that they do not have comfortable places to study after school.

Table 13: Household assets

	Kambia		Port Loko		Pujehun	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Bed (frame with mattress)	299	15	242	16	302	21
Bicycle	35	2	24	2	15	1
Cellphone	272	14	185	13	352	24
Cooking stove	36	2	50	3	4	0
Live stock	460	23	253	17	72	5
Living room furniture	31	2	8	1	29	2
Metal pots and crockery	249	12	247	17	214	15
Motorbike	75	4	29	2	51	4
Radio	267	13	253	17	214	15
Television	19	1	15	1	15	1
Writing tables and chairs	142	7	88	6	77	5
other	112	5	84	5	104	7
	1997		1478		1449	

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.1.5 School-level context

In this section, the school context is examined, with a focus on basic infrastructure, the qualification of teachers and domains relevant for access to schools.

3.1.5.1 Location of schools and access to them

Table 14 gives an indication of how schools are distributed across the study area, using nearness to the district capital as a benchmark. About 36% of schools are within one hour of the district capital; Kambia has the highest percentage of schools close to the capital. There are about 15% of schools that are considered remote, the majority of which are in the Port Loko district. The physical inaccessibility of schools is a challenge for many households surveyed and is likely to be a major contributory factor to children dropping out of school. The nearer a school is to communities, the better it is in terms of improving access to education especially for young children who cannot walk long distances to school.

Table 14: Location of schools

District	Beyond one-hour radius of the district capital and considered rural		Considered extremely deprived and hard to reach		Very remote area of the district (over 3 hours' drive from capital)		Within a one-hour radius of the district capital	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Kambia	6	19	9	28	4	12	13	41
Port Loko	4	45	0	0	3	33	2	22
Pujehun	4	67	0	0	0	0	2	33
Average	14	30	9	19	7	15	17	36

Source: Community and School checklist, OOSC mapping 2022

3.1.5.2 Access to Schools

One of the most important indicators of access to education is distance to the nearest school. The household survey provided the most reliable data set for access to schools. Household respondents also provided feedback about several other parameters associated with access to school, as it relates to each school-aged child in the household. The results

are summarised in Table 15. Based on the responses, it can be deduced that the majority (65%) of school aged-children live less than 3 km to the nearest school. The average time it takes to reach the nearest school on foot is less than 10 minutes. The majority of schoolchildren (94%) walk to and from school every day irrespective of the distance.

Table 15: Access to schools

	Average distance to the nearest primary school			Mode of transportation				Time taken to reach school			
	Above 5km	Between 3-5km	Less than 3km	Motor Cycle	On foot	Public transport	School bus	Less than 10 minutes	10-30 minutes	30-60 minutes	More than 60 minutes
Kambia	10	36	54	3	94	2	1	47	34	11	8
Port Loko	5	38	57	2	97	1	0	46	39	11	4
Pujehun	1	17	82	0	100	0	0	47	50	3	0
Average	5	30	65	2	97	1	0	47	41	8	4

3.1.5.3 Distance travelled to school

The FGD participants agreed that distance to school is an essential element in gaining access to educational resources, especially for rural areas where secondary schools may be located only in larger towns. The farther the distance between home and school, the less likely school-aged children (and especially girls) will attend school. This is especially the case where there are limited public buses to transport children to school, even for parents who can afford the fare. Children therefore have to walk long distances, which causes weariness, especially when parents fail to provide pocket money for lunch. A participant in an FGD discussion held in Pujehum stated that:

The distance to schools and sometimes lack of finances precipitate children to drop out from schools (FGD District Education Officer – Kambia).

In communities without secondary schools, children around the age of 11 who have made the grade for secondary schools have no choice but to continue their education in schools located in larger towns. Many parents with young children in secondary schools are concerned for their children’s safety, particularly girls. The approximately 30 minutes to one hour walk to school under hazardous conditions can result in parents holding their children back from attending secondary school. FGD parents shared the view that school buses are very limited and provided almost exclusively in district headquarter towns. This means that children in rural and hard-to-reach areas, who are most disadvantaged by the long distance between home and school, do not benefit from government provided school buses. A parent in Pujehun said:

Some students have to walk miles to access a schools in other communities and this trend has contributed for many pupils dropping out of school (FGD CTA - Pujehun).

Many parents in hard-to-reach areas opt to send their children away to school and this was found to be more common as the child progresses up through school levels given the scarcity of JSS and SSS schools in rural areas. However, this comes with an economic cost as well as a protection risk. Commonly, although not always, parents send their children to stay with extended family members under the promise that they will be sent to school, or to rented accommodation.

The participants pointed out that in some instances, young children under the age of 12 face considerable risks, including rape and sexual assault) because they must walk through thick forests or on lonely roads to access the nearest secondary school. Under these circumstances, many leave home early and return late, which leaves little time for them to complete any homework. Although motorbikes do ply along rural routes, many parents cannot afford the fare.

3.1.5.4 The School Situation in Intervention Districts

Table 16 indicates the number of schools available in the districts, as reported in KIIs with community and traditional leaders. There are 19 pre-primary schools across the districts, compared to 104 primary schools, which could pose a fundamental challenge to the foundational skills required by children at the time when they start primary school and could hamper their future performance if teaching and learning in lower primary school is unable to close that gap. The number of primary schools in all the districts far outnumber the number of JSS and SSS schools as well. Kambia district has the highest number of schools at all levels, followed by Port Loko. Pujehun district has the least number of schools at all levels of education.

The lack of schools in and around communities is a challenge for schoolchildren. Education authorities cited limited number of schools within the district as a concern, pushing parents to keep their children at home rather than send them away to live elsewhere in order to access education. Parents are cautious to send their children to live with relatives or friends outside of their villages because they worry about exposing their children to maltreatment/ or starvation.

The lack of schools also has implications for AEP graduates who want to transition back into formal education. Especially for Pujehun where SCI's plan was mainly to return the children who pass through their system back to school, the lack of schools could pose challenges for children who want to transition into the formal system.

Table 16: Availability of schools in the intervention areas

	Kambia		Port Loko		Pujehun		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq
Pre-primary	9	47	3	16	7	37	19
Primary	66	63	30	29	8	8	104
JSS	55	66	20	24	8	10	83
SSS	43	73	10	17	6	10	59
CBE	5	71	2	29	0	0	7

Source: KII, community and traditional leaders OOSC Mapping 2022

3.1.5.5 Teacher availability in the intervention areas

As shown in Table 17, male teachers dominate the teaching field at all levels, and the higher the level, the fewer female teachers there are. Port Loko district has the highest number of female teachers across all the levels in both trained and untrained categories. The lack of substantive numbers of female teachers in the educational sector means that young and adolescent girls lack role models and mentors to support them to remain in school and perform to their best.

With the exception of Kambia district where less than 50% of primary school teachers are untrained, the proportion of trained teachers is slightly higher than those who are untrained in all other districts and at the other levels.

At the four levels of education under consideration (i.e. pre-primary, primary, junior secondary and senior secondary), primary schools have the most teachers, compared to the other levels. In spite of this, they have the highest pupil: teacher ratio (PTR) of 49:1, 39:1 and 44:1 for Pujehun, Port Loko and Kambia districts respectively. This is higher than that prescribed by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) of 25:1, and shows that there are relatively fewer teachers in the districts serving a lot more pupils. The PTR for the JSS level- 34:1 for Pujehun is higher than the required PTR whereas those for Kambia and Port Loko districts are almost at par with the national requirement. On the other hand, the PTR for the SSS level is lower than the national average for all the districts- an indication of low levels of enrolment especially when viewed against the few number of schools in the area under study.

Primary schools in Kambia have the highest pupil-to-trained-teacher ratio (PTTR) 122:1, followed by Pre-primary schools in Pujehun and Port Loko with 111:1 and 109:1

respectively. The PTTR at the JSS level is highest in the Kambia district - 59:1, and lowest in the Port Loko district with 35:1. These indicate a dearth of trained teachers in the pre-primary, primary and JSS levels with important implications for the quality of teaching and learning in those levels, and by extension, student retention rates. At the SSS level, the PTTR for Port Loko is at par with that for government – 25:1 whereas ratios for Pujehun and Kambia are below government’s recommended PTTR.

Table 17: Teacher situation in the interventiion

District/ level	Teachers				Total teachers	Total trained	Pupils enrolment	PTR	PTTR
	Trained		Untrained						
	M	F	M	F					
Pujehun									
Pre-Primary	4	15	9	30	58	19	2118	36.52	111
Primary	285	43	233	43	604	328	29364	49	90
JSS	95	5	41	2	143	100	4834	34	48
SSS	59	2	1	0	62	61	1206	19	20
Port Loko									
Pre-Primary	0	14	4	37	55	14	1519	27.62	109
Primary	141	122	109	54	426	263	16767	39	64
JSS	107	35	66	9	217	142	4974	23	35
SSS	73	5	21	1	100	78	1913	19	25
Kambia									
Pre-Primary	5	22	4	23	54	22	1972	36.52	89.6
Primary	139	44	287	40	510	183	22314	44	122
JSS	84	4	95	11	194	88	5228	27	59
SSS	63	1	23	0	87	64	1567	18	24

EMIS Annual School Census data, 2020

3.1.5.6 Basic school infrastructure

Table 18 summarises the condition of school buildings in the area of study. In all, about 20% of schools are in good condition, according to respondents; 33% of schools in Pujehun are in good condition. About 70% of schools in the study area, require some repair works in order to function properly.

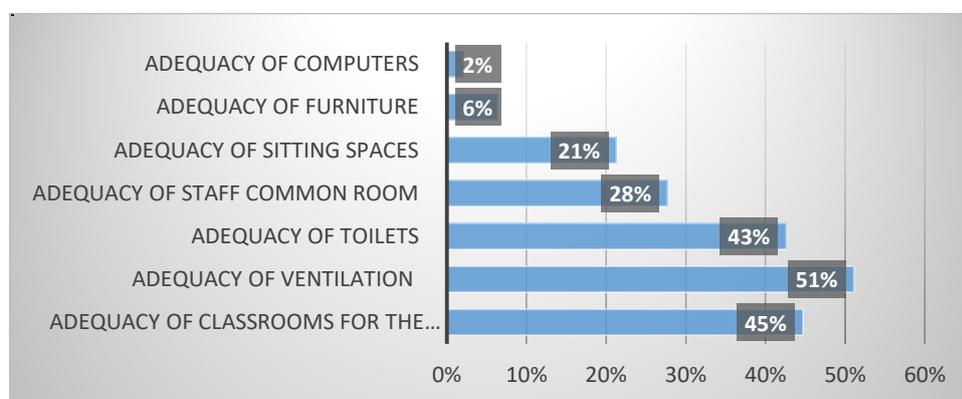
Table 18: Condition of school buildings

District	Average: with some repair work needed		Good condition well kept		Not in good condition		
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Kambia	24	75	6	19	2	6	
Port Loko	5	56	2	22	2	22	
Pujehun	4	67	2	33	0	0	
	33	70	10	21	4	9	

Source: Community and school checklist, OOSC mapping 2022

Figure 4 depicts key respondents' perspectives about adequacy of basic infrastructure in schools. With the exception of ventilation, which is rated at 51%, all the other measures of adequacy such as toilets, classrooms and furniture fall below the 50% mark. In general, the results in terms of adequacy of basic infrastructure within the nearest community school showed a skewed pattern pointing towards the need for improvement in all domains assessed.

Figure 4: Adequacy of basic infrastructure



3.1.5.7 Qualifications of head teachers

Ninety-One Teachers and Head Teachers were interviewed in the 48 communities surveyed, 16 of whom were female. Table 19 below shows the distribution of head teachers with the requisite qualifications to teach at the primary and secondary levels. The majority (79%) were *qualified* teachers, out of which 15% were female. About 38% had a Teachers Certificate {TC}, (the basic professional qualification for teaching), whilst 40% had a Higher Teachers Certificate (HTC), 1.1%- male had a Bachelor's degree.

Table 19: Educational level of head teachers by gender

	F		M		Total	Average	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Bachelor's Degree	0	0	2	2	1	1.1	79% Trained, Female, 15%
H.T.C	9	10	27	30	36	39.6	
TC	5	5	30	33	35	38.5	
WASSCE	1	1	9	10	10	11.0	21% Untrained Female, 2%
O'level	0	0	5	5	2	2.2	
BECE	0	0	1	1	5	5.5	
Other	1	1	1	1	2	2.2	
	16		75		91		

Source: School level interview with head teachers. Out of School Mapping, 2022

3.2 Out of school child context - prevalence of Out of School Children (OOSC)

This section discusses the out of school situation identified from the various districts, communities and households under study. The out of school numbers are estimated using the sum of those (children) who have **never attended** school and those who have **dropped out** of school.

3.2.1 Out of school context – using national level data

The MICS 2017 report indicates that 18% of children in primary school (6-11 years) were absent from school, whereas the out of school rate for lower secondary (JSS) was 19% with males accounting for 20.2% of the total compared to 17.6 percent for females. The out of school rate for the JSS level is slightly higher than that of primary schools. In the case of upper secondary (SSS), the out-of-school rate is high for all categories, with females outnumbering males. Females account for 40% of the population, whereas males account for 31%. At the primary and JSS level however, the out-of-school rate for boys is higher than that for girls. This shows that as females advance in age, their likelihood of dropping out of school increases.

According to UNICEF (2017)⁹, almost one-fifth (18%) of children aged 6 to 11 were out of school. It notes that only 45% of JSS-age children were in school. Nearly a fifth (19 percent) were out of school, with only 36% attending JSS in accordance with their age group. More boys than girls were out of school in both age groups, while 36% of SSS-aged children were out of school. Statistics Sierra Leone (2018) identifies a rural-urban dimension to the out of school situation and observes that 8% of JSS-aged children in urban regions were out of school, compared to 29 percent in rural areas.

Many children in Sierra Leone do not complete primary school or make the transition from primary through JSS to SSS. Primary school graduation rates is 64%, JSS is 44%, and SSS graduation rate is 22 percent¹⁰.

3.2.2 Prevalence of OOSC

To obtain estimates of the prevalence of Out-of-School Children (OOSC) during the mapping survey in the focus districts, household respondents were asked a series of questions in interlinked domains regarding the educational status for children between 4-17 years living in the households surveyed. The domains are:

- Whether child attended school the previous year (2021)
- Whether child attended school during current school year (2022)
- Current educational status of the child.

This section discusses the out of school situation by gender, grade and level of deprivation, among others.

3.2.2.1 School attendance in 2021 and 2022

Tables 20 and 21 show school attendance by children in the study area in 2021 and 2022 and displays the results by gender and by age group for children between the ages of 4- 17 years. The two data sets indicate a consistent pattern.

Overall, slightly more than one in five (22%) children at all levels did not attend school in 2021 and 2022. When asked specifically about current education status of each child, the pattern remained the same. School attendance for girls was slightly higher than boys in both years across the three districts with the exception of Pujehun in 2022 where attendance for both boys and girls was equal (Table 20).

⁹ <https://www.unicef.org/sierraleone/education>

¹⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/sierraleone/education>

Table 20: School attendance in 2020 and 2021

	KAMBIA Percentage (%) (N=991)		PORT LOKO Percentage (%) (N=928)		PUJEHUN Percentage (%) (N=1073)		TOTAL (N=2992)
	Female (N=508)	Male (N=483)	Female (N=444)	Male (N=484)	Female (N=576)	Male (N=497)	
School attendance in 2021							
Yes	79.33	76.19	77.8	76.8	78.51	77.69	78.34
No	20.67	23.81	22.2	23.2	21.49	22.31	21.66
Grand Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
School attendance in 2022							
Yes	82.09	80.54	81.33	79.95	79.96	79.96	78.87
No	17.91	19.46	18.67	20.05	20.04	20.04	22.13
Grand Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

Table 21 shows the educational status of children in the communities. An average of 77% of children across the three districts are currently in school. About 22% were out-of-School at the time of the survey; this comprises of those who have never been to school- 12% and those who have dropped out- 10%. About 1% of those in school are at risk of dropping out since they do not attend school regularly.

The percentage of girls who are currently in school in the districts is slightly higher than that of boys. In Kambia for instance, 82% of girls compared to 80% of boys are currently in school, for Port Loko, 81% of girls compared to 79% of boys are in school. On the other hand, slightly more girls than boys in Port Loko and Kambia have never attended school whereas the reverse is the case in Kambia (Table 21).

Table 21: Prevalence of OOSC at the district level disaggregated by gender

	KAMBIA Percentage (%) (N=991)		PORT LOKO Percentage (%) (N=928)		PUJEHUN Percentage (%) (N=1073)		TOTAL (N=2992)
	Female (N=508)	Male (N=483)	Female (N=444)	Male (N=484)	Female (N=576)	Male (N=497)	
Currently fully in school	81.69	80.12	80.93	78.83	78.93	78.88	76.84

Never Attended	13.98	16.56	15.24	14.41	15.91	15.19	12.30
Dropped Out	4.13	2.48	3.33	5.86	3.93	4.85	9.86
In school sometimes	0.20	0.83	0.50	0.90	1.24	1.08	1.00
Grand Total	100.00						

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.2.2.2 General statistics on identified children

Prevalence of OOSC across the study area by age

The out-of-school population for this study is estimated using the ‘drop out’ and ‘never attended’ population with a specific focus on the population aged 4 to 17 (N2¹¹-SSS). Table 22 presents the prevalence of out-of-school children among the enumerated areas as part of the household survey. The out-of-school status of 4-17 year old children is 22.21% (663 children). This is slightly higher than the OOSC rate reported by MICS in 2017 (18% of children 6-11yrs) probably because of the difference in the age range that were used in the two studies.

The highest out-of-school rate is among senior secondary school population aged 15 to 17 years. The study revealed that as a result of the endemic poverty in the areas under study, children who reach the age of puberty are seen to be old enough to either enter the world of work or are married off in the case of girls. In addition, the lack of SSS in the areas under study require that children leave their communities to other communities to continue their education where girls for instance drop out of school because of teenage pregnancy.

The out of school situation among primary school and pre-school children is almost at par- 5.7% and 5.6% respectively. The economic situation of parents or caregivers result in children dropping out of school in spite of the free quality school education (FQSE) because parents cannot afford the basic items that children require to stay in school. A statement by an under 12 year old OOSC child in Port Loko underscores this,

When I heard about [Free Quality Education] I went to the school to get enrolled, but they told me I needed to pay 100,000 Leones¹² for a uniform and books, so I am still out of school.

¹¹ N2 is Nursery 2, the 2nd year in pre-school

¹² Le100,000 is the equivalent of \$8.00

The lack of schools in close proximity to communities mean that young children cannot start school until they are old enough to walk long distances, resulting in the high percentage of children (5.5%) in the 4-5 year bracket who have never attended school.

Table 22: Prevalence of OOSC across the study area by age

		age category				Total	OOSC Pop
		4-5	6-11	12-14	15-17		
Total Sample		396	1320	662	614	2992	N2 & 3 ¹³ N=396 5.6%
In school	Freq	225	1128	538	408	2299	Primary N=1320 5.7%
	%	7.5	37.7	18.0	13.6	76.8	
Dropped out	Freq	3	67	77	148	295	JSS 662 4.9
	%	0.1	2.2	2.6	4.9	9.9	
In school sometimes	Freq	3	13	7	7	30	SSS 614 6.6%
	%	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	1.0	
Never attended	Freq	165	112	40	51	368	6.6%
	%	5.5	3.7	1.3	1.7	12.3	

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

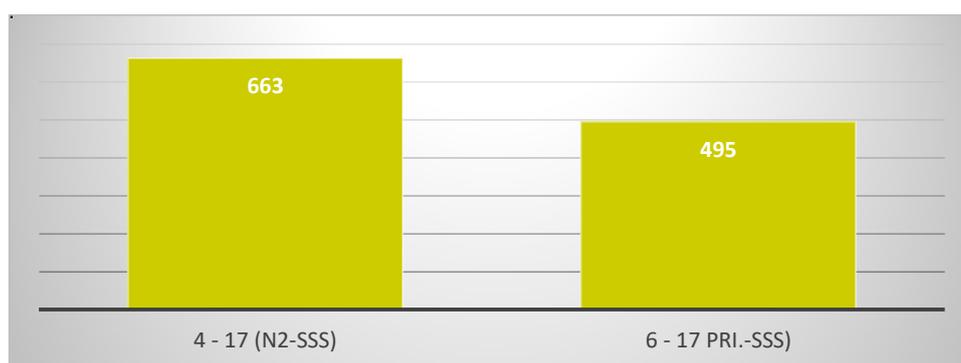
3.2.2.3 Prevalence of OOSC by age groups

This section compares OOSC population aged 4-17 (N2-SSS) and 6-17 (Pri.-SSS). The sum of children who have dropped out of school and those who have never been to school make up the OOSC population (Table 22).

Figure 5 shows that 663 children aged 4-17 years make up the whole population of OOSC children from age 4 to 17 or children from Nursery 2 (N2)-SSS. **Primary to SSS children make up 75% of OOSC population. The fact that nursery 2 and 3 alone make up 25% of OOSC population is reflective of the lack of pre-primary schools in the area under study (Table 16); there are only 19 pre-primary schools across the 3 districts. This explains why that level has the largest number of children who are out of school 168 (25%), compared with the other levels (Table 23).**

¹³ In Sierra Leone, pre-primary starts at age 3 from Nursery 1 and ends in Nursery 3. Nursery 2 and 3 are equivalent to KG 1 and 2 respectively.

Figure 5: Comparison of OOSC population ages 4-17 and 6-17



Source: Household data, OOSC mapping survey, 2022

3.2.2.4 Out of school population by gender

Table 23 shows that **in general, a lot more children in the study area have never been to school (55.5%) compared with those who have dropped out of school.** This is higher than the 2015 Population and Housing Census report, which states that only 37.8% of the population aged 6 and above have ever been to school. The difference in figures could be because this study assesses the out of school situation from a lower age- 4 years where children in pre-primary school age do not start school early because of the dearth of pre-primary schools in the rural areas as depicted in Table 16. A comparison by gender indicates that more boys (64%) than girls (49.3%) have never attended school; on the other hand, girls are more likely to drop out of school (50.7%), than boys (37.6%). A statement in an interview with a teacher throws light on the reason for the difference:

Because girls get pregnant and they are the ones that are mostly likely to be given in marriage, they are the ones that drop out more. Those who have never been to school are usually boys, due to the marabou /quaranic education that they engage in. KII with Teacher, Pujehun

Overall, 349 girls (53%) are out of school, compared with 314 (47%) boys.

Table 23: Out of school population by gender

Out of school population	Female (N=1528)		Male (N=1464)		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Dropped Out	177	50.7	118	37.6	295	44.5
Never Attended	172	49.3	196	62.4	368	55.5
Total	349	100	314	100%	663	100%

Source: Household survey data, OOSC mapping 2022

3.2.2.5 Prevalence of OOSC by age groups

This section compares OOSC population aged 4-17 (N2-SSS) and 6-17 (Pri.-SSS). 15-17 year olds (or children in SSS) are the age group with the highest dropouts- 199 children. This is followed by children aged 6-11 years (children in primary school), with 179 children out of school. Whereas both age cohorts exhibit high levels of out of school population, different variables cause the out of school situation. For children in SSS, the reason for the out of school situation is high dropout, 148 (74%) out of the 199 children who are out of school actually dropped out. On the other hand, the driver of the out of school situation among the primary school population is non- attendance. 112 (63%) out of the 179 children are out of school because they have never been to school. The third age cohort with high out of school population is 4-5 year olds or children in pre-primary age group. 165 (98%) out of the 168 children who are out of school in that age cohort are in that situation because they have never been to school. Table 24 shows that the driver for the out of school situation for younger children is the fact that they have never been to school whereas for older children, it is high dropout rate.

Table 24: OOSC situation by age group- Ages 4-17

Age group	Dropped out		Never attended		Total	Average
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq.	%
4 to 5	3	1	165	45	168	25
6 to 11	67	23	112	30	179	27
12 to 14	77	26	40	11	117	18
15-17	148	50	51	14	199	30
	295		368		663	

Source: Household data, out of school mapping, 2022

3.2.2.6 Out of school numbers by level of deprivation

Table 25 depicts the out of school situation based on the level of deprivation. 72% of children aged 4-17 in rural deprived communities have never attended school, whereas 28% have dropped out of school. On the other hand, whereas 45% of children in extremely deprived communities have never attended school, 55% have dropped out. **There are more out of school children in extremely deprived communities (412 or 62%) than rural deprived communities (251 or 38%).**

Table 25: OOSC population (4-17) by level of deprivation

Out of school status	Rural deprived		Extremely deprived		Total	Average
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Dropped Out	70	28	225	55	295	44
Never attended	181	72	187	45	368	56
	251	100	412	100	663	

Source: Household data, Out of School Mapping

3.2.2.7 The out of school situation by intervention and non-intervention areas

Among the communities under study, the out of school population is 22% as shown in Table 26. There are higher numbers of out of school children in all intervention areas compared with non-intervention areas. Whereas baseline figures for the intervention areas are unavailable, this trend could provide a justification for which those locations were chosen by the education innovators for intervention. It is also a pointer to the fact that more intervention is needed in those communities.

Table 26: Education status by intervention and nonintervention communities

	KAMBIA			PORT LOKO			PUJEHUN			Grand total
	Interven- tion	Non- Intervention	Total	Interven- tion	Non- Intervention	total	Interven- tion	Non- Intervention	total	
Out of school children	17.08%	16.30%	15.5 7%	23.89%	15.67%	20.0 4%	30.69%	23.22%	27.3 0%	22.16%
	95	89	184	118	68	186	179	114	293	663
At risk of dropping out	0.45%	0.55%	0.50 %	1.01%	1.15%	1.08 %	1.03%	1.83%	1.40 %	1.00%
	2	3	5	5	5	10	6	9	15	30
Grand Total	17.53%	16.85%	16.0 7%	24.90%	16.82%	21.1 2%	31.72%	25.05%	28.7 %	23.16%
	97	92	189	123	73	196	185	123	308	693

Reasons for non-attendance

The major reason why children do not attend school is the lack of household finance as is seen in Table 27. In all the districts the percentage of girls who do not attend school due to financial constraints is higher than that for boys; in Pujehun, the gap is much wider- 55% girls compared to 39.6% for boys. The second major reason that prevents children from attending school according to respondents is the age of the child. In communities where schools are not readily accessible, age is a factor that deters the school attendance of younger children meaning that a child may only start schooling when they are older. The distance from home to school was mentioned by 7% of respondents as a reason why children do not attend school.

Table 27: Reasons given for non-attendance at school

	KAMBIA Percentage (%)		PORT LOKO Percentage (%)		PUJEHUN Percentage (%)		
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Abuse/Violence at school	(N=85) 0.00	(N=103) 0.00	(N=73) 0.00	(N=94) 0.00	(N=49) 0.00	(N=58) 0.00	(N=462) 0.00
Distance from school / difficult	11.76	13.59	4.11	4.26	2.04	0.00	6.93
early marriage and or betrothal	7.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.03
economic activities of the child	0.00	1.94	0.00	1.06	10.20	13.79	3.46
health condition (deterioration	1.18	3.88	0.00	1.06	2.04	1.72	1.73
home chores of the child (e.g.,	1.18	0.00	1.37	2.13	0.00	0.00	0.87
lack of financial means	37.65	23.30	61.64	56.38	55.10	39.66	44.16
Lack of school infrastructure (s	5.88	5.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.38
Loss of parent (s)	1.18	2.91	2.74	2.13	4.08	5.17	2.81
migration of parents or child	2.35	1.94	1.37	0.00	6.12	5.17	2.38
Child living with mild or severe disability	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.06	2.04	1.72	0.65
No one took them to school	2.35	2.91	0.00	1.06	6.12	8.62	3.03
Other specify	2.35	6.80	4.11	8.51	6.12	6.89	5.85
religious / cultural beliefs	2.35	2.91	4.11	2.13	0.00	0.00	2.16
The age of the child	24.71	33.98	20.55	20.21	6.12	17.24	22.29
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Household interviews, out of school mapping, 2022

3.3 The drop out Situation

This section discusses drop out in the study areas in terms of class, gender and level of deprivation.

3.3.1 Dropout by class level and gender

Tables 28 shows that there is minimal drop out among children in nursery 2 and 3; just 2% of girls and 1% of girls dropped out. The data shows that the higher the level, **the higher the number of children who dropout. The highest dropout occurs among SSS students, with girls in SSS3 having the highest dropout rate of 23%**, followed by boys in SSS1 and SSS3 with 20% and 19% respectively. Overall, 60% of girls compared to 45% boys dropped out of school.

Table 28: Dropout by level and gender

	Female		Male		Total	Average
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
N2	1	1	1	1	2	1
N3	1	1	0	0	1	0
P1	4	2	7	6	11	4
P2	7	4	1	1	8	3

P3	7	4	3	3	10	3
P4	5	3	3	3	8	3
P5	13	7	6	5	19	6
P6	7	4	4	3	11	4
JSS 1	11	6	8	7	19	6
JSS 2	21	12	8	7	29	10
JSS 3	13	7	16	14	29	10
SSS 1	28	16	24	20	52	18
SSS 2	19	11	14	12	33	11
SSS 3	40	23	23	19	63	21
	177	100	118	100	295	100

Source: Household interviews, out of school mapping, 2022

3.3.2 Dropout numbers by level of deprivation

Table 29 shows dropout rate in the communities based on the level of deprivation. In general, the dropout rate increases as pupils move to a higher grade; whereas there are few dropouts in the pre-school level, the numbers for the SSS level are quite high and form the bulk of dropouts. Overall, there are more dropout cases in extremely deprived communities (225 or 76%) than in rural deprived communities (70 or 24%) although the highest dropout rate of 31% is found in SSS3 in rural deprived communities.

Table 29: Dropout by level of deprivation

	Extremely deprived		Rural deprived		Freq	%
	Freq	%	Freq	%		
N2	2	1	0	0	2	1
N3	1	0	0	0	1	0
P1	6	3	5	5	11	4
P2	6	3	2	2	8	3
P3	8	4	2	2	10	3
P4	7	3	1	1	8	3
P5	16	7	3	4	19	6
P6	11	5	0	0	11	4
JSS 1	14	6	5	7	19	6
JSS 2	23	10	6	9	29	10
JSS 3	25	11	4	6	29	10
SSS 1	42	19	10	14	52	18
SSS 2	23	10	10	14	33	11
SSS 3	41	18	22	31	63	21
	225	100	70	100	295	100

Source: Household interviews, out of school mapping, 2022

3.3.3 Factors accounting for school dropout rate by gender

This section of the report delves into the reasons for which children drop out of school by gender. The factors investigated include economic, socio-cultural, attitudinal and the

performance of the child in school, as indicated in Table 30. **By far the major reason for which children drop out of school is economic 31% for girls and 20% for boys; an indication that girls are more likely to drop out of school because of economic reasons than boys.** The inability of parents to meet school expenses cropped up several times during the KII and FGD with community stakeholders. According to a community stakeholder,

It is especially challenging for parents and caregivers to meet the aspirations of their children in securing quality education for all because the communities are poor and many are unemployed. This explains why, despite the fact that the government has adopted a Free Quality Education policy in the country by exempting parents from paying fees that were previously considered as a burden, parents still find it difficult to provide school learning materials for their children. Children are often seen travelling to the farms or accompanying other family members in income-generating activities around the villages because parents are unable to provide uniforms, text books, exercise books, lunch, and, also unable to meet transportation costs. KII District Education Officer, Port Loko

Teenage pregnancy was reported by 5.9% of respondents as the reason for which girls drop out of school. The discussants in an FGD stated that when parents struggle to provide for their children's schooling, their ability to exert parental control drops. Without the means to pay for indirect school costs, girls are vulnerable to transactional relationships with working men, such as okada drivers or mineworkers. As a facilitator in Pujehun put it,

These men give them money for lunch and materials, or provide transport to school in exchange for sex. This abuse of adolescent girls, who are too young to consent, increases the risk of adolescent pregnancies, causing girls to drop out of school, potentially for good, perpetuating the cycle of poverty. KII, AEP Facilitator, Pujehun

Another reason for which children drop out of school as shown in Table 30 is the child's dislike for school- 5.3% for girls and 3% for boys. There could be several underlying factors fueling children's dislike for school, especially girls. KIIs with community stakeholders unearthed a few and in most cases, the underlying factor is economic. The level of poverty in the communities require that children support the home by engaging in farm work and other chores, leaving them with little or no time to study, this affects their performance in class, leading to the loss of interest in school,

Domestic work sometimes makes girls not to attend school. Some, they are the ones taking care of the home: fetching water, laundry, cooking and taking care of all the little children at home. They hardly have time to study, this makes them lose interest in school, and they drop out. KII teacher, Port Loko

Parents' inability to provide basic necessities for their child's school including lunch results in the lack of interest in school,

Children who go to school without lunch or who have not had breakfast are unable to concentrate in class, and as a result, they perform poorly in school,

become shy, and eventually drop out in search of alternate sources of income
(FGD Teacher – Kambia).

The lack of schools in or near the communities require that children walk long distances to school and back every day. This is a disincentive to schooling and could lead to a loss of interest in school,

Some students have to walk miles to access a schools in other communities and this trend has contributed for many pupils dropping out of school. (FGD CTA - Pujehun).

Other factors fueling drop out are poor academic performance (4.6%) and family members refusal to allow the child to go to school (4.4%).

Table 30: Factors accounting for school dropout by gender

Factors	Female		Male		Total	Average
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Mother's refusal	2	0.3	5	0.8	7	1.1
Father's refusal	3	0.5	2	0.3	5	0.8
Inability to meet school expenses	204	31.1	131	19.9	335	51.0
Indiscipline	8	1.2	9	1.4	17	2.6
Migration	10	1.5	2	0.3	12	1.8
Must help with housework	4	0.6	0	0.0	4	0.6
Poor academic performance	18	2.7	12	1.8	30	4.6
Pregnancy	39	5.9	0	0.0	39	5.9
Preparation for Marriage	4	0.6	2	0.3	6	0.9
Refusal of another family member	17	2.6	12	1.8	29	4.4
School is not important	4	0.6	10	1.5	14	2.1
The child does not like school	35	5.3	20	3.0	55	8.4
Other	54	8.2	50	7.6	104	15.8
Total	402	61.2	255	38.8	657	100.0

Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

3.3.4 Factors accounting for the out of school situation – qualitative

Qualitative interviews were held with local stakeholders in order to gain more insight into the out of school situation. This section discusses the findings.

A participant in Kambia attributes out of school situation to a myriad of causes and believes this has made the future of children uncertain:

The OOSC situation is really worrisome because it has made the future of our children unpredictable. There is increase in teenage pregnancy, early marriages, violence in school which cause children to drop out of school. (Local council rep, Kambia)

3.3.4.1: Economic factors

By far the major reason ascribed for the out of school situation is economic and underlies most of the reasons for which children either drop out of school or are unable to attend school at all.

Lack of financial means (poverty)

High poverty rate means many families are unable to afford the expense involved in sending all their children to school, so they invest in those children whom they can afford to send and whom they believe can achieve better educationally. Evidence from the qualitative data shows that poverty is the most commonly cited primary and contributing factor for school dropout and non-attendance across the districts, as most parents struggle to provide the basic necessities for their children to attend school. While noting that there are many factors influencing children to drop out of school, a key informant observes that poverty is the underlying factor for all cases of school dropout:

One of the main reason why girls are dropping out of school is because of family background, especially when the family head is not educated; the second reason is poverty, which is the bottom line. Some of these children are the breadwinners in their family. The issue of early marriage is also a reason but all of these are also as a result of poverty. KII, District Education Officer, Kambia

▪ Lack of school fees and supplies

Low-income families often face the difficult choice of sending some children to school while keeping others at home. Older children, orphans, and girls are most likely to be left out of school. While free primary and secondary school education looks to be universally available, it is actually not entirely free since parents are still responsible for non-tuition school expenses, such as uniforms, exercise books, pens, and other school supplies, which many families struggle to provide for their children. Unemployed parents or low-income earning households are more likely to have their children drop out of school. According to a teacher in Pujehun:

Children whose parents are low-income earners, are unable to provide essential support to keep them in school. Teacher, FGD Pujehun.

There are also other unforeseen costs, such as fees for extra classes, assignments or for *ad hoc* requests for monetary contributions. As a parent in Port Loko mentioned,

My child sometimes skips school because I do not have money to pay sports fees

The cumulative burden for low-income earners may be an incentive to withdraw their children from school and introduce them to farming, petty businesses and apprenticeship instead.

The requirement for materials, such as exercise books, pens, bags, uniforms, or shoes are for many the single biggest barriers not only preventing children from enrolling in school, but also causing them to drop out. In discussions with stakeholders this was highlighted time and again. A stakeholder in rural Kambia observed that:

the prevalence of OOSC was increasing because parents cannot afford to provide the means for their children to go to school, referring specifically to uniform and materials (Community leader - FGD Kambia).

- **Exams related fees and miscellaneous charges**

Consultations with stakeholders revealed that even though the FQSE package covers examination fees, some heads of schools, continue to levy other charges associated with internal or external exams. Children are often asked to pay some amount for the release of report cards or towards external examination. Children whose parents fail to meet the financial requests from heads of schools or departments face intimidation or threats of expulsion.

It also emerged from the discussions that some teachers ask parents to pay for going the extra mile to give children assignments or to contribute towards funeral expenses for the relative of a teacher or head teacher. Parents deemed such demands as unfair, and some who are struggling to make ends meet might even consider the extreme decision of withdrawing a child from school.

Lack of financial support

The discussants in the surveyed communities revealed that the majority of male children drop out of school due to lack of financial support from their parents. **When parents are unable to meet 'other' school demands, such as uniforms, backpacks, and 'extra classes', children become distracted and begin skipping lessons until they drop out. The risk of dropping out is higher for children who have lost one or both parents (orphans).** Foster parents do not support them and expose them to child labour. As a teacher in Pujehun revealed in the FGD sessions,

Some of these children who drop out are orphans; they lack support and cannot fend for themselves. Foster parents also send them to sell during school days, leading to a loss of interest in going to school.

Boys' involvement in income generating activities at an early age

The burden of indirect cost falls on children if their parents or guardians are unable or unwilling to pay for them, which interferes with their school career when they have to go out and work. According to the survey findings, **boys begin earning money at a young age when they realise that their parents can no longer afford to keep them in school. Boys are influenced to drop out of school, due to the ready interest to engage them to provide cheap labour in their communities.** Rather than “wasting time” in school, their preference quickly shifts to engaging in activities for quick earnings. In an FGD meeting with Community Teacher Association (CTA), a parent in Port Loko district revealed that:

The availability of a ready market for cheap labour within communities influences boys to withdraw from school especially when they opt to engage into quick income activities than waste time in school (FGD CTA- Port Loko district).

This also has implications for the age at which males begin school, as late entry is connected to school dropout. When faced with negative income shocks, parents may choose to have their children participate in immediate income-generating activities, often at the cost of school attendance. As their income levels rise, children's desire to attend school decreases because they believe that if they do not go to school, they can still generate money on their own, which is why they drop out.

3.3.4.2 Socio-economic factors

The communities surveyed are typically inhabited by the rural poor, and households depend on their children helping them on the farms even when school is in session. An Education Officer in Port Loko disclosed that:

Because of the level of poverty in the communities, parents take along their children to help them in the farms even when school is in session. This usually results in absenteeism and, on occasion, tardiness, which can have a severe impact on the child's productivity, leading to failure to transition to the next class and the loss of interest in schooling and ultimately dropping out.

Poverty driven by large family size

In most communities surveyed, a parallel was drawn between poverty and large family size. As shown by the qualitative evidence, large families with many children require parents to provide for all of them if they want them to be educated. Given household earnings and the

unemployment rate, parents are only able to provide for a small number of children, whilst others remain at home. Girls usually stay at home whilst boys continue their schooling; as observed by Devine, D. et al¹⁴, gender considerations come into play in parental decisions on the education of their children and it is always the preference for boys to go to school. A teacher in the Pujehun district noted that:

Poor parents frequently withdraw their female children from school in response to growing school maintenance demands. FGD with Teachers, Pujehun

A participant in an FGD discussion for teachers in Kambia district observed that:

Even when government is paying the tuition fees, there are also other things that need to be provided or done for the children like food which motivates many to go to school. FGD with Teachers, Kambia district.

This extra burden on parents having large family sizes has resulted in children dropping out of school to join family members in their farms or business places.

- **Death of Parents (Orphanhood)**

Across the districts the loss of family bread winner causes children to drop out of school. The loss of both parents often means that children must care for their siblings creating additional pressure to drop out. After the death of one or both parents, a child becomes more vulnerable and the chances of dropping out of school become greater. The FGD consultations revealed that when one or both parents pass on, the educational and other responsibilities of the child is shifted to another family member. It is expected that whosoever takes on the responsibility of the child can follow in the footsteps of the deceased parents. The discussants interviewed stated that many children drop out of school because of the lack of commitment of family members who took over responsibility for the children after the parents' demise. As one stakeholder put it:

The death of parents leads to financial difficulties as those taking over the responsibilities may not provide the requirements needed that will keep the child in school (Community leader – pujehun)

A community teacher in Pujehun noted that foster parents are more likely to prioritize the needs of their own children over those of their foster children. This neglect has led many to look for alternative ways of support and in the process, they become distracted and lose focus in education, providing the reason for these children to drop out of school.

¹⁴ Gendering childhood(s) and engagement with schooling in rural Sierra Leone. Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education (2021), pp. 1-18

3.3.4.3 Socio-cultural factors

Early marriage

The phenomenon of early marriage has traditionally been a common reason for which female children drop out of school in the surveyed communities, and the condition appears to be persisting, posing a threat to the girl child's education. Early marriage contributes to the drop out of female students and subsequently affects their prospects of receiving an equal education as males. As an FGD participant observed:

Early marriage is making most of our girl children drop out of school and this is worrying as the rate of drop out keeps increasing every year (Local Council representative, Pujehun).

Discussions held in all the selected communities reveal that girls are pushed to marry against their will, at the expense of continuing their education, because their parents feel that they must marry and leave home, so that financial responsibility for them is transferred to the husband:

Child marriage is still going on in this community and parents are happy about it. I talk as a teacher and an elderly person, but they don't listen. Teacher, Pujehun District

Parents in the survey communities believe that once a girl begins menstruation, she is ready for marriage, and that anyone who expresses interest is allowed to negotiate the bride price with the family, often without consulting the child. In an FGD discussion with Parent Teachers Association (CTA) members, a participant observed that girls are forced into early marriage to prevent them from getting pregnant out of wedlock:

A girl who becomes pregnant out of wedlock will bring dishonour to the family, therefore they push their girl children to drop out of school and force them into early marriages, regardless of the long-term implications (CTA- Kambia district)

Teenage pregnancy

Pregnancy at a young age is one of the underlying issues significantly contributing to girls dropping out of school, according to the consultations. Parents and teachers alike hardly explain or educate their children about reproductive health, leaving the female child without the knowledge she needs to make well-informed decisions before becoming sexually active and/or delays sexual debut until the legal age of consent which is 18 years. Pregnancy and subsequent drop out results from relationships cultured by adolescents, as reported in the discussions. In Pujehun a stakeholder intimated that due to taboos and other cultural beliefs, parents are hesitant to talk to their children about how to protect themselves from becoming pregnant while at school, putting girls at risk of becoming pregnant. Another factor contributing to unwanted pregnancies is migration of students to

access higher education outside their communities. In due course, they engage in transactional sexual relationships and fall pregnant:

I think a major factor contributing to children dropping out of school is due to unwanted pregnancy. Most of the girls migrate from the suburbs to access senior secondary school education in Port Loko but because most cannot afford to pay rent by themselves, they prefer boyfriends to support them, before long, they become pregnant (Teacher – Port Loko district)

3.3.4.4 Gender division of labour

In the household setting, there is gender division of labour where girls undertake domestic chores such as laundry, cooking, cleaning and caring for young children. Boys on the other hand are expected to help with work on the farms. Depending on the intensity of work, this could interfere with schoolwork and could ultimately lead to drop out.

Domestic/Household Chores

Most parents revealed during discussions that children are required to do domestic work before going to school. Girls are overburdened at home, according to the respondents, since they are allocated the larger share of the household jobs, such as fetching water, getting firewood, caring for siblings, and regular domestic activities; while according to the dominant sexual division of labour and gender stereotypes boys are not involved as much with domestic chores. A community leader in Pujehun had this to say:

The girl child must be kept closer to their families at home than men, placing them at a disadvantage in terms of skipping classes or arriving late to school due to the large amount of work that must be completed in the morning hours before leaving for school. FGD, community leaders, Pujehun.

Over burdening girls with household chores leaves them little or no time to study. They are tired and unable to apply sufficient energy to their studies. It also interferes with their school attendance, often making them late for class or missing out on school altogether. This results in low performance, loss of interest in their studies and they eventually drop out of school.

The qualitative data reveal that many children in the study communities dropped out of school because they are involved directly or indirectly in helping with domestic or farm work, that affects their school attendance. A stakeholder stated that:

Children may be kept at home to help with domestic chores or care for siblings. Older children supporting younger siblings must work to have money for food and other needs (Education officer – Pujehun).

A facilitator in Kambia stated that girl children, in particular, are over burdened by domestic work such that they have little time to study or attend classes regularly. In the morning, they are seen fetching water, sweeping and sometimes laundering school uniforms, and by the time they finish this work it is already late for them to go to school. As a result, they may leave home but are afraid to actually go into the school for fear of punishment or public naming and shaming by their teachers.

In the study communities, it was observed that boys are frequently required to accompany their parents to the farm early in the morning to scare off the birds or carry farm tools to the farm even when classes are in progress. A teacher in Kambia district stated that it is common to see children returning from the farm early in the morning and preparing to leave for school. This leaves them tired and reluctant to go to school, so they choose to hang out with others in the community until school is over.

The consultations in all the surveyed communities reveal that children (often boys) who have to accompany their parents to the farm early in the morning are more likely to face the risk of habitual lateness and absenteeism.

3.4 Children at risk of dropping out

The study assessed children who are currently in school but who were at risk of dropping out. Three main criteria were used - frequency of repetition, over age and regularity of attendance.

At risk of dropping out by frequency of repetition

Grade retention is one of the factors that lead to dropout in school, especially when it is not accompanied by any potential to improve education performance. In the communities under study where there is shortage of teachers, where children have to walk long distances to school and poverty is rife, repeating a grade does not hold prospects for improvement in performance and might likely lead to loss of interest in school and eventual dropout. Table 31 shows that of the children who have ever repeated a grade from primary school to senior secondary school (SSS), a total of 78 (31%) are from intervention areas and another 78 (28%) from non-intervention areas have repeated more than once. This implies that an average of 156 pupils or 29.5% of pupils in the study area could potentially drop out of school because of frequent repetition.

Table 31: At risk of dropping out by frequency of repetition

	Intervention area						Nonintervention areas					
	once		twice		Thrice		once		twice		Thrice	
Education level	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fre q.	%

Nursery 2 ¹⁵	2	100					1	100				
Nursery 3	0						0					
Primary 1	27	87	3	10	1	3	36	82	6	14	2	5
Primary 2	23	74	6	19	2	6	25	68	11	30	1	3
Primary 3	20	67	8	27	2	7	35	76	9	20	2	4
Primary 4	17	65	7	27	2	8	26	67	11	28	2	5
Primary 5	19	48	14	35	7	18	25	66	10	26	3	8
Primary 6	19	61	8	26	4	13	21	64	10	30	2	6
JSS 1	13	76	3	18	1	6	17	81	3	14	1	5
JSS 2	12	63	5	26	2	11	8	73	2	18	1	9
JSS 3	11	85	2	15	0	0	2	50	2	50	0	0
SSS1	4	80	1	20	0	0	2	100	0	0	0	0
SSS2	5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SSS3	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	174	69.6	57	23	21	8	198	72	64	23	14	5
Total number of children who have repeated a class more than once			57+21=78						64+14=78			

Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

At risk of dropping out by gender and frequency of repetition

Whereas there are equal numbers of children in intervention and nonintervention areas who are likely to drop out due to frequency of repetition, Table 32 shows that generally there are more females in intervention areas (45) than males (33) who are at risk of dropping out. On the other hand, there are slightly fewer females (38) than males (40) in nonintervention areas at risk of dropping out due to frequent repetition. In general, more females (83) than males (73) are likely to drop out of school due to frequent repetition.

Table 32: At risk of dropping out by gender and frequency of repetition

Frequency of repetition	Intervention				Nonintervention area			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
Gender	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Once	96	68	101	76	84	69	91	69
Twice	12	9	3	2	12	10	8	6
Thrice	33	23	30	22	26	21	32	25
	141		134		122		131	
Total number of children (by gender) who have repeated a class more than once	Female (Intervention) : 45 Female nonintervention: 38 Total female: 83				Male (Intervention) : 33 Male nonintervention: 40 Total male: 73			

Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

¹⁵ In Sierra Leone, pre-primary starts at age 3 from Nursery 1 and ends in Nursery 3. Nursery 2 and 3 are equivalent to KG 1 and 2 respectively.

At risk of dropping out of school due to age

The age of a child at enrolment can determine whether they complete school. When children are older than the average age in class, this can be a risk factor influencing dropping out of school. Table 33 looks at the risk of dropping out in terms of over-aged children. The age cohort for children in nursery 2 and 3 is between 4 and 5 years, primary is between 6 and 11, JSS is between 12 and 14 and SSS is between 15 and 17. Table 28 shows the age of children by grade; 480 twelve to fourteen year olds who would ordinarily be in JSS and 410 fifteen to 17 year olds who should be in SSS are still in primary and junior secondary school (see figures highlighted in red). This means that potentially, 890 students in the study area are at heightened risk of dropping out of school because they are overage for their class.

Table 33: At risk of dropping out due to age

Current class	age category							
	4 - 5		6 - 11		12 - 14		15-17	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
N2	144	42	201	58	0	0	0	0
N3	71	19	304	81	0	0	0	0
primary 1	8	2	278	63	48	28	30	7
Primary 2	4	1	189	50	57	36	50	13
primary 3	0	0	113	32	47	33	122	35
primary 4	0	0	50	18	75	50	86	31
primary 5	0	0	1	1	117	28	48	71
primary 6	0	0	1	1	136	13	62	86
JSS 1	0	0	0	0	19	14	6	86
JSS 2	0	0	0	0	9	14	6	86
JSS 3	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	100
SSS 1	0	0	0	0	1	25	3	75
	227	10	1137	49	510	23	415	18
Overaged children who are at risk of dropping out					480		410	
Total number of overaged children who are at risk of dropping out					890			

Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

At risk of dropping out due to age by gender

Table 34 looks at the gender perspective of children who are likely to drop out due to being older than the average age of their grade level. Among the 12 to 14 year olds who are overage for their class, 246 are female and 234 are male. Similarly, 215 females compared with 195 males aged 15-17 are overage for their class and are likely to drop out of school. Overall, 461 females and 429 males in primary and JSS schools in the study area are overage for their class, which makes them likely candidates for dropping out of school.

Table 34: At risk of dropping out due to age by gender

Gender	4 - 5				6 - 11				12 - 14				15-17			
	Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Class																
N2	80	23	64	19	102	30	99	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N3	39	10	32	9	152	41	152	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P 1	5	1	3	1	138	38	140	38	29	8	19	5	17	5	13	4
P 2	2	1	2	1	83	28	106	35	25	8	32	11	26	9	24	8
P 3	0	0	0	0	57	20	56	20	25	9	22	8	64	23	58	21
P 4	0	0	0	0	29	14	21	10	36	17	39	18	44	21	42	20
P 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	63	38	54	33	26	16	22	13
P 6	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	68	34	68	34	31	16	31	16
JSS1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	36	10	40	4	16	2	8
JSS2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	20	6	40	3	20	3	20
JSS3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	25	0	0	1	25	2	50
SSS1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	33	1	33	1	33
	126		101		562		575		259		251		217		198	9

Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

At risk of dropping out by regularity of attendance

Truancy has been identified in several studies as a precursor to school drop out (e.g. Fernandez-Suarez et al., 2016)¹⁶. Wilkins and Bost (2016)¹⁷ see truancy as a disengagement from school, which eventually leads to dropout. Table 35 shows that an average of 17% of school children from nursery 2 to SSS 1 in the study area skip school; this makes them likely candidates for dropout. JSS 2 and SSS1 were the only classes that did not have any students that skipped classes.

Table 35: At risk of dropping out by regularity of attendance

Current class	Never skipped		Skipped	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
N2	430	85	77	15
N3	453	85	80	15
primary 1	372	84	69	16
Primary 2	235	83	49	17
primary 3	200	79	54	21
primary 4	188	80	46	20
primary 5	29	94	2	6

¹⁶ Fernández-Suárez A, Herrero J, Pérez B, Juarros-Basterretxea J and Rodríguez-Díaz FJ (2016) Risk Factors for School Dropout in a Sample of Juvenile Offenders.

¹⁷ Wilkins, J., and Bost, L. W. (2016). Dropout prevention in middle and high schools: from research to practice. *Interv. Sch. Clin.* 51, 267–275

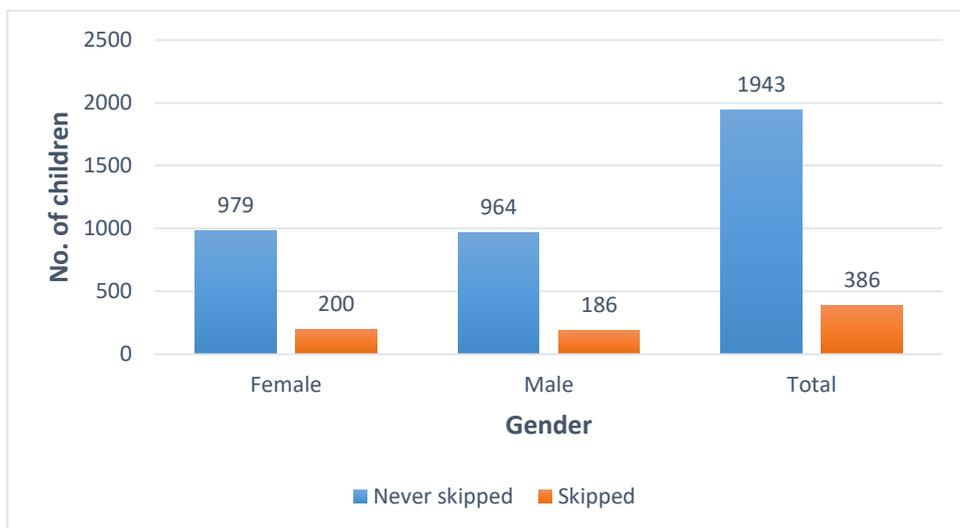
primary 6	16	80	4	20
JSS 1	4	57	3	43
JSS 2	7	100	0	0
JSS 3	1	50	1	50
SSS 1	4	100	0	0
	1939	83	385	17

Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

At risk of dropping out by regularity of attendance by gender

Figure 6 shows that girls skip school more than boys that is, 200 girls compared with 186 boys. This indicates that about 52% of the 386 children who are likely to drop out of school due to regularity of attendance are likely to be girls.

Figure 6: At risk of dropping out by regularity of attendance by gender



Source: Household data, OOSC Mapping Survey, 2022.

3.5 Demand-side factors that influence OOSC situation

This section tries to ascertain the reasons for which a substantial number of children in the study area are at risk of dropping out of school. It mainly draws on information obtained from qualitative sessions with SMC/CTAs and other community stakeholders. There are several reasons, which increase children's risk of dropping out of school. These include economic, socio-cultural and supply side factors.

3.5.1 Reasons for children not attending school by age cohort

Reasons for children not attending school for 4-6 year-olds

- **Hunger while in school**

Hunger is a crosscutting issue among schoolchildren, and for very young children, it has a rather debilitating effect. Although the free quality education programme includes a school feeding component, many schools, especially those in the rural areas, are yet to benefit from it in practice. Discussions with parents highlighted a typical pattern starting with children leaving home early without food or money for lunch and walking long distances, meaning that they are fatigued when they reach school, and walk back home on an empty stomach. Many young children go through this cycle every day, thereby increasing the risk of their dropping out of school.

Most of the teachers in their interviews expressed concern that children often spend the greater part of the day hungry. Hunger seems to be particularly prevalent, though not excessively so, in rural areas where poverty means household members may only eat once a day. For many poor families, school feeding programmes offer young children at least one meal a day. In an FGD with Parent Teachers Association in Kambia, a parent had this to say:

Children who go to school without lunch or who have not had breakfast are unable to concentrate in class, and as a result, they perform poorly in school, become shy, and eventually drop out in search of alternate sources of income.

FGD Teacher – Kambia.

Another issue is that of hunger. If children do not eat before going to school or during lunch, they may not want to attend school every day. CTA, Kambia

This issue of hunger and non-attendance to school is further highlighted by a parent when she says of her 5 year old child, ***My daughter sometimes cries when she doesn't have lunch to go to school and unless we get her something to eat, she will never go to school.*** Household head, Port Loko

Distance to school

There are few pre-primary schools in the study area as indicated in Table 16. This implies that not every community has pre-primary schools therefore children have to walk long distances if they want to access pre-primary education. This is impossible for young children between the ages of 4 and 6 so parents keep them at home until they are old enough to make the journey to school.

▪ Poor Health

The consultations revealed that the health of children greatly affects their ability and performance at school. Illness that occurs during childhood and continues for a long period may impinge on a child's ability to continue to the next level of education. Young children are often sick with malaria, which can result in protracted absence from school. In communities with poor health facilities this can result in significant absenteeism, sometimes preempting school authorities requiring the absent children to look for alternate schools. A stakeholder in Kambia district explains this:

Sickness amongst our school going children is worrisome because we do not have health facilities that are equipped to handle major illnesses. This has resulted in parents having to take their children out of the community for treatment which means the child may be out of school indefinitely, ultimately resulting in dropping out completely (FGD community leaders - Kambia district).

In Port Loko and Pujehun districts the participants opined that terminally ill children may miss out of school because of poverty of parents to take them to hospitals hence they used traditional medicines which they consider cheap regardless of the consequences.

Reasons for children not attending school for 7-11 year-olds

- **Attitudes towards Education**

Stakeholder engagements across the communities mapped underscores the fact that children who live with foster parents may not be enrolled in school. Guardians are said to be resentful of the free quality education programme, because of the added burden it imposes on them to support children who would otherwise have stayed at home; and might even opt to withdraw their wards from school as soon as the child can read and write.

A community stakeholder in Pujehun stated that intense engagement with extra curricula activities results in young children neglecting their studies, obtaining poor grades and eventually dropping out of school. During FGD discussion with Education Officers in Kambia, one participant observed that:

Some children in the pre-teenage years do not take education too seriously. Many prefer engaging in extra curricula activities in the communities such as visiting entertainment centers, spending time viewing different applications on mobile phones and other social media outlets (FGD Education Officer - Kambia district).

Reasons for non-attendance (12-15 years)

- **Peer group influence**

Peer group influence is often overlooked as a key reason for children dropping out of school. Adolescents look up to their peers for advice on issues that are not relevant to education. Children consult among themselves privately and take decisions, without reference to their parents, which might be adverse to their wellbeing. A community teacher in Port Loko in an FGD discussion pointed out that:

Early or unlimited exposure to alcohol, drugs, internet, and television can distract children from pursuing academics and initiate them into antisocial activities. These happen as a result of peer group influence

Young girls who took part in the FGDs freely discussed about the use of contraceptives and their role in providing advice to their colleagues regarding how to access contraceptives. This means that the subject of sex is discussed and practiced among adolescents at an early age. It emerged from the engagement that in many instances when a member of a peer group falls pregnant, their peers are the first to know even before their biological parents or guardians. In some instances, the decision reached by the peer group favours abortion which may result in serious consequences including maternal death. A similar sentiment was echoed with children under 15 in Pujehun portraying that adolescent boys can equally exert negative influence on their peers. The influential ones in the group can sometimes entice their friends to move to the cities to do petty trading or find jobs such as bike riding in order to raise revenue on their own, at the expense of going to regular school.

Due to peer pressure, children no more want to be controlled at home especially when their parents are unable to make meaningful contribution to their education. Boys ride motor - bikes and do odd jobs to get money; and the girls help people to sell especially on Mondays. CTA member, Pujehun

- **Embarrassment caused by financial difficulties**

Financial difficulties encountered by low-income families is a cross cutting factor contributing to the school dropout phenomenon in the survey communities. At older ages, children need their own copies of textbooks. Without text books, a child preparing for major exams finds it difficult to keep up with fulfilling school-related assignments, which is a recipe for failure. Children in such situations may feel embarrassed and demotivated and would more likely entertain thoughts of dropping out of school. As observed by an Education Officer in Port Loko:

When parents remain unemployed and are unable to fail to support their children financially in their education, the issue of parental control becomes a challenge. Children no more want to be controlled at home. They begin to miss classes out of embarrassment and eventually drop out of school if the situation does not improve. FGD Education Officer - Port Loko.

3.5.2 Other cross cutting factors leading to the out of school situation

3.5.2.1 Children with special needs

Young children with special needs face discrimination in schools as they are not given the privileges enjoyed by able-bodied children. The classrooms are not disability-friendly as

most have to leave their wheel chairs outside before entering a classroom. In some cases, children with disabilities are stigmatized. Other children call them nicknames based on the type of disability they have. This, according to discussants, is a demotivating factor, forcing many to abandon school for a more independent life of moving around within the community to source for their livelihood. A stakeholder had this to say:

Friends and relatives discriminate against disabled children and they mock them because they are disadvantaged FGD community leader, Port Loko.

An FGD participant mentioned how his child dropped out of school because of constant teasing from other school children and would have remained a dropout but for the intervention of the head teacher;

My son left school due to ridicule from his colleague pupils that his speech is not clear. He was discouraged by that and left school. The head teacher intervened and encouraged him to return to school. CTA member, Port Loko

Added to this, lack of teacher knowledge and pedagogical skills in handling children with special needs is a major factor in pushing such children to quit school. Given the lack of special needs teachers in schools at any level (and the short supply of special needs schools of any kind), it is especially important that mainstream teachers are trained in catering for special needs students. A facilitator in Port Loko district said;

there is a tendency for teachers to communicate primarily by writing on the board, without adequate verbal explanation, which makes it difficult for children with poor eyesight to grasp the subject being taught FGD facilitator –Port Loko

Such discrimination, even when unintended, affects the will for disabled children to pursue education.

- **Distance to school**

As has already been mentioned in this report, the distance to school is a challenge to school children and for children living with disabilities, this is even worse. As a CTA participant said in reference to the distance involved, ***If children with disabilities do not have someone to walk with them to school, they will reach the school at night because of the distance they have to cover. This is one reason that stops them from going to school.***

Children are unable to walk to school on their own, depending on the kind of disability they have. As observed by a CTA member in Pujehun, ***Children with disabilities cannot go to school on their own, because of the surrounding danger.*** This danger according to participants includes snakes, bad roads and being knocked down by motor bikes and cars. Even if they can afford to pay for transportation, another hurdle that they face is

discrimination from drivers. FGD participants report that not all drivers are willing to transport people with disabilities

Transport people do not like to take persons/children with disability. CTA, Pujehun

3.5.2.2 Migration

The discussants pointed out that migration and unplanned movements on the part of parents or guardians to new communities could also be a driver contributing to school dropout. In an FGD with stakeholders in Kambia, the discussants pointed out that when parents with formal jobs get transferred to another job location the entire family has to relocate. This means parents have to look for school in their new settlements, which may not be readily available. These children are withdrawn from school, and sometimes they need to wait for long periods before being enrolled into a school in the new destination. Older children in such circumstances who are not so passionate about school, might lose the enthusiasm to continue with their schooling, and instead opt to pursue other activities.

3.5.3 Special demand-side factors restricting girls

Socio Cultural Barriers

- **Secret Societies**

In all the selected districts, secret societies are a common traditional phenomenon in the communities sampled, and most school going children are affected when initiation commences. The Bondo society for example, is a female-only society, which all women are expected to pass through before adulthood and in readiness for marriage. The practice cuts across all ethnic groups except for the Creole ethnic group in Sierra Leone. Custom demands that every woman be initiated into the Bondo society. In the past, the initiation schedule conflicted with the school calendar. Many girls who were in school were withdrawn and enrolled into the Bondo society for extended periods which could range from 3 to 6 months. Suitors identify their brides while they are undergoing rituals, and many get married as soon as they 'graduate'; hence for some girls, the initiation ceremony marks the end of formal schooling.

Although enrolment to the Bondo society is widely practiced, the schedule has now been aligned to the school holidays to avoid interruption of the school calendar. Additionally, the number of days that girls are kept in the bush has been reduced, as was reported by FGD participants,

There are byelaws around the secret society now. Girls cannot be kept in the Bondo bush beyond one week after initiating the children. FGD CTA, Pujehun

That said it is not clear whether the change in schedule has had a significant influence on the marriage pattern given the high incidence of early marriage in the country.

A stakeholder in Pujehun said Bondo initiation ceremony also has cost implications that could affect the family's capacity to keep girls in school afterwards. Given the high value placed on the ceremony, parents might dedicate funds to meet the cost of the initiation, affecting their ability to cater for the school needs of the girl children after initiation. As stated by an FGD participant,

The community is not exposed they do not value education. Rather than spending money to educate their children, they spend the little resources they have on Bondo initiation.
FGD CTA, Port Loko

The discussion further revealed that their peers often embarrass girls who are not initiated into the Bondo society and sometimes they disassociate/distance themselves from such 'uninitiated' peers during lunch or break hour, creating an uncomfortable situation in the learning environment. A parent in Port Loko had this to say:

Intimidation and harassment either in school or community demoralizes girls because they feel inferior and demotivated to an extent that the only option they have is to leave school or move away from the community which is a recipe for dropping out of school (FGD CTA - Port Loko).

An AEP facilitator working in Kambia pointed out that at the community level, uninitiated girls are denied entry to the secluded Bondo initiation premises. He continued that such intimidation and harassment sometimes entice girls to get initiated at an early age, CTA participants in Pujehun report that, ***"there is still the Bondo society initiating 13 year old girls"***. According to participants, some girls are unable to fit into the school system after initiation because they feel too big to obey school rules, ***for those who have gone through the initiation, they think of themselves as big girls and the tendency to attend school reduces*** FGD, CTA, Kambia. This ultimately leads to drop out.

▪ **Religious beliefs**

The consultations revealed that there are instances in which children are sent to school based on the religious conviction of their family. For example, some participants in the FGDs for teachers and personal interviews believe that girls should not attend mixed gender schools for fear of getting into relationships which will lead to unwanted pregnancy. In Kambia a parent said that when girls mingle with boys in school, Muslim parents visiting such schools become uncomfortable and demand a transfer of their girl child to another school purely run for girls.

3.6 Supply side factors

Discussions with community stakeholders including teachers, community leadership, SMCs and CTAs indicate that other issues that cause children to drop out of school or not start school at all are caused by the inability of government to fulfil its obligations in terms of

making education accessible to all children across the country. This section looks at school infrastructure, teachers and provision of teaching and learning materials to enhance teaching and learning in the communities under study.

3.6.1 School infrastructure

One of the mandates of the government to provide accessible education to Sierra Leonean children is to make available comfortable school buildings with adequate furniture which are accessible within walking distance for effective teaching and learning to take place. School children in the study area are unfortunately not enjoying such facilities. Below are comments from the stakeholders.

Children walk long distances to get to school. This is greatly affecting girls, especially those who walk for four miles through bush road to get here. KII, Teacher, Pujehun

There is inadequate furniture in the school, no water and no standard toilet facility in the school. FGD, CTA Pujehun

There is no school building in this community; three communities are sharing the only available school and it is a long distance away. FGD, CTA Port Loko

There is inadequate furniture and children who do not get seats usually return to their homes. Port Loko, CTA

3.6.2 Limited/inadequate teachers:

According to community stakeholders, qualified teachers are not attracted to work in schools located in rural areas where basic necessities (clean water, electricity, and other social amenities) are lacking. As a result, school authorities do not have a choice but to hire unqualified teachers who are more ready to relocate to these remote areas. Consequently, children frequently perform poorly on external examinations. The majority of teachers are not on the government's payroll, which poses a significant difficulty for sustainability. Some teachers who are not on payroll, go months without receiving a salary or a stipend from the school administration or the community. The lack of incentives and job motivation ultimately make the teachers demotivated and they eventually leave the schools. Below are sentiments shared by community members on the teacher situation.

We lack trained and qualified teachers here. Our teachers receive no support from government. Parents contribute money to give to the volunteer teachers as incentive so that they can teach our children. FGD CTA, Kambia

There are inadequate trained teachers in our school so volunteer teachers fill the gap of the inadequate number of teachers. KII Teacher, Kambia

Most of our teachers are community teachers. They do not have any formal training in education as such they are not able to impart proper knowledge to the children. They teach as they feel and do not use any proper teaching methods. FGD, CTA Kambia.

Teacher absenteeism and lateness is rife in our schools because they do not receive salaries. Because of the absenteeism, children do not often go to school. FGD CTA Pujehun

3.6.3 Inadequate teaching and learning materials:

As part of the FQSE, government is expected to support schools with core textbooks and school materials such as chalk. According to a teacher in Pujehun, ***“the government is not supposed to supply notebooks, but core textbooks. Government is also supposed to bring in more teaching and learning materials and more buildings for schools”***. However, there is inadequate supply of these materials.

There is irregular supplies for government schools. The government does not supply teaching and learning materials frequently to the schools at all. Teacher, Kambia

My school is in a hard to reach area, we do not have sufficient teachers and we do not have enough furniture. Primary 6 pupil, Port Loko

3.7 How AEPs have contributed to addressing the demand-side barriers to education

One of the outcomes of the AEP program was that, a good number of those targeted were able to return to school. The knowledge gap of these targeted groups was bridged to some extent and that was the reason most of them were able to go back to school. There was a complete reduction of teenage pregnancy and early marriage because participants were taught about their sexuality at these centers. There was community sensitisation on teenage pregnancy and sensitising the community about the benefits of educating the girl child etc.

Port Loko, Resident Technical Facilitator

Reduced teenage pregnancy and early marriage

The FGDs for Facilitators in the districts who were part of Save the Children and BRAC's programme revealed that the coming of AEP and girls focused initiatives in the communities has been beneficial. They have helped in addressing the acute problems of teenage pregnancy and early marriage as girls now have the opportunity to spend time to learn trade (vocational training) and return to school (formal education) which will benefit them in the future. At leisure time they have time to read their books to keep themselves busy rather than thinking of engaging in activities that will not benefit them in future.

- **Reduced illiteracy rate**

Save the Children's program focused on returning children to formal education. It catered for all categories of people within the communities and that has helped many to join voluntarily as the opportunity was brought to their doorstep. A Facilitator in Pujehum revealed that most of the children who could not read and write before the inception of the project can now read and write. The project was able to train teachers through workshops who have done a good work in handling this set of children to be able to read and write. A Facilitator in Pujehum stated that:

Nearby communities were seen bringing in their children to join the project which to me is good for the future of our children who are aspiring to become good citizens in the future (FGD with Facilitators - Pujehun).

Returned dropout children back to school

Prior to the inception of the AEPs in the selected communities, a number of children had dropped out of school due to varying reasons. Parents who could not buy school materials or give lunch to their children seized the opportunity to enrol them in the project. This was to give them the opportunity to learn vocational training skills and provide avenues for formal education. One of the stakeholders in Pujehun stated that some of the children have now transition to formal education because of the educational project implemented by Save the Children in the district.

More pupils were brought back to school because of these programs, some were also given life skills and trained in different skills that they later put in to practice and that has helped them so much (District Education Officer, Kambia).

- **Reformed the attitude of children**

Children were mentored on how to behave in public and respect people regardless of age. This reformation has greatly help them to integrate into the communities and live peacefully with members in their respective localities. They are mentored to show respect to strangers and at the same time not to argue publicly or go into conflict with others.

How AEPs have contributed to addressing the supply side barriers

Addressing the distance factor

AEP brings learning opportunities within the reach of OOSC in remote communities. AEP facilities are usually located within a community and serves a catchment of communities, which are within reasonable walking distance. The proximity to homes saves parents the burden of providing lunch for their children, and facilitates quick access for parents to enquire about the progress of their children.

Promoting community ownership

The AEP models described by Facilitators favour a community ownership model. Host communities identify and or provide simple make shift structures to be used as learning centres. Community stakeholders are also actively involved in monitoring progress.

Overcoming language barriers

The medium of communication in most AEP programmes is in the local language. AEP programmes recruit facilitators who are fluent in the local language(s), to ensure easy dialogue between beneficiaries and facilitators. As beneficiaries progress with the learning process, the facilitators use a mix of English and local language to transfer knowledge, so that beneficiaries get comfortable with receiving information and communicating in the English language with time. AEP programmes offer flexibility in terms of teacher engagement. Retired teachers living in the community volunteer to support AEP programmes

Cost effective/Free tuition

Looking at the level of poverty within the communities it could have been relatively difficult for parents to pay school fees for their children, thus making access to education problematic. In a bid to adapt and encourage the communities to send their children to AEP centers, children are encouraged to attend without putting strict procedures making attendance open to all interested children within the communities. The introduction of free entry into AEP centers resulted in an upsurge in enrolment as parents urged their children to seize the opportunity and attend so they could capacitate themselves and live independent lives in the near future.

Flexible timing

Farming is the predominant means of livelihood in rural communities. The OOSC programme implemented by Save the Children and BRAC in the districts adjusted the timing of classes to accommodate farming obligations. A facilitator in Port Loko reaffirms this assertion by stating that one set of classes is for those beneficiaries who may want to take the classes in the morning before going to the farm and the other set is for beneficiaries whose preference is to attend classes in the evening after farm work. Time flexibility resulted in a high enrolment and retention rates.

Provision of school learning materials

The AEP was able to supply school learning materials with no cost to parents who hardly have the means to buy these materials due to poverty. Since parents and children knew there were school materials supplied at the centers, it inspired many to attend and this has helped to reduce dropout in the study communities. In fact, the AEP encourages children to put on attire of their choice to attend the classes discouraging the use of uniforms as a way of bringing children to the learning centers. During the early stages of the training, teachers who could speak the language taught children in their local language. This was a way of encouraging them to see the need to embrace the opportunity to stay. Once they had adapted, they were taught English at the later stages of the project and that has help many to improve on their writing and communication skills.

3.8 Presence and impact of AEP and Girls Empowerment programming in the districts/communities in addressing the issue of OOSC

Although, reliable statistical data for the mapping survey was not available with which to assess the impact of BRAC's girl empowerment programme and Save the Children AEP, the survey generated robust qualitative evidence concerning the benefits of AEPs in the focus districts (Kambia, Port Loko and Pujehun).

The Save the children AEP intervention transitioned many children to formal education, while the BRAC Girls empowerment programme has equipped girls with diverse skills to enhance their wellbeing as seen from the quotes below from community stakeholders:

For those who stopped attending for whatever reason have made use of this second chance to continue as it keeps them motivated (Teacher, FGD Kambia).

This program improved the lives of the drop out children, they taught them different things and they even learned how to make soap, taught them how to read and write and do some social activities like playing football (Teacher, FGD Kambia).

Children who dropped out of school and some who never went to school, AEP conducted classes for all and some are now in secondary schools (Teacher, FGD Pujehun).

It has improved the education system in the community by changing the mind set of some girls especially in the area of education and marriage (Teacher, Kambia)

Discussions with community stakeholders threw light on the benefits that beneficiary communities gained from the AEP and girls empowerment programmes. Table 36 gives a summary of the positive impact that the programmes had.

Table 36: Summary of AEP and Girls Empowerment Programme Impact

Theme	Impact
Exposure to literacy and numeracy training	Exposure to literacy and numeracy training provided beneficiaries with basic writing skills and ability to undertake simple mathematical computations, to track income, expenditure and profit derived from their small businesses .
Skills Training	Skills Training- The skills training component of the BRAC programme promoted self-reliance. Many acquired skills to be able to establish and maintain their own small businesses.
Start Up Capital	The provision of start-up capital under the BRAC model facilitated the establishment of small businesses which allowed beneficiaries to become more self-reliant and independent.
Sensitization and awareness raising component	The sensitization and awareness-raising component of the AEP has contributed to reducing early marriages among beneficiaries. Messages around types and use of contraceptives have equipped beneficiaries with the information they need to prevent unwanted pregnancy.
Second Chance	AEP and Girls empowerment programmes offer a second chance to those who had dropped out of the formal schooling system, including those who dropped out as a result of pregnancy.

In spite of the positive impact that the AEPs had in the communities, like any programme, the AEPs faced some challenges. Former facilitators shared their perception of factors that hindered AEP participation. These are summarised below:

- **Lack of emotional and financial support**

A major hindrance is lack of support, which has led to many children who are eligible for AEP not attending classes offered by the Education Innovators. As with the formal sector, children can only concentrate on education and learning if they are assured unwavering support from their parents or guardians. AEP programmes were created with the goal to empower beneficiaries with basic knowledge and survival skills and/or to prepare them for their return or transition to school. Even so, parents remain responsible for providing books, pencils, and lunch to facilitate their children’s participation in AEP. Due to a lack of proper family support, some beneficiaries were forced to drop out of these programmes.

- **Parents negative attitude towards education, both formal and AEP**

Parents of some potential AEP beneficiaries did not lend their support for their children to attend AEP sessions, according to AEP facilitators and respondents. FGD participants in Kambia reported that some parents had misgivings of their childrens’ ability to meet the demands of the AEP classes considering that most had been out of school for a long time. As a result, parents were unwilling to prioritize investing money to provide the necessary

assistance required by their children who were eligible for AEP. Instead, parents were in favour of early marriage for their daughters rather than dedicating their meagre resources to further their education.

- **Domestic work**

The discussions with facilitators revealed that many AEP beneficiaries were expected to do housework in the mornings before attending AEP classes. Girls were required to collect water, sweep, and carry firewood (among other chores) before leaving for school in the morning, which contributes to high level of absenteeism and eventual drop out.

- **Involvement of learners in other activities**

The study revealed that some AEP beneficiaries were economically active before enrolling for AEP programmes. They therefore had to juggle their time between domestic chores and attending AEP classes. Many required persuasion to enrol for AEP programmes and to attend lessons on time and regularly. Boys also experienced divided attention. They were required to rise early in the morning hours to scare birds or carry farm tools before heading for AEP classes.

4.0 Conclusion

The objective of the out of school mapping was to gather data on the prevalence of the out of school situation in Sierra Leone, across selected districts, chiefdoms and communities, across different contexts. The following conclusions have been drawn based on the key findings:

4.1.1 Background context:

District distribution and context

The research was carried out across three districts in two regions, namely: Kambia and Port Loko in the North Western region and Pujehun in the Southern region. Sampling was based on exposure to an AEP programme, either by BRAC or SCI, focusing on intervention regions and districts. Generally, 56% of the communities in the districts fall within the rural deprived category and 44% fall within the extremely deprived communities. Among the 3 districts, Port Loko had the highest percentage of extremely deprived communities (16%).

▪ **Teacher availability and teacher gaps by district and sex**

One of the main challenges facing the educational sector in Sierra Leone is the lack of teachers. The EMIS data for the study area shows that 58% of the teachers across all the levels are trained. male teachers dominate the teaching field at all levels; 84% compared with 16% female at all levels. The higher the level, the fewer female teachers there are. Primary schools have the highest pupil: teacher ratio (PTR) of 49:1, 39:1 and 44:1 for Pujehun, Port Loko and Kambia districts respectively. Primary schools in Kambia have the highest pupil-to-trained-teacher ratio (PTTR) 122:1, followed by Pre-primary schools in Pujehun and Port Loko with 111:1 and 109:1 respectively. The PTTR at the JSS level is highest in the Kambia district - 59:1, and lowest in the Port Loko district with 35:1. These indicate a dearth of trained teachers in the pre-primary, primary and JSS levels with important implications for the quality of teaching and learning in those levels, and by extension, student retention rates.

▪ **Major economic activities across study areas**

The major source of income for the communities in the study area is farming, as reported by more than 50% of respondents each in Kambia and Port Loko. Less than 50% of respondents in Pujehun on the other hand mentioned farming as a major source of income, whereas 22% mentioned other sources of income, the main one of which is fishing. Trading is also a major source of household income and follows directly after farming; this was mentioned by about 20% of respondents in each of the locations. Other sources of income for the households are mining and hunting.

▪ **Educational qualification of head teachers by district**

The majority of head teachers in the study area (79%) are *qualified* teachers, out of which 15% are female. About 38% had a Teachers Certificate {TC}, whilst 40% had a Higher Teachers Certificate (HTC), 1.1%- all male had a Bachelor’s degree. The others had secondary school education (Ordinary level, West Africa Senior Secondary school Education and Basic Education Certificate Examination).

- **Educational level of household heads**

A total of 1205 household heads were interviewed; out of this, 77% (931) were male and 23% (274) were female. 2% and 6% respectively of female and male headed households have completed tertiary education. 77% of female headed households compared with 45% of male headed households have no formal education. Bearing in mind that there is a negative correlation between out of school children and their mothers’ educational level¹⁸, the fact that an average 77% of female headed households have no education implies that children in these households have higher chances of never going to school or dropping out of school.

- **Household size**

Household members aged 18 and above make up almost 50% of household members. Those between the ages of 0-17 in total, form the majority of household members. The average household size for the districts is 5.7, which is the same as the rural household size and is slightly lower than the national household size of 5.6 mentioned in the SLIHS (2018).

4.1.2 Out of school incidence:

The sum of children among the 4-17 year olds who have previously been in school (dropped out of school) and those who have never been to school make up the population of children who are out of school.

- **General statistics on identified children**

In all, 2,992 children aged 4-17 (*age of interest for the study*) were studied across the study communities/households. The identified children were further categorized into age groups using the UNICEF Framework on OOSC. Children ‘currently and fully in school’ (2299), children who are ‘sometimes in school’ (30), children who ‘dropped out of school’ (295) and children who have ‘never attended’ formal school (368), with the ‘never attending’ population constituting the highest proportion of the identified children and providing the needed evidence for AEP interventions.

- **Prevalence of OOSC by age groups**

¹⁸ Increasing Access to Quality Education for Rural and Marginalized Children in West Africa— A Comparative Study of Accelerated Education and Girls Focused Programmes in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Comprehensive Analysis – Sierra Leone. May, 2022

The sum of children among the 4-17 year olds who have previously been in school (dropped out of school) and those who have never been to school make up the population of children who are out of school. The findings show that 663 (22.2%) children aged 4-17 years make up the whole population of OOSC children from age 4 to 17 or children from Nursery 2 (N2)-senior secondary school (SSS). Children aged 6-17 years or those in primary to SSS make up 495 or 75% of the OOSC population. The fact that nursery 2 and 3 alone make up 25% of OOSC population is reflective of the lack of pre-primary schools in the study area; out of the 168 children who are out of school at that level, only 3 of them have dropped out, compared to 165 who have never been to school. The number of children who have dropped out of school is highest among children aged 15-17 (SSS1-SSS3), followed by those in the JSS level, JSS and pre-school. This is an indication that the higher children move along the educational ladder, the higher the risk of dropping out.

- **Out of school population by sex**

The evidence shows that there are more girls out of school than boys, 349 (53%) and 314 (47%) respectively. This is in line with the Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS) 2019 findings where 49.6% girls and 37.8% boys in rural regions in Sierra Leone are out of school. However, there are more boys who have never been to school 64% compared with 49.3% of girls.

4.1.3 Drop-out situation/context

- **Drop-out numbers by class level and sex**

The findings indicate that there is minimal drop out among children in pre-school; 2% of girls and 1% of boys dropped out. The highest dropout occurs among SSS students, with girls in SSS3 having the highest dropout rate of 23%, followed by boys in SSS1 and SSS3 with 20% and 19% respectively. Overall, 60% of girls compared with 45% of boys dropped out of school in the study area.

4.1.3.1 Children at risk of dropping out:

The study assessed children who are currently in school but who were at risk of dropping out. Three main criteria were used - over age, frequency of repetition and regularity of attendance.

- **At risk of dropping population – using overage at grade level**

Age at enrollment affects school completion, and there is a risk that children older than the class average may drop out of school. 480 twelve to fourteen year olds who would ordinarily be in JSS and 410 fifteen to 17 year olds who should be in SSS were still in primary and junior secondary school. This is in line with MICS (2017) findings that educational progression is stunted because 45% of JSS aged children are still in primary school. This means that potentially, 890 students in the study area are at heightened risk of dropping out of school.

- **At risk of dropping population – using frequency of repetition**

Grade repetition is seen as one of the factors that lead to dropout in school, especially when it is not accompanied by any potential to improve education performance. The findings show that of the children who have ever repeated a grade from primary school to senior secondary school (SSS), a total of 78 (31%) from intervention areas and another 78 (28%) from non-intervention areas have repeated more than once. This implies that an average of 156 pupils or 29.5% of pupils in the study area could potentially drop out of school because of frequent repetition. On the other hand, there are slightly fewer females (38) than males (40) in nonintervention areas at risk of dropping out due to frequent repetition. In general, more females (83) than males (73) are likely to drop out of school due to frequent repetition.

- **At risk of dropping population – using frequency of attendance**

Truancy has been identified in several studies as a precursor to school drop out (e.g. Fernandez-Suarez et al., 2016)¹⁹. Wilkins and Bost (2016)²⁰. The findings indicate that an average of 17% of school children from nursery 2 to SSS 1 in the study area skip school; this makes them likely candidates for dropout. The study shows that girls are more likely to skip school than boys; 200 girls compared with 186 boys. This indicates that about 52% of the 386 children who are likely to drop out of school due to regularity of attendance are likely to be girls.

4.1.4 Impact/Achievements of AEPs

The AEP and girls focused interventions in the communities have been beneficial for them. Prior to the inception of the AEPs in the selected communities, a number of children had dropped out of school due to varying reasons. AEPs have contributed to giving a second chance to those who enrolled. Save the Children's program focused on returning children to formal education. It catered for all categories of people within the communities and that helped many to join voluntarily. The sensitization and awareness-raising component of the AEP has contributed to reducing early marriages among beneficiaries. Messages around types and use of contraceptives have equipped beneficiaries with the information they need to prevent unwanted pregnancy. The skills training component of the BRAC programme promoted self-reliance. Many acquired skills to be able to establish and maintain their own small businesses.

¹⁹ Fernández-Suárez A, Herrero J, Pérez B, Juarros-Basterretxea J and Rodríguez-Díaz FJ (2016) Risk Factors for School Dropout in a Sample of Juvenile Offenders.

²⁰ Wilkins, J., and Bost, L. W. (2016). Dropout prevention in middle and high schools: from research to practice. *Interv. Sch. Clin.* 51, 267–275

4.1.5 Demand Issues

Several key demand-side issues that were also highlighted:

- **Economic**

By far the major reason ascribed for the out of school situation is economic and underlies most of the reasons for which children either drop out of school or are unable to attend school at all. Evidence from the qualitative data shows that poverty is the most commonly cited primary and contributing factor for school dropout and non-attendance across the districts, as most parents struggle to provide the basic necessities for their children to attend school. While free primary and secondary school education looks to be universally available, it is actually not entirely free since parents are still responsible for non-tuition school expenses, such as uniforms, exercise books, pens, and other school supplies, which many families struggle to provide for their children. Unemployed parents or low-income earning households are more likely to have their children drop out of school.

- **Socio-economic**

In most communities surveyed, a parallel was drawn between poverty and large family size. As shown by the qualitative evidence, large families with many children require parents to provide for all of them if they want them to be educated. Given household earnings and the unemployment rate, parents are only able to provide for a small number of children, whilst others remain at home. Across the districts the loss of family bread winner was cited as causing children to drop out of school. The loss of both parents often means that children must care for their siblings creating additional pressure to drop out. It is expected that whosoever takes on the responsibility of the child can follow in the footsteps of the deceased parents. The discussants interviewed stated that many children drop out of school because of the lack of commitment of family members who took over responsibility for the children after the parents' demise.

- **Socio-cultural**

The phenomenon of early marriage has traditionally been a common reason for which female children drop out of school in the surveyed communities. Early marriage contributes to the drop out of female students and subsequently affects their prospects of receiving an equal education as males. Teenage pregnancy is another reason for which girls drop out of school. Also, gender division of labour requires that girls do most of the house work, leaving them no time to study, this affects their grades, leading to a loss of interest in their studies and eventually dropout. The Bondo society which is an initiation rite for girls interferes with their studies since the rights involved psychologically prepare girls for marriage; a lot of girls who go through it do not return to school.

4.1.6 Supply Issues

Provision of school infrastructure, and teaching and learning materials

Discussions with community stakeholders including teachers, community leadership, SMCs and CTAs indicate that other issues that cause children to drop out of school or not start school at all are caused by the inability of government to fulfil its obligations in terms of making education accessible to all children across the country. There are limited number of schools in the study area therefore children have to walk long distances to school. Additionally, about 70% of schools in the study area require some repair works in order to function properly. Added to this is inadequate furniture. There is inadequate supply of core textbooks and other teaching and learning materials. There are not enough teachers in the area coupled with the fact that most of them do not have any formal training in teacher education. All these are disincentives for teaching and learning and make schooling unattractive to pupils and their parents.

4.1.7. Contribution of AEPs/GFMs to addressing the supply-side barriers to education

AEP brings learning opportunities within the reach of OOSC in remote communities. AEP facilities are usually located within a community and serves a catchment of communities, which are within reasonable walking distance. The proximity to homes saves parents the burden of providing lunch for their children, and facilitates quick access for parents to enquire about the progress of their children. The medium of communication in most AEP programmes is in the local language, which helps beneficiaries to understand what their instructors teach. Looking at the level of poverty within the communities it could have been relatively difficult for parents to pay school fees for their children, thus making access to education problematic. However, AEPs are free which make them easily accessible. Additionally, AEPs supply learning materials at no cost to parents who hardly have the means to buy these materials due to poverty. Farming is the predominant means of livelihood in rural communities. The OOSC programme implemented by Save the Children and BRAC in the districts adjusted the timing of classes to accommodate farming obligations.

4.2 Recommendations

- **Government Policy**
- **Sustained Budget for OOSC strategy roll out**

The government should allocate a specific budget to implement the Government-led/UNICEF-supported OOSC Strategy. The budget should include the strategic rollout of AEPs to guarantee targeted spread across the country so more poor areas may benefit from the programmes and lower the number of school-aged children out of school.

Sensitisation on early marriage not to take place in the community. Teacher, Kambia

Enforce measures to prevent sexual violence and harassment and early marriage (Byelaws)

Existing laws against sexual offences in schools committed by teachers and by male students must be enforced.

The Sierra Leone Child Rights Act prohibits marriage under the age of 18, regardless of whether the marriage is carried out under formal, customary or religious law.

While laws in Sierra Leone prohibit child marriage, implementation is weak, because many rural communities respect customary leadership and bylaws more than national law. The government in partnership with development partners, parents and communities should intensify efforts to address contradictions between national law and the Customary Marriage Act, which allows children to marry with parental consent. When the national law is fully implemented, the girl child stands a better chance to complete school at least up to secondary level. The extended period in school reduces the risk of early marriage and increases their prospects of earning a decent income when they eventually choose to join the world of work.

- **Improve access to schools**

There are not enough schools in the study area as reported by the community stakeholders, and most of the school buildings are not in good condition, with poor toilet facilities. Added to it is inadequate furniture. There is the need to improve access to schools by constructing more schools, especially secondary schools and providing good toilet facilities as well as adequate number of desks. Closer proximity of communities, especially those in remote localities, to schools will reduce absenteeism and dropout rates. It is hoped that the MBSSE's School Infrastructure and Catchment Area Planning Policy 2021 will be

implemented quickly and effectively so that the challenge of children having to walk long distances to school in rural communities will end.

Regularise the status of teachers who are already in the field

It came up during discussions that there are trained teachers who have been teaching for years but have not been provided with pin code²¹ and therefore are not on government salary. For this reason many potential educators who are qualified have taken up jobs in other sectors. It is important that the pace of recruitment is increased so that trained teachers who are already teaching will get the appropriate remuneration so that they can give of their best.

- **Recruitment of more trained teachers**

It is important that more trained teachers are recruited and incentivised to stay and teach in rural areas so that teaching and learning in those communities will improve. This will boost the confidence that school children and their parents have in education and parents will be inclined to lend more support to their children who are in school and a lot more children will be enrolled in school. It is important that more female teachers are posted to the rural communities to be the role models that the girls need to aspire to be.

- **Strengthen the capacity of untrained teachers**

During the stakeholder interaction it came up that most of the teachers who teach in the rural communities are untrained. It is important that they are encouraged to improve upon their education and undertake formal training in education by enrolling in the distance education programme so that they will get the right expertise to teach.

- **Strengthen strategies to enhance education for children with special needs**

It is important that there is an integrated educational system where people with physical and mental challenges will feel safe to attend regular school and will have the same opportunities to learn just as their counterparts who do not have any physical challenge. Special needs education should form part of the curriculum of the teacher training colleges so that every teacher gets to know how to handle children with disabilities. Teachers who are already in the school system should be given regular in-service training to be able to support children with disabilities in the classroom.

²¹ Pin code is a number given to government employees indicating that they have been included in the gazette and are eligible to be receiving salaries.

- **Establishment of pre-primary schools**

The inadequate number of pre-primary schools in the study area indicates that children start primary school with no foundational skills which will affect the rate at which they learn. The study found out that pre-primary schools had the highest pupil trained teacher ratio (PTTR). It is important that government give attention to the establishment of pre-primary schools and train teachers for same.

- **Education Innovators**

Government and development partners should support Education Innovators to implement quality alternative education programmes. This is to help them assist children who have been Out-of-School for two years or more and to allow them catch-up and re-enter the school system or the world of work depending upon their age and preference. Eligibility for funding support to innovators should be tied to compliance with set quality standards, established by the government.

- **Discourage illegal request from school authorities and motivate teachers**

Unauthorized requests by school authorities for extra funds to meet needs outside the standard requirements, is a burden for parents and a disincentive to keeping children in school. The government will need to establish a standard monitoring mechanism to curb this practice. The recommended strategies will need to be critically monitored using existing community structures, including parent/ teacher association fora.

- **Schools and Communities**

Promote active school, parent and community partnerships - Parents' active involvement with school officials to familiarize themselves with their child's schedule, courses, and progress toward graduation remain crucial to student success, according to the discussions. Parents who took part in the survey voiced the necessity for parents and guardians to dedicate time for regular visitation to schools in order to monitor their children's progress in terms of punctuality, obedience, and academic work. Teamwork between parents and school officials will provide a solid mentorship base for a child, to ensure the child stays focused and motivated to continue with schooling. In addition, a functional Parent-Teacher Association (CTA) is critical in creating a venue where parents and teachers may gather to discuss common issues affecting the child. In such a forum, parents can discuss options with teachers in order to keep their children in school. Community leadership on their part should organize frequent community meetings to discuss education related challenges in the community, including strategies for improving general performance of pupils and of schools in external examinations. The reference to role models, who hail from the community, can also be used to inspire school-aged children to aspire for higher heights.

- **Cultivate an In-School Mentorship Relationship**

Education authorities at all levels to promote an innovative strategy, proposed by parents. The strategy calls for the formation of mentorship groups at the school level comprised of promising students, supported by teachers. The purpose of the in-school mentorship group will be to provide structured assistance to students who are lagging behind with their academic work. The availability of mentors at the school level, will create a positive environment to promote learning and discourage drop out.

Intensify advocacy measures to equip parents' to meet other school requirements -

Sensitization about the free quality education package should emphasize provision of 'Free School Fees' to manage parents' expectations. Parents should be encouraged to view the FQE package as an opportunity to join forces with government to equip children with basic requirements to achieve high quality education. In the partnership strategy, parents should recognize the new vantage position created by relieving them of the burden of paying school fees. The removal of the fee burden now creates an opportunity for parents to utilize funds previously used for school fees to meet the cost of other materials such as uniforms, bags and shoes.

List of Annexes

Annex 1: Teacher Situation by chiefdom and district

District/ Chiefdom	Level	Teacher Status				Total teacher s	Total train ed	Pupils enrolmen t	PT R	PTT R
		Traine d		Untraine d						
		M	F	M	F					
	Primar y	42	4	18	10	74	46	3233	44	70
Kpaka	JSS	9	0	8	1	18	9	551	31	61
	SSS	9	0	0	0	9	9	207	23	23
Barri	Primar y	70	11	48	6	135	81	6233	46	77
	JSS	10	0	12	0	22	10	734	33	73
	SSS	9	0	0	0	9	9	220	24	24
Sorogbeima	Primar y	98	16	69	13	196	114	9605	49	84
	JSS	37	2	0	1	40	39	1438	36	37
	SSS	17	1	0	0	18	18	394	22	22
Galliness Peri	Primar y	20	5	42	5	72	25	4199	58	168
	JSS	15	1	6	0	22	16	911	41	57
	SSS	9	1	0	0	10	10	96	10	10
Makpele	Primar y	55	7	56	9	127	62	6094	48	98
	JSS	24	2	15	0	41	26	1200	29	46
	SSS	15	0	1	0	16	15	289	18	19
Port Loko										
Marampa	Primar y	141	12	109	54	426	263	16767	39	64
	JSS	107	35	66	9	217	142	4974	23	35
	SSS	73	5	21	1	100	78	1913	19	25
Kambia										
Tonko Limba	Primar y	128	39	249	36	452	167	17468	39	105
	JSS	73	4	69	10	156	77	4568	29	59
	SSS	63	1	23	0	87	64	1567	18	24
Gbinle Dixon	Primar y	45	5	38	4	92	50	4846	53	97
	JSS	11	0	26	1	38	11	660	17	60
	SSS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Annex 2: Household members and household size

	Distribution of household members by age					total HH members	Number of households assessed	Average household size
	0-4	5 - 9	10-14	15-17	18+			
Kambia	270	412	326	177	1050	2235	396	5.64
Port Loko	235	342	354	171	1132	2234	396	5.64
Pujehun	262	336	417	266	1051	2332	400	5.83
Average household size for the 3 districts								5.7

Annex 3: Tools for data collection



Microsoft Word 97 -
2003 Document

Annex 4: List of fieldworkers

3-2-22 DRAFT QUALITATIVE LIST OF ENUMERATORS FOR AEP/KIX-OOSC-MAPPING

NO	NAME	GENDER	CONTACT	LANGUAGE	QUALIFICATION	AGENCY
SENIOR MODERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN THE VARIOUS DISTRICTS						
PUJEHUN DISTRICT						
1	Amos Bunduka	Male	076-785-422/077-785-422	Krio, English, Temne, Mende	Masters in peace and development studies	Dalan
PORT LOKO DISTRICT						
2	Mariama Laurel Kargbo	Female	076-389-603/077-912-818	English, Krio & Temne, Mende	SECHN	Dalan
KAMBIA DISTRICT						
3	Jamil Shoab Jabbie	M	076-689-878/077-547-988	Krio, English, Temne	BSc. Hons. Public Sector Mgt.	Dalan
LIST OF MODERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN PUJEHUN						
1	Sia Mattu Bandabla	Female	076-781-328	Mende, Krio, English, Temne	Bsc. Social Work	SCI
2	Cornelius Martins	Male	078-551-055/077-551-055	Mende, Krio, English	B.A. Linguistics and literature	Dalan
LIST OF MODERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN PORT LOKO						
1	Abubakarr Bundu	Male	077-441-224/034-044-495	English, Krio, Temne,		Brac
2	Kindo Kamara	Male	078-901-459	English, Krio, Mende & Temne.	HTC-Secondary	Dalan
3	Hawanatu Bangura	Female	078-776-825/ 030-787-360/076-647-881	English, Krio, Temne	Bsc. Degree in Sociology	Dalan
LIST OF QUALITATIVE ENUMERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN KAMBIA-DISTRICT						

NO	NAME	GENDER	CONTACT	LANGUAGE	QUALIFICATION	AGENCY
1	Sahid I. Conteh	Male	077-932-854/079-608-077	English, Krio, Temne	Bachelor of Arts History and Political Science	Dalan
2	Jeneba R. Swaray	Female	076-355-631/088621308	Mende, English, Krio	certificate in state enrolled community health nurse (SECHN)	Dalan
3	Fatmata Mansaray	Female	+23288978551			Brac-Female
4	Hannah Y. Sandy	Female	079-438-918	Krio, English, Temne		Dalan
5	Jenneh Lahai	Female	076-635-025	Krio, English, Temne, Mende	Diploma in Social Studies and Community Development	Dalan
6	Esther Kai Sesay	Female	078-157-349/030-829-275	English, Krio & Temne	Business Studies	Dalan

BACK UP FOR QUALITATIVE:

NO	NAME	GENDER	CONTACT	LANGUAGE	QUALIFICATION	DALAN EXPERIENCE
1	Rugiatu Conteh	Female	+23276174054			Brac-Female

DRAFT QUANTITATIVE LIST OF ENUMERATORS FOR AEP

/KIX-OOSC-MAPPING

LIST OF QUANTITATIVE ENUMERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN PUJEHUN-DISTRICT						
NO	NAME	GENDER	CONTACT	LANGUAGE	QUALIFICATION	AGENCY
1	Neima Alpha	Female	076-299-951	English, Krio, Mende	Bsc. Ed. Home Economics & Community Development Studies	SCI
2	Isata Tengbeh	Female	088-925-029/ 078-287-771	English, Krio, Mende, Kissi	Bsc. Business Admim & Entrepreneurship	SCI
3	Gamong Sannoh	Male	030-272-735/076-577-901	English, Krio, Mende	HTC Secondary (Agriculture)	SCI
4	Abdulai Jalloh	Male	079-900-803/ 088-339-028	English, Krio, Mende, Fullah	Diploma in Information Communication & Technology	SCI
5	Alusine Mansaray	Male	076-428-053	English, Krio, Mende, Temne	Bsc. Hons. Accounting	SCI
6	Joseph Mammie	Male	078-236-108/077-694-104	Mende, Krio, English	B.A Linguistics & Sociology	Dalan
7	Fatmata Y. Foday	Female	076-777-766	Mende, Krio, English	Bachelor's Degree	Dalan
8	Hannah Kanagbou	Female	078-266-610	Mende, Krio, English	Diploma in Accounting and Finance	Dalan
9	Hassanatu Monica Amara	Female	077-933-971/079-091-740	English, Krio, Mende	Bsc. Hons. in Business and information technology	Dalan
10	Sia Betty Pessima	Female	078-332-183/088-801-889`	English, Krio, Kono, Mende	Bsc. Hons. in Sociology	Dalan
LIST OF QUANTITATIVE ENUMERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN PORT LOKO-DISTRICT						

1	Kadiatu Kalokoh	Female	076-578-258/088-459-030	Krio, English, Temne		Brac.
2	Fatima Mamusu Koroma	Female	078-675-709	Krio, English, Temne		Brac
3	Zainab Kamara	Female	076-910—509/099-896-616	Krio, English, Temne		Brac
4	Abdul Barrie	Male	088-619-806	Krio, English, Temne, Fullah		Brac
5	Sidique Musa	Male	078-293-636	Krio, English, Temne		Brac
6	Joseph Bangura	Male	23230-335-652	Limba, Temne, Krio, English	Diploma in hardware and networking in computer engineering	Dalan
7	Fatu Kargbo	F	077-319-548	Temne, Krio, & English	BSC Gen in Financial service	Dalan
8	Foday Kargbo	Male	077-709-878/076-175-805	English and Krio, Temne	Diploma in Human resource	Dalan
9	Abibatu Kamara	Female	030-488-646/079-958-289	Krio, English, Temne	B.Sc. Business Administration	Dalan
10	Victoria Hawanatu Kanu	Female	079 104-056	Temne, Krio, English	BA. Hon. Linguistics.	Dalan
LIST OF QUANTITATIVE ENUMERATORS ASSIGN TO WORK IN KAMBIA-DISTRICT						
1	Michael W. Kalokoh	Male	088-562-381	English ,Krio and Temne		Brac
2	Fanta Deen Sesay	Female	+232-30-396-106			Brac-Female

3	Marie S. Kamara	Female	+232 30-75-67-97			Brac-Female
4	Zainab Musa Conteh	Female	+23277222393			Brac-Female
5	Kadiatu Fanta Kamara	Female	088-009-889			Brac-Female
6	Hawa Conteh	Female	088-413-431	English, Temne Krio	Diploma in Operation Studies	Dalan
7	Adama Alpha Bangura	Female	076-777-788 088226177	English, Limba, Temne Krio	Bsc in Financial Investment	Dalan
8	Morlai Kargbo	Male	076-711-783	English, Temne Krio	BSC in peace and conflict studies	Dalan
9	Kelvin Bangura	Male	088-804-805/078-555-565	English ,Krio and Temne	Diploma in Computer Application Package	Dalan
10	Saa David Musa Yamba	Male	077-589-165/076-233-192	Mende, Krio, English	Bsc. in Social work	Dalan