



**NON-FORMAL EDUCATION
NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

MARCH 2021

STREET CHILD OF CAMEROON: NON-FORMAL EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Acknowledgement

This needs assessment was a collaborative effort to gather data which would contribute to the design of evidence-based and coordinated programming to meet the learning needs of all children engaged in non-formal education.

Street Child would like to thank the Cameroon Education Cluster for selecting us as the lead organisation to coordinate this assessment and the Global Education Cluster for its support in designing data collection tools.

Street Child would also like to thank all partner organisations who helped coordinate and provided enumerators for the in-community surveys including; Authentique Memorial Empowerment Foundation (AMEF), PLAN International, Education Cameroon (EDUCAM), Pan African Institute for Development West Africa (PAID-WA), and Green Partners Association (GPA).

Finally, Street Child would like to thank all organisations that participated in the remote survey and all community leaders who participated in the in-community survey.



Executive Summary

Since 2016, ongoing violence and displacement as well as boycotts of and attacks on education have forced over 80% of schools in Cameroon's NWSW regions to close, leaving over 855,000 children out of school. Over the past year, actors on the ground have reported a gradual opening up of space for education, and an increase in non-formal education (NFE) spaces and learning – often in the form of community schools or home learning spaces.

A lack of data on non-formal education has made these reports difficult to verify and limits the ability of actors to develop programming to support meaningful access to quality education in areas where schools remain closed. To contribute to filling this gap, Street Child, in collaboration with the EiE Cluster and education actors across the region, conducted an assessment of non-formal education in November & December 2019.

The aim of this assessment was to assess -

- Access to non-formal learning
- Forms and curricula of NFE
- Settings and leaders of NFE
- The impact of COVID-19 on NFE

The assessment was conducted in two phases; a remote survey conducted with educational actors and an in-community survey conducted with key informants across the NWSW. In total 16 partners were involved in either phase of the assessment with 87 communities surveyed remotely and 199 key informants from 21 communities surveyed in-person. As a result, this assessment can be considered to represent a reasonable cross-section of NFE provision across the NWSW.

Key Findings;

- There has been a significant increase in access to NFE over the past year. 49% of partners and 67% of respondents report NFE starting within the past year with an estimated 13% of partners

and 45% of respondents reporting children to be engaged in NFE.

- There are observable disparities in access to NFE with host community children more likely to access NFE than IDP children, and learners with disabilities, married girls and pregnant girls are least likely to access NFE.
- 84% of key informants felt that NFE spaces within their communities were safe. However, continuing risks for children accessing NFE include unsafe travel, the risk of detention, and the risk of COVID-19.
- The majority [64%] of NFE currently provided was reported as using distance teaching and learning approaches, particularly radio learning and e-learning.
- A third [33%] of NFE occurs at home or in churches, most often led by untrained and unpaid facilitators.

Key Recommendations;

- This report demonstrates there is substantial access NFE, suggesting a sufficient foundation for donors and education actors to build upon and support existing community efforts to ensure safe, quality education is provided to out-of-school children, married and pregnant girls and learners with disabilities in NWSW.
- To build upon access to NFE, new and innovative (in-person, community-based) approaches which increase quality and inclusiveness should be introduced by international actors with knowledge and experience of different EIE initiatives to support local actors to adapt proven approaches and curricula to the NWSW context.
- Although there are a number of NFE interventions being delivered, these efforts appear fragmented and uncoordinated. Therefore, an NFE Working Group should be established to share lessons learned, innovations and best practices between educational actors.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION AND SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS	5
2. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT	6
3. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS	6
4. PHASE 1 FINDINGS.....	7
4.1. ACCESS OF CHILDREN IN NFE.....	7
4.2. FORMS AND CURRICULUM OF NFE	8
4.3. SETTING AND LEADERS OF NFE	8
5. PHASE 2 FINDINGS.....	9
5.1. ACCESS OF CHILDREN IN NFE.....	9
5.1.1 ENROLMENT IN NFE	9
5.1.2 ACCESS TO NFE	10
5.1.3 BARRIERS TO ACCESSING NFE	11
5.2. FORMS, CURRICULA & LEARNING RESOURCES OF NFE	11
5.2.1 FORMS & CURRICULA.....	11
5.2.2 LEARNING RESOURCES	12
5.3 SETTINGS & LEADERS OF NFE	12
5.3.1 SETTINGS	12
5.3.2 LEADERS	13
5.4. COVID-19 AND NFE.....	13
6. ANALYSIS	14
6.1. ACCESS.....	14
6.2. FORMS AND CURRICULA	14
6.3. SETTINGS AND LEADERS	15
6.4. COVID-19.....	15
7. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	16
7.1. ACCESS.....	16
7.2. FORMS AND CURRICULA	16
7.3. SETTINGS AND LEADERS	17
7.4. COVID-19.....	17
8. ANNEXE	18
8.1. PHASE 2 SELECTED COMMUNITIES.....	18
8.2. PHASE 1 QUESTIONNAIRE.....	18
8.3. PHASE 2 QUESTIONNAIRE.....	19

1. Introduction and Situational Analysis

Since 2016 more than 80% of schools have been closed leaving over 855,000 children out of school [[HRP 03/2020](#)] in Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest regions [referred to hereafter as NWSW] as a result of the ongoing conflict in the region and ongoing boycotts of and attacks education. The crisis remains volatile, with at least 705,800 people internally displaced, 360,500 returnees and 61,300 refugees in Nigeria [[OCHA 30/12/2020](#)]. Over 3,000 people are estimated to have been killed since the beginning of the conflict [[The New Humanitarian 08/07/2020](#)].

At the beginning of 2017, Anglophone secessionists imposed a boycott on GoC education with nearly all schools across the NWSW outside of main towns in which there is a significant military presence closed. This was reflected in the 13% of schools operational and 71% of villages across the NWSW having no alternative learning options available according to IOM's MSNA¹ conducted in October 2020. The protection risks associated with the educational boycott enforced by secessionist non-state armed groups [NSAGs] are extremely severe with reports of students and teachers caught engaged in GoC education kidnapped, forcibly recruited, beaten and killed [[IFRI 06/2020](#); [ICG 02/08/2017](#); [OCHA 31/10/2020](#); [DW 06/11/2020](#)]. Worsening household economic situations have increased children's vulnerability with some parents relying on child labour to support their families including sending children to work as domestic workers, farm workers, begging and for adolescent girls, engaging in survival sex work [[DRC 11/2020](#); [OCHA 06/2020](#)].

In May 2020, Street Child of Cameroon developed and coordinated a Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) which surveyed over 4,500 people in the Northwest, Southwest, West and Littoral regions of Cameroon to better understand the emerging needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. During this RNA 65% of respondents reported that children were learning [[Street Child 05/2020](#)]. Television was reported as the most common source of learning by 72% of respondents followed by the internet [40%] and SMS [25%].

Over the last year, however, actors on the ground have reported space opening up for education. In addition to increased enrolment in formal schools in urban areas with a significant military presence, there are reports that many communities have independently begun setting up community schools and other community learning spaces. These community efforts have likely been encouraged by a shift in NSAG attitudes to education, with some NSAGs reportedly allowing learning as long as it is not tied to GoC schools, curricula or symbols such [e.g. flag or national anthem]. However, the lack of data on learning across the region has made it difficult to verify and understand these claims of increased access to education. In particular, though data on formal school enrolment is available and used by the Education Cluster, there is no comprehensive data on access to non-formal education. As a result, there is a lack of knowledge of different communities' needs, capacities and challenges in non-formal learning, limiting efforts by education actors and donors to support and strengthen meaningful access to quality learning in the region. This assessment of non-formal learning therefore aims to contribute to filling this gap.

¹ IOMs MSNA was shared with all Education Cluster members, however, it is not publicly shared due to data sensitivity.

2. Non-Formal Education Assessment

In October 2020 Street Child, in collaboration with the NSW Education Cluster, designed and coordinated an assessment of access to non-formal learning across the NSW in order to capture and share data with all relevant stakeholders to improve the design of evidence-based programming to meet learning needs of children engaged in non-formal and community-based learning. The rationale was that together with existing data on access to formal education, more accurate data on access to non-formal education could also form the basis for advocacy and resource mobilisation for the education response in the region. Recognising that the context is likely to change given the volatility of the conflict and the continuing impact of COVID-19 in the region, this assessment aimed to provide a framework which can be replicated in the future to update the data as needed.

This assessment aimed to understand:

- The access to non-formal education,
- The forms and curricula of non-formal education,
- The settings and leaders of non-formal education, and
- The impact of COVID-19 on non-formal learning spaces.

3. Methodology and Limitations

The assessment methodology was structured into two phases. Phase 1 of the assessment was a remote Google Forms survey conducted by 16 Education Cluster partners across all NSW divisions on their knowledge of the communities in which they operate. The data collected was therefore partner reporting estimates of convenience sampled communities rather than first-hand observations of randomly sampled communities. Furthermore, this sampling strategy relying on partner access resulted in the surveying of communities only with educational actor presence, the majority of which will have received funding for UNESCO's E-learning programme for example, therefore data bias exists within the findings of this report.

Phase 2 of the assessment was an in-community KoBo Collect survey of key informants conducted by 5 partners who had had access to communities selected for Phase 2 for validation, triangulation and probing of Phase 1 data. Communities were selected using a purposive sampling strategy based on the three most common (i) types, (ii) locations, (iii) leaders and (iv) curricula of NFE identified in Phase 1 findings. Using this sampling strategy and criteria 24 communities [list found in the Annex] were selected for the second phase of the assessment. Community-based enumerators were asked to use random sampling to select 10 to 15 key informants [community leaders, religious leaders, women's leaders, youth leaders and trainer teachers] as respondents with a gender balance and varied age range. The data collected was key informants' understandings of selectively sampled communities rather than persons necessarily involved in NFE. A significant margin of error therefore exists in the findings of this report, which as a result this assessment could be considered to represent a reasonable cross-section of NFE provision across the NSW rather than a comprehensive assessment of NFE across the NSW regions.

The methodology and tool design for both remote and in-community surveys was informed by consultations with educational actors to ensure they were conflict-sensitive and the Global Education Cluster (which is delivering similar assessments in other contexts) to ensure global standards were met. Enumerators

conducting the in-community surveys were trained by Street Child on the KoBo Toolbox data collection tool used as well as assessment ethics and best practices [available upon request]. The Do No Harm principle was followed throughout data collection with due consideration given to access challenges through the use of community-based enumerators from selected communities who followed organisational security protocols.

4. Phase 1 Findings

The remote Phase 1 assessment, conducted with 16 partners with knowledge and experience of delivering education interventions, assessed 87 communities across all 13 divisions of the NWSW. The findings below represent partner estimates of access to NFE and types of NFE in the communities they operate in.

4.1. Access of Children in NFE

Partners estimated that of children aged 5 to 16, 13% were in formal (FE), 30% in non-formal education (NFE), and 47%² out-of-school (OOS). There were significant differences in partner estimates for NW and SW respectively. The percentage of children estimated to be in NFE was more than double in the SW [17%] than the NW [8%], and the percentage of children partners estimated to be OOS was significantly more in the NW [58%] than in the SW [38%].

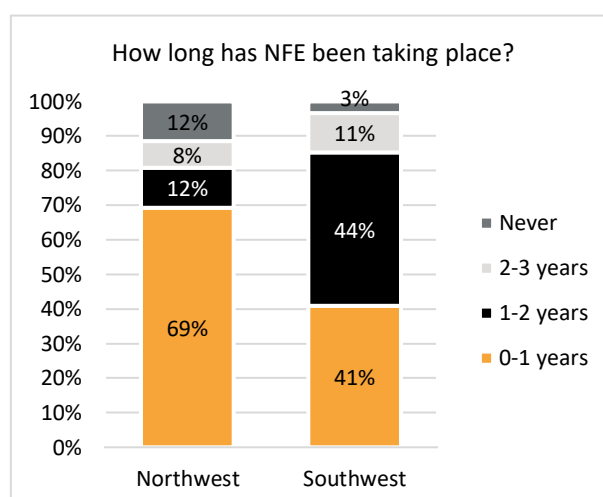
However, it should be noted that the data collected also indicates that partners do not have a clear picture of numbers of children in and out of education; when the partners' estimated numbers of children in FE, NFE and OOS are summed they do not total 100%. When correcting for this, the³'actual' number of OOS children was marginally lower in SW [30%] and significantly higher in NW [90%].

Region	Children in NFE	Children in FE	OOS Children	'Actual' OOS Children
Northwest	8%	2%	58%	90%
Southwest	17%	53%	38%	30%
Total	13%	30%	47%	58%

Almost half (49%) of partners report that NFE has been taking place for less than 1 year.

However, the difference when comparing NW and SW is noteworthy, with partners reporting NFE to have been taking place in the SW for longer than in the NW; 55% of partners in SW report NFE has been ongoing for more than 1 year, compared to only 20% in the NW. 69% of partners in NW report NFE having commenced within the past year.

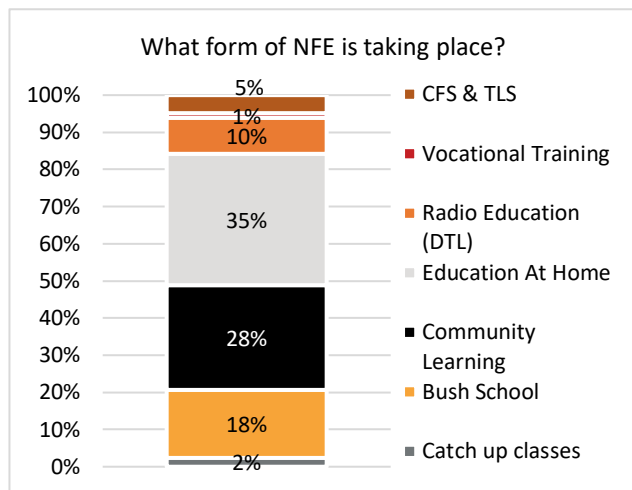
Overall, 6% of partner report that NFE has never taken place in their communities. The proportion of partners



² In this assessment Out-Of-School children are those neither in formal nor non-formal education.

³ 'Actual' out-of-school (OOS) children was calculated by subtracting the number of children in formal and non-formal education from the total number of children.

estimating NFE has never taken place in their communities was far greater in the NW than the SW, which appears to be consistent with the great proportion of OOS children reported in the NW.



4

4.2. Forms and Curriculum of NFE

4 main forms of NFE were reported; education at home, community learning, bush school learning and radio education.

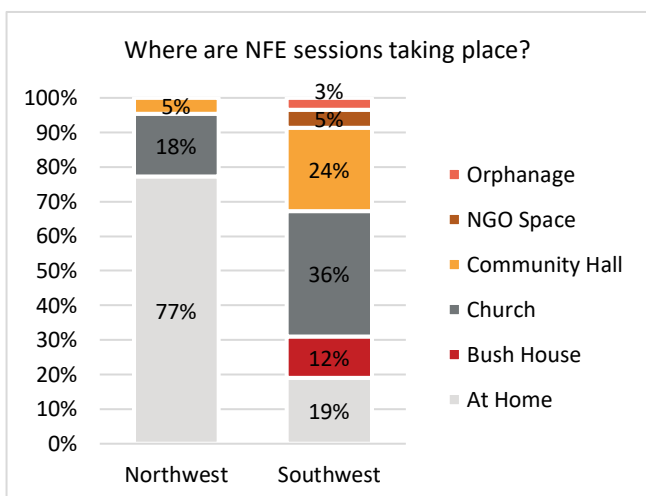
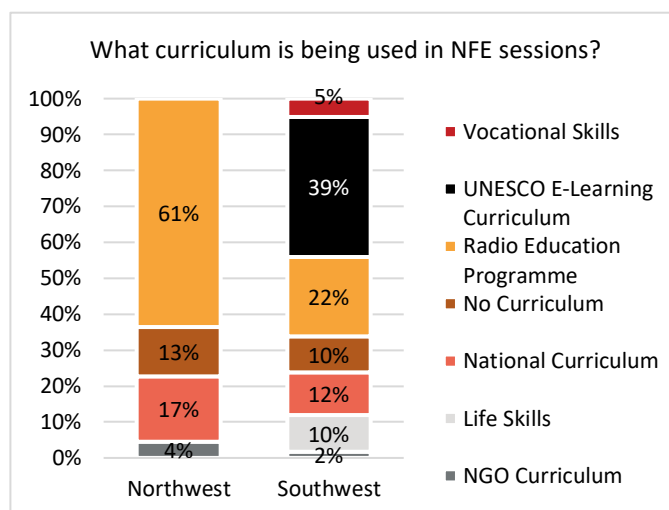
Only one form of DTL (radio education) was identified, and was reported by 10% of partners.

Interestingly, partners report a greater range of forms of NFE in the SW than in the NW. **In the NW, education at home and bush school learning comprise 91% of NFE.**

The most commonly reported curriculum being used were radio education programmes [33%] followed by UNESCO’s E-learning curriculum [28%].

11% of partners estimated that NFE sessions used no curriculum.

The range of curricula partners identified as being delivered in the NW was much less varied than in the SW, and radio education is by far the most common curriculum used in the NW (reported by 61% of partners).



4.3. Setting and Leaders of NFE

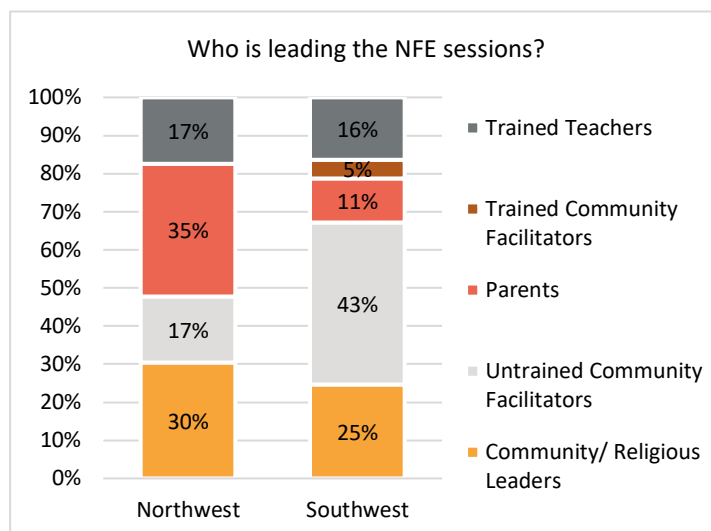
Three main settings of NFE were identified by partners; at home [35%], at church [31%] and in community halls [19%]. **Only 4% of NFE was estimated to be taking in NGO spaces.**

Similarly to NFE curriculum, the setting of NFE in the NW was much less varied than in the SW with at home, at church and community halls the only settings of NFE identified by partners in NW.

⁴ Child Friendly Space (CFS) and Temporary Learning Space (TLS)

Overall, **4 out of 5 NFE facilitators are estimated to be untrained**. This includes untrained community facilitators, community leaders and parents. Trained teachers and trained community facilitators only account for 21% of all leaders of NFE sessions.

In the NW and SW the number of trained and untrained leaders of NFE estimated by partners was similar, however, parents are more likely to lead NFE in the NW and untrained community facilitators more likely to lead NFE in the SW.



5. Phase 2 Findings

The in-person community Phase 2 assessment, conducted with 5 partners with access to the selected communities, assessed 21 communities across 6 divisions of NWSW Cameroon. Unfortunately, 3 of the initial 24 communities (Tanifum, Tole and Mile 16 Bolifamba) selected using the sampling criteria were unable to be assessed as a result of access issues and seasonal holidays.

Of the 21 communities assessed 60% were identified by respondents as rural areas and 40% were identified as urban areas. At the divisional level communities of 2 divisions were identified as predominantly urban areas [Mezam and Meme] and 1 division was identified as peri-urban [Fako], therefore these are the urban/peri-urban areas referred to in the findings below.

5.1. Access of Children in NFE

5.1.1 Enrolment in NFE

Across the selected communities, respondents estimated that **45% of children aged 5 to 16 were in non-formal education**. When disaggregated by age children aged 5 to 8 years old were marginally more likely to be in NFE [50%] than children aged 13 to 16 [44%].

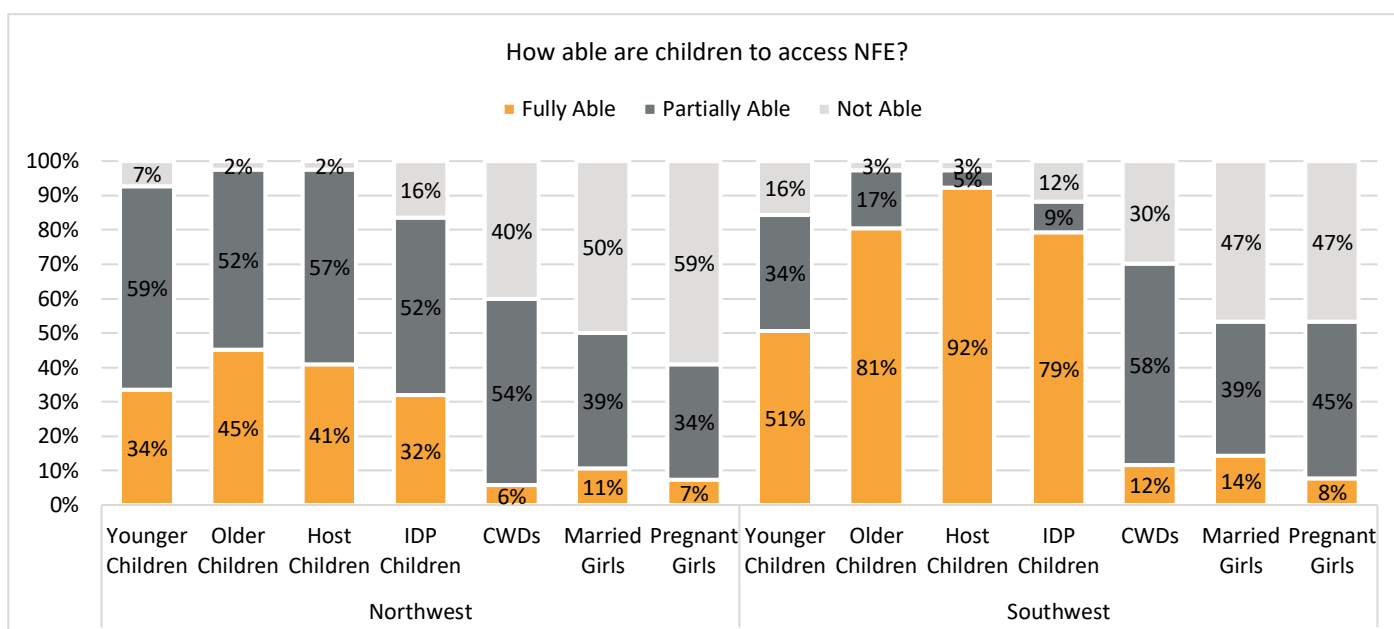
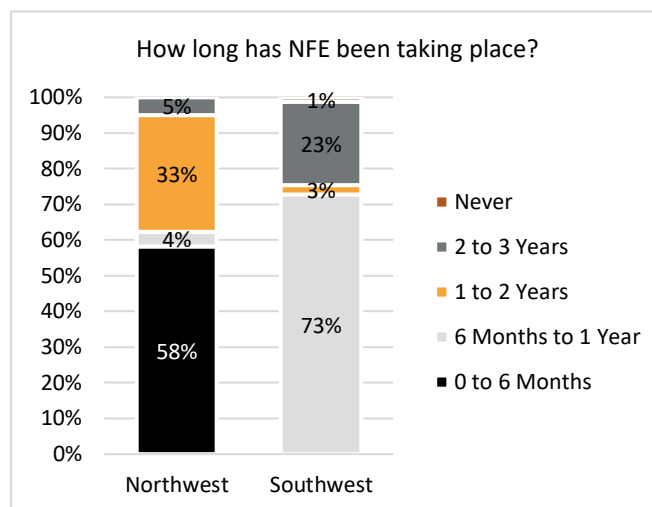
There was little difference across gender, with boys [46.1%] and girls [44.7%] almost equally reported to be accessing NFE. Host community children were reported to have better access to NFE than IDP children – 36% of host community children compared to 21% of IDP children were reported to be in NFE. Only 2% of learners with disabilities (LWD) were reported to be in NFE.

	Boys aged 5-8 in NFE	Girls aged 5-8 in NFE	Boys aged 9-12 in NFE	Girls aged 9-12 in NFE	Boys aged 13-16 in NFE	Girls aged 13-16 in NFE	Children aged 5-16 in NFE	IDP children in NFE	Host children in NFE	LWDs in NFE	Children in NFE
Total	51%	49%	43%	43%	45%	43%	45%	21%	36%	2%	13%

More than two-thirds [67%] of respondents reported that NFE had been taking place for less than 1 year with the last 6 months before assessment the most prevalent period for NFE in the last 3 years.

In the NW in particular more than half of respondents [62%] reported that NFE had been taking place for less than 1 year while in the SW almost three-quarters [73%] reported that it been taking place for less than 1 year.

5.1.2 Access to NFE



Respondents' perceptions of children's ability to access NFE varied dependent on their background across the various subgroups with host community children and older children⁵ perceived as the groups most able to access NFE.

Disabled children and pregnant girls were the groups perceived as least able to access NFE with only 8% 'fully able' to, while married girls were perceived as 'not able' to access NFE by almost half of respondents.

Importantly, every subgroup was perceived as more able to access NFE in surveyed communities in SW than in the NW. In particular, respondents perceived host children and IDP children as more than twice as able to access NFE in the SW than the NW.

⁵ Younger Children (age 6 to 11) and Older Children (age 12 to 16)

5.1.3 Barriers to Accessing NFE

The most commonly reported barriers children face in access to NFE were lack of learning materials, lack of money, household income-generating activities/ chores and fear of COVID-19.

Important to note was that respondents from the NW identified every barrier in access to NFE more than their counterparts in the SW. In particular, lack of money was identified as a barrier by three-times as many respondents in the NW [75%] than the SW [25%] and poor quality teaching by more than twice as many in the NW [30%] as the SW [12%].

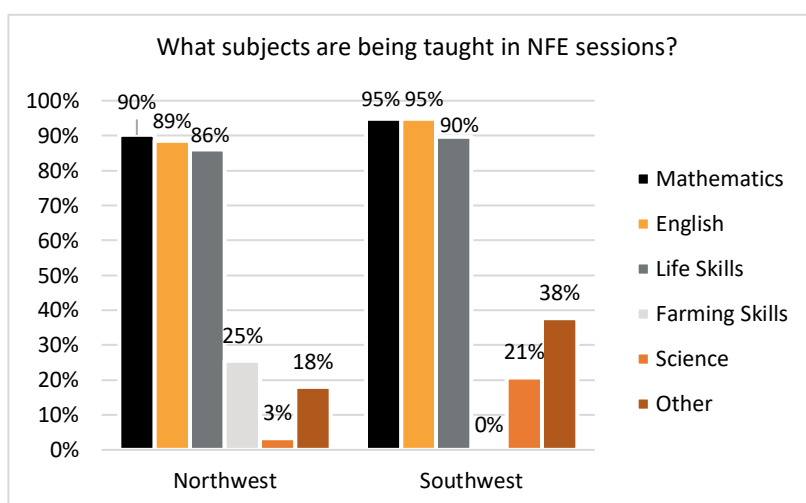
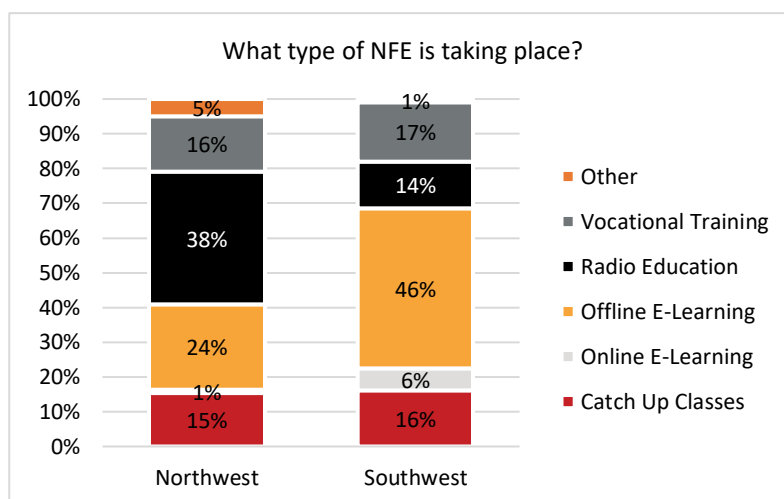
When asked about safety, **84% of respondents felt that NFE spaces in their community were safe.** The 16% of respondents who felt that NFE spaces within their communities were unsafe identified the main safety issues as COVID-19, insecure travel and detainment/ arrest. Insecure travel was identified by respondents as a safety issue twice as much in the SW [50%] as in the NW [25%], and detainment/ arrest was identified three-times as much in the NW [32%] than the SW [10%].

5.2. Forms, Curricula & Learning Resources of NFE

5.2.1 Forms & Curricula

Respondents estimated that almost two-thirds [64%] of NFE used some technology including radio education [31%], offline E-learning [30%] and online E learning [3%].

In the SW, more than half of respondents estimated NFE used some form of E-learning compared to just a quarter of respondents in the NW. However, in the NW the older technological modality of radio education was much more prevalent.



Finally, urban and peri-urban areas had a greater variation in forms of NFE than rural areas where vocational training in particular was common, for example in Manyu [64%] and Menchum [53%].

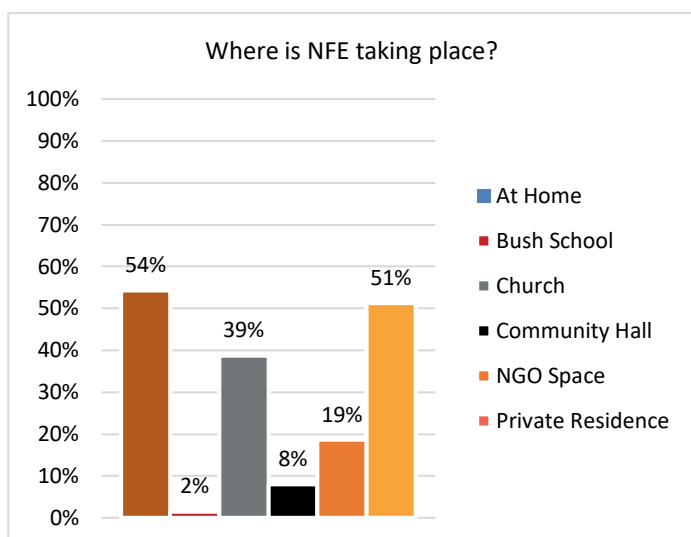
Overall, the most commonly reported curriculum being used in NFE was the UNESCO E-learning curriculum, reported by 63% of respondents. Comparing NW and SW, the national curriculum was reported to be used much more in the NW [31%] than in the SW [9%]. NFE sessions in

the NW were three-times more likely [15%] to use no curriculum than sessions in the SW [5%].

The majority of respondents across both regions reported that mathematics [92%], English [91%] and life skills [87%] were taught in NFE sessions in their communities⁶. However, there is also some variance across regions. 25% of respondents in the NW reported that farming skills were taught in NFE sessions, compared to 0% in SW. Conversely, 21% of respondents in SW reported science was taught, compared to only 3% in NW.

5.2.2 Learning Resources

Across NWSW, approximately half of respondents estimated that textbooks, exercise books, pens and pencils [52%] and radios [51%] were used in NFE sessions. Computers, tablets and mobile phones were also reported in more than a third of selected communities in the SW, but not reported at all in the NW. **28% of communities in the NW and 10% of communities in the SW were reported to have no learning materials.**



45% of NFE spaces in communities surveyed did not have access to their own toilet. 4 in 5 NFE spaces with toilets however were gender-separated. NFE spaces in selected communities across urban/ peri-urban areas were less likely to have access to their own toilets than those in rural areas.

7

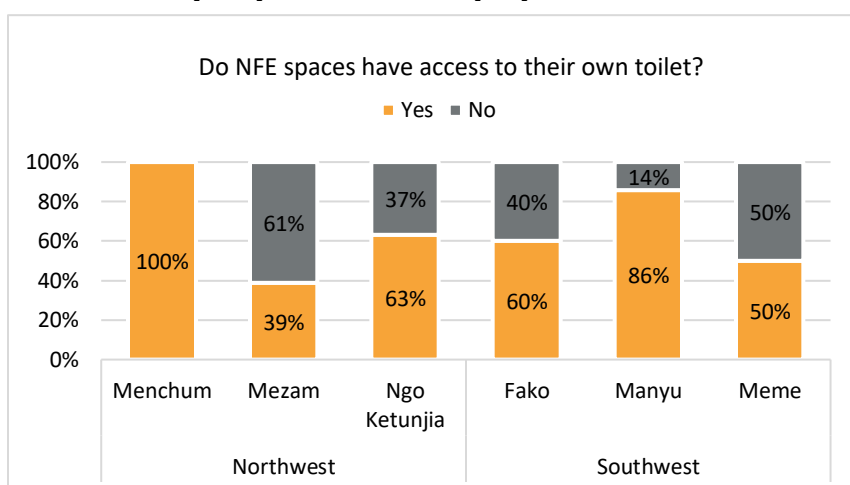
5.3 Settings & Leaders of NFE

5.3.1 Settings

The most commonly identified settings of NFE were at home/in private residences and at church.

73% of respondents in the NW reported NFE to be taking place in homes, compared to only 25% in the SW.

Only 19% of respondents identified NGO spaces as a setting in which NFE was taking place. NGO spaces are more commonly reported to be used in the NW [25%] than in the SW [9%].



⁶ 'Other' subjects taught in NFE sessions included technology, arts & crafts and religious studies

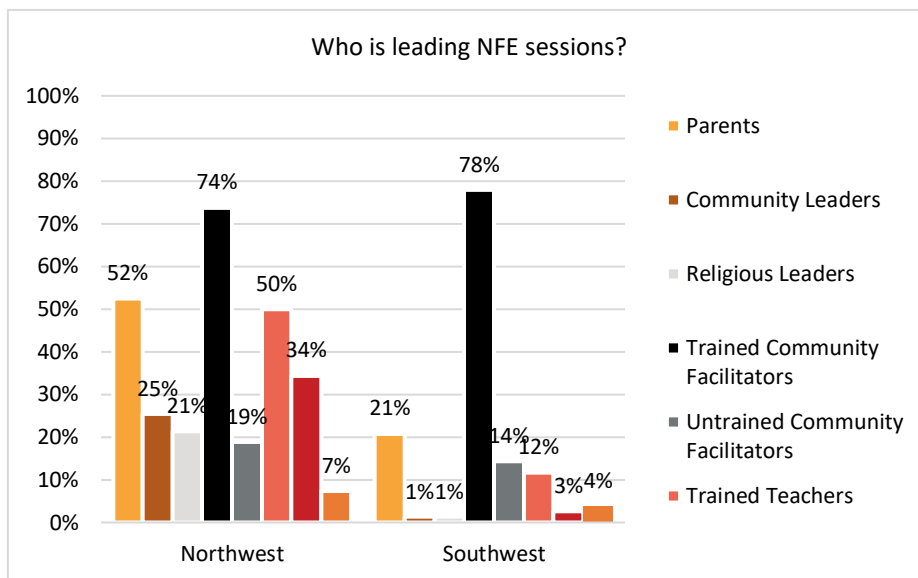
⁷ Private residences were homes in which children other than those that lived there learned.

79% of respondents reported that NFE spaces did not accommodate learners with disabilities. In regards to what resources respondents wanted to accommodate LWDs, the most commonly reported were: mobility aids (wheelchairs and canes) [45%], sensory aids [40%] and adapted learning materials (braille books) [39%]. Comparing needs in the NW and SW, infrastructure (e.g. ramps and handrails) and equipment was needed more in the SW while visual/ hearing aids and adapted learning materials were needed more in the NW.

5.3.2 Leaders

Three-quarters of respondents identified that trained community facilitators were leading NFE sessions followed by parents [40%] and trained teachers [35%].

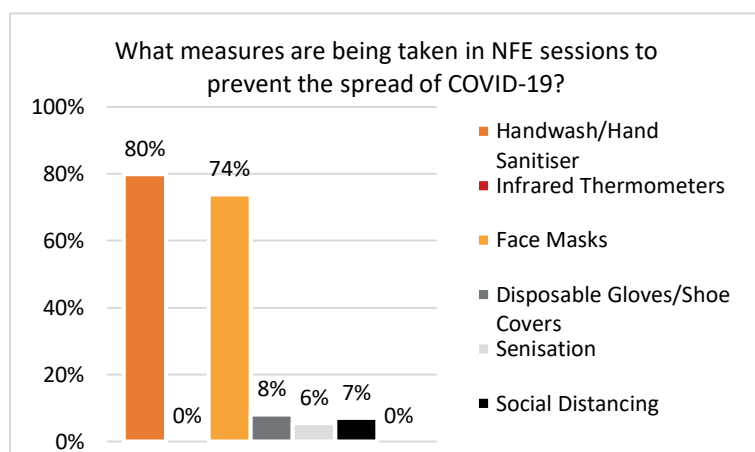
Comparing the NW and SW it is noteworthy that in the SW trained community facilitators were the only leaders of NFE sessions identified by more than a quarter of respondents, whereas in the NW parents, trained teachers and untrained teachers were also commonly identified.



Overall, **three-quarters of respondents report NFE leaders to be unpaid.** This was higher in the NW, where 94% of respondents reported that NFE leaders were unpaid. This aligns with respondents' estimation that children only need to pay for NFE in 15% of communities with parents almost always [87%] covering this cost.

5.4. COVID-19 and NFE

96% of respondents reported that their communities were aware of COVID-19, with the exception of Ngo Ketunjia division where 1 in every 5 communities were estimated to be unaware.



72% of respondents said they had received COVID-19 assistance or materials from the government, NGOs or community groups. Communities in the NW and urban/ peri-urban areas were more likely to have received assistance or materials.

A majority of respondents reported COVID-19 prevention measures were in place in NFE sessions, including handwash/hand sanitiser [80%] and face masks [74%].

6. Analysis

6.1. Access

Despite inconsistencies in both partner and key informants estimates of exact number of children enrolled in NFE, it was clear that there are already a substantial number of children [13 – 45%] engaged in non-formal learning in communities assessed. Although overall numbers of children in NFE were high, access was perceived to be inequitable with host community children more likely to attend sessions than IDP children, and LWDs, married and pregnant girls least able to access NFE. The main barriers which these children face in accessing NFE were identified as lack of money, household income-generating activities/ chores and fear of COVID-19. This likely reflects the impact that the conflict has had on household incomes and livelihoods, which have possibly been further weakened as a result of COVID-19.

In the past, there has been a reluctance among (international) humanitarian actors to engage in NFE interventions for fear of increasing tensions, being perceived as party to one side of the conflict, or putting staff and communities at risk. Interestingly, 84% of key informants reported that NFE spaces in their communities were safe, suggesting that these assumptions by humanitarian actors may need to be re-examined and the risks associated with NFE interventions re-evaluated. This is further supported by the fact that a large majority of NFE [49 – 67%] has been set up only within the last 12 months – suggesting that there has been an opening up of space for safe non-formal education which actors and donors should take advantage of to strengthen access of safe, equitable, quality education.

That being said, perceived risks and safety challenges affecting access to NFE spaces remain, which actors must take into account. These include COVID-19, insecure travel and the risk of detainment/ arrest. It is noteworthy that COVID-19 was identified as both a major barrier and safety issue within NFE despite measures being taken to address it in formal education settings, perhaps demonstrating the need to increase COVID-19 measures in NFE spaces as a strategy to address concerns and increase attendance.

6.2. Forms and Curricula

There was an observably prevalent use of distance teaching and learning (DTL) modalities and curricula in NFE across communities assessed. The three main forms of NFE identified by informants (online, offline and radio learning) and two main curricula reported by partners (radio programmes and UNESCO E-learning) highlight the prevalence of DTL modalities being used. This could be the result of a more general positive trend of COVID-19 response increasing access to NFE and suggests the presence of infrastructure that could support the scaling of DTL approaches into areas where there is no educational access. On the other hand, given that DTL approaches often cannot meet all educational and development needs of children, the lack of non-DTL approaches being used could be considered to highlight the need for actors to develop and implement different and more varied approaches to non-formal teaching and learning – particularly as COVID restrictions have been lifted and children in formal schools have returned to in-person learning across Cameroon.

In addition, the difference in forms of NFE across NW and SW point to the need to differentiate approaches to varying contexts and needs of different communities. For example, E-learning was reported to be used in SW but not in NW, and radio more commonly reported in the NW than SW – likely pointing to differences in

access to network and devices needed for online learning. In addition, farming skills were reported to be included in NW NFE sessions but not in the SW, whilst science lessons were reported much more often in the SW than in NW. These differences could reflect the divergent needs and contexts in which there are more trained teachers with experience teaching subjects such as science leading NFE sessions in the SW and more parents without experience leading NFE sessions in the NW, however, it could also be interpreted as inequitable opportunities within NFE.

6.3. Settings and Leaders

The majority of NFE is reported to be taking place at home [35 – 54%] and in churches [31 – 39%]. Reported use of NGO spaces for NFE is limited [4 – 19%]. Here again, however, the differences between NW and SW must be noted – in the NW, three-quarters of NFE is reported to be taking place at home, compared to a much more varied use of space in the SW. This could point to more acceptance for community-based learning in the SW, whilst NFE remains at home in the NW. Further research is needed to understand the nature of at-home learning in the NW in particular, to be able to design and implement interventions to support safe, quality at-home learning or improve access to dedicated community learning spaces where possible.

When asked about the leaders of NFE there was complete divergence between Phase 1 and 2 findings with 80% of partners estimating that leaders were untrained while 75% of key informants estimated that they were trained. This could reflect a different understanding between these groups of what constitutes a 'trained' NFE leader. Regardless of their training however three-quarters of NFE leaders were unpaid according to key informants, particularly in the NW. This high level of unpaid NFE leaders could be the outcome of many being parents and community/religious leaders, volunteering to provide some level of education in their communities without external support. In addition, where children do need to pay for NFE this is primarily paid by parents, again pointing to the community-based nature of NFE and lack of external financial support.

6.4. COVID-19

Almost all communities surveyed were aware of COVID-19 according to the key informants interviewed. However, less than three-quarters had received COVID-19 assistance or materials, and communities in the SW were less likely to have received support than those in the NW. This could be an illustration of the effectiveness of COVID-19 response programming to raise awareness but inequitably distribute assistance and materials. Likely reflecting high rates of awareness, it is reported that many NFE spaces are taking measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 – including handwashing and use of face masks.

7. Recommendations

The NFE assessment findings have provided an insight of NFE across the Northwest and Southwest of Cameroon as well as highlighting important learning and key areas for reflection.

7.1. Access

- 67% of communities report NFE starting in their communities within the last year. This, coupled with the fact that 84% of informants report existing NFE spaces in their communities to be safe, point to an important moment of opportunity for donors, INGOs and NNGOs, to invest in and strengthen community efforts to provide safe and quality non-formal education to out-of-school children in the 2 regions.
- Educational actors appear to have a limited understanding of the number of children out of education across their working communities. Therefore, a comprehensive community-level assessment of the number of children out of education should be conducted before designing and conducting future educational interventions.
- There is already a significant percentage of children already accessing NFE across communities assessed, therefore a mapping of NFE interventions would benefit the understanding of the Education Cluster and their ability to provide structure and support.
- Learners with disabilities, married and pregnant girls were perceived as groups least able to access NFE with the majority of spaces not accommodative to their needs. If NFE is to provide an inclusive alternative to formal education, inclusive access must be advocated for and needs of most vulnerable groups considered when designing and implementing NFE interventions.
- Advocacy for safe access of children to non-formal learning spaces must be a priority. In particular, actors must work together to address key security concerns: unsafe travel and the risk of detention of children on their way to learning spaces.

7.2. Forms and Curricula

- The prevalence of DTL modalities, curricula and learning materials could be interpreted as a lack of in-person EiE approaches and curricula. Though DTL approaches meet an important need where access is challenging or in-person teaching and learning is not possible, other needs (such as access to safe spaces and psychosocial support) which are key in a conflict setting are less likely to be met through DTL modalities. There is a need for partners develop and implement in-person, low-cost interventions that can meet the holistic learning and development needs of out-of-school children in the NWSW.
- There was a range of modalities used with different preferences and prevalence of modalities across regions. This suggests that modalities have organically developed or opportunistically introduced depending on circumstances and greater coordination of these approaches and sharing of best practices could increase effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, the establishment of an NFE Working Group could support sharing of innovations, best practices and lessons learnt between educational actors. However, the outcomes and impact of these approaches should however be assessed and compared to ensure that assumptions of best practices are not made.

- The lack of varied curricula could demonstrate a dearth of international actors with experience of different NFE approaches able to introduce and adapt such knowledge to the NWSW context. International actors should support local partners through the introduction and adaptation of EiE approaches and curricula from other contexts to supplement current NFE.
- Learning materials currently commonly used in NFE sessions suggest that education actors and their staff are open to technologically innovative approaches to education which could constitute a platform on which further interventions could be built.

7.3. Settings and Leaders

- Alternative spaces such as homes and churches are currently most often used for NFE. Educational actors should therefore consider leveraging on and improving existing alternative learning spaces (e.g. adding WASH facilities) to maximise cost effectiveness while also considering the impact of these spaces on learning outcomes.
- There was a small number of NGO spaces used for NFE compared to alternative learning spaces such as private residences and churches, therefore a mapping of all NFE spaces would benefit the understanding of the Education Cluster and their ability to leverage and improve them for future interventions.
- There is currently a wide range of people leading NFE with varied levels of training, therefore educational actors should aim to provide basic pedagogical trainings, focusing on skills needed to handle the challenges associated with emergency contexts and EiE (e.g. having differing learning levels in one class, overcrowded classrooms, and need for PSS and life-saving skills) to leverage and strengthen existing community efforts.
- Many leaders of NFE sessions were unpaid, perhaps as a result of student's inability to pay them. Educational actors and the Education Cluster should therefore conduct research to understand why leaders of NFE sessions are unpaid and what the impact on learning may be.

7.4. COVID-19

- Handwashing and face masks are commonly used as measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in NFE spaces. However, the reoccurrence of COVID-19 as both a barrier and security issue in NFE spaces illustrates the continued importance of addressing beneficiary concerns through COVID-19 prevention measures in order to enable trust and thereby access.
- NFE sessions are not being used as platforms to conduct sensitisation on COVID-19, perhaps because awareness is already very high. These sessions should be considered in the future however as opportunities to sensitise and raise awareness of other issues.

8. Annexe

8.1. Phase 2 Selected Communities

Community	Sub-Division	Division	Region	Agency
Bawuru	Menchum	Menchum	Northwest	GPA
Agyati	Bafut	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Sang	Bali	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Azire	Bamenda 1	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Abangoh	Bamenda 1	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Atuazire	Bamenda 2	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Bamendrakwe	Bamenda 1	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Ntarikon	Bamenda 1	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Hospital Roundabout	Bamenda 2	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Nkurah	Bamenda 2	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Old Town	Bamenda 2	Mezam	Northwest	PLAN
Menkeng	Ndop	Ngo Ketunjia	Northwest	PLAN
Mesoh	Ndop	Ngo Ketunjia	Northwest	PLAN
Tole	Buea	Fako	Southwest	PLAN
Wonya Mavio	Buea	Fako	Southwest	PLAN
Lower Motowoh	Buea	Fako	Southwest	PLAN
Mie 14 Dibanda	Buea	Fako	Southwest	PLAN
Mile 16 Bolifamba	Buea	Fako	Southwest	PLAN
Messelele	Tiko	Fako	Southwest	PAIDWA
Moquo	Tiko	Fako	Southwest	PAIDWA
Mbakem	Eyumojock	Manyu	Southwest	EDUCAM
Kake	Kumba 2	Meme	Southwest	AMEF
Fiango	Kumba 2	Meme	Southwest	AMEF
Kang Barombi & Mabanda	Kumba 3	Meme	Southwest	AMEF

8.2. Phase 1 Questionnaire

Education

1. Is there a form of non-formal learning taking place in this community?
2. How long has non-formal learning been taking place in this community?
3. If yes, what type of non-formal learning is taking place in this community? Community- Bush School/ Education at home/ Other
4. Where in the community are these children learning?
5. Who is leading the non-formal learning sessions in this community? Trained teacher/Community Teacher/ Community Leader/Parent/Other- tell us who
6. What curriculum is being taught in these education sessions? National Curriculum/ UNESCO Distance Learning/ No Curriculum/ Other-tell us what

7. Are there learning materials at these education sessions? None/ Online Lessons/ Radio/ TV/ Textbooks/ Other

Learners

8. Based on your estimations and knowledge of the community, complete the table below for the number of children receiving educational opportunities:

Children Aged 5-8 Children Aged 9-12 Children Aged 13-16

No. Children

No. Children in NFE

No. Children in FE

No. Children OOS

9. Are host or IDP more likely to attend non-formal learning in this community? Host or IDP

10. Are there any other groups that are marginalised from non-formal education in this community?

Community Situation

11. Is your organisation currently accessing this community?

12. How would you describe your access in this community? Access to secondary Data / Phone call access to the community / Works through a partner in this community / Can visit this community / Currently visits and has projects in this community

13. Would your organisation be willing to conduct a further non-formal education assessment in-person within this community, leveraging your existing presence and resources? Yes / No

8.3. Phase 2 Questionnaire

Non-Formal Education Information

1. Is there non-formal learning taking place in this community? Yes / No

2. What type of non-formal learning is taking place in this community? Catch Up Classes / Online E-Learning / Offline E-Learning / Radio Education / Vocational Training / Other type of NFE?

3. How long has non-formal learning been taking place in this community? 0 to 6 Months / 6 Months to 1 Year / 1 to 2 Years / 2 to 3 Years / Never

4. Where in the community is non-formal learning taking place? At Home / Bush School / Church / Community Hall / NGO Space / Private Residence / Other places of learning?

5. Who is leading the non-formal learning sessions? Parents / Community Leaders / Religious Leaders / Trained Community Facilitators / Untrained Community Facilitators / Trained Teachers / Untrained Teachers / Other leaders of learning?

6. Are the leaders of non-formal learning paid in this community? Yes / No

7. Who is paying these non-formal learning leaders? They are paid by the Regional/ Divisional Government / They are paid by the Community / They are paid by the Child's Families / Other form of payment?

8. Do children need to pay for non-formal learning in this community? Yes / No

9. How do children pay for this? Children pay themselves / Parents pay for children / Community pays for children / NGO pays for children / Other form of payment?

10. What curriculum is being taught in non-formal learning sessions in this community? National Curriculum / UNESCO E-Learning Curriculum / NGO Curriculum / Government Radio Education Programme / Life Skills Curriculum / Vocational Skills Curriculum / No Curriculum / Other curriculum?

11. What subjects are being taught in the community? Mathematics / Reading / Writing / English / Life Skills / Farming Skills / Other subjects?
12. What learning materials are used in these non-formal learning sessions? There are no learning materials / There are online learning materials accessed by computer / There are online learning materials accessed by tablet/ mobile phone / There are learning materials presented in radio lessons / There are learning materials presented in TV lessons / There are textbooks, exercise books, pens or pencils / Other types of learning materials?

Types of Learners

13. How many boys age 5-8 are in non-formal education?
14. How many girls age 5-8 are in non-formal education?
15. How many boys age 9-12 are in non-formal education?
16. How many girls age 9-12 are in non-formal education?
17. How many boys age 13-16 are in non-formal education?
18. How many girls age 13-16 are in non-formal education?
19. How many boys with disabilities are in non-formal education?
20. How many girls with disabilities are in non-formal education?
21. How many IDP boys are in non-formal education?
22. How many IDP girls are in non-formal education?
23. How many boys in Host Communities are in non-formal education?
24. How many girls in Host Communities are in non-formal education?

Access

25. For each of the following types of children, please indicate if they are "Fully Able", "Partially Able" or "Not Able" to access non-formal education in this community?

	Fully Able	Partially Able	Not Able
Young Children (5 to 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old Children (12 to 16)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Host Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IDP Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Married Girls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnant Girls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Barriers

26. What are the barriers do these children face in access to non-formal education in this community? Detainment or Arrest / Forced Recruitment / Household Income/ Chores / Lack of Money / Fear of COVID-19 / Poor Quality Teaching / Lack of Learning Materials / Insecure Travel / Other barriers?
27. Are the non-formal learning spaces in this community safe? Yes / No
28. If not, what are the safety issues that make non-formal learning spaces unsafe? Detainment or Arrest / Forced Recruitment / COVID-19 / Insecure Travel /Other safety issues?

Gender and Social Inclusion [GESI]

- 29. Do non-formal learning spaces in this community have access to their own toilet? Yes / No
- 30. Are the toilets separated by gender? Yes / No
- 31. Do non-formal learning spaces in this community accommodate learners with disabilities? Yes / No
- 32. What tools help accommodate learning with disabilities? Infrastructure (e.g. Ramps, Handrails) / Equipment (e.g. Wheelchairs, Cains) / Visual/ Hearing Aids / Adapted Learning Materials (e.g. in Braille) / Other tools?

COVID-19

- 33. Are communities aware of COVID-19 ? Yes / No
- 34. What measures, if any, are the community taking in non-formal learning spaces to prevent the spread of COVID-19? Handwash/ Hand Sanitiser / Infrared Thermometers / Face Masks/ Disposable Gloves / Disposable Shoe/ Boot Covers / Handwashing Stations / Nothing / Other measures?
- 35. Have you received any support from NGOs, Government or Community Groups with COVID-19 assistance or materials? Yes / No
- 36. How do you prefer to be contacted about NGO assistance? Phone Call / Whatsapp / Radio / In Person / Other contact method?