

BRICE

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CRISIS THROUGH EDUCATION



‘Education for Life’ in South Sudan and Uganda was a four-year project implemented by Oxfam and partners (2019 - 2023) under the European Union programme titled ‘Building Resilience in Crisis through Education’ (BRiCE). Danida co-funded the project.

Through provision of Accelerated Education (AE), BRiCE supported out of school children and young people, not least girls, and displaced learners, in Uganda and South Sudan pursue their educational dreams. Placed in the nexus and designed with a strong focus on gender, teacher professional development and advocacy, the project not only provided a voice for displaced learners’ right to education but also strengthened systems for teachers’ professional development and AE and improved access and quality of primary level education.

ACCELERATED EDUCATION

The project was anchored in the delivery of AE and short-term English language acquisition courses to displaced and out-of-school children and adolescents.

Teachers were provided with regular incentives, which combined with mentorship, training, and supervision contributed greatly to teacher attendance and retention as well as improving the quality of education delivered. Scholastic materials such as exercise books, pens, lesson plan books for teachers were distributed with the aim of improving social, cognitive, and emotional stability of the learners as lack of learning materials usually leads to learner drop out.

RESULTS

- Support to the running of 22 AE centres (in South Sudan 18 and Uganda 4) and another 20 formal primary schools in Uganda.
- 6,390 learners have benefitted from AE and 859 learners from language acquisition courses. In total 63 % were refugees or IDPs.
- The overall completion of learners was at 81 %.
- 7,442 learners provided with psychosocial support and skills (5,598 in South Sudan and 1,844 in Uganda).
- Learners feeling safe in school rose from 57.9 % at the beginning of the project to 87 % at the end.



Ala and Nakiro Awich, learners, Primary School, Palabek, Uganda

‘Now we are trying to build a life here. I hope to become a teacher one day, get a job and make a bit of money. The teachers support and encourage me when I struggle in school. I am a lot older than the other pupils in my class, and that bothers me. But I try not to feel ashamed. Poverty and war are the reasons why I have fallen behind, and all I want to do now is try to catch up.’

Peter Lomuyak, AE learner, Aywee Primary School, Palabek

TEPD

A core component of the project was the provision of continuous Teacher and Educator Professional Development (TEPD). Building on global good practice from INEE’s Training for Primary School Teachers in Crisis Contexts (TiCC), a TEPD package was developed to meet the specific needs of teachers to enable them to support learners with different needs and backgrounds. The TEPD training pack focused on teachers’ understanding of their own role as teachers, pedagogical skills such as classroom management and lesson planning, as well as contributed to teachers being better able to handle gender, SRHR and conflict sensitive issues.

TEPD encourages continuous learning and support through peer coaching amongst teachers. The peer-to-peer learning model includes Teacher Learning Circles, as well as the possibility for classroom observations, visitations, and exchange visits. The activities are envisaged at creating a community of teachers who will learn from and motivate each other and jointly innovate skills and strategies to help them find new solutions to the challenges they face.

RESULTS

- An adapted and contextualised version of the INEE’s TiCC package was developed for Uganda and South Sudan, incl. Teacher Learning Circles.
- 22 teacher trainers from the education authorities and 855 teachers (South Sudan 393 and Uganda 462) received continuous support, supervision and training.
- 74 % of teachers perceive the quality of teaching and learning to have improved following the TEPD training. They now pay more attention to equal treatment of girls and boys and apply a variety of methods in their teaching. This was confirmed by 97 % of the learners.
- Teachers feeling safe in school rose from 31.6 % at the beginning of the project to 77 % at the end.



Akongso Jennifer Sunthia, teacher, Palabek, Uganda



Omara David Okora, teacher, World View Primary School, Palabek, Uganda

‘Always, when we identify those learners [who suffer from emotional problems], we try to find out why they are behaving like this. I pull them aside and give them time to speak so we can help them solve their problems. I try to stay close to them, and I accompany them to their homes. It is my pride to see them leave their problems behind, and I can only help them, because I had lots of training with the project.’

Male teacher, AE Centre, Palabek Refugee Settlement

GENDER

To address gender inequalities in the education system, challenge harmful gender norms and gender-blind practices, gender was mainstreamed into all activities. PTAs/SMCs and teachers were supported to develop gender action plans and budgets. Gender Responsive Pedagogy was integrated into the TEPD, creating an understanding of unknown biases and the importance of coaching adolescent learners. It addressed how to work with gender in the classroom and introduced SRHR to learners.

Schools worked with making re-useable sanitary pads and creating ‘girls’ corners’ to cater for menstrual hygiene practises and young breastfeeding mothers. Furthermore, psycho-social support was designed to meet girls’ and boys’ needs and address violations of their rights, including gender-based violence. Two gender studies were commissioned in Uganda and South Sudan to understand the impact of COVID 19 lockdowns on female learners and their access and retention in school.

RESULTS

- 49 % of learners enrolled in AE and language acquisition courses were female (South Sudan M49-F51 % and Uganda M57-F43 %).
- 73 % of female AE learners completed their education (South Sudan 72 % and Uganda 88 %).
- 81 % of teachers now apply participatory methods and gender- and conflict-sensitive approaches.
- As a result of the trainings, some teachers have restructured children’s clubs to encourage joint participation of girls and boys in, for example debates, drama, football and life skills sessions.
- In Uganda, the gender study contributed to the Revised Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Teenage Pregnancy Framework under the Ministry of Gender and Social Transformation.



Lucia Jildo Abbas, learner, Juba, South Sudan

‘A lot has changed during the lockdown. Corona has spoilt almost everything. Most of the girls around here got pregnant, and others married. I hope they will be able to go back to school anyway – getting married or pregnant should not be the end of their journey if they wish to study. My dream is to become a medical doctor.’

Lucia Jildo Abbas, AE learner, Juba

WAYS OF WORKING

RESEARCH

Research products and programmatic resources drawn from the collective knowledge and achievements of the project have contributed to a body of knowledge such as policy briefs, technical papers, research products as well as webinars and presentations. The research focused on issues of teacher and learner well-being and their interconnectedness. The impact of COVID 19 on learners and teachers were added following the pandemic. Research findings and learning from the project were shared at international conferences and in key fora, including the Global Refugee Forum, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), UKFIET, and World Education Research Association (WERA) .

TRIPLE NEXUS

The project was designed around a triple nexus approach to respond to needs arising from the humanitarian situation in South Sudan while at the same time applying a longer-term approach. This approach was embedded in the work with education system strengthening, professional development of teachers, strengthening of school governance bodies, and in advocacy efforts towards recognition and financing of refugee education. During COVID 19 the project built on the strong relationship with teachers and PTAs/SMCs, redirecting support to remote learning and innovative measures for capacity building of teachers e.g. through SMS. Research and advocacy efforts were also redirected to focus on the gendered impact of COVID 19 as well as the existing inequalities related to education for displaced and marginalised groups which were exacerbated during COVID 19. Peacebuilding was addressed through co-location of AE centres and existing primary schools allowing work on social cohesion between learners and teachers as well as through TEPD.



Akidi Naume, teacher, and learner, Palabek, Uganda

PARTNERSHIPS

BRICE was implemented through a consortium led by Oxfam Denmark in partnership with AVSI, CDI, Columbia Global Centre, EI, FAWEU, LGIHE, UNATU, and the Ministries of Education in South Sudan and Uganda. The project strived towards joint ownership and learning by building on the strength and nature of all partners. This entailed ensuring synergy among partners' activities and creating links from local to global through annual learning events and partner-led task teams. The relationships built between various partners and stakeholders enabled advocacy for sustained system changes to education provision and policies for displaced people's education from a local to a global level.

