

**Evaluation of the Mobile Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
(ABEK)**

A Final Report

Submitted to

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Section One: Introduction

1.1 Background

Karamoja is a hot semi-arid savannah grassland and shrub region with insufficient rainfall that does not allow reliable crop production. The region therefore depends overwhelmingly on itinerant pastoralism for its livelihood. The search for pasture and water is a responsibility reserved for the men and youth who move with the herds often to distant locations across districts. In addition to the harsh climatic conditions, Karamoja is bedevilled by conflict arising from incessant cattle rustling that is rampant in the region. The mobile nature of communities in Karamoja clearly suggests that the level of economic, social and political development in the region is low compared to the rest of the country. The culture of the pastoralist communities of Karamoja where households rely heavily on the contribution of children's labour encourages children to stay away from school. Thus, in spite of the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda since 1997, there are still many children of school going age in Karamoja region who do not enrol in school. The phenomenon of movement itself presents many challenges for both providers and would-be users of educational services. Implicitly, many pastoralist children still do not enjoy their right to basic education. The 2015 Education For All (EFA) targets of universal access to primary education will not be achieved unless policies and resources are directed to provide these children with access to quality education that is relevant to their needs and circumstances. There is little evidence however on how pastoralist education has been addressed through major national initiatives in Uganda.

In order to address the gaps in educational provision in Karamoja, Save the Children in Uganda (SCiUG) together with the District Local Governments designed and initiated an Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) programme in 1998. The ABEK cycle is four years and upon completion of the cycle, learners can join formal primary school at Primary 5 level. ABEK is a non-formal approach designed to provide basic education to children from pastoral communities whose way of life limited their attendance of formal schools. It targets children aged 6-18 years but has mainly been in proximity to "ere" (homesteads). It provides an alternative and more flexible education

with flexible learning hours and a context based curriculum, with a strong focus on relevance. The teachers are community members who have been trained and supported by SCiUG in collaboration with Moroto Core Primary Teachers College. The programme has had great success in the region and has created significant positive changes in the lives of children in the pastoralist communities in Karamoja.

However, four evaluation studies and a strategic review of the ABEK programme revealed that the programme was more sedentary in nature due to the proximity to the learning centres to “ere”. The four reports further highlighted that 85% of the children enrolled and attending ABEK were female hence, majority of the boys were left out by the programme. In a 2009 rapid assessment, it was found that the majority boys were in the kraals (cattle camps) away from home. As a result, the ABEK programme was extended to 20 mobile kraals in the districts of Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Napak, Nakapiripirit and Amudat in April 2009. As of April 2009, 2,830 (2,480 males and 350 females) learners had enrolled in the 20 mobile ABEK centres. The pilot project was designed to last two years where upon an evaluation would be conducted to assess the impact of the project among the mobile herders. At the end of the project, the mobile ABEK was planned for under the mainstream ABEK programme in each district’s management structures which were established at each kraal. Teaching and learning has been ongoing in these centers.

It is in this regard that SCiUG sought to conduct an evaluation of the mobile ABEK programme which has been implemented on pilot basis for a period of two years (2009-2011). The goal was to assess the effectiveness of implementation process and the quality and relevance of the interventions. Also assessed was the sustainability of the achieved results, teacher support systems, community and child participation and ownership, successful transitions and systems/structures put in place to improve quality of education.

1.2 Objectives of the Evaluation

1.2.1 General Objectives

1. To evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the mobile ABEK program in as far as increasing access to quality basic education for children in Karamoja
2. To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the mobile ABEK implementation strategies.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

1. To establish the level of access to mobile ABEK by the learners (intended beneficiaries).
2. To assess the quality of learning in mobile ABEK.
3. To assess the level of transition of learners from mobile ABEK into formal schools.
4. To examine the strengths and weaknesses of mobile ABEK implementation strategies and strategies to address the gaps.
5. To analyze the contextual factors that are relevant for ABEK project implementation and their impact so far and also their potential to further impact on the project. Such factors include – weather, security, the social economic and cultural factors.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

1.3.1 Study Design

The objectives of the evaluation dictated adoption of cross sectional and comparative study designs and use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection including secondary and primary sources of data. The cross sectional element sought to obtain data from a cross section of stakeholders in mobile ABEK; pupils enrolled in mobile ABEK, parents/guardians of children enrolled in mobile ABEK, mobile ABEK management structures (Village ABEK Committees, Centre Management Committees, Sub County ABEK Committes), instructors/facilitators in mobile ABEK centres, teachers

in formal primary school, community members, mobilisers and elders, district education offices and staff of SCiUG. The comparative design was used especially when answering parts of objective 3 which required a comparison of levels of activeness in formal primary school of children who had transited from ABEK mobile compared to those not from ABEK mobile and ascertaining the ratio of children who had been to mobile ABEK and had joined formal school compared to those not from mobile ABEK.

1.3.2 Study Areas

The study was conducted in Moroto, Kotido, Kaabong, Napak, Amudat and Nakapiripirit districts where mobile ABEK is being implemented in Karamoja region. 9 Mobile ABEK centers (1 from Moroto, 2 from Kotido, 2 from Kaabong, 1 from Napak, 1 from Amudat and 2 from Nakapiripirit) were randomly selected from the 20 mobile ABEK centres in the region to participate in the evaluation. So were 9 communities within which the selected ABEK mobile centres were located and their respective VAC, CMC, SAC. In addition, 2 formal primary schools within reach of each selected mobile ABEK centre were selected from each district as were the respective District Local Governments, ABEK Coordinators and Monitoring Assistants.

1.3.3 Sample Selection of Respondents

The sample size had been dictated by the number of days SCiUG has set aside for execution of the evaluation and finances and personnel available. However, the size of the sample studied is big enough to allow for generalization across the entire ABEK mobile project area.

25 children from each district with one mobile ABEK centre, 50 children from each district with more than one centre and 25 parents/guardians of children enrolled in mobile ABEK centers were randomly selected for interviews from each district. We had intended to randomly select half males and half females but this was not possible because females enrolled in mobile ABEK were much fewer than males. Females were fewer because mobile ABEK targeted herds boys who move with the kraals. The few girls who attended mobile ABEK usually came to collect milk and blood from the kraals.

Data was also obtained from programme managers in Karamoja and partners in mobile ABEK viz, 2 district educational offices from each district, 2 VAC from each community, 2 CMC from each community and 2 SAC from each community, 4 mobile ABEK instructors/facilitators from each centre, 2 mobile ABEK community mobilisers from each centre, 2 community leaders from each community, 2 elders from each community, 1 head teacher from each formal primary school and 4 teachers from each formal primary school. Below is a table indicating the category and number of respondents that were selected to participate in the evaluation.

Table 1: Category and Number of Respondents That Participated in the Evaluation Per District

Category	District					
	Moroto	Kotido	Kaabong	Napak	Nakapiripirit	Amudat
Children enrolled in mobile ABEK	25	50	50	25	50	25
Parents/guardians of children enrolled in mobile ABEK centers	25	25	25	25	25	25
District educational officials	2	2	2	2	2	2
VAC	2	4	4	2	4	2
CMC	2	4	4	2	4	2
SAC	2	4	4	2	4	2
Facilitators/instructors in mobile ABAK centres	4	8	8	4	8	4
Head teachers in formal primary schools	2	2	2	2	2	2
Teachers in formal	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mobile ABEK community mobilisers	2	4	4	2	4	2
Community leaders	2	4	4	2	4	2
Elders	2	4	4	2	4	2

Table 2 shows the actual numbers of selected pupils and parents/guardians and the respective mobile ABEK centres, sub counties and districts where they are located.

**Table 2: Selected Pupils and the Respective Mobile ABEK Centres
Sub Counties and Districts Where They Are Located**

District	Sub County	ABEK Center	Number of Pupils Selected	Number of Parents/Guardians Selected
			(n)	(n)
Amudat	Karita	Naporokocha	25	24
Nakapiripirit	Lolachat	Moruangomion	25	23
		Namorulem	25	10
Kaabong	Kalapata	Kalapata II	24	13
	Lolelia	Lolelia	25	4
Kotido	Kotido	Lomaria I	25	13
		Lomaria II	25	11
Napak	Lokopo	Lokopo	17	24
Moroto	Nadunget	Lolita	9	9
		Lokali	25	24

Teachers in formal primary school were selected from Kalapata primary school, Kalapata sub county, Kabong district, Namanatou and Nadunget primary schools, Nadunget sub county both in Moroto district, Rengen primary school, Rengen sub county, Kotido district, Sakale primary school, Lolachart sub county, Nakapiripirit district, Karita primary school, Karita sub county, Amudat district, and Lokopo and Nakiceleet primary schools, Lokopo sub county, Napak district.

With regard to selection of district education officials, one District Education Officer and one District Inspector of Schools were further selected from Nakapiripirit district, one centre coordinating tutor was selected from Amudat district, one senior education officer and one District Inspector of Schools were selected from Moroto district, one district ABEK coordinator was selected from Kabong district, one District Education Officer was selected from Kotido district and one District Inspector of Schools was selected from Napak district.

One facilitator was selected from Naporokocha and one from Loporokoco mobile ABEK centres in Karita Sub County, Amudat district, one from Loputiput mobile ABEK centre in Nadunget sub county, Moroto district, two from Kalapata mobile ABEK centre,

Kalapata sub county, Kabong district, two from Lokopo mobile ABEK centre, Lokopo sub county, Napak district, two from Namorulem and two from Moruangomion mobile ABEK centres in Lolachart sub county, Nakapiripirit district.

The distribution of community leaders interviewed across districts is indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of Community Leaders Interviewed Across Districts

Category of Community Leaders	Districts					
	Amudat	Nakapiripirit	Kotido	Napak	Kabong	Moroto
L C Officials	4	2	2	2	1	2
Community Mobilisers	2	2		1	2	1
VAC	3	2		2	2	2
CMC	6	1	2	2	2	2
SAC	2	2	1	1	1	1
Elders	2	1	1	1	2	3
Total	19	10	6	9	10	11

1.3.3 Measurement Indicators

Objective 1 (establishment of levels of access to mobile ABEK by the learners) was measured by use of quantitative indicators that included; rates of enrollment, attendance, progression through the ABEK cycle, completion of the ABEK cycle and dropping out. Other quantitative indicators will include proportion of mobile ABEK centers with functional management structures.

Objective 2 (assessment of the quality of learning in mobile ABEK) was measured by use of both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators here included

children's own enthusiasm about mobile ABEK, children's assessment of the relevance of mobile ABEK to their lives, percentage of children (those at last level/stage of Mobile ABEK) demonstrating reading, writing, cognitive and any other life skills (a P.3 level literacy and literacy test was used here), levels of parental interest in their children's education, levels of values attached to children's education by parents, percentage of SCiUG supported teachers that were applying interactive, creative teaching methods (observations were used to measure this), percentage of SCiUG supported mobile ABEK centers that are established in a safe, child friendly and conducive learning environment and teacher to pupil ratios in mobile ABEK centers.

Qualitative indicators in Objective 2 included levels of; interest in learning, self confidence and esteem and mental and cognitive development generated by mobile ABEK amongst children. In addition, levels of personal hygiene and understanding of its importance inculcated into children, of children's participation in playing, singing and story telling and of children's ability to use local materials and play manipulative games using picture books, paper, pencils and crayons are the other qualitative indicators that were measured. However, these indicators required a child centred methodologist who was not available to the survey team.

Objective 3 (assessment of the level of transition of learners from mobile ABEK into formal schools) was measured by use of quantitative indicators that included; formal primary school teachers' perceptions of efficacy of mobile ABEK, levels of activeness in formal primary school of children who have transited from ABEK mobile compared to those not from ABEK mobile, number of children from mobile ABEK joining formal primary school over the last two years of the project's implementation, ratio of children who have been to mobile ABEK who have joined formal school compared to those not from mobile ABEK and differences in performance in formal primary school between children who had been to mobile ABEK and those that had not been to mobile ABEK.

Objective 4 (examination of the strengths and weaknesses of mobile ABEK implementation strategies and strategies to address the gaps) was measured by use of

qualitative indicators that included; relevance of mobile ABEK to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle, harsh climatic conditions, security/conflict conditions and to the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja. Other qualitative indicators were availability of instructional materials, recreational kits, instructors/facilitators and instructional manuals, criteria for selection of mobile ABEK instructors and facilitators, training of instructors/facilitators, modes and focus of instruction in mobile ABEK centres, medium of instruction in mobile ABEK centres, venues for conducting lessons, compatibility of times of the day in which lessons are conducted to children's herding and domestic responsibilities, levels of community, elders' and district education officials' involvement in mobile ABEK and district education officials' perceptions of the effectiveness of the teaching methods used in mobile ABEK, i.e., ability to enable children to learn.

Objective 5 (analysis of the contextual factors that are relevant for ABEK project implementation and their impact so far and also their potential to further impact on the project) was measured by use of qualitative indicators that included; relevance of mobile ABEK to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle, harsh climatic conditions, security/conflict conditions and to the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja. Additional qualitative indicators were appropriateness and relevance of the project objectives to the learning needs of children, effectiveness of the project, nature of internal capacities built or strengthened within communities, of internal resources employed in the project activities especially with regard to finances, instructional materials, transport, management, instructors/facilitators, extent to which the mobile ABEK project activities had been mainstreamed into existing community/district educational structures, contributions of other partners to the success of the mobile ABEK, positive or negative unexpected effects the mobile ABEK project could have encountered onto which actions should be taken in future projects, nature of support required to enhance sustainability of the mobile ABEK project in the immediate and long terms and, strengths and weaknesses that could be built upon and/or improved in future mobile ABEK projects.

1.3.4 Methods of Data Collection

Data were collected through use of a multiplicity of methods. Data from project documents were obtained qualitatively while data from pupils and parents/guardians were obtained quantitatively through structured interviews conducted by research assistants. Some data from pupils were obtained through observations. Data from partners in mobile ABEK were obtained through key informant interviews using interview guides and focus group discussions.

1.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative secondary and primary data were analysed by content analysis along the major themes expressed in each ToR. These are relevance and effectiveness of the mobile ABEK program; strengths and weaknesses of the mobile ABEK implementation strategies and strategies for addressing the gaps; levels of access to mobile ABEK; quality of learning in mobile ABEK; levels of transition of learners from mobile ABEK into formal schools; and, contextual factors that are relevant for ABEK project implementation and their impact so far and also their potential to further impact on the project.

Broad categories were developed to differentiate and describe ideas expressed by the different respondents. These broad categories were further broken down to indicate the nature of relevance and effectiveness of the mobile ABEK program, the strengths and weaknesses of the mobile ABEK implementation strategies, levels of access to, and quality of learning in mobile ABEK, levels of transition of learners from mobile ABEK into formal schools and contextual factors that are relevant for ABEK project implementation including their potential to further impact on the project.

Quantitative data were analysed with help of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists Software (SPSS. PC). Raw frequencies were generated.

Section Two: Levels of Access to Mobile ABEK by Learners

2.1 Introduction

Levels of access to mobile ABEK by learners were measured through ascertaining rates of enrollment, attendance, progression through the ABEK cycle, completion of the ABEK cycle and dropping out. Access levels were further assessed in terms of proportion of mobile ABEK centers with functional management structures. However, before discussing levels of access, it is important that we get a clear picture of the socio-demographic characteristics of the pupils who participated in the evaluation. This is indicated in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Children

Characteristics	%
Sex	
Males	76.5
Females	23.5
Age	
4-8 (Early Childhood)	18.3
9-12 (Advanced Childhood)	29.5
13-17 (Adolescence)	44.6
18-23 (Early Adulthood)	7.6
Level/Grade	
I	31.5
II	35.6
III	32.9
Total	100.0

Table 4 indicates that over three quarters of the children attending mobile ABEK were males. This was expected because its male children who attend to animals most amongst the nomadic pastoralist of Karamoja. And mobile ABEK was targeting children herding animals in the mobile kraals. Table 4 again shows that a large proportion of the children

attending mobile ABEK (44.6%) were adolescents followed by 29.5% children aged 9-12 (advanced childhood). Children in the early childhood age bracket of up to 8 years constituted 18.3% while young adults were 7.6%. All the 3 grades in mobile ABEK were near proportionately represented.

2.2 Rates of Enrollment, Attendance and Dropping Out in Mobile ABEK

Enrolment into mobile ABEK centers is conducted in mayatas when there is relative peace and stability. There are more boys enrolled than girls because mobile ABEK originally targeted boys who tended animals in the kraals. The few girls enrolled are those who come to collect milk and blood from the kraal every morning. This also explains why in some centers in Kaabong and Kotido districts, there were no girls enrolled because the kraals had migrated to distant places in search of pasture and water.

Attendance rates are also subject to similar conditions of relative peace and stability in the kraal. During migration, attendance rates are very low since teachers must wait for the children to settle into a more defined and secured area. In addition, teachers do not have attendance registers to regularly document children's attendance. The children attend at own volition and if there are any other activities for example building fences and/or milking the animals that compete for their time, the activities take precedence over attending mobile ABEK.

Attendance is further influenced by availability of pastures and water within the kraal and harsh climatic conditions especially torrential rains. For girls, attendance is further influenced by amounts of domestic chores they have to attend to at home. For some households, girls' attendance of mobile ABEK is not a priority. Majority girls who attend mobile ABEK are the very young ones and in grades I and II but rarely in grade III because by then they are deemed old enough to attend to domestic chores within their natal homes. In addition, parents fear that their daughters could be "kidnapped" by suitors as culturally permitted.

Drop out rates are not known because mobile ABEK centres lack attendance registers. In addition, when kraals shift, some girls get married, new children join the centers, others

do not return to the centres or join other centres. Important to note however is that the drop out rates for girls are much higher compared to those of boys because as girls approach puberty (13 years and above) they are prone to ‘kidnaps’ for marriage. During puberty, there is restricted movement. It is younger girls whose parents consider not ready for marriage who are allowed to attend mobile ABEK. Boys’ movement is not restricted but upon marrying, they are considered adults who are not obliged to attend mobile ABEK.

Table 5 overleaf illustrates the estimated (by facilitators) rates of enrollment, attendance and drop out in the centres investigated.

Table 5: Rates of Enrollment, Attendance and Dropping Out in Mobile ABEK

District	Sub County	ABEK Center	Boys			Girls		
			Enrollment	Attendance	Drop Out	Enrollment	Attendance	Drop Out
Amudat	Karita	Napolokoch	68	58	Not known	24	20	Not known
Nakapiripirit	Lolachat	Moruangomion	163	154	Not known	24	12	Not known
		Namorulem	152	90	Not known	40	23	Not known
Kaabong	Kalapata	Kalapata I	173	120	Not known	None	NA	NA
	Lolelia	Nachakolet	134	68	Not known	None	NA	NA
Kotido	Kotido	Lomaia I	123	Not known	Not known	None	NA	NA
		Lomaria II	145	Not known	Not known	None	NA	NA
Napak	Lokopo	Lokopo	83	63	Not known	12	12	Not known
Moroto	Nadunget	Nudunget	54	43	Not known	34	15	Not known
		Lokali	45	39	Not known	23	13	Not known

2.3 Rates of Progression Through and Completion of the ABEK Cycle

Rates of progression were not easy to establish because of all the children in the three grades share the same shade. They are also taught the same topics by the same instructor. It's the instructors who make decisions regarding the grade into which the pupil is. However, it appeared like levels of grades were determined by the number of years a

pupil has been attending and age; the older a pupil was, the higher the likelihood to be in a higher grade. Since there were no systematic assessments of competences in mobile ABEK, the longer a child stayed enrolled, the more it was deemed to have learnt enough to proceed to a higher grade.

Rates of completion were also not easy to establish; ideally, completion of mobile ABEK would be measured by joining formal primary school. But there were cases of continued attendance of mobile ABEK until children got fed up and dropped out. There are no systematic mechanisms for progression and completion of mobile ABEK. Those who join formal primary school join nearby primary schools on parents/guardians initiation. Some were enrolled in the boarding sections of formal primary schools so that when their families moved to the next kraals, the children's studies were not interrupted. Sometimes, the mobile ABEK coordinators and the Inspectors of school make arbitrary decisions regarding who should join formal primary school. Mobile ABEK needs to put in place systematic mechanisms for progression and completion which are well known by parents/guardians, instructors and pupils just like it is in formal schools.

However, as will be seen later in the section on relevance of mobile ABEK, given the unique conditions in Karamoja, successes of the mobile ABEK programme should not be measured conventionally in terms of rates of completion only. Children had acquired knowledge and skills that were relevant to the Karamoja conditions which helped them stay their communities with improved and sustainable knowledge and skills. This indeed is an indicator of success of the mobile ABEK programme. Given the unique conditions in Karamoja again, SCiUG should start planning for adult vocational education for children who complete mobile ABEK but may not join formal primary school because of being over age. The vocational education could focus on enhancing pastoral livelihoods beyond what is taught in mobile ABEK.

2.4 Proportion of Mobile ABEK Centers with Functional Management Structures

All the mobile ABEK centers had management committees comprising of chair person, vice chair persons, secretary, treasurer, mobilisers and committee members. All in all, management committees comprised of nine members. The committees oversee the

activities going on in the centers including mobilizing communities and children to attend mobile ABEK, monitoring and supervising facilitators, writing and keeping minutes and keeping money and food meant for the learners. Management and decision making powers are vest with selected elders. Women are sometimes incorporated onto management committees and are mostly charged with cleaning up the centers. This may not contribute much overall to functionality of the centres and we did not come across any women models that participated more in the management and not only clean the centres. But Karamoja region being highly patriarchal and hierarchical society, inclusion of women in roles played by notable men like elders will take some time.

Section Three: Quality of Learning in Mobile ABEK

3.1 Introduction

Quality of learning is usually assessed from the point of view the perceived relevance of the learning to the learners and their significant others especially parents/guardians and communities. The relevance in turn determines the learners' enthusiasm about the learning process, levels of competences acquired and the parents'/guardians' levels of interest in their children's education..

3.2 Children's Assessment of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to their Lives

As one of the measurement of children's assessment of the relevance to mobile ABEK to their lives, children were asked about the importance of attending mobile ABEK to their lives. Acquiring literacy, i.e. the ability to read and write was most cited form of relevance, mentioned by 63.8%. This was followed by becoming knowledgeable especially of hygiene and sanitation and of the children's environment, which was said by 37.1%. Learning other languages especially English and Swahili was reported by 29.5% as enabling the children to interact with people from different ethnic groups and further facilitate formation of friendships. Acquisition of numeracy skills was mentioned by 27.7%. Other forms of mobile ABEK's relevance to the children's lives mentioned included learning the importance of spraying animals to kill ticks, learning to identify animal drugs and acquisition of knowledge of the right dosage to administer to animals, helping understand religion, creation of awareness of children's rights to education alongside their responsibilities e.g. to be obedient and enabling children to get life skills and/or jobs in the future.

3.2.1 Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Nomadic Pastoral Lifestyle in Karamoja

Children in the mobile ABEK considered the lessons they learnt as relevant to the nomadic lifestyle within their communities as indicated in Table 6. According to Table 6, 42.2% of the children said that they had obtained knowledge of animal health including the different types of disease that afflict animals, knowledge about parasites like ticks, they could differentiate sick animals from healthy ones and had obtained knowledge of how to treat the sick animals. One quarter of the children reported that they had gained ability to count and recognize animals according to their colours while 11.6% had gained

knowledge of preserving milk by boiling it, preserving meat and churning yoghurt. Further, 9.4% of the children had learnt that cattle are important sources of prestige, marriage and livelihood while 7.1% had become aware that animals are not supposed to be kept in same house with humans.

Table 6: Children’s Perceived Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Nomadic Pastoral Lifestyle in Karamoja

Perceived Relevance	%
Obtained knowledge of animal health	42.2
Gained ability to count and recognize animals according to their colours	25.0
Don’t know	23.2
Knowledge of preserving milk by boiling, preserving meat, churning yoghurt	11.6
Learnt that cattle are important sources of prestige, marriage and livelihood	9.4
Learnt that animals are not supposed to be kept in same house with humans	7.1
Learnt the value of cow dung as fertilizers	5.8
Learnt to brand my cows to differentiate them from others’	5.4
Learnt how to keep milk utensils clean	5.4
Learnt about need for clean environment for animals if cows are not to contract diseases.	3.1
Have learnt that I have a right to education though am a pastoral nomad.	3.1
Learnt the value of boiling blood, milk instead of taking it raw; avoids worms and diarrhea	2.2
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Other forms of relevance of mobile ABEK to the nomadic lifestyle within their communities included becoming aware of the value of cow dung as fertilizers, learning to brand cows to differentiate them from others', learning how to keep milk utensils clean, learning about need for clean environments for animals if cows are not to contract diseases, becoming aware of their right to education even though they are pastoral nomads and learning the value of boiling blood and milk instead of taking them in raw form so as to avoid worms and diarrhea. However, 23.2% of the children did not tell the relevance of attending mobile ABEK to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle in Karamoja.

3.2.2 Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Harsh Climatic Conditions in Karamoja

Table 7 below indicates children's perceived relevance of mobile ABEK to the harsh climatic conditions in Karamoja.

Table 7: Children's Perceived Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Harsh Climatic Conditions in Karamoja

Perceived Relevance	%
Don't Know	41.7
Learnt the value of always preserving grass for animals during the dry season e.g. through rotational grazing.	39.0
Learnt the value of trees	24.2
Learnt the value of preserving water	11.7
Learnt the value of storing food for drought preparedness	4.0
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Table 7 indicates that although 41.7% of the children did not know any form of relevance of mobile ABEK to the harsh climatic conditions in they lived in, 39.0% reported that they had learnt the value of always preserving grass for animals during the dry season e.g. through rotational grazing while 24.2% had learnt the value of trees; trees brings rain, act as wind breakers, hence the need to preserve instead of cutting them and for planting more. Further, 11.4% said that they had learnt the value of preserving water through

digging water catchments points like dams and canals while 4.0% said that they had learnt the value of storing food for drought preparedness.

3.2.3 Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Security/Conflict Conditions in Karamoja

Children’s perceived relevance of mobile ABEK to the security/conflict conditions in Karamoja is illustrated in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Children’s Perceived Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Security/Conflict Conditions in Karamoja

Forms of Relevance	%
Learnt about the negative consequences of rustling, encourages us to embracing peace	52.5
Helps us interact easily with soldiers on security matters	26.9
Learnt to bring animals early to the kraal to avoid rustlers; graze from nearer the kraal	12.6
We have become security conscious and have ideas about where to run to in case of raids e.g. to churches, schools, barracks; hide in bushes or in between rocks	9.9
Security situation can most improve if all active youth (karacuma) attend school become change agents	4.0
To always report to elders, parents, LCs, and soldiers in case of attack of raiders	3.6
Moving in groups to avoid being kidnapped	2.7
Avoid moving with boys very late; rape occurs during raids	1.3
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Mobile ABEK was relevant to the security/conflict conditions in Karamoja because majority children (52.5%) said that they learnt about the negative consequences of

rustling and the importance of embracing peace. 26.9% added that what they learnt in mobile ABEK helped them interact easily with soldiers on security matters. In addition, 12.6% said that they had learnt the importance of bringing animals early to the kraal (from grazing) to avoid rustlers and to graze from nearer to the kraal. 9.9% said that they had become security conscious and had acquired ideas about where to run to in case of raids e.g. to churches, schools, barracks or hide in bushes or in between rocks.

Other forms of relevance to the security/conflict conditions in Karamoja included becoming aware that the security situation can most improve if all active youth (karacuma) attend school and become change agents in communities; learning that they should always report to elders, parents, LCs, and soldiers in cases of attack of raids; moving in groups to avoid being kidnapped; girls' avoidance of moving with boys very late; and, becoming aware that rape also occurs during raids.

3.2.4 Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Traditional Social Lifestyles in Karamoja

Results of measurements of children's perceptions of the relevance of mobile ABEK to the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja are shown in Table 9. According to Table 9, majority children (50.2%) said that they are taught to respect traditional values and embrace their cultures. 16.9% added that they had learnt all people should be respected; not only the elders as tradition dictates. More interesting was that mobile ABEK had promoted perceptions of gender equality amongst pupils; 11.6% said that they had become aware that girls have as much right to education as boys and that women too can participate in village meetings. In addition, they said that girls have a right to mix with boys at ABEK centres and at home and that boys and girls should share domestic responsibilities. They further added that girls should not marry while still children and that women circumcision was a dangerous practice.

Other forms of relevance mentioned included; learning not to tattoo their bodies like was done in the past to avoid catching HIV/AIDS which is also transmitted through sharing sharp objects; becoming aware that wife inheritance can lead to acquiring HIV/AIDS; encouragement to always utilize hospitals instead of witchdoctors; rejecting some

traditional beliefs like engaging in human sacrifice for success in raids; teeth removal is not good; and that rape is a criminal and not a right.

Table 9: Children’s Perceived Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Traditional Social Lifestyles in Karamoja

Forms of Relevance	%
Taught to respect traditional values and embrace our cultures.	50.2
Don’t know	35.6
Learnt or respect all people, not elders only	16.9
Enhanced our understanding of gender equality	11.6
Learnt not to tattoo our bodies like in the past to avoid HIV/AIDS transmitted through sharing sharp objects, wife inheritance can lead to acquiring HIV/AIDS too.	3.1
Encourages us to always utilize hospitals instead of witchdoctors.	2.7
Helps reject some traditional beliefs like engaging inhuman sacrifice for success in raids; teeth removal is not good.	2.7
Rape is criminal and not a right	1.8
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

3.3 Children’s Own Enthusiasm About Mobile ABEK

Children’s enthusiasm about mobile ABEK was measured in terms of their attendance rates; majority (76.4%) said that they attended 5 days a week while 23.6% reported that they attended 3-4 days a week. These statistics could not be validated because the centres lacked learners’ daily attendance registers. The major reasons cited for not attending regularly include undertaking household work mentioned by 10.3%, anticipating facilitator absenteeism, reported by 9.4% accompanying mothers to markets and/or being

sent on errands by parents, mentioned by 4.9%. Irregular attendance on account of attending to gardens and herding were mentioned by 3.6% each.

3.4 Percentage of Children (Those At Last Level/Stage of Mobile ABEK) Demonstrating Reading, Writing, Cognitive and Any Other Life Skills

Literacy and numeracy skills were assessed by use of P.3 level literacy and numeracy tests. This data is yet to be analysed by SCiUG, although initial impressions show that learners' literacy and numeracy skills were wanting. They were not matching those expected of a child who has completed P.3 on which basis we conducted the literacy and numeracy tests.

3.5 Levels of Parental Interest in their Children's Education

Before discussing the levels of parental interest in their children's education, it is important to provide the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the parents, since these have bearing on parental involvement with their children's education. Table 10 illustrates the characteristics of the parents that participated in the evaluation.

Table 10: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Parents/Guardians

Characteristics	%
Sex	
Males	46.9
Females	53.1
Age	
20-30	18.4
31-40	33.3
41-50	20.4
51-60	17.0
61+	10.9
Marital Status	
Married	90.1
Single	2.6
Divorced	0.7
Widowed	6.6
Educational Level Attained	
None	93.6
Primary	4.5
Secondary	1.9
Ethnicity	
Matheniko	11.0
Bokora	14.8
Pian	29.7
Jie	13.5
Dodoth	14.8
Pokot	16.1
Total %	100
Total (n)	155

Table 11: Economic Characteristics of Parents/Guardians

Sources of Livelihood	%
Crop growing	76.0
Livestock keeping	48.1
Charcoal burning, firewood selling	40.9
Casual labourer	25.3
Hunting, selling thatching grass, gathering wild fruits	10.4
Relief aid	7.8
Brewing	1.9
Begging	1.3
Trading	0.6
Total (n)	155

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

3.5.1 Levels of Values Attached to Children’s Education by Parents

All the parents/guardians with children in mobile ABEK centres said that education was important for children. Asked about the nature of importance of education to children, all said that it enables them develop life skills such as a sense of responsibility towards young sisters and brothers, solving elders’ problems, helping parents etc. 40.5% said that education enables children develop marketable skills while 16.3% said that education promotes peace in the area because it reduces raids. 13.1% added that education mobile ABEK education helps children become knowledgeable in general terms and specifically in hygiene and sanitation and their environment. Further, 13.1% said that mobile ABEK education prepares children for transition to formal primary school while 9.2% contended that education shapes children’s character to behave responsibly. Only 2.6% placed value on numeracy gained from education. Nonetheless, it is clear that parents/guardians of children in mobile ABEK valued education.

Values parents/guardians attach to their children’s education are also reflected in their (parents’/guardians’) engagement with their children’s education. In this regard, we assessed parents’/guardians’ awareness of what goes on in mobile ABEK centres. Table

12 indicates parents'/guardians' levels of awareness of activities carried out in mobile ABEK centres.

Table 12: Parents'/Guardians' Levels of Awareness of Activities Carried out in Mobile ABEK Centres

Activities	%
Taught literacy (reading, writing)	100.0
Singing, story telling, drama, playing	79.9
Playing	57.8
Sweeping, cleaning	32.5
Taught numeracy	12.4
Taught art; drawing pictures and objects colours of skins of animals	9.1
Taught how to pray	5.2
Taught children's rights and responsibilities like respecting parents	4.5
Total (n)	100

Asked the importance of these activities, all parents/guardians said that children gain literacy skills (ability to read and write), 34.1% reported that children become knowledgeable of good hygiene and sanitation practices and good environmental practices. 12.4% said that children acquire numeracy skills (ability to count) while 14.4% said that mobile ABEK prepares their children for transition to formal primary school. 17.6% added that children learn songs, riddles, poems and tales about culture which is crucial in the child socialization process.

Asked about the nature of other activities that would be useful to children that the parents/guardians would like to be included in mobile ABEK centres, results are indicated in Table 13.

Table 13: Other Activities That Would Be Useful to Children that the Parents/Guardians Would Like To Be Included in Mobile ABEK Centres

Other Activities	%
Extra curricula activities; athletics, sports, dance, drama, playing, art, crafts, story telling, riddles	83.9
Cook porridge for children	16.8
Exchange visits to primary schools	15.4
Teach children hygiene, cleaning centers	9.1
Learning to speak English, Swahili	6.3
Provide children with uniforms	6.3
Praying	4.9
Teach children cooking, nutrition	4.2
Teach children discipline, culture	4.2
Teach children brick laying	4.2
Agricultural skills, branding animals	2.8
Don't Know	6.3
Total (n)	155

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

With regard to supporting children to attend school regularly, 90.7% of the parents/guardians reported that their children attended mobile ABEK all 5 school days of the week. This does not tally with what their children said probably because some children could be playing truant while their parents thought that they were actually attending mobile ABEK. 89.1% of the parents/guardians further said that they had plans for their children to join formal primary school upon completion of the mobile ABEK cycle. Only 2.7% said that their children will engage in trade of get jobs while 8.2% reported that upon completion of the mobile ABEK cycle, their children will continue herding cattle.

Asked what problems they encountered in their children's attending of mobile ABEK, 27.7% said none. 53.5% said that they heard lots of domestic overloads like looking after

cows and fetching water which the children would be helping out with if they had not been attending mobile ABEK. 44.4% faced the burden of providing scholastic materials especially books, school bags, pens and pencils. 12.3% reported loneliness in the absence of their children while attending mobile ABEK while 7.7% said that hunger arising from lack of food discouraged children from attending. Other problems mentioned included worry about insecurity when children are on their way to mobile ABEK, teacher absenteeism, child indiscipline/refuse to go to school and lack of built shelter at the centres.

Parents’/guardians’ proposals for addressing the aforementioned problems are indicated in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Parents’/Guardians’ Proposals for Addressing the Problems they Encountered When their Children Attend Mobile ABEK

Proposals	%
Government and NGOs should provide scholastic materials	44.4
N/A	27.2
Provide food to children	20.3
Adjust time for learning, reduce number of days for learning, children should get holiday breaks	17.6
Drill borehole near the village	12.4
Don’t know	8.5
Provide shelter	3.3
Whenever there is insecurity, children should stay at home	1.3
Motivate teachers, give them transport	1.3
Total (n)	155

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

3.6 Parents'/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to their Children's Lives

3.6.1 Parents'/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Nomadic Pastoral Lifestyle in Karamoja

Parents'/guardians perceptions of the relevance of mobile ABEK to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle in Karamoja are indicated in Table 15.

Table 15: Parents'/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Nomadic Pastoral Lifestyle in Karamoja

Perceptions	%
Children no longer participate in raids	58.4
Obtain knowledge of the different types of disease that afflict animals; parasites like ticks, differentiate sick animals from healthy ones, how to treat them	40.3
Learn that cattle are important sources of prestige, marriage and livelihood	18.8
Children learn to keep animals in secure places	14.3
Ability to count and recognize animals according to their colours	9.7
Children learn the good pastures for animals	7.8
Learn how to keep milk utensils clean	5.2
Total (n)	155

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

3.6.2 Parents'/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Harsh Climatic Conditions in Karamoja

Gaining knowledge of the importance of environmental protection was the most cited relevance of mobile ABEK to the harsh climatic conditions in Karamoja, cited by 72.9%. Forms of the importance of environmental protection mentioned included preserving trees instead of cutting them, planting trees, awareness that planting trees helps in rain

formation and that trees act as wind breakers. Other forms of relevance mentioned but by very few parents/guardians included teaching children to always preserve grass for animals during the dry season through rotational grazing, gaining knowledge of the importance of digging water catchments points like dams and canals and storing food for drought preparedness. 27.1% were not aware of any relevance of mobile ABEK to the harsh climatic conditions in Karamoja.

3.6.3 Parents'/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Security/Conflict Conditions in Karamoja

14.6% were not aware of any relevance of mobile ABEK to the security/conflict conditions in Karamoja. However, 88.2% reported that the programme taught children about the negative consequences of rustling thereby discouraging it and encouraging peaceful co-existence. 9.7% added the programme instilled into children the importance of bring animals early to the kraal to and/or grazing from nearer the kraal so as to avoid rustlers while 10.4% of the parents/guardians said that the programme cautions girls to avoid moving with boys when its very late, not to move alone at night and that rape occurs a lot during cattle raids.

3.6.4 Parents'/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Traditional Social Lifestyles in Karamoja

Results of the assessment of parents'/guardians perceptions of the relevance of mobile ABEK to the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja are illustrated in Table 16.

Table 16: Parents’/Guardians Perceptions of the Relevance of Mobile ABEK to the Traditional Social Lifestyles in Karamoja

Perceptions	%
Taught to respect traditional values, embrace our cultures.	62.0
Children have learnt to value peace	22.0
Respect all people, parents, not elders only	18.0
Children have learnt to reject some traditional beliefs like engaging inhuman sacrifice for success in raids; teeth removal is not good.	12.7
Children have learnt to dress up	12.0
Don’t know	9.3
Children marry at right age	3.3
Children value cattle	2.0
Total (n)	155

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

3.7 Percentage of SCiUG Supported Teachers That Were Applying Interactive Creative Teaching Methods

Observations indicated that facilitators applied interactive and participatory teaching. These included song, role playing, story telling including inviting children to tell stories, asking questions and picking children to answer them, teaching children to count using sticks, reciting the alphabet, asking children to come to the front and tell what they learnt the previous day, physically guiding children in writing by helping them to hold a pencil and actually write etc.

3.8 Percentage of SCiUG Supported Mobile ABEK Centers That Were Established in Safe, Child Friendly and Conducive Learning Environments

All the mobile ABEK centres visited scored poorly on indices of safe, child friendly and conducive learning environments. For example all were hosted under trees which definitely could not shelter children from rain and sunshine. Only 4 out of 11 had safe drinking water sources. However, 7 out of 11 had play grounds although the grounds were littered with trees and tree stumps. None had a latrine while only 2 had play materials. None had desks and chairs. However, 8 out of 11 had blackboards and 9 were clean.

3.9 Teacher to Pupil Ratios in Mobile ABEK Centers

All the mobile ABEK centers visited had one or two facilitators. Usually, there is one facilitator at a time who attends to between 60 and 150 learners. The ratio of pupils to teachers is therefore very high.

3.10 Children's Levels of Interest in Learning

In order to establish levels of children's interest in learning, we had to first ascertain the nature of what they learnt at mobile ABEK centres. Table 17 indicates what children said they learnt at mobile ABEK centres.

Table 17: Topics Children Learnt in Mobile ABEK Centres

Topics	%
Literacy	100.0
Numeracy	92.4
Singing, story telling, drama, playing	70.5
Hygiene and sanitation	29.0
Art; drawing pictures and objects colours of skins of animals	16.1
Children's rights and responsibilities like respecting parents	13.8
Science and environment, livestock	11.2
Religion	6.3
History, our culture	5.4
Peace and its importance	2.7
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Children had high interest in learning as indicated in Table 18. According to table 18, over one third (37.6%) reported that they liked all the topics/subjects they were taught. Over one half liked literacy while 43.2% liked numeracy. Religious studies were liked by 21.3%.

Table 18: Subjects Most Liked By Pupils in Mobile ABEK Centres

Subjects	%
Literacy	51.1
All lessons/ topics	37.6
Numeracy	34.2
Religion	21.3
Singing traditional songs	9.5
Art, drawing picture of cows	7.2
Hygiene and sanitation	6.3
Culture	1.8
Cattle management	1.4
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Asked why they liked those particular topics/subjects, table 19 shows that 69.3% said that the topics/subjects made them become knowledgeable and improved their problem solving skills. One third said that numeracy helps them to know the number of animals they have, in knowing the number of sick animals and that is useful in counting money. 18.1% were of the view that literacy helps them know how to write their name and those of their parents while 10.2% said they were learning the English language.

Table 19: Reasons Why Pupils Liked Particular Subjects

Reasons	%
Help us become knowledgeable and improve our problem solving skills	69.3
Numeracy helps to know the number of animals, count money, and know the number of sick animals	33.0
Literacy helps me know how to write my name, parents' names	18.1
Help me learn the English language	10.2
Inculcate importance of good hygiene and sanitation (latrine use and cleaning milk pots).	7.4
They help me transit to primary school	3.7
Cultural topics/story telling impart values and morals which children need to acquire	2.8
They enable me to understand religion	1.9
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Subjects/topics children did not like some are illustrated in Table 20. Interestingly, 79.9% had no subjects/topics they did not like, another indicator of their high interest in studies. Literacy especially writing and reading in Ngakarimojong, English, Swahili and numeracy (because counting was very difficult to understand) were the topics/subjects some children did not like.

Table 20: Subjects Pupils Did Not Like

Subjects	%
None	79.9
Literacy, writing and reading in Ngakarimojong	9.4
English, Swahili	5.7
Numeracy, counting, it is too difficult to understand	4.9
Total %	100
Total (n)	225

Section Four: Levels of Transition of Learners from Mobile ABEK into Formal Schools

4.1 Introduction

Transition was largely investigated through interviews with teachers in formal primary schools nearest to the mobile ABEK centers. However, we had to first ascertain formal primary school teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of mobile ABEK.

4.2 Formal Primary School Teachers' Perceptions of the Efficacy of Mobile ABEK

Teachers in formal primary school regarded mobile ABEK useful in preparing children for transition to formal primary school. They further said that mobile ABEK enabled children acquire literacy and numeracy skills, imparted onto them knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, sharpened their creativity and fostered a sense of unity amongst themselves. Clearly, teachers in formal primary schools held mobile ABEK in high regard in as far as its efficacy was concerned.

Teachers in formal primary school reported several processes through which transition from mobile ABEK to their schools was carried out. In some schools, oral and/or written interviews were carried out to establish performance competences of the transiting children. In other schools, teachers relied on mobile ABEK instructors' recommendations while in other formal primary schools, age was the determining factor in admitting transiting children; the older the child, the better the chances of being admitted! Transiting children were admitted in any class right from primary 1.

4.3 Levels of Activeness in Formal Primary School of Children Who Have Transited from ABEK Mobile Compared to Those not from ABEK Mobile

Children from mobile ABEK were considered by teachers in formal primary schools to be more active than those with non mobile ABEK background. Several reasons were cited amongst which were they have prior experience with the classroom environment and have some literacy and numeracy competences that they join with. They thus participate in asking and answering questions with much more ease compared to those joining primary school straight from home. For these reasons, children with mobile ABEK backgrounds were reported to perform better than those from non mobile ABEK. This though may be applicable only to ABEK graduates that join in P1. If children join in

P.3 or P.4, their peers also have some literacy and numeracy competences. Unfortunately, we did not collect data indicating how many children from ABEK were joining which grade level in the formal school.

It was however noted that children from mobile ABEK do not attend classes during the harvest seasons until the end of the seasons. Yet children from non mobile ABEK do attend regularly. It was also mentioned that children from mobile ABEK are not punctual because they have to first milk cows and take them to graze unlike their counterparts from non mobile ABEK who are free of these chores because their families have no cattle anyway. This illustrates the importance of a flexible learning hours and questions the justification for considering formal school placement (which is not flexible) as a measure for success for mobile ABEK. Long distances from the kraals also made children from mobile ABEK arrive late. Again, this is another illustration of why flexible and nearby non formal education may be better than placement in formal primary schools if its quality and relevance are improved.

With regard to dropping out rates, children from mobile ABEK were said to drop out much more than their non mobile ABEK counterparts because of going back to the kraals where peers who are out of school tease them about being too old to be in school. Implicitly, having over-age pupils in class requires teachers to teach differently, which they may not do in formal primary schools. Similarly, pastoralist children may find inflexibility in formal schools irrelevant to their herding roles and responsibilities.

However, some teachers were of the view that there were no significant differences in drop out rates between mobile ABEK and non mobile ABEK backgrounds; that it all depended on parental encouragement of the child and community attitudes towards education. The more negative the attitudes were, the more the drop out rates regardless of child's educational foundation backgrounds. It was however mentioned that parents of children from mobile ABEK were more interested in their children's education and even bought for them scholastic materials more than the parents of children from non mobile

ABEK back grounds did. Parents of children from mobile ABEK backgrounds were also said to monitor their children's performance much more and had higher hopes in their children's education. Some were said to put their children in boarding sections of formal primary school so that the children do concentrate on their studies, which is an interesting development for future studies.

4.4 Number of Children from Mobile ABEK Joining Formal Primary School Over the Last Two Years of the Project's Implementation

Teachers and head teachers in formal primary school were not certain of the exact numbers of pupils from mobile ABEK who have joined their respective schools. However, in Sokale primary school, Lolachat Sub County, Nakapiripirit District, it was reported that 9 children from mobile ABEK had joined. 50 children had joined Nadunget primary school, Nadunget Sub County, Moroto district. 72 children had joined Nawanatau primary school in Nadunget Sub County, Moroto district while 123 had joined Karita primary school, in Karita Sub County, Amudat district. 109 children had joined Nakicelet primary school in Lokopo Sun County, Napak district. Only 20 were said to have joined Kalapata primary school, Kalapata Sub County, Kabong district. In Rengen primary school, Rengen Sub County, Kotido district, the teacher who had the records was not present at the time the evaluation was conducted.

4.5 Ratios of Children Who Have Been to Mobile ABEK Who Have Joined Formal School Compared to Those Not from Mobile ABEK

Ratios of children who have been to mobile ABEK who have joined formal school compared to those not from mobile ABEK could not be readily established because of the poor information management systems in formal primary schools in Karamoja. One head teacher in Napak noted that:

“We are not very certain of the numbers of children who are joining from mobile ABEK centers but we get many from the sedimentary ABEK and only a few from mobile ABEK. This is because the mobile ABEK centers are far from our school and the children are very mobile. The kraals move to distant places which makes it difficult for children to join our school. The inspector of schools has encouraged us to just take in the children regardless of their standards. It is only of recent that the inspector is planning to carry out an enrolment campaign in all the mobile ABEK centers in Napak. For the children who will be on transition next year, we shall have a more organized system in place, but for now we do not have the actual figures”.

It was however noted in all the formal primary schools that participated in the evaluation that children joining formal primary schools from Mobile ABEK were much fewer than those from non mobile ABEK.

Several reasons were forwarded by teachers in formal primary schools as to why fewer children joined from mobile ABEK compared to non formal ABEK centres. First was that some children from mobile ABEK tend to think that they have had enough of studies and do not see the need for formal primary school attendance for most are too old (over 16 years of age) for lower primary classes. Implicitly, transition is more positively correlated with younger age especially if the children are transiting to P.1.

Secondly, it was said that parents of children in mobile ABEK encourage their children to tend to animals more than those from non mobile ABEK settings. Alternately, children from non mobile ABEK often do not have family kraals hence join formal primary schools to avoid being idle at home. The long distances between mobile ABEK centers and formal primary schools were also said to discourage many children from joining the later. And finally, it was reported that being far away in the kraals, children from mobile ABEK miss the “back to school” campaigns in the villages that would have encouraged them to join formal primary school.

4.6 Challenges Children With Mobile ABEK Backgrounds Face in Formal Primary Schools

Teachers in formal primary schools enumerated a number of challenges children from mobile ABEK do face in primary school. These included:

- long distances from kraals to primary schools;
- the challenge of longer time spent at formal primary school (8 hours per day) compared to only two they were used to in mobile ABEK;
- higher work load of subjects taught in formal primary school compared to the few they were taught in mobile ABEK;
- challenges in comprehending science and SST subjects because they were used to numeracy and literacy in mobile ABEK;
- poor listening skills for English because they were taught in Ngakarimojong in mobile ABEK;
- absenteeism when they go back to the kraals; lack of uniforms which fosters inferiority complex when their colleagues have uniforms;
- peer pressure from friends in the kraals who tease them that they are too big for school; and,
- the harsh climatic conditions in Karamoja.

The challenges mentioned by teachers that children from mobile ABEK do face in formal primary school put to question the relevance of formal primary school to pastoralist children in Karamoja. First, the higher load of subjects taught in formal primary school is not conducive to pastoralist children who have other herding responsibilities. Mobile ABEK was developed to respond to the needs of children rather than children having to adapt to the system. Secondly, the subjects themselves may be irrelevant to the pastoral lives of the children.

Section Five: Examination of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Mobile ABEK Implementation Strategies and Strategies to Address the Gaps

5.1 Strengths of the Mobile ABEK Implementation Strategies

This section derives from data obtained from parents/guardians, facilitators, district education officials and community leaders. The major strengths of the mobile ABEK implementation strategies lay in its relevance to the unique conditions in Karamoja, the context based curriculum and flexible learning hours.

5.1.1 Relevance to the Unique Conditions in Karamoja

The key strengths of the mobile ABEK lie in its relevance to the unique conditions in Karamoja. The conditions include the nomadic pastoral lifestyle, harsh climate, incessant insecurity/conflicts and the traditional social lifestyles themselves. The curriculum of mobile ABEK is so context based that both the pupils and parents/guardians do recognise its relevance to their lives. So relevant is the ABEK programme to the conditions in Karamoja that some teachers in formal primary school said that some learners from mobile ABEK do not enroll in formal primary schools because they think they have learned enough.

5.1.2 Flexible Learning Hours

Flexibility of learning hours is another key strength of the mobile ABEK programme. The flexibility enabled the learners to combine studies with their herding roles and responsibilities. Majority children interviewed (78.2%) said that they reported to the centres at 7:00 am. 10.2% said that they reported at 6:00 am, which is the time lessons are supposed to begin. 8.9% said that they reported at 8:00 am while only 2.7% reported at 9:00 am. 97.8% of the children said that they were comfortable with the time they reported to school. Majority children (72.0%) said that they left the centres between 8:00 am and 9:00 am while 28.0% reported that they left between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm. 97.3% of the children were comfortable with the time they left school. Implicitly, the reporting and leaving times of mobile ABEK centres were compatible with the children's herding and domestic responsibilities. For 92.0% of the children mentioned that even

with attending mobile ABEK, they had sufficient time to undertake other activities within and beyond their homes. The activities children engaged in are shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Activities Children Engaged in While Not at Mobile ABEK Centres

Activities	%
Herding	100.0
Household work	100.0
Leisure	21.3
Crop agriculture	18.7
Nurturing	10.2
Taking charcoal for sale running errands, sent to the market to buy food	3.6
Studying (reading, writing and counting	4.9
Nothing	0.9
Attend peace talks	0.4
Total (n)	225

NB: Total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

Table 21 above shows household activities that involve cooking, fetching water and firewood, sweeping compound and washing clothes were the most reported activities undertaken by children followed by herding and milking cattle, looking after goats and sheep and treating animals. Leisure in form of playing, singing and drama, crop agriculture (digging, collecting vegetables, harvesting sunflower and cucumber) and nurturing (baby sitting brothers and sisters and bathing them) were the other activities children did engage in while not at ABEK centres.

5.1.3 Medium of Instruction in Mobile ABEK Centres

Ngakarimojong was the major medium of instruction in mobile ABEK centres, reported by 88.9%, followed by English that was reported by 28%. Pokot and Swahili were reported by 9.8% and 8.9% of the pupils, respectively. By learning in own local languages, the pupils did not feel that they were being alienated from their cherished cultures.

5.1.4 District Education Officials' Involvement in Mobile ABEK

Strength of the mobile ABEK programme was the active involvement of district education officials including Centre Coordinating Tutors (CCTs) in the implementation of the programme. District education officials reported that they played several roles in the implementation of mobile ABEK. These included:

- Designing the teaching methods used in the centres and ensuring quality of education provided in mobile ABEK through monitoring the teaching and learning processes;
- Building capacities of management committees through sensitizing them about their roles;
- Providing facilitators to mobile ABEK, paying facilitators not yet registered on the government pay role; and
- Enhancing community participation in mobile ABEK through conducting peer group meetings;

District education officials perceived the teaching methods used in mobile ABEK effective because the medium of communication and materials used were all in local languages which made it easier for children to comprehend. In addition, the curriculum was tailored to the socio-economic, environmental and security contexts/conditions in Karamoja which made it relevant to the learners. For example, the officials noted that learners could count and identify their animals, had gained a better understanding of their environment especially the need for conserving the scarce water resources and planting trees, had changed perceptions of the value of cattle rustling and were embracing peaceful co-existence. District education officials added that children had adopted good water and sanitation practices like building and using latrines and had come to appreciate the relevance of education in improving their lives. Before mobile ABEK, children thought that education was meant to challenge and ultimately uproot their cherished culture.

Further, that the mobile ABEK non formal approach was very flexible and eclectic and imparted onto children numeracy, literacy and life skills. Furthermore, that the approach was anchored onto the children's day to day experiences which had practical applicability

to their lives at home and within kraals. Flexibility of the learning schedules was reported by the officials to have enabled children to have received an education without compromising their domestic and herding responsibilities. This was reported to have helped avoid a potential clash between parents/communities and the mobile ABEK programme. District education officials added that at the end of three years' attendance of mobile ABEK, children are ready to transit to formal primary school with some literacy and numeracy competences. However, the officials noted that that the time allocated (two hours per week day) were too few to adequately cover the many topics that ought to be covered.

5.1.5 Community Leaders' Involvement in Mobile ABEK

Community leaders got involved because of their high social status within their communities. They were identified by communities because of the respect they commanded. Community leaders played several roles in the implementation of mobile ABEK including mobilizing communities and children, membership of CMSs, VAC and SACs, monitoring children's and facilitators' attendance and coordinating with security officials to ensure centres are secure.

Like pupils and parents/guardians, community leaders were cognizant of the relevance of mobile ABEK to their respective communities. The most mentioned form of relevance was discouraging children from participating in cattle rustling and promotion of peaceful living. Addressing literacy, numeracy and sanitation and hygiene needs were also mentioned. Community leaders further noted that some children had transited to formal primary school although some noted that fewer children did indeed transit. Community leaders further acknowledged the relevance of mobile ABEK to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle, harsh climatic conditions and the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja mentioned earlier by parents and pupils.

5.1.6 Criteria for Selection of Mobile ABEK Instructors and Facilitators

Facilitators mentioned several ways through which they were selected. Instructors were selected from villages surrounding the sedentary ABEK centres, some on recommendations of parents and community leaders. The advantage of community based

selections was that parents and pupils knew the facilitators personally which helped build trust in them. Minimum requirements were a pass in English and Mathematics at Primary Leaving examinations and knowledge of the local language in the area where the facilitators were going to teach. Some were interviewed but others were not.

5.1.7 Training of Instructors/Facilitators

Selected facilitators underwent training at Moroto Core Teacher Training College. Refresher courses were arranged to for the facilitators where they were taught how to teach in local languages, interactive and participatory teaching, child participation and interacting with children and how to study the teaching manuals. Centre Coordinating Tutors also mentored facilitators especially in interactive and participatory teaching methods and how to make lesson plans.

5.1.8 Modes and Focus of Instruction in Mobile ABEK Centres

Talk and chalk was the dominant mode of teaching in mobile ABEK centres, mentioned by 60.2% of the pupils. Interactive and participatory teaching methods were reported by 39.8%. Observations indeed indicated that facilitators applied interactive and participatory teaching. These included song, role playing, story telling including inviting children to tell stories, asking questions and picking children to answer them, urging children to count sticks, reciting the alphabet, asking children to come to the front and tell what they learnt the previous day, physically guiding children in writing by helping them to hold a pencil and actually write etc.

5.2 Weaknesses of the Mobile ABEK Implementation Strategies

5.2.1 Paucity of Instructional Materials

Paucity of instructional materials was a major weakness of the mobile ABEK programme. Only 13.3% of the children interviewed said that they had enough scholastic materials. The types of instructional materials children had are shown in Table 22.

Table 22: Types of Scholastic Materials Pupils Had

Materials	%
Blackboards, Chalk, dusters	92.3
Pens, pencils, rubbers	64.1
Slates	53.6
Exercise books	50.9
Text books	5.0
Counting Sticks	2.3
Total (n)	255

NB: total % is more than 100 due to multiple responses

All instructors interviewed said that they did not have enough instructional materials. However, they mentioned that they had some books, stones used in counting, slates, blackboards, chalk, teacher's guide book, lesson plan book and charcoal used in lieu of chalk.

5.2.2 Paucity of Recreational Kits

Only 6.3% of the children said that their centres had enough sports and play materials. Actually, 71.1% said that their centres had no sports and play materials at all while 28.0% said that they had leather balls. Skipping ropes were mentioned by only 0.9%.

5.2.3 Paucity of Instructors/Facilitators

The mobile ABEK programme does not have sufficient numbers of instructors. Each centre had one or two instructors who attended to between 60 and 170 pupils of all the three grades simultaneously! Discussions with SCiUG staff revealed that the insufficiency of instructors emanated from the unique conditions in Karamoja. First, it is difficult to find people willing to follow pupils whenever they migrate with their kraals. Second, Government set the minimum standards for qualifying to be ABEK instructors at Ordinary Level certificate of education; this standard very high for Karamoja considering the low levels of educational attainment in the region. In this evaluation for example, 92.3% of the parents/guardians interviewed never attended school at all! SCiUG therefore had to negotiate with government to reduce the minimum standards to Primary seven.

That is why of the 11 instructors interviewed, only 1 had Grade III teacher training qualifications and only 1 had O'Level qualifications. Three had completed P.7, another 3 had completed S.2, 2 had completed S.3, and 1 had completed S.1.

5.2.4 Venues for Conducting Lessons

Lessons were held in open spaces (under trees) in locations near the kraals. ABEK centres do not offer protection from the rain, cold and or/sunshine. Whenever it rained, children and facilitators ran for shelter, thereby ending the lessons.

Section Six: Analysis of the Contextual Factors That Are Relevant For ABEK Project Implementation and their Impact So Far and Also Their Potential to Further Impact on the Project

6.1 Relevance to the Unique Conditions in Karamoja

Mobile ABEK is a context specific programme that was designed to respond to the educational needs of pastoral boys whose itinerant herding responsibilities could not allow them attend conventional primary schools that run from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Thus, the most significant contextual factor was responsiveness to the unique conditions in Karamoja. As earlier noted, these include nomadic pastoral lifestyle, the security/conflict conditions, the harsh climatic conditions and the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja. All the stakeholders particularly children attending mobile ABEK and the parents/guardians concurred that indeed the programme was relevant to their lives. It is this relevance that even surprised facilitators and community leaders who had expected resistance from communities for formal education had an opportunity cost to herding which is the main source of livelihood in the region. The acceptance and support mobile ABEK received from communities therefore is an indicator of its relevance in the region.

6.2 Appropriateness and Relevance of the Project Objectives to the Learning Needs of Children

The major objective of mobile ABEK is to provide basic education to children from pastoral communities whose way of life limits their attendance of formal primary schools. It provides an alternative and more flexible education with flexible learning hours and a context based curriculum, with a strong focus on relevance. The flexible learning hours, mobility of the learning venues, relevance to the lives of the children and ability to enable children combine learning without compromising their responsibilities towards sustaining their community and household livelihoods makes the mobile ABEK programme appropriate to the learning needs of children in Karamoja. Mobile ABEK further focuses on challenges of insecurity especially cattle rustling by imparting onto learners its negative consequences and the value of peaceful existence. The importance of environmental protection is also closely linked to their livelihoods while children are further taught their cultural values but also cautioned against engaging in harmful

traditional practices like rape, knocking out teeth, tattooing their bodies, respecting only elders and early marriages for girls. This is in addition to basic literacy and numeracy. Mobile ABEK project objectives are therefore appropriate and relevant to the learning needs of children in Karamoja region.

6.3 Effectiveness of the Project

The mobile ABEK project's effectiveness lies in its meeting the context specific learning needs of itinerant herding children in the region. That it has influenced children's thinking about their rights to education though they are herders, changed their perceptions of cattle rustling, made them conscious of their environment and their cultures including the negative aspects of their cultures is indicative of effectiveness. However, transition to formal primary school was not as expected while numeracy and literacy levels were still below those expected of their equivalents in formal primary school.

6.4 Nature of Internal Capacities Built or Strengthened Within Communities

Community embracing and support for mobile ABEK is the single most significant internal capacity that has been built within communities. For resistance had been expected. Support from the revered institution of elders is also a built capacity for long term continuation of the project. Selecting facilitators from within communities is another internal capacity that has been built.

6.5 Nature of Internal Resources Employed in the Project Activities Especially With Regard to Finances, Instructional Materials, Transport, Management, Instructors/Facilitators

District resources employed in the mobile ABEK project activities so far mainly revolve around facilitators. It was mentioned by district education officials that the qualifications of facilitators had been streamlined and that they were receiving four years in service training. In some districts, facilitators had been incorporated onto government pay rolls. In addition, the districts were training facilitators and management committees with the aim of improving the management of the centres. Learning materials were also being printed by the districts.

Some parents/guardians were providing scholastic materials to their children while others were in charge of maintaining the cleanliness of the centres. Communities allowed their children to enroll in the mobile ABEK programme, which is no mean feat given Karamoja region's history of "breaking of the pen" which alienated education. Communities further volunteered CMC members, provided labour and logs for sitting on in the centres and selected facilitators. The Moroto District Local Government had provided some financial resources (400,000/= although 4,000,000/= had been allocated) and while all the six District Local Governments said that they monitored the programme. The central government was yet to provide any resources to the programme.

6.6 Extent to Which the Mobile ABEK Project Activities had been Mainstreamed into Existing Community/District Educational Structures

Contributions of Moroto District Local Government to the mobile ABEK programme have been formally integrated in district plans and memoranda of understanding have been signed between the districts and mobile ABEK managers. Facilitators are also being trained in teacher training colleges while formal primary schools enroll children transiting from mobile ABEK. Interviews with the officials in the inspectorate of schools in Nakapiripirit revealed that some instructional manuals used in mobile ABEK have been adopted in formal primary schools too although the exact type of manuals was not elicited.

6.7 Contributions of Other Partners to the Success of the Mobile ABEK

The existing success of mobile ABEK has been attributed to the contributions of partners especially SCiUG which has contributed finances, scholastic materials and logistical support. Sensitisation by mobilisers was also reported to have contributed to parents' sending their children to the centres.

6.8 Positive or Negative Unexpected Effects the Mobile ABEK Project Could Have Encountered Onto Which Actions Should Be Taken in Future Projects

The major unexpected positive effect that the mobile ABEK project encountered was the support from communities and elders. Both the facilitators and district education officials had expected some resistance given Karamoja region's historical resistance to educational initiatives dating way back to the colonial period when a pen was

symbolically broken by the elders to signify resistance. In Kalapata mobile ABEK centre, Kalapata Sub County, Kaabong district, the facilitator said that elders too had enrolled to learn to read and write. This is a major boost to mobile ABEK because this is an endorsement of the learning programme.

In addition, as put by a facilitator in Namorulem mobile ABEK centre, Lolachart Sub County, Nakapiripirit district, another unexpected positive effect that the mobile ABEK project encountered was the possibility that actually shepherds could learn without abandoning herding! For previous formal educational initiatives had “turned children away from herding” since they had to concentrate on studies that run from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday, except during school holidays. By learning without compromising children’s herding responsibilities, the mobile ABEK programme had endeared itself to communities. It is for this reason that other facilitators were pleasantly surprised that some parents were buying scholastic materials for their children! This had also been unexpected; rather, it was resistance that had been expected!

However, there were some unexpected negative effects that the mobile ABEK project did encounter. Irregular/delayed payment of facilitators’ salaries, their lack of transport especially that they have to follow kraals and their lack of accommodation were the major negative effects the mobile ABEK programme did face. Given the unique but equally difficult conditions within which the programme is implemented, it is imperative that facilitators’ salaries are regularly paid, they are availed bicycles to ease the process of following kraals and subsequently pupils and tents which they can easily put up while at kraals/mobile ABEK centres and which they can carry along with them as they move to the next kraals following learners.

Insecurity was another challenge that negatively affected the implementation of mobile ABEK. During times of insecurity, children and facilitators expectedly do not attend. None provision of food at the centres also affected its implementation, considering that food was one of the major attractions to learning centres, including formal schools in

Karamoja region. Other challenges included lack of shelters, latrines and safe sources of drinking water.

6.9 Nature of Support Required for Enhancing Sustainability of the Mobile ABEK Project in the Immediate Term

For sustainability, the mobile ABEK programme still requires support with training and remuneration of facilitators and provision of scholastic and play materials. The programme can only sustain itself with respect to mobilisers who stay within communities and management structures which have blessings of elders, a revered structure in Karamoja region.

6.10 Nature of Support Required for Enhancing Sustainability of the Mobile ABEK Project in the Long Term

In the long term, the mobile ABEK programme can be sustainable if facilitators are included in the pay rolls of local district administrations. With increased responsibility for training facilitators vested with district education departments and conducted in public teacher training colleges, the mobile ABEK programme could become sustainable. Increased ownership of the programme through strengthened management committees and committed community mobilisers would further enhance the sustainability of the programme in the long term.

6.11 Strengths and Weaknesses That Could Be Built Upon and/or Improved in Future Mobile ABEK Projects

Relevance of the mobile ABEK programme to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle, harsh climatic conditions security/conflict and the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja is the major strength that has to be maintained in future projects. Support of elders and communities especially community mobilisers is strength. Teaching in local languages and flexible learning hours have to be maintained in the future too. Support of the district education officials in mobilisation of communities and support supervision to facilitators is another key strength of the programme.

The weaknesses that need to be addressed include separating children according to grade and/or age. There is also need to increase the number of facilitators per centre to at least

three such that each handles a different grade and to design more systematic curricula that is responsive to the different grades of the learners. Criteria for assessment and promotion from one grade to other needs to be developed and be known by all stakeholders including children, their parents/guardians and facilitators.

The learning facilities and environments require urgent attention. Absence of built structures exposes learners to the vagaries of weather. Tents which could be dismantled in preparation for shifting to other grazing areas are highly recommended. So are mats for very young children and stools for the older children. Increased instructional and play materials are also recommended as is regular payment of facilitators' salaries and providing them with shelter (tents) and bicycles. Provision of porridge and construction of latrines and safe sources of drinking water are further recommended.

Section Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

The mobile ABEK program in Karamoja was relevant not only to children and their parents/guardians but also communities and local governments. To children and their parents/guardians, the program addressed the need for children to attain basic education while not compromising the children's roles and responsibilities in herding which is a major source of livelihood. The flexibility of the program enabled children to attain basic education while simultaneously attending to the herds. Children therefore acquired the right attitude towards learning which prepared some for transition to formal primary school. Children further acquired some literacy and numeracy competencies, gained knowledge of hygiene and sanitation and learnt languages English and Swahili. In addition, the context specific curriculum was relevant not only to children and their parents/guardians but also communities and local governments. The curriculum was relevant to the nomadic lifestyle in Karamoja for the children said that had obtained knowledge of animal health including the different types of disease that afflict animals, knowledge about parasites like ticks, they could differentiate sick animals from healthy ones and had obtained knowledge of how to treat the sick animals. They had also acquired knowledge of use of cow dung as fertilizers and of preservation of milk and cattle blood.

With regard to the harsh climatic conditions in Karamoja, children had learnt the value of environmental protection, water and pasture preservation. Mobile ABEK was also relevant to the security/conflict conditions in Karamoja because majority children said that they learnt about the negative consequences of rustling and the importance of embracing peace. In terms of relevance to the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja, children came to appreciate the good and not so good in their cultures; majority children said that they had learnt to respect traditional values and embrace their cultures, to respect all people and not only the elders as tradition dictates. More interesting was that mobile ABEK had promoted perceptions of gender equality amongst pupils; children had become aware that girls have as much right to education as boys and that women too can participate in village meetings. In addition, they said that girls have a right to mix with

boys at ABEK centres and at home and that boys and girls should share domestic responsibilities. They further added that girls should not marry while still children and that women circumcision was a dangerous practice. Parents/guardians, community leaders and district education officials all concurred that the mobile ABEK programme was relevant to the four unique conditions in Karamoja.

The mobile ABEK programme's effectiveness lies in its meeting the context specific learning needs of itinerant herding children in the region. That it has influenced children's thinking about their rights to education though they are herders, changed their perceptions of cattle rustling, made them conscious of their environment and their cultures including the negative aspects of their cultures is indicative of effectiveness. However, transition to formal primary school was not as expected while numeracy and literacy levels were still below those expected of their equivalents in formal primary school.

Levels of access to mobile ABEK by learners, conventionally measured through rates of enrollment, attendance, progression through the ABEK cycle, completion of the ABEK cycle and dropping out could not be validated due to absence of pupil registers and statistics on progression, completion and dropping out in the mobile ABEK centres. However, self reporting by pupils indicated that majority reported regularly while parents/guardians confirmed the children's self reporting. All the mobile ABEK centers had functional management structures.

Recognition of the relevance of mobile ABEK to the unique conditions in Karamoja by all the stakeholders in the programme attests to its quality. However, the literacy and numeracy skills children exhibited were wanting because they could not match those expected of a child who has completed P.3 on which basis the literacy and numeracy tests were conducted.

The learning environments in mobile ABEK were not safe, child friendly and conducive; all were hosted under trees which definitely could not shelter children from rain and

sunshine. Only 4 out of 11 had safe drinking water sources. None had a latrine while only 2 had play materials. All had insufficient learning materials. None had desks and chairs. However, 7 out of 11 had play grounds although the grounds were littered with trees and tree stumps. Nonetheless, 8 out of the 11 visited had blackboards and 9 were clean. The ratio of pupils to teachers was also very high with one to two facilitators teaching between 60 and 178 children. Children of all the three grades were also herded together and taught similar topics at the same time! There were no established mechanisms of progression through the ABEK cycle too. The facilitators decided on who should be in Grades II and III depending on the length of stay of the children.

Levels of transition of learners from mobile ABEK into formal schools could also not be readily ascertained because formal primary schools did not keep the statistics of children transiting from mobile ABEK while the latter were also not keeping track of children who transited.

However, teachers in formal primary schools regarded children from mobile ABEK as more active than those with non mobile ABEK because they had prior experience with the classroom environment and had some literacy and numeracy competences that they joined with. They thus participate in asking and answering questions with much more ease compared to those joining primary school straight from home. For these reasons, children with mobile ABEK backgrounds were reported to perform better than those from non mobile ABEK. This though was mostly applicable only to ABEK graduates that joined in P1. If children joined in P.3 or P.4, their peers too must have had some literacy and numeracy competences.

Children who transited from mobile ABEK were further noted not to attend classes during the harvest seasons. Yet children from non mobile ABEK did attend regularly. Children from mobile ABEK were also not punctual because they had to first milk cows and take them to graze unlike their counterparts from non mobile ABEK who are free of these chores because their families have no cattle anyway. This illustrates the importance of a flexible learning hours and questions the justification for considering formal school

placement (which is not flexible) as a measure for success for mobile ABEK. Long distances from the kraals also made children from mobile ABEK arrive late. Again, this is another illustration of why flexible and nearby non formal education may be better than placement in formal primary schools if its quality and relevance are improved.

The key strengths of the mobile ABEK lay in its relevance to the nomadic pastoral lifestyle, harsh climate, incessant insecurity/conflicts and the traditional social lifestyles in Karamoja. The curriculum of mobile ABEK is so context based that pupils and parents/guardians, community leaders and district education officials did recognise its relevance to their lives. Other areas of strength included the flexible learning which enabled the learners to combine studies with their herding roles and responsibilities, teaching in local languages, interactive and participatory teaching methods and community leaders' involvement in the implementation and management of the programme. Key weaknesses of the programme included paucity of instructional and play materials, instructors/facilitators and open spaces (under trees) in which lessons were conducted that did not offer protection from the rain, cold and or/sunshine. Another weakness was absence of systematic criteria for determining progression and herding children of all grades together to study similar topics.

The most significant contextual factor that was relevant for ABEK project implementation was responsiveness to the unique conditions in Karamoja. The flexible learning hours, mobility of the learning venues, relevance to the lives of the children and ability to enable children combine learning without compromising their responsibilities towards sustaining their community and household livelihoods makes the mobile ABEK programme appropriate to the learning needs of children in Karamoja.

Community embracing and support for mobile ABEK was the single most significant internal capacity that had been built within communities. For resistance had been expected. Support from the revered institution of elders is also a built capacity for long term continuation of the project. Selecting facilitators from within communities is another internal capacity that has been built. District resources employed in the mobile ABEK

project activities so far mainly revolve around facilitators; qualifications of facilitators had been streamlined and they were receiving four years in service training. In some districts, facilitators had been incorporated onto government pay rolls. In addition, the districts were training facilitators and management committees with the aim of improving the management of the centres.

However, the existing success of mobile ABEK has been attributed to the contributions of partners especially SCiUG which has contributed finances, scholastic materials and logistical support. Thus, medium and long term sustainability of the mobile ABEK programme will be dependent on continued support with training and remuneration of facilitators and provision of scholastic and play materials. The programme can only sustain itself with respect to mobilisers who stay within communities and management structures which have blessings of elders, a revered structure in Karamoja region. It is in this context that the following recommendations are made:

7.2 Recommendations

1. Children attending mobile ABEK need to be separated according to grade and/or age and be taught age specific topics.
2. The number of facilitators per centre should be increased to a minimum of three such that each handles a different grade.
3. More systematic curricula that are responsive to the different grades of the learners should be designed.
4. Criteria for assessment and promotion from one grade to other needs to be developed and be known by all stakeholders including children, their parents/guardians and facilitators.

5. The learning facilities and environments require urgent attention; tents which could be dismantled in preparation for shifting to other grazing areas are highly recommended. So are mats for very young children and stools for the older children.
6. There is need for increased instructional and play materials.
7. Facilitators' salaries should be regularly paid in addition to providing them with shelter (tents) and bicycles to ease their transportation.
8. Safe sources of drinking water and latrines need to be made available to promote good hygiene and sanitation practices.