

Education in Gonder Zuria

Research Project

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Introduction

This research project was carried out between January 2008 and May 2008, focusing on 60 schools in the Gonder Zuria area.

Aims: To assess broadly the state of education in Gonder Zuria and to find new partner schools for linking and for resourcing projects. To identify and investigate problematic areas of education and develop solutions for the following:

- Enrolment, particularly of females
- Drop-out rates
- Attendance
- Teacher training
- Pupil attitudes and awareness
- Parental attitudes and awareness
- Health and hygiene
- Teachers' attitudes towards teaching in rural areas
- Use of modern pedagogical methods
- Access to and use of teaching aids and other resources
- English language as a medium of instruction

Methods: Quantitative and qualitative research was undertaken including questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires relating to the resources and infrastructure of schools were distributed to all schools in Gonder Zuria, the results of which can be found in appendix 2.

In addition, interviews with parents, teachers and male and female students were carried out in four schools, two urban and two rural. The results of these interviews are found in appendix 1.

Education in Gonder Zuria

This section of the report will give a general introduction to the state of education in Gonder Zuria and will discuss several problematic areas, including suggested solutions and recommendations for further research.

Gonder Zuria

Gonder Zuria is a large woreda south west of Gonder. The principle settlements are Maksegnit and Enfranz, with Maksegnit being the administrative centre. Gonder Zuria is overwhelmingly rural with most settlements having no access to electricity and very limited access to a road network. The only asphalted road is the main road which runs through the woreda linking Gonder to Bahir Dar.

Based on figures published by the Central Statistical Agency in 2005, this woreda has an estimated total population of 264,920, of whom 130,796 were males and 134,124 were females; 27,136 or 10.24% of its population are urban dwellers. With an estimated area of 1,286.76 square kilometers, Gondar Zuria has an estimated population density of 205.9 people per square kilometer.

There is a marked difference in quality between schools in urban areas and on the main road and those in rural areas. The majority of schools are small elementary schools, catering to grades 1-4, established very recently and funded by the community. A great many schools have infrastructural problems, with a lack of adequate classrooms being a primary problem. The concentration of libraries, pedagogical centres, laboratories, toilets and water fixtures is extremely low outside of urban centres.

One secondary and preparatory school, situated in Maksegnit, caters to the whole woreda, meaning pupils must stay in this town or Gonder itself to attend school after grade 8. The administration is currently building a secondary school in Enfranz, to open in September.

The vast majority of Gonder Zuria's inhabitants are farmers; most people outside of urban centres are involved in pastoral and agricultural work. There is only a small private sector in the towns, meaning that many educated people must leave to find work further afield, in Gonder for example.

Themes

Enrolment

According to the Central Statistical Agency, the most recent net primary enrolment figures available (2005) for the Amhara region were 83% in urban areas and 32.35% in rural areas. Gonder Zuria is overwhelmingly rural; we can therefore expect the rural enrolment rate to be more applicable. Evidently, these figures are three years out of date, we can expect an increase of 10%-20% based on previous years. We were unable to get enrolment statistics specifically for the woreda during our research, however pupil numbers show an even spread of male and female students, with females outnumbering males in many cases. This would suggest that there is not a large disparity between the sexes when it comes to enrolment. Certainly, the education administration has been carrying out a large awareness-raising programme, which may account for this. Without specific statistics for the woreda, it is difficult to assess enrolment rate but measures taken to combat drop out rate and increase attendance would be beneficial in raising the enrolment rate too.

Drop-out and attendance rates

Many schools register high drop out rates, although this is a much more acute problem in the rural areas. The main reason is poverty; in a low income, agriculturally based economy, many families simply cannot afford the costs of schooling, or more often, keep children at home to help with farm and housework. Additionally, the lack of secondary schools in the woreda means many pupils are forced to drop out after Grade 8; many families cannot afford to pay for them to attend school in far away Maksegnit or Gonder.

Social problems also play a role, with orphaned children often discontinuing their education in order to earn money, or children with difficult home lives dropping out through stress. Another cause is a lack of awareness on the part of parents about the value of education, although the woreda education administration is doing much to combat this. Finally, parents may discontinue the education of their children because they see no value in educating their children when a large percentage do not pass the Grade 10 examination, do not access higher education and cannot find well-paid jobs. At the moment, most schools in rural areas are severely under-resourced and those students who go on to attend secondary schools perform poorly compared with their urban counterparts. Lack of necessary English skills is particular problem.

Attendance is also deficient in rural schools, with many children missing up to a third of their education through having to help their parents at busy times of the year.

Recommendations:

- By increasing the income of schools with projects such as *Gardens* or *Livestock Rearing*, we can help struggling students by supplying necessary resources such as pens, exercise books and uniforms and helping with other expenses. Some schools already have a 'Charity club', which collects money for poorer students, whilst others organise general collections to help in specific drop out cases. Strengthening these activities should be a priority.

- Drop-out between elementary and secondary school can be solved in two ways: by providing financial help to students from distant rural communities to study in Gonder or Maksenyit, perhaps with the child sponsorship system or providing subsidised accommodation. Secondly, capacity building in certain areas to provide more venues for secondary education should be planned.
- Awareness-raising is a priority of schools and the administration and the results in schools we have visited are encouraging. Link Ethiopia does not have the specific cultural knowledge necessary to raise awareness; however, we can strengthen the current activities. Resourcing of equipment such as loudspeakers would strengthen the school's and the administration's ability to raise awareness and encourage school enrolment.
- Parental lack of faith in the educational system is a more difficult problem to solve. Solving this problem will require a combination of changes: strengthening the infrastructure of elementary schools not only provides a better base of education but increases perceptions of quality of the school. Strengthening English language skills to enable students to compete at secondary level is another important change. These will be discussed below.

Further research

- Complete project planning for *garden* and *livestock rearing* projects. Pilot these projects. If successful introduce them into a number of Gonder Zuria schools to increase income. Trusts may be a good source of funding for this.
- Identify economically struggling students from distant rural schools who would otherwise be unable to attend secondary school. Can we help these children with the Child Sponsorship Scheme?
- Average rents in Maksegnit are 30-60 birr/month per child to attend secondary school. Research into the possibility of a Link Ethiopia hostel in Maksegnit to provide accommodation and care for students studying away from home.
- Approach electronics goods stores for donations of loudspeakers or megaphones – these would necessarily need to be battery operated. Research further with Gonder Zuria education administration into what other equipment they require.

Teacher Training

Currently there is a great emphasis on teacher training through the CPD (Continuous Professional Development) programme, which aims to bring all teachers up to a reasonable level of quality. There are different courses for new teachers and more experienced teachers. Generally, teachers receive around two hours training a week.

Teachers are very enthusiastic about CPD; however, there are some barriers: firstly the CPD manual is written in English, which makes it difficult to understand for many first cycle teachers who lack the level of English required. Secondly, teachers complain of a lack of qualified trainers, saying that the people training them- often other teachers and school supervisors- have little more experience than themselves.

Teachers are also supportive of using modern teaching aids as part of model classrooms but again, resources and training are lacking.

Finally, teachers have identified English language as a deficient area and feel they need more support and training in teaching first and second cycle English.

Recommendations

- Continue our support for and capacity building of TTC's training.
- Fund cluster-wide training combined with model classroom resourcing in Gonder Zuria clusters. Trusts may be a good source of funding for this.

Further Research

- Research (currently being planned) into supporting English language training for first and second cycle teachers.

Pupil Attitudes and Awareness

In general, attitudes of pupils we spoke to towards education were encouraging: pupils understood the value of education and hoped to continue onto higher education. However, pupils of lower capability and from lower socio-economic backgrounds tended to have a more negative view of education.

The quality of the school's infrastructure, its teachers and its location all had impact on pupil attitudes towards education. In schools with poor infrastructure, such as temporary classrooms, pupils linked this with a poor quality of education. In particular, those students with lower performance felt at a disadvantage learning in severely under-resourced schools, which lowered their expectations for the future of their education.

Schools in urban areas without secure compounds presented pupils with many potentially harmful distractions such as local bars. Again, students with low performance and, consequently, low motivation to stay in school were most likely to leave the school compound during lesson times. This is a particularly acute problem at secondary level, where all teaching is in English, and therefore pupils with lower language skills quickly become demotivated as they are unable to follow the lesson content.

Recommendations

- Solving infrastructural problems in terms of classrooms and furniture should be a priority when dealing with these schools, as this has a knock-on effect of increasing pride in the school and perception of increased quality of education.
- Installing proper fences in urban schools is a priority in order to help student discipline and avoid truancy. It also makes the schools more secure.
- Preparing students adequately for being taught in English at secondary school should be another priority, through resourcing of different media and books and also through strengthening teacher training.
- Financial support through income generation or child sponsorship schemes, as mentioned above, will have a knock-on effect in increasing positive attitudes towards education.

Parental Attitudes and Awareness

In general, there is a high level of awareness in the community amongst parents of the importance of education, although there was a lower level of awareness in more rural areas. Some pupils interviewed in very rural schools reported older siblings nearing thirty that had never been to school, as their parents had no awareness of education's importance at that time. Most parents now report that such attitudes, however, are changing. All parents we interviewed were enthusiastic about their children's education but again, infrastructure and lack of resources were perceived as the main barrier. In rural areas in particular, parents complained of the distance to secondary schools and their children's poor performance in secondary school when compared with their urban counterparts.

Recommendations

- As discussed above, strengthening the infrastructure of schools, particularly focusing on providing adequate classrooms and furniture, helps foster positive attitudes towards education.
- As discussed above, we should aim to strengthen the administration's current awareness raising work through provision of equipment.
- Capacity building in Ambober and Dagoma to provide venues for secondary education would encourage more positive attitudes amongst parents, as their children could more easily access secondary education.

Teacher Attitudes

Motivation and attitude towards education varied between schools, though in general urban schools and better resourced schools had more motivated and positive staff. Many schools in Gonder Zuria are in distant rural communities and teachers must live there during the week, returning to their homes in urban centres at the weekend. The majority of teachers disliked the accommodation provided for them (often teachers' shelters made of wood and mud, constructed by the school) and complained of the lack of electricity and running water, cramped confines and infestations of vermin and insects. Toilets and washing facilities were often deficient, or in some cases, non-existent. We found that having to live in rural areas without access to the amenities of the town had a big impact on teacher motivation.

Recommendations

- Increasing the quality of teachers' accommodation in rural areas. This may involve making repairs and improvements to existing rooms and providing furniture or equipment to improve quality of life, such as radios, TVs, or other forms of entertainment.
- Improving sanitation facilities such as a water pump, proper toilets and a clean wash-room/pump shower would also help teachers living in rural areas.
- Helping teachers set up a garden or plant fruit trees to improve their diet or beautify their accommodation is another solution.
- Providing subsidised or free transport to nearby urban centres on holidays and weekends would make teachers' lives easier.

Further Research

- More detailed research with teachers living in rural areas to find out what equipment, furniture or infrastructure they prioritise.
- Research into the possibilities of new technologies to improve rural life: e.g. solar power to heat water or provide limited electricity, use of human waste and animal waste as bio-fuel to provide power etc.

Use of modern pedagogical methods

Although the Ethiopian government is strongly encouraging the adoption of modern teaching methods such as pupil centred methodology and continuous assessment, many teachers have complained that implementing such techniques is difficult given the severely overcrowded and uncomfortable classrooms they must teach in. Lack of free seating to move around makes group work and free discussion difficult, and lack of resources to use also prevents them implementing many pupil-centred activities. Large class sizes and frequent pupil absences also means continuous assessment is difficult. Teachers are thus forced to teach using teacher centred methods, which can mean lessons are monotonous and uninspiring, leading to pupils losing interest in the learning process. Lack of continuous assessment means teachers have no way of judging pupils' progress until their exams, by which time it may be too late to help pupils improve.

Recommendations

- Concentrating on providing good quality classrooms to overcrowded schools, especially those with temporary shelters.
- Providing good quality, movable furniture for pupils so teachers can facilitate group work, discussion and debate within class.
- Strengthening pedagogical centres/model classrooms and supplying them to schools without them. Providing training alongside this.
- Continuing work with the TTC to provide additional training on using new methodologies in classrooms.

English Language as a medium of instruction

The switch to English language instruction at grade 9 causes a high drop out rate for pupils, for several reasons. Firstly, the quality of English language teaching pre-grade 9 is often too poor for pupils to be able to follow the lesson content in grade 9 and above. Secondly, many teachers' grasp of English language is not adequate to teach lessons in grade 9 and above; pupils therefore cannot learn properly and lose motivation and interest after the switch to English. This leads to both high drop out rates and a high percentage of pupils failing the grade 10 exams. Some parents have complained that failing this leaving exam means their investment in their child's schooling has been for nothing, discouraging them from schooling their other children. Teachers report that they lack adequate training to teach English well in preparation for grade 9, and that lack of teaching resources also hinders English teaching at all levels.

Recommendations

- Provide resources such as posters, maps, flashcards, felt tip pens, masking tape and other media e.g. tape players or radios as appropriate to help teachers in English teaching.

- Continue work with TTC to provide additional English language training for grade 1-8 teachers.
- Provide TTC with resources for training such as dictionaries, flashcards, short stories and novels in English.
- Support expansion of the Gap volunteer teaching scheme to more rural schools to give rural students a chance to practise their English communication skills.

Further Research

- More in-depth research with English clubs in how we can support their activities.

Health and Hygiene

Access to healthcare provision outside of Maksegnit and Enfranz is very limited. The only clinics are in towns, and although there are some health centres in rural areas and vaccination programmes which visit schools, parents must take their children for long distances to reach medical attention. Moreover, sanitation provision within schools is very poor outside of the urban centres; the vast majority of schools are without toilets and running water. Pupils must often drink from rivers and groundwater, causing further illnesses.

All of these problems have a knock on effect on school attendance and parents' willingness to send their children to school. In particular, girls we interviewed prioritised toilets more than boys. Providing privacy for girls' sanitation needs will have a knock-on effect on enrolment and attendance. Awareness of the importance of sanitation is growing swiftly due to government health workers and awareness-raising. Providing adequate sanitation facilities in schools is therefore a priority.

Recommendations

- Provide adequate toilets and water fixtures as a matter of priority.

Further Research and Action Points

- Research into the possibilities of working with clinics and healthcare centres to provide subsidised medicines, possibly through schools.

Access to Secondary Education

As discussed above, there is currently only one secondary school in the region in Maksenyit, shortly to be joined by one in Enfranz. There is a large drop out rate after Grade 8 for pupils from distant rural clusters, whose parents cannot afford the costs of studying in distant towns, such as renting a room. The Education Administration has identified two clusters which would benefit from capacity building to enable secondary education: Amober and Dagoma, both of which are rural clusters very far from Maksenyit. Secondary schools in these areas would cater to a large number of students who would otherwise be unable to continue their education.

Recommendations

- Seek partners for designated schools in these clusters. Fundraise towards building classrooms, library and laboratory to enable secondary education.

Strategies

This chapter will suggest a step-by-step strategy for improving the quality of schools in Gonder Zuria. The different steps are based on priorities according to teachers, pupils and parents we interviewed.

YEAR ONE

Classrooms and Furniture

- All stakeholders prioritised classrooms and furniture as the first step.
- Perceptions of schools without adequate classrooms and furniture were generally negative, meaning less attendance and higher drop-out.
- Lack of adequate furniture and classrooms also impacts on teachers' abilities to use modern pupil centred methods. Pupils also find uncomfortable furniture hinders concentration.
- Temporary shelters in particular, are a poor environment to learn in and cannot be used in bad weather.
- Even in schools with proper classrooms, overcrowding is a severe problem.
- Partner schools, individual donors and Gift Ethiopia may be a source of funding for this.

Income Generation

- Concurrently with a sustainable income generation project should be started in the school.
- We are currently designing projects such as *Gardens, Live-stock rearing, Shops and Gelati-production*. When piloted successfully these should be introduced in each school as appropriate.
- Extra income can be used to benefit a target group such as orphans or a women's association. Income can be used to help with expenses of education, lowering drop-out and increasing attendance.
- Currently the majority of schools in Gonder Zuria earn additional income by land rent or by selling grass. Garden projects should be considered carefully against what income the school already earns; if the school can earn more selling vegetables grown on their land than simply renting it, they should be encouraged to begin the garden project.
- Trusts may be a good source of funding; after the first year, these projects should be self-funding and sustainable.

YEAR TWO

Sanitation

- After permanent classrooms have been built, the second highest priority for pupils, teachers and parents alike is sanitation. Adequate sanitation has a huge impact on perception of the school as a good learning environment and on attendance.
- Moreover, lack of toilets and water is a particular problem for female students. Providing adequate female toilets will increase female enrolment and attendance.

- Toilets and water supplies should be built together where possible. The schools should be encouraged to set up a committee responsible for keeping toilets clean and raising awareness about the importance of washing hands and proper hygiene.
- Funding for toilet blocks and water taps should come from partner schools, Gift Ethiopia, or individual donors.

Fence

- In a few cases, schools in more urban areas have named their second highest priority as a secure perimeter boundary round the school grounds. This is because in a densely populated area lack of fence leads to a security and discipline problem within the school.
- This project's importance will depend on the particular situation of each school and should be considered after consultation with the beneficiaries.

Teacher Training and Model Classroom Resourcing

- Concurrently, a separate program of teacher-training combined with model classroom/pedagogical centre resourcing.
- Once schools have adequate classrooms, teacher training is appropriate to increase the quality of education.
- Schools should be given the tools to teach (i.e. teaching aids, media etc.) at the same time they receive their training.
- For first and second cycle schools, training concentrating on English language teaching, may be appropriate.
- Trusts will be an appropriate source of funding for these programs. Ideally, training programs should target a whole cluster.

YEAR THREE

Library/Book Project

- After the school has the basic facilities of permanent furnished classrooms and sanitation, parents and pupils generally pick a library or adequate books as their third priority.
- Without an adequate library or enough textbooks, all stakeholders felt education was deficient.
- Lack of textbooks and teachers' handbooks has a significant impact on the quality of education. Supplying these should be a priority.
- Supplying English language books will also improve English skills in grades 1-8, helping pupils when they switch to English language at secondary level.
- When supplying books or a library to rural schools, security is a concern. In schools lacking a guard, this may have to be built into the project.
- Training for teachers or a librarian will also need to be considered.
- We should support schools in setting up a book club, in order to increase awareness of and access to the library.
- Partner schools, individual donors and Gift Ethiopia may be a source of funding for this.

SUBSEQUENT YEARS

- After the third year of our work with a school, and providing it has proper classrooms, sufficient furniture, water and toilets, and a library, there are a variety of projects which the school may like to continue with:
- Supplying adequate sports equipment, such as footballs, volleyballs, nets and mats.
- Building an adequate office and supplying administrative equipment such as typewriters, printing machines and computers.
- Resourcing laboratories with up to date chemicals.
- We may also like to strengthen the work of clubs or associations within the school such as women's associations, charity clubs, HIV awareness clubs, English clubs, Civics clubs etc.
- Partner schools, Gift Ethiopia and individual donors could contribute to costly infrastructure projects; inexpensive resources and sports equipment could be funded alongside these projects in a variety of ways.

Teachers' Shelters

- In some rural schools, building and improving adequate teacher accommodation may be seen as the priority after basic resourcing.
- Poor accommodation and living conditions has a negative effect on teachers' morale, retention of staff and willingness of teachers to teach in rural areas.
- More research will be needed to design specific projects to improve teachers' accommodation, as discussed above.

Appendix 1

Focus group interview questions

Teachers

School: Maksenyit No.2 Elementary **Date:** 21.04.08

Participants: 2 female, 4 male (see sheet)

Training

- Around 2 hours a week
- Not enough
- Need more English language training, especially with spoken language skills
- English in grades 1-4 is deficient
- Need more pupil-centred teaching methodology – difficulty of implementing this in classrooms of 70 pupils

Provision for teachers

- Generally, teachers have to work in the rural areas for a period until they get promoted to towns.
- Infrastructure is important in easing their lives

Drop out rates/attendance

- Poverty and lack of awareness main factors
- Teachers will call parents or visit their houses if there is a drop-out
- Often money for exercise books, pens etc. is a big factor – therefore money for this is important
- Problems of girls walking long distances to schools – could be dangerous for them
- Social problems have a big impact on pupils' attendance and participation

Teaching Methods

- Teacher centred, occasional use of resources for science lessons
- Need more materials, need more training

Further education

- What problems are there regarding pupils not going on to secondary or further education? What causes?
- What can be done to encourage more pupils to go on to secondary or further education?

Successes & Problems

- Lack of books, lack of teacher guides
- Lack of furniture and sufficient classrooms
- Training a priority

School: Maksenyit Secondary & Preparatory **Date:** 23.04.08
Participants: 4 male (see sheet)

Training

- Receive CPD induction
- Not enough training in pupil centred methodology and action research etc
- Need more English language training, especially with spoken language skills
- Use a variety of methods in teaching depending on subject, esp. languages
- Pupil-centred teaching methodology – difficulty of implementing this in classrooms of 70 pupils. Also lack of materials is problem. Student: Resource ratio v low.

Plasma

- Advantages: Standardises teaching and means all pupils have same quality. Can show students scientific experiments, different countries, etc. Condenses lessons.
- Disadvantages: Makes teachers lazy, disrupts teaching and learning process, means poorer students fall behind more easily, prohibits assessment of student progress, makes English language harder due to accent of plasma lessons, and prohibits student participation and interaction.
- Should be limited to 20 minutes instead of over 30.
- If had perfect resources, would still use both!

Improving students' English skills

- Tutorial classes are important
- More materials would help e.g. Tapes, English programmes, media centre, films, microphone, and magazines.

Problems in school

- Only 2 toilets in school so this causes big problems. Health problems, concentration problems etc.
- No fence so student discipline is affected and schooling disrupted. Also security problem.
- Fence even comes before toilets.

Drop out rates/attendance

- Grade 9 students often unprepared for move to English language lessons. 67% have to retake year.
- Better preparation for this in lower grades would help.
- Financial problems, lack of awareness also problems to students staying on. Lack of interest due to not understanding of English lessons.
- If teachers can't speak good enough English this exacerbates the problem.
- More reference books and teaching aids/maps etc in classroom would help.
- Teachers moved around a lot so hard to keep consistency.
- Pedagogical centre needs strengthening.

Financial help for poor pupils

- Is already a poor students club- we could assist them with garden/shop

- Support Programme- 100 birr a month for top 25 poor students. Sometimes teachers contribute additionally from their own pockets.

Successes

- Teachers enthusiastic and dedicated.
- Good relations between administration and teachers.
- Improvement in students grades as compared to last year – use of continuous assessment.
- Lots of clubs for students.

School: Chehera Elementary **Date:** 30.04.08

Participants: 2 male, 2 female (see sheet)

Training

- Receive CPD induction
- Quality of trainers is poor
- Teachers feel their own education is deficient – don't have the skills to teach e.g. in English
- Would like training on encouraging attendance
- Would like training on ELT
- Perception that pupil centred methodology difficult as pupils very young.

Drop out rates/attendance

- Pupils often miss days of school due to having to help at home/ with farmwork
- Parents sometimes not aware, also view the school negatively because of temporary classrooms, lack of resources.
- Better infrastructure would increase enrolment and attendance.

Teaching Resources

- Would like a pedagogical centre, teaching aids, flashcards and other media

Attitudes to rural areas

- Don't mind as they can walk from Maksenyit
- Would even live nearby if school had better infrastructure
- School's infrastructure more important than accommodation for them

Needs

- Classrooms and furniture to replace temporary shelters
- Adequate sanitation facilities: toilets and clean water
- Teaching resources and textbooks.

School: Denkez Elementary **Date:** 02.05.08

Participants: 3 male, one female (see sheet)

Working in Denkez

- One has been there for three years, two for two, and one for one.
- Very difficult because of lack of modern facilities- mostly miss easy transport to Gondar and Maksegnit and Teda, which means they can't see their families.
- Also would like telephone, TV, roads, proper houses instead of teachers' hostel. No bars, nowhere to go and nothing to do in evening.
- Weather is difficult- bad conditions.
- Problems in school don't bother them as much as town itself. All want to move and teach somewhere else.

Training

- Receive CPD induction- they like this as it helps them develop professionally.
- Problems with CPD training- the trainers are not proficient enough and need better training themselves! Often it is a supervisor or another teacher with no experience training them.
- All think they need CPD manual in Amharic as well.
- Mostly use teacher centred methodology because of lack of free seating which they can't move around and lack of resources to use.

Improving students' English skills

- English language resources would help- e.g. maps, posters, flashcards, as well as extra training in teaching English themselves.

Drop out rates/attendance

- Drop out rates are a big problem here- parents need children to work with them.
- Teachers try to raise awareness but so far this is not having a big effect.
- Better facilities in the school would help a lot.

Problems in school

- Most keen for toilets and sanitation in school- this would make big difference to teaching.
- Secondly library and teaching resources and text books.
- Furniture after these.

Parents/Community Members

School: Maksenyit No.2 Elementary **Date:** 21.04.08

Participants: 5 male, 3 female (see sheet)

Education

- Education important for whole world. Gives you knowledge to develop yourself

Plans for your children

- Succeed in education
- Want them to learn
- Want them to go to Secondary, however, very low pass rate for higher education, around 50 out of a 1000.
- Many drop out in Grade 10 and have to find whatever work they can or continue their education privately

Pupil attitudes

- Generally good, eager to learn

Expenses

- Exercise books, pens, uniform all difficult for large families
- Price of living is high
- Also have to contribute to school building fund (50 birr)

Distance to school

- Not applicable, live in town

Successes & Problems

- Infrastructure biggest problem: children cannot learn in tin classrooms without furniture
- Comfort is the priority when learning
- Classrooms and furniture even take priority over water
- No fence at present, local people use toilets, no way to control kids coming on and off grounds
- Water supply has stopped

School: Maksenyit Secondary & Preparatory **Date:** 23.04.08
Participants: 2 male, 2 female (see sheet)

Education

- Education important for whole world, for solving problems.

Plans for your children

- Want them to have the best chance in life
- Want them to attend university

Expenses

- Pens and exercise books are difficult to buy
- The community will all help each other out

Drop out rates/attendance

- All their children go to school
- Rural students have a noticeably higher drop out rate and poorer attendance

Sickness and Health

- Not such a problem, Maksenyit clinic easy to access.

Successes & Problems

- First priority- more classrooms to ease overcrowding.
- Lack of fence a big problem – necessary to ensure security and fight truancy
- After this, books important
- Office too

School: Chehera Elementary **Date:** 30.04.08

Participants: 2 male, 2 female (see sheet)

Education

- Everyone knows education is important- like a light! Even for adults is important.

Plans for your children

- Succeed in education
- Want them to make a difference in the country- to do this they need to be something other than farmers!
- One woman is sad that she did not get chance for education therefore she wants her children to benefit.

Pupil attitudes

- When they need children to work at home their children are sad because they wish to learn.

Expenses

- Pens and exercise books are difficult to buy
- The community will all help each other out
- Price of renting a room when their children go to grade 9.

Drop out rates/attendance

- One parent keeps his child home from school because he has no one else to look after the farm with him. Also his child isn't keen to come because the conditions in the school are too poor.
- Used to make them absent but this school is near to their homes so easy for children to attend.
- Varies according to season- e.g. harvest time can be $\frac{3}{4}$ times a month. If they could afford to hire someone to work for them the problem would be solved.

Sickness and Health

- Nearest health centre around Maksegnit, or Gondar for serious illness. Sometimes children die on the way- need to carry them there.
- Dysentery a big problem. Comes in epidemics e.g. 2006. Rainy season gets worse.
- Awareness of this and malaria is growing due to health workers.

Successes & Problems

- First priority- comfortable classrooms. After this, water and toilets.
- Would like to make this school up to grade 8.

School: Denkez Elementary **Date:** 02.05.08

Participants: 4 male (see sheet)

Plans for your children

- Want them to get good results
- Don't mind what kind of job they have as long as they are happy and successful.
- Farming is growing harder so they want children to help them financially.

Pupil attitudes

- Children are very eager to come to school even when they need them to stay home and work.

Expenses

- Pens and exercise books are difficult to buy
- The price of these items leads to them keeping children home because they cannot afford materials.
- Price of renting a room when their children go to grade 9.

Secondary School

- Very desperate to send at least one child.
- Problem with rent in Maksegnit.

Drop out rates/attendance

- They take it in turns- if a parent has three children, they will stay home to work in three day rotations.
- Very common to keep children home- need them because they don't have money to hire farmhands in busy season. Now farming is getting harder.

Sickness and Health

- Nearest health centre around Maksegnit, or Gondar for serious illness. Sometimes children die on the way- need to carry them there.
- Sickness worse in rainy seasons. Main problem is with water borne diseases- diarrhoea and also malaria.

Successes & Problems

- First priority- Good classrooms, then fence, then library, then water and toilets.
- Biggest problem- losing hope because their children find it harder and harder to pass grade 10 exam so there is no point in them going to school that far.

Pupils: Boys

School: Maksenyit No.2 Elementary **Date:** 21.04.08

Participants: 4 male (see sheet)

Education

- To develop the country and be a good citizen
- To know yourself and, in turn, achieve important things
- Without education, people will cause problems

Family

- 2 farmers, 1 civil servant, 1 carpenter, 1 merchant

Future plans

- Will attend university
- Want to be scientists and doctors

Drop out rates/attendance

- Never miss school

Expenses

- Rent of room in Maksenyit for children from communities further away: 30-60 birr per month

Sickness

- Occasionally, couple of days for stomach problems

Food and Drink

- Go home to eat, live nearby, hunger not a problem

Distance to school

- Walk to school within ten minutes

Successes & Problems

- Teachers do not use resources
- Tin classrooms and lack of furniture
- Lack of library and laboratory
- Lack of fence, would like to plant trees and a garden
- Need materials for clubs such as HIV/AIDS awareness material, magazines and other media, loud speakers for group activities

School: Chehera Elementary **Date:** 30.04.08

Participants: 4 male (see sheet)

Education

- To get knowledge

Family

- Farmers
- 1 boy had 1 brother who did not attend school as he had to help at home

Future plans

- Want to be scientists and doctors

Drop out rates/attendance

- Often miss school, have to shepherd or water crops
- Feel sad when they have to miss school

Sickness

- Get sick often as there is no clean water, have to drink from dirty river

Food and Drink

- Eat before and after school

Distance to school

- Live nearby

Successes & Problems

- Rain, dust and wind make learning in temporary shelters difficult
- Often thirsty at school
- Often ill from stomach problems, need toilet

School: Denkez Elementary **Date:** 02.05.08

Participants: 4 male (see sheet)

Family

- All farmers and shepherds.

Future plans

- All want to go to high school- one engineer, one pilot, one journalist, one teacher.

Drop out rates/attendance

- Some have parents that keep them from school. One- parents said don't go today as you went yesterday.
- Another say he should read his books at home instead.
- One quarrels with his family who do not wish him to go.
- Frequency- 2/3 days per month up to twice a week.

Sickness

- Bad sicknesses from river- trachoma, giardia. Water borne diseases big problem.

Distance to school

- For secondary this will be a problem. Will have to rent rooms in Maksegnit.

Pupils: Girls

School: Maksenyit No.2 Elementary **Date:** 21.04.08

Participants: 4 female (see sheet)

Education

- To help Ethiopia progress and contribute to society
- To better yourself and get a good job

Family

- 2 teachers but currently working in admin office, one farmer and housewife, one shopkeeper, one has sister in Italy who supports her
- All siblings are at school except for two, both of whom dropped out due to deaths of parents leading to them having to support family financially

Future plans

- Will attend university. Acknowledge this will be difficult financially but distance learning is an option. Also families can help.
- Want to be doctors, author and artist

Drop out rates/attendance

- Very rarely miss school- maybe once or twice to help parents, one girl dropped one year due to death of parents.

Expenses

- Pens and books are no problem but uniform is a problem for other children in the school.

Sickness

- Occasionally, couple of days for cold or headache; don't miss due to menstruation (this school has private toilets)

Food and Drink

- All eat regularly except when fasting- they find this is a big problem for concentration during Zom and Ramadan. Girl who walks one and a half hours sometimes misses breakfast.
- Find that lack of water is a big problem- they must go out from school grounds to find it and ask people on the main road.

Distance to school

- All live in town except for one girl who walks for one and half hours; this is not a problem at the moment as she walks with other girls but if there is no one to walk with it is too dangerous. May be a problem for secondary school- may have to rent a room in town if possible.

Successes & Problems

- Teachers do not use resources except very rarely in science classes- would especially like more maps and posters on the wall.
- Tin classrooms and lack of furniture- very uncomfortable
- Big problem is lack of fence- town people use the toilet and they can't have a garden because animals would eat the plants.
- Lack of water means they get very thirsty.
- Successes- teachers very dedicated to their welfare and prepared to help them outside school also. Awareness raising common.
- Women's association- child marriage not common but have had five cases the past two years. A few girls are still kept home from school as parents don't see value of education but again this is quite rare. Report any problems to teachers/administration.

School: Maksenyit Secondary & Preparatory **Date:** 23.04.08
Participants: 4 female (see sheet)

Education

- Advantage- can change your life and develop your mind.
- Can solve personal and national problems and improve relationships with people
- You can see the difference between educated and uneducated people!

Family

- 2 farmers, 2 merchants

Future plans

- Will attend university
- Want to be lawyer and doctors
- All siblings attend except for one girl's family who don't have enough money to send them all

Drop out rates/attendance

- Never miss school- only very rarely to help parents (1 or 2 days)

Expenses

- Rent of room in Maksenyit for one girl from community further away: 60 birr per month
- Replacement of exercise books and pens is a problem

Sickness

- No

Food and Drink

- Go home to eat, live nearby, hunger not a problem except when fasting for Ramadan or Zom

Distance to school

- Walk to school within ten minutes except for one girl who stays in room during week

Successes & Problems

- Teachers do not use resources because pedagogical centre is poor
- Overcrowding of classrooms makes learning difficult
- Shortage of teachers means students have to make their own lessons ('Gobez Tamarocc Club') or teachers have to double up
- Lack of toilets means harder to concentrate a garden
- Like teachers' dedication
- Several clubs inc. student council and Gobez Tamarocc Club in which high performing students tutor other students.

School: Chehera Elementary **Date:** 30.04.08

Participants: 4 female (see sheet)

Family

- All farmers

Future plans

- 2 doctors, one teacher, one wants to work in agriculture office. All want to go to secondary school; no knowledge of university.

Drop out rates/attendance

- Miss school very often depending on season of agricultural year. Harvest time- up to 3 or 4 days a week.
- This is for work such as tending to vegetables and crops, fetching water, tending to animals.
- All siblings attend except for one girl who has older brothers who didn't go to school at all.

Sickness

- Many stomach problems from water- sometimes stay off school for a week at a time.
- Outside toilets cause health problems.

Distance to school

- All live in Chehera village. Distance will be a problem for secondary school.

Priorities

- Furniture first, then water and toilets. After this library and books.

School: Denkez Elementary **Date:** 02.05.08

Participants: 4 female (see sheet)

Family

- All farmers

Future plans

- All want to go to high school. One teacher, three doctors.

Drop out rates/attendance

- Sometimes miss school, depending on season, at harvest time- up to 3 days a week.
- This is due to illness and working at home for families.
- One has a brother who is not attending because his parents don't have enough money (13)
- Three have brothers who never attended-parents did not have awareness of education.

Distance to school

- For secondary this will be a problem. Will have to borrow money for their rooms to rent. Only one pupil has parents with enough money.

Priorities

- Water and toilets first, then library and furniture.