



# Project Brief

## The Somali Girls Education Promotion Programme (SOMGEP)

**OVERVIEW** CARE Somalia has been providing development and lifesaving assistance across all regions of Somalia/ Somaliland since 1981. Our programmes go beyond meeting basic needs at the onset of an emergency to helping affected communities recover and rebuild their lives long after the crisis ends. This project brief includes information on one of those projects, the Somali Girls Education Promotion Programme (SOMGEP).

**18,593**

Girls to be reached



**150** Primary schools

**23** Secondary schools

### Background

CARE International, through its long-term experience in Somalia/ Somaliland and a series of long-term studies conducted in rural areas, has concluded that addressing social and cultural issues is the most promising means of lifting barriers to girls' education in rural areas. As such, the Somali Girls Education Promotion Project (SOMGEP), funded by DFID's Girls' Education Challenge, has been designed to increase access to education for some of the most educationally disadvantaged children; rural (sedentary and nomadic) girls aged 5-15. More specifically, the project aims at improving retention and learning outcomes for girls in 150 primary and 23 secondary schools in the remote and rural areas of Somaliland, Puntland and Central Somalia. The project is expected to increase learning outcomes for 10,145 girls and to improve access, attendance and retention among marginalized girls, and to create a conducive environment for learning at the school and the household.

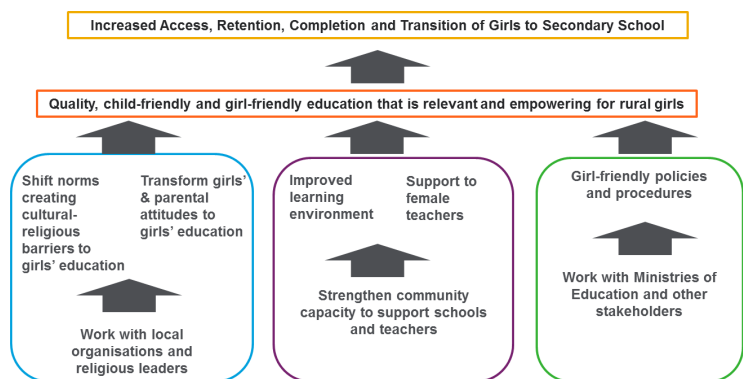
### What We Know

Baseline results from the project provided valuable insight to the project's approaches and final goals. Some of these findings include insight into the barriers to education that girls in these communities face, including: traditional gender norms, cultural and religious practices result in a preference for boys' education and the exclusion of girls from public spaces, resistance to secular education, low motivation due to the limited number of jobs for women, a lack of girl-friendly classrooms due to mostly male teaching staffs, absentee teachers and lack of school or family follow-up on school attendance rates, nomadic tendencies of families, lack of appropriate sanitation facilities, competition with boys over limited resources, and early marriage.

# What We're Doing

## Project Design:

SOMGEP focuses on promoting change in stakeholders' attitudes and addressing underlying causes of marginalisation for sustainable change, changing practices at the household, school, community and policy/governance level to create a more supportive environment for girls.



## Project Approaches:

In partnership with eight implementing partners, during its four-year project period (2013-2017), SOMGEP aims to:

- Shift traditional gender norms and religious interpretations that prevent girls' attendance and participation;
- Improve classroom delivery and school conditions;
- Develop girls' leadership skills and participation in class;
- Build local capacity for participatory school management; and
- Support the development of a policy framework to promote girls' education at the MoE level.

## Research Methodology:

The project uses a rigorous evaluation methodology and cohort tracking of students. An adapted version of UWEZO tracks progress in the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. A combination of household and school surveys assesses enrolment, retention, attendance and promotion, as well as the factors



influencing girls' and boys' academic success at home and classroom.

## Results So Far:

Midline (February 2016) results from the project indicate significant positive progress against programme goals, resulting in meaningful change for these girls and communities. These changes include:

- A statistically significant increase in student literacy scores. Additionally, 68% of the girls improved their reading score.
- A statistically significant increase in student math scores.
- A focus on student attendance: at the baseline no schools kept attendance books, but now 75% are regularly tracking attendance. Teachers, parents and community members are now following up on students out of school.
- Student enrollment increased by 16.5%. Key predictors include the presence of community education committees
- A marked shift in positive support by religious leaders for girls' education.
- Mothers' literacy classes have led to their increased support for girls to enroll and regularly attend school.

CARE Somalia

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