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Practices, Contributions and Challenges of Alternative Basic Education in Pastoral Communities of Ethiopian Somali Regional State

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to explore practice, challenges and future prospects of Alternative Basic Education program in pastoral community of Ethiopian Somali Region. To achieve this purpose, mixed research design was employed (it was given more emphasis to sequential exploratory design). Three Zones were selected out of eleven Zones using purposive sampling technique. From Siti zone, Shinile, Afdam and ErerrWoredas were purposely selected. *From Shebelle zone (*Gode, Dannan and Adaale*) and Fafen zone (*Gurusum, Jijiga and KebribeyaWoredas*) Woredas were purposely sampled. From the specified Woredas, a total of 54 ABE facilitators, 27 education heads and supervisors and 18 community members and 8 NGO workers were involved. Questionnaire, interviews, FGD and observation were employed to collect data for the study. Besides, so as to triangulate the data collected using primary sources; different documents were analyzed such as national and regional ABE related documents. The finding revealed that ABE curriculum was not able to accommodate over aged children, over aged and appropriate age children are attending in the same class, one teacher is assigned to teach different subjects and levels with no knowledge of multi-grade teaching, teachers were teaching with no syllabus, clash was found between the planned date/hour for the programs (under implementation) with the actual plan designed by MoE, no accelerating program was implemented to address the demand of over aged children, ABE education was not found convenient for learning (children are attending their education in a tree shade), ABE school is running on some fixed villages, the schools and schedules are not mobile, unavailability of appropriate management, lack of qualified facilitators, high class absenteeism, poor teacher incentive and salary, high turnover of facilitator, inadequate community participation, low level of supervision and monitoring and lack of learning materials were captured from the study. With respect to contributions of ABE program, participants responded that ABE system supported the government to easily transfer ABE School in to formal primary schools, improved literacy rate, improved enrollment of girls and boys, improved community awareness and perception towards modern education. The respondents further asserted that the future fate of ABE is gloomy since the value and quality of the program is questionable. Hence, the study recommended that greater attention and improvement shall be made on accessibility of ABE schools, appropriateness of ABE curriculum, preparation of ABE facilitators and facilitators guide. Region education bureau and Ministry of education shall also work out on the way to introduce and strengthened multi-grade teaching and accelerating program in pastoral*

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areas. The ABE syllabus shall be also revised in line with pastoral community's livelihood and cultural orientation.
Key Words: ABE, Practices, Contributions and Challenges,

Background

The National Planning Commission (GTP II, 2015), intended to improve educational participation (access), quality, equity and relevance at all levels of education.Toachieve these, implementing educational development army package in coordinated and organized manner,expanding basic general education and functional adult literacy and providing special support for emerging regions for equitable education are the main strategic directions that will be pursed during GTP II period. As country, vision of Ethiopia with regard to education and training is "building an education and training system which assures quality and equity in education by the year 2020 which aims at producing competent citizens". In pastoral areas of Ethiopia; Ethiopia Somali region, it is undeniable fact that; suffered from inadequate infrastructure and little provision of basic social services like education and trainingin the past régimes. In recognition of this, to address the previous challenges, the FDRE government gave special attention to the development of education in such pastoral areas in terms of access, relevance, quality and equity in similar manner.Among many; one of the action taken at national level was; the ministry mainstreamed pastoral education as a priority in the ESDP III (MoE, 2005).In an effort to put it in to practice and guide education sector focus in pastoral areas, a Pastoral Education Strategy was also developed (MoE, 2008) which outline the specific challenges and opportunities of pastoral communities and pinpoint strategies that will promote primary and secondary education participation (access), quality, equity and relevance.Above and beyond to policy and strategy formulation; efforts were also made to make the strategy, content, approach and organization of education more relevant to the diversified needs of the population in different areas of the country. For instance; the introduction of Alternative Basic Education (ABE) program, the adoption of multi grade teaching approach and inception of comprehensive quality improvement program like GEQIP to mention a few.In particular to Ethiopian Somali region, in similar fashion;thedevelopment and implementation of ABE program has been going and improvements were made so far. Rapid expansion of ABE to reach the unreached children is in place. Since the development of such strategies; access to education has improved at rapid rate which resulted in sharp increases in the number of facilitators and schools/ ABE centers. Because of such positive development, regional education bureau established more than 1859 ABE centers throughout the region in all districts that has contributed to raising the Net Primary School Enrolment rate to 57 % (EMIS, 2013/14). Although there is positive and rapid development made so far towards the realization of MDG is encouraging; however stillproblems are acute in the implementation process of ABE program. Ethiopian Somali region is still very far from attaining these goals. The education system in general is characterized by low enrolment rates and quality. These pose a serious threat to the

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future of its children (Feinstein International Center, 2011). This study was not intended to cover the whole education sector of the region; rather it focused only on Practice, Contributions and Challenges of ABE in Pastoral Ethiopian Somali Region.

Statement of the problem

Ethiopian Somali region is a vast territory where by the population is basically pastoral and agro pastoral in their livelihood. Equity and access to education in the region is problematic especially in far and remote rural areas. Provision of education in such pastoral region requires diversification of educational programs by introducing different alternative approaches. Diversification is needed especially in conditions where the formal education system is unlikely to attain universal primary education (World Bank, 1995). Despite rapid expansion of education as stipulated in GEQIP (2008); Ethiopia's education face challenges of access that continuous to be an obstacle especially for females and other most in danger children, poor students and pastoralist areas (e.g. Somali and Afar).

To address the problem and satisfy the unique needs of pastoral community; Alternative Basic Education Strategy (MoE, 2006) was developed and several other measures were taken at national and regional levels for reaching mobile communities.The strategy aimed at developing a well-planned and organized ABE system that will provide opportunities for out of school children especially for those between ages of 7-14 to have access to good and quality basic education.

UNESCO (2015) education sector review report of Ethiopia indicates though there is significant progress and improvement towards equity and access in most regions; school participation level in emerging regions, pastoralist and semi pastoralist communities still remains very low. Although; the ABE program has helped increase in enrollment in such areas; problems of low quality and student's transition from ABE program to the formal school remain as major challenges. In Pastoral areas as to ESDP V (MoE, 2015) the quality of primary and secondary education (including ABE) is characterized by low quality of outcomes, persistent high dropout and repetition rates identified. As to the document, this low performance reflects the presence of low quality of educational inputs, i.e. skilled teachers, relevant teaching and learning materials etc.Moreover, the document has shown; for every 1,000 children who begin school, around one-half will pass uninterrupted to Grade 5 and only one-fifth to completion of Grade 8. The failure of the education system to ensure student learning and acquisition of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy contributes to the above observed poor attainment and achievement. Research findings on education in Somali region; Christine Jonason and ShimelisSolomon (2014) identified one of the challenges confirmed was that; in the ABE program;educational background of most of the Alternative Basic Education (ABE) facilitators is below the minimum standard required at national level. Besides, ABE facilitators didn't passed through the necessary professional trainings.

According to Education Statistics Annual Abstract (EMIS, 2013/2014) of ESRS;the overall net enrollment rate of primary education in the region shows improvement from 43% to 57% for 2002 and 2006 E.C year respectively. The

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Primary school age population of the region is estimated as 1,234,622. The corresponding Primary school age population who were enrolled and accessed in both formal and ABE was 701,991 (56.9%) children's. The gap or not enrolled to primary school education is 532,671. By implication, 532,671 (43.1 %) Primary school age population in the region is not visiting school.The share of ABE program in primary school enrollment is significant where the share is 422,493 (60.2%) out of 701,991. As to this finding; greater number of Primary school age pollution in the region is observed by ABE program than formal system.Besides improvements and changes made as mentioned above; according to ESDP IV (MoE, 2010); the government recognized the challenges and problems of ABE program. Some of nationally stated and practically observed challenges which initiated to conduct this study were as follows: limited transition from ABE center to the formal schools,ABE program is interpreted as a regular and long standing while it is an alternative approach, the low access of indigenous children to schools in emerging regions, impact of mobility in pastoral areas and community, low density of population that has made the building of school infrastructure difficult, shortage of qualified teachersas opposed to article (3.4.4) of ETP (MoE, 1994) which state that teachers will be certified before assigned to teach at any level of education, though multi grading teaching approach was designed to address shortage of facilitator/teachers in ABE centers; it was not fully materialized, effective and implemented properly because of problem skill teaching , class room and other educational inputs.Hence, the aim of this study was to investigate the existing Practice, Contributions and Challenges of Alternative Basic Education program in Ethiopian Somali Regional State from the view point of policy and Strategies designed nationally and finally to propose recommendations to stakeholder of education to solve the prevailing problems.

Basic research questions

To investigate the existing Practice, Contributions and Challenges of ABE in ESRS and to realize research purpose; the following basic questions were formulated;

1) How does ABE program have been practiced in ESRS?
2) What contributions were seen because of ABE program in ESRS?
3) What were the challenges observed in the implementation of ABE in the ESRS?

Objectives

To address the above basic questions, the following general and specific objectives of the study were stated;

General objectives;

The general objective of this study was to investigate practice, contributions and challenges of ABE in ESRS.

Specific objectives;

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- identify the condition of the existing practice of ABE program
- distinguish the contributions of ABE to education system
- explore existing challenges seen in the practice of ABE program

METHODOLOGY

Study methods

Qualitative approach with a descriptive survey form was employed.

Sampling Technique

Non - Probability sampling (Random, availability and Purposive sampling techniques) were employed.

Study area

The table below shows the areas of the study selected for the purposive of this study in Ethiopian Somali regional State.

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Table 1. Representation of Study Areas and ABE centers

S/N	Area	Population	Sample size	Sampling Technique
1	Zone	11	3	Purposively
2	Woreda	68	9	Purposively
3	ABE Center	-	10	Purposively

Research respondents

From three zones, nine woredas, ten ABE centers and key stakeholders, different individuals and groups were involved through availability a Non - Probability sampling techniques. The below table represents the distribution of respondentcategory**,** population, sample size and sampling technique for each respondent categories.

Table 2. Representation of Population, Sample Size, and Sample technique

S/N	Respondent category	Population	Sample size	Sampling Technique
1	ABE facilitators	-	54	Availability
2	ABE de facto coordinators	9	7	Availability
3	Education Heads	7	7	Purposive
4	Delegated heads	2	2	Purposive
5	Woreda ABE focal persons	9	9	Purposive
6	Cluster supervisors	9	9	Purposive
7	ABE regional focal persons	3	3	Purposive
8	Community members	-	18	Availability
9	NGO representatives	8	8	Availability
10	Former ABE facilitators	-	2	Purposive
11	ABE students	-	5	Availability
12	TTC Experts	3	3	Purposive
Total Respondents			**117**	

Table 3, Research tools and respondents

S/N	Instruments/ Tools	To Whom it was applied
1	Interview	Facilitators, Heads, Supervisors, Parents, experts and NGOs
2	FGD,	Facilitators, ABE coordinators, Heads, Supervisors and Parents
3	Questionnaire	Facilitators, Heads and Supervisors,
4	Observation check list	By researchers to check class progress
5	Documentary Analysis	By researchers to collected data related with the issue

Finally, triangulation had been done to check consistency of data collected by using the above tools during data organizing and processing.

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Method of data analysis

After field work and process of data collection was over;thematic way of analysis was used. For the purpose, intensive data collection and analysis was executed. The application of zigzag analysis was implemented. When gap was identified during analysis, researchers went to the field and concerned offices to enrich the missed data.

Ethical considerations

The purpose of the study was properly justified for respondents. The letter which justifies the intention of the research was also shown. The confidentiality and trustworthiness of the data was also communicated. All respondents were asked for their consent to involve them in the study as respondents and they had shown it.

Discussion and results

The first basic research question which was raised in the preceding parts was to look in to the practice of ABE education in the region. The following were practicerelate issues as we discovered in this research study.

A). ABE is fixed program

Pastoral Education Strategy (MoE, 2008) and that of Alternative Basic Education Strategy (MoE, 2006) stated clearly; the institutionalization of multiple delivery modalities were suggested in the documents. Though, a fixed delivery approach of ABE is one option but not the only option. The finding from this study assured that contrary to the strategies, ABE is mainly restricted in small villages which are permanent. As to our findings, facilitators not use mobile approach of delivery whenever there is need especiallywhen children move in search of posture and water during dry season; instead; they show the tendency to discontinue the program in most cases.

B). Mobile approach of delivery is not in place

In Pastoral Education Strategy (MoE, 2008) the proposed approaches for pastoral education in order to improve access were ;Provide alternative basic education through mobile schools (tents easily moveable and simple structures that can provide shelter, flexible black boards, mat, etc) in areas where the duration of mobility of communities in a year is more than 4 months, Study the mobility pattern of pastoralists, water points where they make temporary shelters in large numbers, etc before starting mobile education services and act accordingly, Provide semi-mobile education by establishing temporary on-site schools in areas where mobile communities make a short stay to ensure the continuity of education offered in the permanent village of the communities. Hence, in this study, community members and facilitators told;ABE program is not mobile by nature and no one is doing to give education tents, water spots, and temporary shelters.

C). Self-contained Vs. multi grade teaching approach

The teaching approach expected to be applied in pastoral areas where there is shortage of teachers in required quantity and quality and to address the problem; as to Pastoral Education strategy (MoE,2008) and Alternative Basic Education Strategy (MoE,2006), the use of multi grade teaching is highly recommended.The finding from

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class room observation and interviews has shown different practice.From the findings, it is possible to decide the teaching approach under use as self-contained on one side since one facilitator covers all the four subjects for one class. On another side, it seems multi grade teaching approach since the same facilitator covers all the four subjects for all grades in different periods. In most ABE centers which were visited;it is a clearly observed fact that; one facilitator is handling all subjects for all levels (Grade1-3/1-4) and it is a rare event thattwo facilitators are assigned in one ABE center.As Scholars in field; multi grade teaching needs adequate educational input like;highly qualified teachers, good class room space, enough teaching and learning materials, well organized and prepared syllabus, articulate language/medium of instruction/trained in the language, good class room and time management skill, good skill of teaching methodology. These qualities were not in place and most importantly facilitators were not properly trained in their profession about teaching methodologies.Thus, the suggested multi grade teaching for ABE program is not properly implemented because of poor qualities of the aforementioned in put factors.

D). Miss Match between content scope, time planned and time used

As per the finding of this study; the ABE program is divided in to three to four levels to be completed in three or four years depending on the capacity of the ABE centers. In the duration of study, there is also a clash between the planned numbers of days/hours of study and the actual practiced. Accordingly, the contact hours/period allotted annually per day varies from document to document. The official document of MOE indicates that; the number of days in a year vary from 150-220 (MOE, 2000). The coverage of daily lesson contact for all levels of ABE is expected to be 3:20 to 4:00 hours or 2:00 – 6:00 hours. Tomeet the national Minimum Learning Competency (MLC) standard in the ABE, it is advisable to conduct teaching and learning in the three or four levels of ABE 3:20 to 4:00 hours or 2:00 – 6:00 hours. This is unrealistic in relation to the existing condition of pastoralism and ABE centers. Hence, the study found that, because of harsh learning and climatic condition, it is difficult to conduct class 2:00 to 6: 00 hours per day in one shift. What has been practiced in reality is that; they practice 2:00- 4:00 hours teaching per day. This is against national policy to cover the contents and can have an adverse impact on the quality of learning in the region.

Contribution of ABE to the education system of the region

1). ABE supported access of basic education in the region.

The finding from analysis of primary data collected from 54 respondents in questionaries' 27(50%) of the respondents strongly agreed 20(37%) of them agreed and 7(13%) responded in the medium about the contribution of ABE in increasing access to basic education. The UNESCO (2015) independent report also confirmed the change made from 2000/2001 to 2013/14 for Ethiopian Somali region in gross primary education participation (1-8 grades) where the role ABE is significant. Hence, accordingly, girls participation from 7.2 % to 126.5%, boys participation from 13.4% to 141.8 %and finally,both boys and girls from 10.6 % to 134.9 %. Thus, this increment in gross enrollment may perhaps not possible without ABE program in the region. Besides to this, the data obtained

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from the regional education bureau is presented as under.

Table 4. ABE Enrolment data of Ethiopian Somali regional state for year (2014-2016)

Years	Male	Female	Total
2014	225,781	93,799	319,580
2015	143,821	62,603	206,424
2016	157,008	106,686	263,694

Source: ESREB EMIS (2014-2016)

In addition to what is stated in the proceeding part; the Table 1. Demonstratethe enrollment trend is increasing especially from 2015 to 2016. Hence, from this, it is possible to realize that ABE has played key role in terms of increasing access of education in the region in 2015 (206,424) to 2016(263,693) because without access no enrollment is expected as such.

2). ABE created an opportunity to establish and expanded formal basic education

ESDP IV (MoE, 2010) , a strategic action plan acknowledged for further expansion and strengthening the education system as whole in such a region ; transforming ABE centers to formal/regular full functioning schools, expanding and up-grading the existing ABE center to formal schools,constructing new 1st and 2nd cycle primary schools in pastoral and agro pastoralist areas is one strategy. In relation to this, analysis of data from questionnaires also confirmed that; the majority of the respondents 32(59.3%) strongly agreed and 22(40.7%) agreed that the role of ABE in expanding and establishing formal education in the region is paramount important. From this, it is clearly possible to recognize that almost all participants have shown their consent on the issue in line with the role ABE as opportunity to establish and expand formal schools in the region.Besides, UNESCO (2015) as part of EFA program implementation evaluation report also indicated change made from 2000/2001 to 2013/14 in terms of expansion of primary education (1-8 grade) in the pastoral and agro pastoral Somali region. The report confirmed that;number of primary schools had increased from107 in (2000/2001) to849 in 2013/14) in the last decades. According to ESREB (EMIS, 2014 -2016), the number of ABE centers upgraded to formal schools were;in 2014 (189 ABE centers to formal schools), in 2015 (102 ABE centers to formal schools), in 2016 (88 ABE centers to formal schools).From this, a total of (379) fully functioning first cycle (1-4grade) basic primary schools were created and developed because of ABE program.From the above UNESCO report and Somali region education bureau; we can comprehend the presence of ABE schools utmost important in the region. Besides, we can conclude that and possible to make sure that without the expansion of ABE centers in pastoral and agro pastoral regions like Somali ; it could be impossible to further establish, expand and strengthen formal schools.By far, therefore, just start by using ABE and establish a foundation for formal school in this region especially at primary level (1- 8 grades) as it was successful as the previous performance has indicated.

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3). ABE program improved girl's primary education participation

Data has been collected in the form of questionnaire and documentary analysis to check whether ABE in Somali region improved girl's primary education participation/access to basic education or not?.From the analysis of data revealed that; 24(44.4%) of the participants responded strongly agreed; and 22(40.7%) agreed while 7(13%) of them respondent medium.Hence, since the inception of ABE; rapid and positive change has been made in terms of pastoral girl's participation in education. In support of this, UNESCO (2015) EFA program evaluation report discovered that; pastoral girls Gross Enrollment rate in primary education in Somali region dramatically improved 7.2 % in (2000/1) to 126.5% in (2013/14). This extreme enrollment indicator above hundred is because of under or over aged admission to the system. In similar fashion, the analysis of data form interviews and FGD has shown similar result where the participation of girls in the region improved because of ABE program. National Planning Commission (GTP II, 2015), nationally intended to push upward the base year (2013/2014) 95.2% net enrolment performance to 100% in the target year (2019/2020) at primary school level. In addition, in the GTP II period, it was intended to ensure equity gap in all Primary school between girls and boys ratio to be 1:1. Hence, strong effort is highly needed in pastoral areas by focusing on strengthening and expansion of ABE to realize the target.

4). ABE contributedto literacy (reading and writing skill) development

In the FGD andinterviews held with ABE facilitators and woreda heads in Shinileworeda pointed out that:*"Not only ABE has paved the way for children who are not able to participate in the formal schooling system; but also the program helped children's to meet their basic learning needs such as literacy and numeracy in their nationality (mothertongue) language."* As ESDP V (MoE, 2015) , a National Learning Assessment (NLA) for oral reading fluency in seven nationality languages in Ethiopia was conducted and competed at grade 2 (%) and the finding is presented as follows in the table below;

Table 5. NLA for oral reading fluency in seven nationality languages at Grade 2 (in %).

Proficiency level	**"Proficient''**	**''Basic''**	**"Below Basic"**	**"None''**
Afaan Oromo	5	20	21	54
Af-Somali	**34**	**27**	**13**	**26**
Amharic	6	21	48	25
Hadiyyisa	4	7	13	76
SidaamuAfoo	3	13	15	69
Tigrinya	2	33	34	31
Wolayttatto	12	20	18	50
Source: ESDP V (MoE,2015)				

As per the above table; NLA result for seven nationality languages proved that; Af - Somali students at grade 2 performed higher than other nationality students in Ethiopia per the above

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findings.Hence, reading literacy performanceAf - Somali students is summarized as presented under :34 % "proficient" = Reading fluently with full comprehension, 27% "basics" = Reading with some fluency and comprehension, 13% "below basics" =Reading slowly with limited comprehension, 26 % "below basics" = Non-readers. Hence, since ABE grade/level 2 is under this category; it is possible to say that, ABE has contributed to such development (oral reading) compared with the above other Ethiopian nationality languages presented in the table.

5). ABE changed attitude of community to modern education

Regarding the attitude of the community towards modern education, data from the questionnaire shows that 18(33.3%) of them strongly agreed 25(46.3%) of the participants agreed and 11(20.4%) of them remained in the middle about the impact of the ABE project in raising the attitudes of the community to wards modern education. One ABE facilitator shared his idea as follow:

> *Before the commencement of the ABE, the attitudes of the community to wards education were poor. This is because in the past, there was no modern educational provision for the pastoralist in our area. Children's lack chance to get modern education. Gradually when the ABE program was started in our pastoral area; the awareness level and attitude of the community to wards modern education somehow changed. Because, after ABE level 3 or 4, our children's can transfer to formal schools and the ABE centers itself through time might be changed to formal primary schools.*

Major challenges of ABE in Ethiopian Somali Regional State

1). Lack of female ABE facilitators

MoE (1994) article 3 sub article 3.4.10 stipulates that special attention will be given to the participation of women in the recruitment, training and assignment of teachers.In addition to education policy, Pastoral Education Strategy (2008), recruit people who have better qualification from the locally available educated manpower as ABE facilitators, giving priority to females, and offer them pre-service and in-service training.As policy and strategy designed; this study tried to look in to proportion of female facilitators in the teaching of ABE centers.The finding confirmed that, the proration of female facilitators compared to their counterpart male is extremely low in the region for ABE system of education.

Table 6. ABE facilitators of ESRS by Zone and Gender (2008 E.C)

S/No	Zone	Male	Female	Both	Difference	% of Female
1	**Siti**	**286**	**16**	**302**	**270**	**5.29**
2	Afdahm	333	28	361	305	7.76
3	Jerer	253	49	302	204	16.22
4	**Shebelle**	**217**	**17**	**243**	**200**	**7.26**
5	**Fafan**	**823**	**20**	**843**	**803**	**2.37**
6	Qoraxay	43	37	80	6	46.25
7	Dollo	344	104	448	240	23.21
8	Liban	310	34	344	276	9.88
9	Dhawa	153	14	177	138	7.909

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10	Erer	228	33	261	195	12.64
11	Nogob	37	17	54	20	31.48
Total		**2874**	**355**	**3229**	**2519**	**10.99**
Source: ESREB (EMIS, 2008 E. C)						

In the Table 6 above demonstrates the proportion of ABE facilitators in the region for all Zones by gender.As to this figures, the percentage of female facilitators in the ABE program is estimated to be 10.99 % for the region in ABE program. The cross ponding proportion of male ABE facilitators is 89.01 respectively in the region.When we figure out it by zone it will be much less like the selected zone Siti (5.29%), Shebelle (7.26%) and Faafan (2.37). From this, it is easy to infer that, female facilitators recruitment, selection, training and deployment in the area off teaching in ABE program is at infant level which needs further reconsideration by concerned boys. This may perhaps obstruct attracting more girls in to education as far as female facilitators can be a role model to them.

2). Shortage of properly qualified ABE facilitators

MoE (ETP, 1994) article 3 sub article (3.4.4) states that teachers will be certified before assigned to teach at any level of education. In addition, article 3 sub article (3.4.5) stipulates that, starting from kindergarten to higher education; teachers will be required to have the necessary teaching qualification and competency in the media of instruction, through pre-service and in-service training. As to this policy statement; it is obvious that anyone who is going to be assigned is expected to qualify him or herself in the teaching professional and even in medium of instruction at all level. According to interview, FGD and documentary analysis, slightly a significant and reasonable number of ABE facilitators were training either in their profession or in medium of instruction. In addition to the finding from interview, FGD and documentary analysis, as it was obtained from the analysis questionnaire most respondents 38(70.4%) showed disagreement for the existence of qualified facilitators but a few 16(29.6%) has been found strongly disagree with it.The table below is education statistics adopted from region which indicate number of facilitators who has taken short term training and those who did not taken training for 2009 E.C.

Table 7. Number of ABE facilitators by training condition (2009 E.C)

Sex	Trained	Untrained	Total	% of trained	% of Untrained
Both	3800	2000	5800	65.52	34.48
Source : ESREB ABE Department/Unit					

From the Table 7, 65.52 % (3800)facilitatorshave taken months of short term training (they are not professionals). About 34.48 % (2000)of them were the one who has never faced any training. The training which is given to the ABE facilitators is not up to standard of the education policy.This is because as to our finding, the training standard at this ABE level (1- 4) required is at least one – year or mixed mode of training or diploma as far as it is equivalent with the formal education grade and both practice similar curriculum and prepare students for the same level of education. Hence, still there is a gap in terms of developing the pedagogical and medium of instruction skill which is a base for quality teaching and learning.

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ESDP V (MoE, 2015), at the end of the period, percentage of ABE facilitators without teaching qualification will be reduced to 20%.In similar fashion, percentage of appropriately qualified teachers: G1–4 will increase from 55% to 100%.In the ESDP V (MoE,2015) period, all teachers will move to the required qualification standard: a three-year diploma for primary school teachers;a first or second degree, respectively, for first and second cycle secondary teachers; a one-year (TTI) accelerated mixed-mode of training for ABE teachers; and a certificate (But, three month is duration of study for facilitators in our context); multi-year diploma for ECCE facilitators and teachers. For this to be achieved, teachers in the regions and areas with thelow rates of qualification will be prioritized for upgrading.

3). High turnover /attrition rate of ABE facilitators

In remote and hardship areas like pastoral areas, it is proved facts that, the condition of teaching staff is not stable whereby leave the job.In this study lack of trained and experienced ABE facilitator leave their job of teaching as revealed in data collected form interview, FGDs and documentary analysis.As per the data collected and anlysised for this study, data for the 2009/2017 about the turn over condition of staffs from the ABE centers facilitators is high. In 2009 E. C. academic year, out of 5800 ABE facilitators in the region; 560 of them leave the job of teaching in ABE schools. When this figure computed in terms of percentage; about 560 (9.7%) of ABE facilitators leave the job in one year for different reasons.In the ESDP V (MoE, 2015), the annual attrition rate of teachers/ staff at the end of ESDP IV is 4% and the target at the end of ESDP V will be 2%.ESRS ABE staff attrition rate is 9.7 is really much higher than the national.

4). Low completion and high dropout rate of ABE students

The table below shows, the completion and dropout rate of ABE students in Ethiopian Somali region for the last three consecutive years.

Table 8. ABE student's completion and dropout rate by gender

Type of Indicator	2006 E.C			2007 E.C			2008 E. C		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Completion rate	61%	54%	58 %	67%	59%	63 %	72%	65%	69%
Dropout rate	22.3%	26.7 %	25 %	19.4 %	22.5 %	21 %	17.3 %	19.7 %	19%
Source: ESREB (EMIS, 2006-2008 E.C)									

In the first place, according to the table presented in the preceding part, related with boys completion rate, it is clear observable that boys completion rate is slightly greater and better than girls as proved in 2006 E.C (61%), 2007 E.C (67%) and 2008 E.C (72%).In the same table above, girls completion rate is slightly less than their counter part boys comparatively as discovered in 2006 E.C (54%), 2007 E.C(59%) and 2008 E.C (65%).The justification for why girls' completion

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rate is less than boys is that; in most cases; in pastoral community girls are mainly needed at home.When we look it in to the completion rate altogether for both sex in ABE school; there is positive growth or increasing trend in the percentage of completers like in 2006 E.C (58%), 2007 (63%) and 2008 (69%). In the second place, the second internal efficiency analysis of ABE program as per the analysis of secondary data as per the table after mentioned is the ABE students drop out rate. According to the table presented, related with boys dropout rate, it is clear evident that boys dropout rate is slightly less and better than girls as proved in 2006 E.C (22.3%), 2007 E.C (19.4%) and 2008 E.C (17.3%). This implies that, the trend is a decreasing trend of boy's dropout rate in ABE schooling and healthy function but still high. Since it is a double digit figure, nevertheless; further action is needed to make it at least below two digits.

From the above drop out indicators, girls dropout rate is to some extent greater than boys as revealed in the data of 2006 E.C (26.7%), 2007 E.C(22.5%) and 2008 E.C (17.7%).The justification for why girl's completion rate is less than boys is that; in most cases; in pastoral community girls are mainly needed at home.Regard the dropout rate as whole for both boys and girls in ABE centers; there is positive growth or decreasing in trend in the region in 2006 E.C (25%), 2007 (21%) and 2008 (19%).The double digit of ABE students drop out rate in the region implies that drop out is high enough and indicates very slow improvement though it seems decreasing in trend. As a result, more effort and work is still expected to reduce the rate of dropout rate in the ABE program.

5). High rate of student absenteeism

As to our finding, as a common feature of all ABE centers, the majority of students are absent for their class attendee and absenteeism is report as challenge.During our center visits and interview, ABE facilitators explained and reported to the research team that; the most difficult thing in the ABE program was the low attendance rate of students. The daily class attendance data of ABE students collectedduring visit indicated as presented in the table under for the selected ABE centers in the study areas.

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Table 9. Percentage of Students absentee from class for selected ABE centers visited

N	Name of ABE Center	Woreda	No. Students (Both Sex)	No. of Students absent during visit	% of Absenteeism
1	Hilogadudo,	Gode	65	35	53.80%
2	AnoKulul	Gode	45	27	60.00%
3	Jirris	Adaadle	77	39	56.7%
3	Huddagarasa	Shinile	84	49	58.30%
4	Hudagasaka	Shinile	58	32	55.20%
5	Obale	Gurusum	69	38	55.10%
6	Shurka	Gurusum	83	48	56.70%
7	Caracaska 1	Jigjijiga S.	245	56	22.90%
8	Caracaska 2	Jigjijiga S.	318	74	23.30%
9	Geed Gabl	Jigjijiga N.	-	-	No class
Average rate of absenteeism for ABE centers visited					**55.25%**
Source: Class room observation data					

According to the above table 6, it is clear and confirmed fact that, in all ABE centers except Jigijiga South Woreda ABE schools, the in all ABE centers, the majority of the students were absent in class during visit. From this fact, it is realistic to assume that the condition of class attendance in ABE centers is poor in the region. We tried much to support this finding with a data from regional education bureau about class absenteeism (Region wise), but not possible to get the rate of ABE students absenteeism. Hence, we were forced only to use class room observation figure.In JijgjgaWoreda North, Geed Gadl, as few students report, the class was interrupted before a month due to unknown reason.Hence, flexibility and establish systematic controlling mechanism, which potentially make at least the majority of ABE students can take part in the teaching learning and process.

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6). Low salary and incentive scheme

Considering the salary and benefit issues as reflected during interview with ABE facilitators as reflected that; they were paid very low amount of money for their service. They reported that they were dissatisfied, unmotivated and they were reluctant towards their job of teaching. They confirmed to the study team that they were paid about 800.00 Birr per month. We proved that, the hardship allowance to amount even for facilitators working in the very far areas is not as such attractive; it about 300.00 Birr. This is not enough to attract and retain better professional facilitators either she or he who has even interest, motivation and commitment to serve.The finding ensured that, facilitators who are working in Siti and Faana zone were not working in towns; they were handling the task of their teaching out the zone towns in the rural, hardship areas where there is no transport some times , pure water, electricity, and even they teach in the same hardship situation like facilitators from other zone such as tree shade(most common) few of the teach in locally made centers.The study also confirmed from the view of cluster supervisor repeated the problem of low salary and incentive schemes. In line with the salary and incentive system to be applied in such pastoral areas, the Education and Training Policy of (MoE, 1994) states clearly in its Article 3 sub article3.4.12 that various steps will be taken to promote incentive to motivate teachers specially to those assigned in the hardship areas.

The National Pastoral Education Strategy (MoE, 2008) suggests the application and putting in to affect an incentive system for teachers and other professionals who are willing to work in the harsh conditions of pastoralist areas, on the basis of the experiences of other regions and countries. Besides, the document recommends evaluation of the incentive system over time and makes adjustments accordingly as necessary step to attract and retain teachers and other professionals assigned and to be assigned which can motivate them to serve in difficult environments.In sum, having all these policy direct and strategic directions, through time no continuous consideration has been made in order to improve the salary and incentive mechanisms in the teaching profession of ABE.

7). Weak practice of multi grade teaching approach

To conduct a successful implementation of multi grade teaching approach in particular school context, as suggested in many research findings; the following conditions should be considered:a). To improve access and internal efficiency of the first cycle of primary education in hard-to-reach remote rural communities, sparse settlement areas, pastoralists and semi-agriculturalist societies), b). Appropriate training courses and materials will be developed to train multi-grade teachers**,** c). Teachers will also be trained in pedagogy and management of multi-grade students **(**Preparation of teachers/facilitators in needed number for each center?), d). Textbooks will be modified in such a way that a great deal of self-learning approaches and exercises are incorporated to meet the needs of a multi-grade class student (Modular/integrated in approach in nature, self-instruction based, activity based,

participatory/active learning, and assessment continuous? 1:1 text book ratio are high required) (In our Case no text book is modified) and e). Class room infrastructure highly needed (arranging enough space, chairs and text book suggested)

As per the finding, the practice of multi grade/class teaching in the ABE centers of Ethiopian Somali region is going differently from what the evidences and research on the use of multi grade teaching is suggested above. The finding confirmed that; significant number of facilitators not properly qualified or trained in the techniques of using multi class teaching and all of them were not professional teachers. Late alone in the technique of multi grade teaching skills, majority of them never taken training on how to teach and management multi classes in ABE centers. Besides to the lack of skill in the teaching of multi grade or class, the existing resources like student text books, appropriate training materials, lack of curriculum/syllabus materials, and lack of chairs/ enough space in the program is challenging the multi grade teaching approach and the program. Furthermore; thus, as per the analysis of the data, lack of trained and qualified teachers is severe in the ABE centers. In the study area, facilitators who were better qualified such as the proficiency to teach are often observed by other formal primary schools or employ to other organization as we discussed above as turnover.

8). Problem of data base management

For the success of any educational program including ABE program, developing and the presence of accurate, timely, and relevant information system at center level is important to support the information demand of users.In the ABE centers, which this study has covered, the preparation, management and reporting system of ABE school performance is not properly done.As far as its need is high in recent times for research, supervision, and for management decision processing producing education data is highly suggested. The study found that, Woreda education offices and ABE centers at grass root level lack data about completion rate, dropout rate, and gender equity, text book student ratio, teacher- pupil ratio, repetition rate, class absenteeism rate and even class size. From the observations conducted what woreda education offices and ABE centers prepare and produce as data of ABE performance is simple statistics related with the number of students by grade/level, and gender in unprocessed form. We also discovered that data of ABE performance even at regionlevel is very scattered and provide the necessary information for users in needed and full manner. As finding indicated, not only for ABE, but also for other sub sectors of education there is no regular year data collection , processing, analysis, publication and dissemination of all educational data/information for concerned stake holders.

From my practical experience, educational data of 2007 and 2008 E .C including ABE program is not yet produced and made ready for public use in form of published for researchers , planners and policy makers though it exists in a very scattered fashion. Pastoral Area Education Strategy (2008), it is clearly intended to establish strong Information management system at all levels of pastoralist regions to ensure the collection of timely, accurate and relevant educational data, as well as preparation and dissemination

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of quarter, biannual and annual reports to concerned bodies on time.

9). Lack of text books and supplementary reading materials

The review of official documents particularly the ESDP V (MoE, 2015) and GTP II (2015), the percentage of primary schools offering ≥ 20 varieties of supplementary literacy/numeracy materials national average will reach 100%. As to our finding, the implementation of ESDP V and GTP II is now two years has been elapsed/gone and most ABE centers as we observe were running teaching learning without enough text books and teacher guide for students and facilitators late alone offering ≥ 20 varieties of supplementary literacy/numeracy materials at national average will reach 100%.

As to ESDP V(MoE, 2015) all teachers have sufficient materials for effective teaching ; hence at the end of GTP II the following performance indicators are targeted;Student to textbook ratio (all institutions, all subjects, all grades) will increase from 1:1 to 1:1.2 (books are expected to be greater than students number and 1:1 is not achieved in ABE schools), Text book to teachers' guide ratio will be 40:1, Teacher to teachers' guide-use ratio will reach1:1.When we evaluate practice of ABE program, this study confirmed that; all students and facilitators not provided expected text books and teacher guide for most subjects up to expected quantity.In supporting the ABE program, these targets should be putted in to consideration for reaching the national and regional goal.

10). Poor practice of active teaching and learning

According to ESDP V (MoE, 2015) it was planned in the action plan that the percentage of teachers and ABE facilitators demonstrating active learning methods will reach 100% in 2019/2020.In ABE centers visited for this study as to our finding; what has been going in the ABE schools in terms of teaching methodology in most caseis passive, not participatory, and facilitator centered instead of using student centered approach.The observation indicated that; ABE facilitators write what they had on the black board and ABE students' copy what the facilitator wrote. It is a rare event to observe students who are grouped or arranged for group works.In a few ABE centers, we observed that few individual students were allowed to recall letter of English, Afi-Somali and count numbers. The finding tied with the use of active teaching method also demonstrates that since many of the ABE centers were under tree shade and lack proper class room set up; it is difficult to implement active teaching. For the execution of active teaching method in ABE centers, in most ABE schools, one/single facilitator or two (exceptional) face shortage of time since they move from one group to another group.

Therefore, they were forced to write a note for each level of ABE students turn by turn.Hence, without approaching nationally designed 100% of teachers and ABE facilitators who can demonstrate active teaching and learning methods; as to our observation; it seems a challenging to ensure the relevance and quality of education at all levels, i.e. general education (primary,

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secondary, preparatory, TVET and higher education) as per to the GTP II plan of 2014/015- 2019/20 because ABE program is supplier of students for all the above ladders of education in the region.

Conclusion

On the way to conclusion, Ethiopian Somali region has no as such dynamic educational development in particular to ABE in terms of quality and equity which has been undergoing reforms of social and economic progress of the country. Though the regions Alternative Basic Education program has shown improvement and development in last few years in areas of access; still this sub sector of education is characterized by inadequate facilitators, poor quality of staff, low material and input supply, inadequate supervision and monitoring, low information and data management, low salary scale and incentive mechanisms for staffs, low proportion of female teaching staffs and high absenteeism of students.These living conditions are not an ideal environment for the children to achieve the minimum learning competency. The government of Ethiopia tries to improve its citizen's educational level to achieve the long dream middle income development goal by 2020. In pastoral areas of the country including Ethiopian Somali region; low quality of teaching and learning in ABE schools is challenging the sector success in the region and the country. As the result of this, when education is one of the indices of development, the education bureau of regional government of Ethiopian Somali region and other stakeholders has to reconsider the importance of ABE towards educational developments as far as ABE is complementary to formal basic education and prepares students to next level of education.

Recommendations

To ministry of education

- Disseminate ABE policy documents, program action plan, and strategies for regions, Zones, woredas and stakeholders as far as these documents are the guiding rules.
- Put in to practice a strong and continues supervision, monitoring and evaluation of ABE program up to grass root level in collaboration with region
- Allocated the necessary financial resource required for the further development of the ABE sub sector of education in the region
- Make the training of ABE facilitators, salary and its benefits equivalent with that of the formal basic education (Grade1-4) to make facilitators more responsible to their job in terms of motivation and interest to work in harsh environment
- Besides, modify the syllabus of ABE as intended in pastoral education strategyas modular, self-instruction based, encourage independent learning, activity based, participatory and allows continuous assessment

To regional education bureau

- Create conducive situations for higher education institutions particularly universities found in your areas to contribute their due share for the development of pastoralist education and training by engaging themselves in research and capacity-building activities as suggested in the strategy

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- Arrange pre- service and in -service training for ABE facilitators as per the national strategy to support quality teaching and learning
- Modularize the program as designed in the strategy to make learning more participatory and self-instruction based
- Encourage the selection of female candidates for ABE teaching as per the policy guide to use them as role model
- Establish separate data management system for ABE at all levels; collect data regularly, process it, produce report and disseminate to all user to facilitate research, planning, policy and management decision making.
- Since there is high absenteeism of student; support woredas to establish a strong ABE management committee that involves community representatives, local traditional and kebele leaders and follow the implementation continuously
- To solve the problems of ABE centre inputs like books, syllabus and black board; produce and disseminate teaching and learning materials timely and when needed
- Involve different stakeholders in research, consultancy, training and development activities
- Strengthen the existing ABE centers and expand a new centers especially in potential and risk areas
- Upgrade strong ABE centers up to grade six as intended ESDP V (MoE,2015) to improve the continuity of learning
- Reconsider the salary and incentive mechanismsin order to retained existing facilitators on their job, better experienced and to pull new ABE facilitators as candidate to address the shortage of facilitators
- Seek for additional reading materials especially in language areasfor ABE schools from development organizations like colleges, Universities, local, national, and multinational NOGS
- Provide training for facilitators on multi grade teaching approach in collaboration with others like colleges, Universities, and local, national, multinational NOGs

To woreda education bureaus

- Supervise, monitor and evaluate the progress of ABE program implementation regular and update on time in your vicinity
- Establish, prepare and process monthly, quarterly, and annual report of ABE student information to the concerned region in communication with ABE centres
- Make ABE data and information system as much as possible comprehensive enough to look at least all the variables of the system
- Identify potential ABE sites that can be up graded to the formal schools and areas of future expansion in your territory
- Ask for material supply from regional education bureau and distribute it on time and when need is in place
- Avoid the use of de facto coordinator in communication with region since woredas are using facilitators as coordinator because as far as this approach is not as such productive; instead it is better to assign officially ABE coordinator/director with incentive mechanism

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To ABE centres/ schools, facilitators/coordinators

- Communicate with the community regularly
- Follow the attendance issues
- Use mobile approach when need comes
- Improve the internal efficiency of teaching and learning
- Develop good information and data management system
- Create awareness continually to the community
- Encourage girls participation
- Involve and ensure the local chiefs, community representatives and leaders in the decision making and management of ABE centres
- Create, make strong and motivate ABE school board/committee as management body of ABE centres
- Prepare report of ABE performance to the woredas which is timely, accurate and relevant

To Universities, Colleges, NGOs and Development agencies

- Support , conduct and focus on research activities continuously
- Provide training and development activities
- Encourage and produce new innovative ideas, technologies and modalities for ABE
- Provide an advisory and consultancy service
- Build water spots (NGOs & Development agencies)
- Construct least cost class rooms in permanent villages to avoid the use of tree shade
- Donate reading books and other inputs to ABE centers
- For NGOs, reconsider direct involvement in the implementation of ABE program in the region because for instance after withdrawal of some NGOs; the program has shown slow progress

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