



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION



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# FINAL REPORT

## Implementing the CBC in Dadaab and Kakuma Refugee Camps

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
ASAL	Arid and Semi-arid Lands
BOM	Board of Management
CBC	Competency-Based Curriculum
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EDPCG	Education Development Partners Coordination Group
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
KII	Key Informant Interview
LWF	Lutheran World Foundation
MoE	Ministry of Education (Kenya)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
SH	Samuel Hall
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VBE	Value-Based Education
WIK	Windle International Kenya

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Kenya's Vision 2030 aims to 'transform Kenya into a newly industrialising, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030'.<sup>1</sup> Curricular reform of the national education system forms one of the flagship projects of this process. Accordingly, in 2017 the Government introduced a new Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).<sup>2</sup> Intended to phase out the 8-4-4 system in favour of a more learner-centred system, the curriculum reform is ambitious in its scope, consisting of a significant pedagogical shift, and requiring additional material and infrastructural resources for effective implementation.<sup>3</sup> Existing research on this curricular shift both confirms the limitations of the 8-4-4 system,<sup>4</sup> as well as highlights constraints faced to date in the implementation of the CBC across Kenya nationally.<sup>5</sup>

In line with the goals of keeping the education system in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps aligned with the national curriculum, following commitments made in adopting the Global Compact on Refugees to "include refugee children and youth in national education systems without discrimination", the shift to the CBC has also been implemented there.<sup>6</sup> Camp-based education management and service delivery in Kenya is largely financed and supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and partners.<sup>7</sup> While the Government of Kenya also contributes to refugee education, the way in which the educational system in the camps is implemented results in gaps in resources and limited ability to plan for the longer-term.<sup>8</sup> The emergence of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in late 2019 created further hurdles to CBC implementation. It underscores the necessity for teachers to "embrace new and diverse ways of teaching to accommodate for learning losses."<sup>9</sup>

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) and UNHCR are partnering in Kenya with the Kenyan Ministry of Education (MoE) to improve CBC implementation in low resource settings such as refugee camps. One element of this support comes through AKF's support to strengthening teaching in the camps through the rollout of its value-based education (VBE) modules.<sup>10</sup> However, limited evidence exists about the specificities of the camp contexts within the CBC implementation process.

This research seeks to address that gap, providing evidence around how the new curriculum has been implemented and received in refugee hosting areas in Kenya and identifying capacity gaps and other challenges critical to the CBC's successful implementation, to better support UNHCR, AKF and other international education partners to provide quality education to school-age children within displacement contexts. Learnings from this research should be considered not just in the context of the camps, but also as broader lessons from which to learn in reinforcing the implementation of the CBC nationwide.

## 1.1. Research objectives

Samuel Hall was commissioned by AKF and UNHCR to lead a **situational analysis of the CBC delivery in refugee hosting areas in Dadaab and Kakuma, with a particular focus on VBE**. This was done by:

1. Conducting a situational analysis on the status of CBC implementation in refugee hosting areas in Dadaab and Kakuma;
2. Assessing and providing evidence of effective practices and interventions through the VBE teacher transformation modules; and,
3. Providing recommendations for critical elements necessary to create the enabling environment for effective delivery of CBC in low resource contexts.

<sup>1</sup> Government of Kenya, "Kenya Vision 2030."

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, "National Curriculum Policy," 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 21.

<sup>4</sup> Akala, "Revisiting Education Reform in Kenya: A Case of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC).", 2

<sup>5</sup> See for example, Wambua, "Constraints Facing Successful Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya."

<sup>6</sup> UNHCR, "Global Refugee Forum Factsheet - Education.Pdf."

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR Kenya, "Education."

<sup>8</sup> UNHCR Kenya.

<sup>9</sup> Aga Khan Foundation, Terms of reference.

<sup>10</sup> Aga Khan Foundation, Terms of reference.

**Chapter 1** introduces the study and presents the methodology used. **Chapter 2** provides a situational analysis of the implementation of CBC in refugee hosting areas in Dadaab and Kakuma, mapping the broader stakeholder environment and identifying key challenges and constraints identified through in-person school observations, focus-group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews with parents, teachers and key regional stakeholders within the camps. **Chapter 3** then delves into the VBE training module as a case study, exploring its impact on teachers and Board of Management (BOM) members who participated in the Kakuma Camp modules, with a particular focus on how teachers report it changing their approach to teaching and the CBC. Finally, **Chapter 4** provides a roadmap outlining key recommendations for creating an enabling environment for more effective delivery of the CBC

## 1.2. Methodology

The research took a qualitative approach to considering key tenets of CBC implementation in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. The assessment focused on the significant drivers, enablers and barriers to implementation of the CBC.

Research was conducted directly in Kakuma refugee camp, located in north-eastern Kenya, in Turkana county, and Dadaab refugee camps, located in the eastern Kenya, in Garissa County. Approximately 440,000 people lived in Kakuma and Dadaab camps, as of July 2021; approximately half of refugees in Kenya are children.<sup>11</sup> While Dadaab hosts primarily Somali refugees, in Kakuma the population is more diverse.

With the support of UNHCR, a total of 13 schools were identified and selected for in-person observation and key informant interviews.

Table 1 – Schools visited for this research

Dadaab refugee camp	Kakuma refugee camp
Bahati primary school	Al-Nuur primary school
Horyal primary school	Angelina Jolie primary school (private)
Iftin primary school	Fashoda primary school
Ileys primary school	Fuji primary school
Midnimo primary school	Malakal primary school
Upendo primary school	Mogadishu primary school
	New Light Academy (VBE school)

The research targeted key actors in the CBC ‘ecosystem’, namely, teachers, parents, and implementation stakeholders including the MoE, UN agencies and NGOs / CSOs. In addition, an observation of each school’s infrastructure was conducted. In total, approximately 170 people participated in the research.

Three main types of instruments were used to conduct the research, key informant interviews, School Observations and FGDs:

**Key informant interviews** were conducted at national, camp, and school level; these focused on the implementation of the CBC. This included limited information around CBC implementation in Kalobeyei refugee camp. Key informants included: principals, teachers, Parent Teachers Association, school management committees, MoE officers, education committees, and staff from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in the selected locations. **Focus Group Discussions** targeted teachers, parents, and also, in the case of the VBE FGD, BOM members who had participated in the VBE training modules. These sought to capture participants’ experiences

Figure 1 – Map of research locations (Image source: VOA, 2021)



<sup>11</sup> UNHCR, “Kenya Statistics Infographics | July 2021.”

with the practical implementation of the CBC in the camps, as well as to discuss the experience of the VBE training modules. Discussions were based on an open-ended questionnaire, lasting approximately one and a half hours, and conducted by moderators with a group of approximately five respondents. Finally, **observational methods and photography** mapped school characteristics, and created visual and audio products to highlight some of the strengths and challenges of existing learning spaces, materials, and infrastructure.

Table 2 – Fieldwork completed by location

Location	Research Tool	Total Conducted
Dadaab	Parent FGD	6
	Teacher FGD	6
	Key informant interviews	18
	School observations	6
Kakuma	Parent FGD	6
	Teacher FGD	6
	VBE Participant FGD	1
	Key informant interviews	16
	School observations	6
Nationally	Key informant interviews	3

## 2. CBC SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

### 2.1. Background on CBC implementation

#### 2.1.1. Understanding curricular evolutions

The CBC was introduced in Kenya by the MoE in 2017 to replace the 8-4-4 system that had been in place since 1985.<sup>12</sup> Under the 8-4-4 system, learners would spend eight years in primary schools, four years in high school and the final four years in university.

The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) 2009 summative evaluation of the 8-4-4 curriculum identified critical “gaps in achievement of national goals of education, curriculum objectives, capacity of the implementers, assessment and management structures that support curriculum implementation.”<sup>13</sup> The evaluation recommended that the curriculum be revised to place “more emphasis on practical and vocational education, nurturing of talents, inclusion of critical life skills” and less emphasis on the “cognitive domain.”<sup>14</sup> The previous system was criticised as oriented toward students who perform well in traditional subjects, while ignoring other vocational interests such as education, arts and sports.<sup>15</sup>

The CBC follows a 2-6-3-3 system: learners are to spend two years at the pre-primary school level, six years in primary (three in lower, three in upper), and six years in secondary school.<sup>16</sup> These years will be divided into three tiers of basic education, Early Years capturing pre-primary and lower primary, Middle School capturing upper primary and junior school, and finally three years in Senior School (with an additional 3 years of Tertiary education possible).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Amutabi, “Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and the End of an Era in Kenya’s Education Sector and Implications for Development.”

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, “National Curriculum Policy,” 10.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 10.

<sup>15</sup> Kabita and Ji, *The Why, What and How of Competency-Based Curriculum Reforms: The Kenyan Experience*, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Curriculum Designs.”

<sup>17</sup> Kabita and Ji, *The Why, What and How of Competency-Based Curriculum Reforms: The Kenyan Experience*, 12.

The design, development and implementation of the CBC focus on a learner-centred training and formative and genuine evaluation approaches.<sup>18</sup> It is anchored on the development of learner competencies and the application of acquired knowledge in practical life.<sup>19</sup> In essence, the CBC education system is meant to meet the job market demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and enhance the competitiveness of Kenya in terms of producing skills and competences with respect to the global social and economic demands.<sup>20</sup> It integrates the use of ICT in the teaching of each subject, noting “Due to the added value of ICT in learning, all teachers and students should use ICT to support and enrich their teaching and learning activities. ICT is a way of life in the knowledge society and digital era.”<sup>21</sup> The learning areas identified by KICD include English, Kiswahili (or Kenya Sign Language), Home science, Agriculture, Science and Technology, Mathematics, Christian Religious Education, Islamic Religious Education, Music, Art and Craft, Physical and Health Education, Social Studies, and foreign languages (Arabic, French, etc).<sup>22</sup>

These teaching areas have material and infrastructural requirements. At a high level, for example, classrooms must be suitable to the new pedagogical approaches, with appropriate tables available and set up for small groups, along with chairs. Music and physical education require instruments, games, and space to use both, while agriculture necessitates tools and similarly space. Finally, students and teachers require new textbooks adapted to the CBC, while ICT infrastructure is needed to allow for the subject-wise ICT learning approach referenced above. The curricular reforms do have as ambition to address persisting gaps in availability and access to textbooks and learning materials, recognising that “besides books other materials will be needed to support experiential learning and the requisite formative assessments.”<sup>23</sup>

Piloting of the CBC began in 2017, and it was rolled out nationally in 2019 to gradually phase out the 8-4-4 system.<sup>24</sup> While overall views of this evolution are positive, a number of issues have been raised with regards to how the CBC has been implemented. For example, one assessment underlines the “perceived limitation consultation of stakeholders and the preparedness and readiness of schools to effectively implement CBC programme.”<sup>25</sup> The change in approach and responsibilities of teachers is significant (see Box 1 below), requiring new pedagogical approaches, and a shift towards continual assessment approaches rather than the previous system, based on a single national examination.<sup>26</sup>

### Box 1. Intended roles of teachers and parents in the CBC

Under the new CBC, the roles of teachers and parents have significantly changed. Teachers, as the key implementers and facilitators of the CBC programme, are expected to re-orient pedagogical delivery methods in order to ensure a competency-based approach, so as to “encourage innovation, experiential learning and creativity,” while making extant use of technology for both in-class and distance learning.<sup>27</sup> Using this approach, teachers are prompted to contribute to “early identification”, “mentoring” and “nurturing” of talents,<sup>28</sup> and to adopt a flexible approach that bears in mind students’ different learning speeds.<sup>29</sup> Individualised attention and support is strongly emphasised under the new curriculum, as teachers are expected to strike a “fair balance between formative and summative assessments” – thus moving away from tradition assessment approaches in Kenya, which tended to place a heavier onus on final examinations.<sup>30</sup>

The roles of head teachers, teachers and parents are detailed by the KICD as follows:

<sup>18</sup> Obonyo and Sifuna, “Competency Based Curriculum in Primary Schools in Kenya: Prospects and Challenges of Implementation,” 39.

<sup>19</sup> Obonyo and Sifuna, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Obonyo and Sifuna, 40.

<sup>21</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Basic Education Curriculum Framework.”

<sup>22</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “CBC Materials.”

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, “National Curriculum Policy,” 16.

<sup>24</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “New Curriculum Roll-out Now Pushed to 2019.”

<sup>25</sup> Anyango, Abuya, and Janet, “Stakeholder Consultation and Implementation of Competency Based Education Programme in Public Primary Schools in Kisumu East Sub-County, Kenya,” 78.

<sup>26</sup> Akala, “Revisiting Education Reform in Kenya: A Case of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC),” 6.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, “National Curriculum Policy,” 17.

<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 12.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 19.

Stakeholder	Role
Head teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Create a positive climate within the school set up.</li> <li>• Supervise and coordinate curriculum implementation.</li> </ul>
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key implementers and facilitators of CBC</li> <li>• Ensure access of available textbooks to students, maintain and update related records and timely retrieval.</li> </ul>
Parents / Guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Role model – The first educator, trainer and a source of authority to learners</li> <li>• Provide basic needs for learners</li> <li>• Involve in school activities</li> <li>• Provide conducive learning environment for CBC.”<sup>31</sup></li> </ul>

For each, this does represent a significant evolution from expectations around their previous role – evolutions which have yet to be fully realised.

The implementation of the CBC programme has been undertaken in line with Article 53 of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya, which calls for “free and compulsory basic education”, the Basic Education Act No. 14 of 2013 and regulations thereunder, the 2021 Early Childhood Education Act, No. 3 and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development Act, No. 4 of 2013. These provide the legal and policy frameworks for the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the CBC programme.

The CBC was piloted in 2017 in ten schools that were selected from 47 counties.<sup>32</sup> Subsequently, the new curriculum was rolled out nationwide for pre-primary (1 and 2), and Grades 1-3 in 2019, and for Grade 4 in 2020.<sup>33</sup> The rollout is expected to continue gradually to Grade 12 in 2028.<sup>34</sup>

### 2.1.2. CBC implementation progress in Dadaab and Kakuma camps

Education in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps follows the national curriculum in Kenya, with students sitting for national assessments and examinations. However, its implementation is managed by UNHCR rather than directly through the MoE.<sup>35</sup> As Kenya undertook educational reforms, especially through the adoption of the CBC approach, additional support was needed to ensure that camp schools were included in the roll-out of the CBC. This is especially crucial to stay aligned with commitments made under the Global Compact on Refugees, and in light of the uncertainty over the future of the camps.

The implementation of the CBC in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps began with the early years of education (two years of pre-primary 1 and 2, and three years of lower primary schooling, Grades 1-3). Nationwide, this was begun with multi-agency (MoE, KICD, KNEC) team trainings led by the MoE on CBC, to address the significant changes in pedagogical approach which the CBC entails. Curriculum Support Officers and CBC Champion Teachers have been appointed, drawn from across schools in each county to serve as Trainers of Teachers (TOT).<sup>36</sup>

The implementation of the CBC requires significant training throughout the process and remains a material need. For example, as of December 2019, UNHCR indicated in its Dadaab monthly operational update that approximately 600 more teachers within the camps required training on necessary skills for the implementation of the CBC curriculum, and that schools within the Dadaab camps were lacking teaching and learning materials that were necessary for the implementation of the CBC programme for various grades; including approximately 21,000 textbooks and teaching guides.<sup>37</sup> These teachers were then trained in December and January by the MoE team detailed above, but as new teachers join and new grades rolled out, further training and additional learning

<sup>31</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Curriculum Reforms in Kenya - Roles of Various Stakeholders.”

<sup>32</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Government Launches Pilot Program of New Curriculum.”

<sup>33</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Curriculum Reforms in Kenya - Where Are We?”

<sup>34</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), 2.

<sup>35</sup> UNHCR Kenya, “Education.”

<sup>36</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Curriculum Reforms in Kenya - Where Are We?,” 2.

<sup>37</sup> UNHCR, “Dadaab, Kenya - Monthly Operational Update - December 2019.”



materials are needed.<sup>38</sup> Efforts are under way on both fronts – for instance, in May 2021, some 258 teachers participated in a UNHCR-led virtual training on CBC, curriculum planning and implementation as well as promotion of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of children. One key informant underlined, “We are getting some textbooks through donor funding, and so far, we have gotten from UNHCR and UNICEF, we have Church of Sweden that also provided funding to buy textbooks. Funding might be a challenge, but we are scaling up slowly on the program as we get funding. We are implementing this program on two fronts; one is the capacity building of teachers and two is getting teaching and learning resources.”<sup>39</sup> However, across the board today, key informants and teachers interviewed describe a situation of major continued gaps.<sup>40</sup> The majority of schools visited, for instance, still have untrained teachers.<sup>41</sup>

Teacher training is further complicated by the high rates of teacher turnover. For example, within Dadaab camp, layoffs occurred throughout the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a negative impact on the general flow of the implementation of CBC in schools, with new teachers not necessarily trained on the CBC. CBC implementation is further challenged by the general lack of the necessary infrastructure and the poor learning environments in schools within the camps (see Sections 2.2 - 2.3).<sup>42</sup>

Finally, in Kakuma in particular, many teachers have limited formal teacher training. For instance, UNHCR notes that 57% of secondary school teachers are untrained there.<sup>43</sup> The lack of formal training puts the teachers in a position in which they may not participate adequately in the effective implementation of CBC programme in schools within the camp.

*“I would say 70% of our teachers are incentive teachers; these are refugees. If you go to a school of the 70% teachers, 60% of them are not trained [qualified]. They do not have any background in teaching, so we recruit and we do have a lot of intakes and we do our in-service trainings around CBC.” - KII22, Interview with an education officer in Kakuma, August 2021.*

Beyond teacher capacity issues, in both Kakuma and Dadaab, the pre-COVID teaching context already faced issues with overcrowding and lack of materials, both of which make it harder to implement the CBC curriculum. As in the rest of Kenya, precautions to address the COVID-19 pandemic have further impeded CBC roll-out, as regulations around social distancing and group sizes directly interfere with CBC’s group learning and play-centred approach. As one teacher describes it, “It has affected the seating arrangement of CBC because of COVID-19 protocols like social distancing.”<sup>44</sup> Another similarly notes, “learning activities cannot be carried in groups as learners are expected to observe social distance; learners absent themselves when they feel sick because they feel shy about coughing or sneezing class. Learners don’t play and do activities together due to COVID strict measures.”<sup>45</sup>

Some progress has been made in CBC specific trainings for teachers, even as COVID-19 closed schools. For instance, Finn Church Aid (FCA), funded by UNICEF, was able to train about 123 teachers working in schools within the Kalobeyei settlement on the CBC in early 2020.<sup>46</sup> Beyond CBC trainings, teachers have also been exposed to support supervision and mentorship from the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). These officers often visit schools, conduct classroom observations and offer mentorship and support to teachers.

In both camps, the education sector has also benefited from linkages with the Kenyan government, specifically the MoE and the KICD. These two institutions have been supportive in training and capacity building of teachers. However, this support has been facilitated by UNHCR and the international community and therefore continued collaboration may depend on the level of funding available.

<sup>38</sup> According to UNHCR stakeholder

<sup>39</sup> KII 33, Interview with an Education Officer from LWF in Dadaab, conducted in September 2021

<sup>40</sup> UNHCR, “Dadaab, Kenya - Monthly Operational Update - May 2021.”

<sup>41</sup> KII33, Interview with an Education Officer from LWF in Dadaab, conducted in September 2021.

<sup>42</sup> UNHCR, “Dadaab, Kenya - Monthly Operational Update - December 2019.”

<sup>43</sup> UNHCR, Education Strategy – UNHCR Kakuma Camp

<sup>44</sup> KII8, Interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>45</sup> KII9, Interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>46</sup> Muraya, “Learning Continues in Refugee Camps as Schools Close Temporarily.”

## 2.2. Centre stage: teacher capacity to implement the CBC in Dadaab and Kakuma camps

Teachers are crucial to the successful implementation of the CBC – without their capacity to take onboard the new approaches and content which the CBC entails, material and infrastructural efforts are doomed to failure. Interviewing teachers and head teachers reveals positive enthusiasm from many, but also deep conceptual challenges and practical limitations, as this section explores.

### 2.2.1. Mixed, but generally positive, attitudes towards CBC

Globally, stakeholders argued, teachers' attitudes towards CBC in Dadaab and Kakuma camps are similar to that of teachers throughout Kenya, with enthusiasm mixed with uncertainty and hesitancy.

*"I have seen the attitude of teachers in the refugee camp is the same attitude the Kenyan teachers have, others are really complaining that it is really demanding in terms of their time, they have to look at the learners, know what the learners are able to do and in terms of preparations it really requires a lot of time from them to get it done."* - KII27, Interview with an education officer in Dadaab, August 2021.

In particular, while attitudes towards collaborative, experiential learning and greater student agency were broadly positive, practical challenges raised by teachers temper this enthusiasm.

Generally, four common profiles of teachers – not mutually exclusive – towards CBC were identified:

#### 'Converts'

Educators who endorsed the CBC, after initially negative views. *"Initially, the teachers had a negative attitude towards the CBC. When something new comes, there is always fear of starting it. But as of now, we have come to understand that CBC is very important because the learners learn so many things. The class is pupil-centred and when you compare it with the 8-4-4 system, you will discover that CBC is very good for the learners. It makes work easier for the teachers because more learning activities are given to the learners so that when they carry out these activities, the teacher is just monitoring every learner to find out what they are talented at."* - KII5, Interview with a head teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.



#### 'Hesitators'

Teachers expressed hesitancy and ambivalence toward the implementation of CBC, highlighting their apprehension for the new curriculum and the shift away from standardised lectures and exams *"It varies, some have positive attitude towards the CBC while others have bad attitudes towards it but they all enjoy because there is a shift in methods of teaching which needs more from the learner as compared to the teacher. Some are having negative attitude because the nature of human is that we fear anything new, you are not sure of its failures and success."* KII10, Interview with a teacher in Dadaab, August 2021



#### 'Frustrated advocates'

Teachers who endorsed the broader CBC philosophy, yet felt exasperated and demoralised with regard to their capacity to implement the new curriculum, for example as a result of lack of adequate CBC training, teaching and learning material resources. *As one teacher explains, "(teachers are) worried because they don't have the required textbooks, they never taught some subjects before in the previous curriculum like music and Art, the instruments are not available."* - KII13, Interview with a teacher in Dadaab, August 2021



#### 'Resisters'

Teachers who remain unconvinced by the switch from 8-4-4. *"It is something new that they are not used to, and they feel resistant to change, some feel it is a waste of time especially with some activities that the children are to engage in. They think the activities, such as community service, do not add any value to the learners and is a waste of time."* - KII22, Interview with an education stakeholder in Kakuma, August 2021



These profiles are driven by conceptual misconceptions around the primary objectives of the CBC, limited training and resources, and more generalised challenges to education in these contexts.

## 2.2.2. Inconsistent conceptual understanding of the CBC

The level of understanding of CBC among teachers and principals varied greatly across the locations studied, reflecting the discrepancies in the depth and availability of CBC training provided to date, as well as of previous pedagogical studies.

Many teachers and principals interviewed for this research demonstrated strong knowledge of the core philosophy, features and expected outcomes of the CBC. For instance, a number of respondents described CBC as being a learner-centred approach allowing students to move at their own pace, participate in knowledge creation, while moving away from the 8-4-4 system based on more traditional style of teaching and examinations.

*“CBC is a new curriculum that replaces the 8.4.4 system, it was introduced to our school and it focuses on learners’ abilities by doing activities. It revolves around the skills, attitude and values and behaviours acquired; it is learners-centred, meaning the planned activities should be practically done by the student, unlike the 8.4.4 system which was more on teachers teaching the lesson and the aim was passing the exam.” – KII3, Interview with a teacher in Dadaab, August 2021.*

Many teachers interviewed also demonstrated their knowledge of the increased level of parental involvement and the role they play in complementing the teacher's efforts.

However, beyond small misunderstandings, two significant conceptual challenges face actors wishing to strengthen understanding of the CBC.

### I. Differing interpretations of “facilitation”

Teachers’ and principals’ interpretations and understandings of their role under the CBC varied greatly, particularly in terms of their function as learning facilitators. Some teachers provided a minimalistic description of their role in implementing the CBC, seeing it as one of student supervision and monitoring. One teacher explained: *“The CBC is learner-centred, whereby there are hands-on skills and learners have to do most of the work and the role of the teacher is only to guide them and give instruction.”*<sup>47</sup> A headteacher in Kakuma similarly commented: *“It makes work easier for the teachers because more learning activities are given to the learners so that when they carry out these activities, the teacher is just monitoring every learner to find out what they are talented at.”*<sup>48</sup>

In sharing their understanding of CBC, several teachers noted that in comparison to the 8-4-4 system, they felt the burden of effort on the part of the teacher was lightened. *“They all enjoy it because there is a shift in methods of teaching which needs more from the learner as compared to the teacher.”*<sup>49</sup> Another senior teacher noted: *“(teachers) are happy because the CBC makes their work easier. Because learners engage. They do it by themselves and teachers are just there to guide.”*<sup>50</sup>

Other teachers more accurately emphasised an expectation of active guidance and individualised support – in these cases finding the workload to be harder compared to the 8-4-4 system:

*“When you look at the scheme of work of CBC and that of 8-4-4 is so different. But the teachers have accepted to change on their scheme of work from 8-4-4 to CBC. The 8-4-4 was like ‘I am a teacher, I enter into the class and ask what did we learn yesterday.’ But the CBC is learner friendly, you go back and start with singing to bring learners attention. There are also teaching formalities in CBC. You can’t go to class and just start teaching at the word go, no, I have to start to talk to the learners and ask them how they have been, if everyone is in the class, so I can be able to guide and console the ones that face problems.” - FGD with teachers in Kakuma, August 2021.*

<sup>47</sup> KII32, Interview with a teacher in Mogadishu, conducted in September 2021.

<sup>48</sup> KII5, Interview with a head teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>49</sup> KII10, Interview with a head teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>50</sup> KII28, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

Another respondent noted: *“Some teachers feel like it’s an added workload. So some of them are actually complaining not because it’s a hard system, but it’s adding more workload than the previous one was quite easy for them to give a test, you mark ABCD you award the marks but with CBC you have to observe the learner, you have to prepare the portfolio and help them developing the competencies.”*<sup>51</sup>

These latter teachers recognise the fuller scope of teacher responsibilities implied by the shift to CBC. Analysis of similar shifts in other contexts confirms the breadth of retraining needed: *“In Indonesia, for example, the CBC shifted the role of the teacher from head to education facilitator [...] That involves a massive mandate of curriculum implementation on teachers who are supposed to be retrained and equipped with appropriate skills and knowledge about CBC.”*<sup>52</sup>

## II. A siloed, job-oriented approach to CBC

When reflecting on some of the benefits of the CBC, several teachers also presented the CBC as a pragmatic and job-oriented system. One head teacher explains: *“My attitude towards the CBC is very positive because the learners are being directed to exploit their talents and their abilities. In ten years to come, I see that we may not be having waste as we had in the previous curriculum. Most of the learners will be self-employed. When they learn these skills, the economy of the country will be booming. For me, I really embrace the new system of education.”*<sup>53</sup>

Teachers also highlighted a perceived shorter duration of the CBC (not counting the mandatory ECDE and three years of tertiary education, and focusing on the 12 years of 6-3-3) compared to the 8-4-4 system as one of its main benefits: *“(teachers) are ready to support the curriculum because it’s taking less duration for learners to complete their studies. For example, 8-4-4 can take 16 years for a learner to complete the university while the CBC system is 6-3-3 which is less than 16 years to the completion.”*<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, a number of teachers described their role as one of talent identification and career-orientation. *“The experience I got from CBC is that we don’t teach normally, but teach the talent of a student and identify those talents.”*<sup>55</sup>

Although well-intentioned, this view of teaching raises the question of whether children are being siloed into specific pedagogical subjects for which they may demonstrate a certain capability, while being discouraged from cultivating curiosity and exploring a broader range of talents and interests outside of their usual habits. In other words, this pragmatic, siloed approach to teaching may not pay enough regard to the quality or breadth of learning.

### 2.2.3. Limited capacity of teachers and principals to fully implement the CBC

Broadly, teachers and principals who had undergone training on the CBC reported feeling empowered to implement the fundamental components of the CBC; however, nearly all acknowledged the need for continued additional support, resources, and training.

Several teachers, for example, expressed their confusion about the new protocols and lesson planning components of the CBC. *“I still need more training because the part of the professional document is confusing. It’s not hard but confusing, especially lesson planning.”*<sup>56</sup>

Teachers and principals described facing challenges and constraints limiting their capacity to implement the CBC. These included challenges relating to the duration and availability of training, underlying gaps in teaching experience (particularly for volunteer teachers), systems of teachers training other teachers, and varying levels of digital literacy among teachers.

- **Training:** Significant deficiencies in the length and availability of CBC trainings to date were noted by respondents in both Dadaab and Kakuma. In four of the 13 schools visited for this study, less than half of

<sup>51</sup> KII16, Interview with a head teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>52</sup> Ruth and Ramadas, “The ‘Africanized’ Competency-Based Curriculum,” 48.

<sup>53</sup> KII5, Interview with a head teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021

<sup>54</sup> KII31, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>55</sup> FGD7, Focus group discussion with teachers in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>56</sup> FGD3, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

the teachers employed had received CBC training. Only three schools reported that most or all of their teachers had received training. As one teacher in Kakuma detailed, even when teachers have trained this training is insufficient. *"Some teachers went up to Lodwar for one week training, national teachers went for the training for one week, other teachers went for the training for three days and others went for two weeks. So, it depends on the content, but most cases, it was one week training[...] You know this is a new system, one week is not enough."*<sup>57</sup> Another key informant complained that the content and scope of the training were too shallow.<sup>58</sup> Further training on new areas of the curriculum – such as music, agriculture and the creative arts – was specifically requested.<sup>59</sup> Finally, some teachers expressed concerns around the competence of trainers to teach the teachers such complex topics, warning this can negatively impact perceptions of CBC more broadly: *"The incompetency of the trainers is an issue because it makes the teachers have judgement even when the training is ongoing. These guys can deliver nothing. We will not benefit. Moving forward, we need to have competent trainers to train our teachers."*<sup>60</sup>

- Teacher-led CBC training:** In some schools, teachers are expected to train other teachers in CBC, despite having undergone limited training in CBC themselves, leading some respondents to express concerns over the degree of preparedness of teachers to implement CBC: *"I would argue that teachers have been oriented but not trained on CBC."*<sup>61</sup> Given the conceptual misunderstandings highlighted in the previous, there is a significant risk for 'cascading' models of training – in the camps and more broadly – to amplify disinformation if champions' initial training is not followed up with regular mentoring and clear requirements for champion recruitment, to make sure they are suited to transmit these complex concepts.
- Previous teacher experience:** High rates of teacher turnover and the use of 'volunteer' teachers makes it difficult for stakeholders to sustainably train teachers on the CBC to a high standard. Several key informants noted that incentive (volunteer) teachers had encountered particular difficulties understanding and implementing the activities under the new curriculum, attributing it to their lack of prior teaching experience.<sup>62</sup> *"The challenge (...) is that they are not professionally trained teachers, so they don't know how to keep records, they don't know how to do lesson planning and some of them find it difficult to understand the new curriculum or the syllabus."*<sup>63</sup> In some cases, some incentive teachers have preferred to avoid teaching the classes altogether: *"They [the MoE] are struggling, especially with the incentive (volunteer) teachers, in letting them know that this is the direction we need to take. We have had incidents where teachers don't agree to take the CBC classes because of the challenges that come with it, the way the activities are tailor-made and all that."*<sup>64</sup> Layoffs due to funding gaps in 2020 were identified as a further cause for concern around teacher experience, potentially leading to newly recruited teachers who have not yet received training on CBC as schools have reopened.<sup>65</sup>
- Limited digital literacy:** Also noted as a potential challenge to CBC implementation was the level of digital literacy among teachers and principals, which comes in contrast to the approach outlined in the KICD Basic Curriculum for the CBC which underlines the need for both teachers and students to use ICT across the learning areas. While some teachers responded that they had received basic training on ICT, such as how to navigate content on the internet, working with computer programmes and tablets, most had not received any such training.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, they lack the technological materials to engage on this in depth, due to limited numbers of tablets, and intermittent or unavailable power (see Section 2.3).

<sup>57</sup> KII31, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>58</sup> KII15, Interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>59</sup> KII16, Interview with a headteacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>60</sup> KII 32, Interview with a headteacher in Kakuma, conducted in September 2021.

<sup>61</sup> KII34, Interview with an Education Advisor at AKF, conducted in August 2021

<sup>62</sup> KII23, Interview with an education coordinator in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>63</sup> KII21, Interview with a TSC Curriculum Officer in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>64</sup> KII22, Interview with a Senior Education Officer from LWF, conducted in August 2021

<sup>65</sup> FGD14, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>66</sup> FGD13, Focus group discussion with teachers in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

- **Inadequate oversight and assessment of teachers:** One respondent lamented the absence of governmental follow-ups and teacher assessments to ensure adequate CBC implementation, noting that CBC teacher trainings *“should be quickly followed by school visits by the relevant government officers so as to ensure that what they have been trained and what they are doing is working well. So, the idea of making follow ups is not really there, and we also need to carry a complete assessment on how far it is being implemented and delivered in schools.”*<sup>67</sup>

The challenges outlined above are not unique to the camp setting. Previous assessments of CBC implementation in Kenya have found that the implementation thereof did not include enough preparation or training time, with head teachers, for example, raising *“concern particularly with the lack of infrastructure, shortage of well-trained teachers familiar with the new context, and a comprehensive orientation of all stakeholders to the new curriculum.”*<sup>68</sup>

More positively, several teachers from schools in both Kakuma and Dadaab noted adaptive solutions they had found to apply the CBC methods with available materials, demonstrating a degree of resourcefulness and capacity to apply their training to the CBC even when key resources were unavailable:

- Seeking out further information online to help them to implement the CBC where they lack training *“They are going to the internet to watch clips on how they will assist their learners, improvising some resources like using their own mobile phone where there is no computer and internet.”*<sup>69</sup>
- Using alternative approaches to visualising key elements. *“We lack facilities to help learners to do the activities like activity books but we engage in drawing to the board for them to understand or showing them from our phone.”*<sup>70</sup>
- Designing approaches around materials which are present. *“Some teachers even ask the learners to come with a list of some materials that are found at home so that they can teach practically.”*<sup>71</sup>
- A few teachers also demonstrated their awareness of the importance of adapting activities to match student’s abilities and ensure inclusivity of students with disabilities, explaining for example that *“I cannot say that in my school team, it should be all those who are physically fit, when we are playing volleyball, we can have a section where we can include these people with the impairment to come and play.”*<sup>72</sup>

## Box 2. Financial resources for the CBC

The deficiencies in training of teachers, and overall inadequacy of available training and material resources for implementing CBC suggest important financial deficits in reaching full implementation of the new curriculum. One interviewed teacher framed these challenges as follows: *“Teachers were not able to purchase the materials required for CBC because we don’t have the funds.”*<sup>73</sup> While teachers themselves are not meant to be directly purchasing materials, as this is done by implementing partners, it points to a clear gap evidenced by the pupil to textbook ratio (see Figure 3)

Additionally, staffing of classrooms is insufficient, suggesting important budgetary limitations for CBC. These issues appear to have been compounded by budget cuts and layoffs occurring throughout 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic: *“Some teachers were laid off during the year 2020 because of lack of funding and this has disappointed both teachers and the learners.”*<sup>74</sup>

The risk of donor and other funder hesitancy may rise, as competition over development financing resources increasing globally as a result of COVID-19. This could pose a challenge to bolstering the financial resources of CBC implementing partners in the near term (the Recommendations section considers some options for maximising impact of funding).

<sup>67</sup> KII24, Interview with an MoE officer, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Kaviti, *“The New Curriculum of Education in Kenya: A Linguistic and Education Paradigm Shift,”* 92.

<sup>69</sup> FGD3, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>70</sup> FGD8, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021

<sup>71</sup> FGD14, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>72</sup> KII12, Key informant interview with a teacher, Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>73</sup> FGD14, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>74</sup> FGD14, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

## 2.3. Infrastructure

Many of the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the CBC in the context of Kakuma and Dadaab camps can be directly linked to the imbalance between the number of students under their supervision, and the classroom space, learning materials and other resources which they have at their disposal. This concern was expressed across all schools interviewed, suggesting a strong mismatch between material and infrastructural needs of the CBC curriculum and the current capacities of primary schools in the camps. At least, likely stemming from past education development projects, schools visited had enough and suitable toilets as well as handwashing facilities and a source of water. More broadly in Kenya, a number of schools face similar difficulties, with a recent spate of newspaper articles underlining infrastructure and material limitations in schools in different parts of the country.<sup>75</sup>

### 2.3.1. Insufficient indoor learning spaces

In the majority of schools visited (eight of 13), the furniture arrangement followed basic CBC standards, with desks and tables arranged in a group like or circular arrangement (rather than in rows), with gender-balanced groups in each section.

Only three, however, were described as adequately furnished, with enough desks and tables for all learners. Most (eight) schools also did not have sufficient and adequate furniture. In schools where furniture was described as inadequate, common challenges included broken or an insufficient number of desks, tables, and chairs, leading to some students sitting on top of their desks or on the floor. In other cases, seating arrangements were still in forward-facing, row arrangements. In one school visited, students were grouped by gender, with boys and girls sitting on separate sides of the classroom.<sup>76</sup>



Classroom sizes and numbers were also raised as a concern, frequently described as being “congested” and “too few”.<sup>77</sup> The average ratio of teachers to students was 1:63. The highest ratio was reported in Ileys Primary School in Dadaab (1:111), while the lowest ratio was reported in Angelina Jolie Primary School in Kakuma.

One teacher described facing significant challenges with implementing the CBC standard for classroom arrangements:

*“Especially in the lower grades, we don’t have desks and our learners are sitting on the floor. We also don’t have mats in these classes, especially in grades 1, 2 and 3. Only those learners in grade four to class eight are the ones privileged to sit on desks. In the lower grades, we don’t have mats, and we don’t have desks. Our learners are sitting on the dusty floor. That is a big challenge.” - KII32, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, September 2021.*

<sup>75</sup> See for example Chepkwony, “Schools Struggling to Adapt to New System Due to Inadequate Infrastructure, Teachers,” in The Standard, and Owiti, “Invest in School Infrastructure for CBC to Succeed, Magoha Told.” in The Star.

<sup>76</sup> OBS5, Observation of a school in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>77</sup> KII7, Interview conducted with a Headmaster in Kakuma, August 2021.

Other challenges noted included classroom overpopulation and the absence of a ramp at the entrance of the school for mobility-impaired students.<sup>78</sup>

Picture 1 – Student seating arrangement in a primary school in Dadaab refugee camp



Picture 2 – Desks arranged to form tables for groups in a primary school in Kakuma



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<sup>78</sup> FGD3, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.



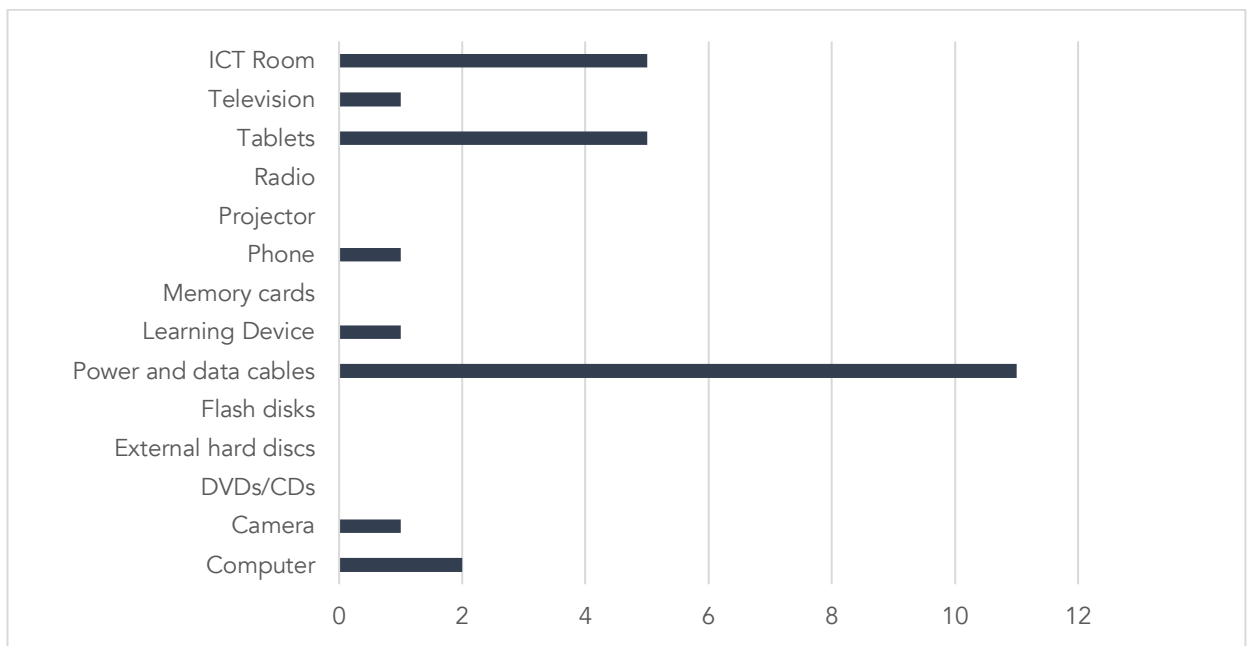
Picture 3 – Learners in an overcrowded primary school in Kakuma



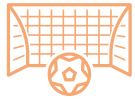
### 2.3.2. Lack of working ICT facilities

The internet – and the use of ICT to accompany CBC lessons more generally – form critical tools to strengthen and facilitate the implementation of the CBC. However, only half (five) of the schools visited in-person in Kakuma and Dadaab were equipped with a dedicated ICT room with tablets for student use. Two schools reported having no ICT facilities whatsoever and four schools were only equipped with data and power cables.

Figure 2 – Availability of ICT resources (number of schools)



Many teachers cited the lack of ICT equipment as a significant hindrance to implementing the CBC. Even when schools have ICT facilities, these are not always functional, with teachers in one FGD noting that their ICT room lacked internet, although it had materials. One teacher noted: *“So it will become a very big problem. For example, you are teaching agriculture, social studies in whatever subject and we have a link that you need to click on, so that these particular learners can be able to see.”*<sup>79</sup>



### 2.3.3. Outdoor learning spaces

Of the 13 schools visited, less than half (five) had adequate space for class activities, even ground, and a safe, fenced-in space. More positively, some playgrounds were equipped with farming equipment and garden spaces, and sports equipment such as volleyball or football nets.

Picture 4 – Outdoor play materials in Upendo Primary School in Dadaab



Picture 5 – Playground in Upendo primary school



## 2.4. Materials

Across primary schools visited in both Kakuma and Dadaab camps, key informants identified deficiencies in terms of the available material resources for implementing the CBC curriculum, including in terms of the number of textbooks for students and CBC resources for teachers, and play materials for indoors and outdoors critical to the successful implementation of CBC.



### 2.4.1. Textbooks

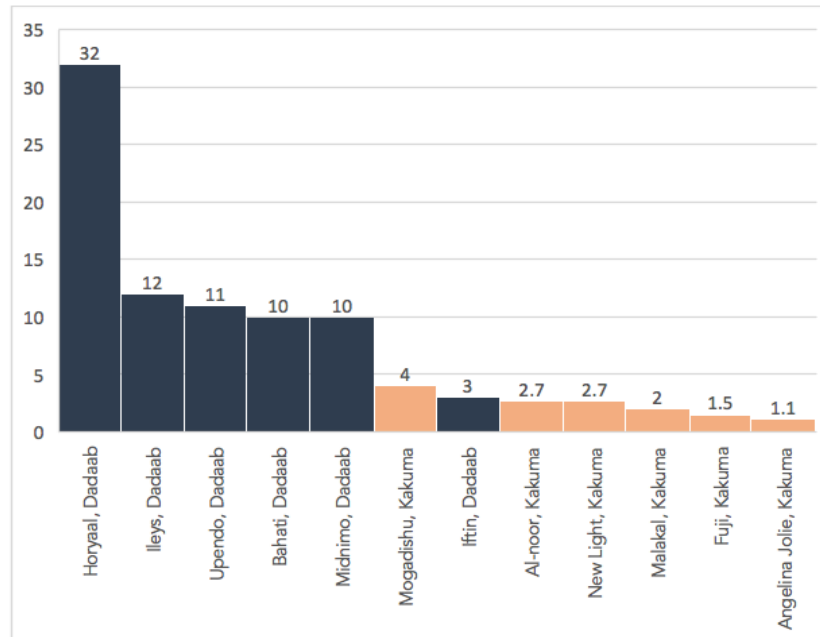
Across the board, schools did not have sufficient CBC textbooks, averaging at one CBC textbook for 7.6 student, with the highest ratio reported in Horyaal Primary school (1 CBC textbook per 32 students), and the lowest ratios in Angelina Jolie (1:1.1) and Fuji (1:1.5) primary schools. No school reached the threshold of one CBC textbook per each student, although schools in Kakuma were generally better off. Key informants noted that in some cases, initiatives to provide CBC textbooks to the schools at the curriculum began to be implemented in new grades had been delayed because the textbooks were not yet available on the open market.

<sup>79</sup> FGD21, Focus group discussion with teachers in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

The content of the new textbooks, however, was remarked on positively by at least one stakeholder in Kakuma: “The books that are brought are very simple and easy to understand, so these make the learners and even the community see that this (CBC) is even working.”<sup>80</sup>

As the CBC textbooks were recently rolled out in classrooms, most all were reported to be in very good condition; this was supported by pictures taken in the field, although some did note the need for better storage spaces for these textbooks.

Figure 3 – Ratio of number of students to CBC textbooks, by school (as reported)



#### 2.4.2. CBC teaching guides and practical tools

Several key informants noted that there were too few teaching guides for CBC, meaning that copies had to be shared between teachers.<sup>81</sup> “Only a few copies of the syllabus are available.”<sup>82</sup> The lack of textbooks had an immediate impact on student learning, preventing teachers from implementing the CBC curriculum. “Without those materials and with the large numbers of learners there is nothing much a teacher can actually do, so the teacher tries to avoid using the necessary strategy in delivering the curriculum and resort to the lecture method.”<sup>83</sup>

Also frequently missing from many schools were the implements for different pedagogical activities such as farming, music, arts and crafts, and sports. “Learners don’t have drawing materials, modelling, play materials are not there.”<sup>84</sup> One teacher explained this made some aspects of the curriculum impossible to deploy, giving an example from agriculture classes, while another flagged ICT needs:

“In agriculture, you will find maybe materials like jembe, seed are not available. If they ask to prepare a seed bed, so they come and you find that we don’t have those particular resources.” – FGD with teachers in Kakuma, August 2021.

“To me, we need to materials needed for the CBC, for example when there is learning about computers, we need direct object that the learners can see, we might be talking about computers, in the community and the classes, and learners are not able to see what is this computer, we need those materials to be provided in the school so that they can at last be able to see and know this is a computer as they can see it with their eyes.” – FGD with teachers in Kakuma, August 2021.

<sup>80</sup> KII17

<sup>81</sup> KII13, interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021 ; KII3, interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>82</sup> KII15, interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>83</sup> KII24, interview with an MoE Curriculum Officer in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>84</sup> KII1, interview with a teacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.



### 2.4.3. Play materials

In addition to substantial material deficiencies, play materials for indoors were absent in all but one of the 13 schools visited in person throughout the course of this study, and only three schools had play materials for outdoor activities.

*“Since the CBC approach is more activity-based, initially creating that level of creativity has been a bit of a challenge, one is because of the materials that are required where you find there are huge limitations in terms of the materials required to deliver all the activities according to the curriculum.” - KII23, interview with an Education coordinator in Dadaab, August 2021.*

*“Teaching and learning materials are inadequately supplied. This includes Books for the new curriculum and play equipment such as toys and suitable playgrounds.” – FGD with teachers in Dadaab, August 2021.*

## 2.5. Relevance of the CBC training material for camp contexts

Due to the circumstances of primary schools in refugee camps, which frequently suffer from issues of overcrowding, understaffing and a lack of sufficient materials for CBC lessons, certain aspects of the CBC curriculum have not been successfully implemented. Training materials fall short on two fronts in the context of Dadaab and Kakuma camps, along with many other remote parts of the country:

- **Lack of relevance of examples to refugee children in camps** – in some cases, training materials refer to examples which are non-existent in the camp context, such as traffic lights. The practical relevance of the examples given in the curriculum – and some of the elements of learning – is simply not clear to many in Dadaab and Kakuma camps. This points to the need for a broader range of examples to be included in CBC training materials – not just for the camps but also for children in other parts of Kenya who may not be familiar with say, traffic lights, and would benefit from more diverse examples being proposed, to avoid putting the onus of identifying these on teachers.
- **Lack of availability of materials to interact with examples** – in other cases materials may be familiar, but limited in availability such that they cannot be used in classes. One respondent gave the example of clean water, despite how basic it may sound, as not being usable in class due to limited access.

*“Accessibility of locally available materials is a challenge here. For example, when you are talking about water, sometimes there is no water for some practical lessons. Again, so many of the teachers in the camp lack creativity, in my opinion. And this is because most of them lack exposure, they are not as exposed as the national teachers.*

*For example, if you talk about traffic lights and you want to create an activity on traffic lights, you find the teachers and learners have never seen traffic lights in their lives, so how do you become innovative on something you have never seen your entire life?” - KII23, interview with an Education coordinator in Dadaab, August 2021.*

In some cases, it may not just be limited availability of materials which challenges teachers but the fact that some elements of the curriculum are simply not feasible at the local level. This of course is not limited to the camp contexts; other more rural and arid regions of Kenya would face a similar challenge.

*“I’m a teacher of agriculture, I face challenges. For example, the weather in Kakuma itself does not support agriculture. and at the same time, we lacked some tools to carry out the activities and there was a shortage of water in the school. Those are the factors that hinders me as an agriculture subject teacher. In general, for CBC to be effective all teachers should be trained and also the teaching materials should also be supplied adequately. Yeah, also we have some activities of subjects like math activities which do not require much materials because we have local resources available, like stones, use stones when you want to count numbers*

*with learners, we also have textbooks especially languages, learners are able to read.” KII31, interview with a teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.*

Finally, teacher trainings themselves may be insufficient in covering how to best use locally available materials; additional focus on this could help teachers jointly workshop alternatives to the above.

*“CBC calls for the use of the locally available materials (...) the only challenge is the textbooks where you find one textbook being shared amongst 30 learners in a class. I was having a meeting the other day with the LWF suggesting to them to train the teachers on creativity, training teachers on material development and material use particularly the locally available ones.” KII27, interview with an Education officer in Dadaab, August 2021.*

## 2.6. Parental expectations and challenges in engaging with the CBC

Parents interviewed in the context of this research displayed a mix of reactions and attitudes toward the introduction of the CBC. While some were hopeful about the potential learning benefits of CBC, many expressed doubts about the quality of learning under it, without the examination-centred approach to which they are used: *“When a child doesn’t perform well and fails, they are pushed to go to the next class. (...) If they are pushed like that, some will go through class 6, 7, 8, to form four without knowing anything.”*<sup>85</sup> This raises the concern of “learning poverty”, i.e. the case of children who have limited access to quality learning, and so may find themselves going through school without learning key skills. The World Bank has recently underlined this as a significant issue, calling for a new “Learning Poverty” indicator to be used to combine school access and learning limitation rates in one indicator calling for urgent action.<sup>86</sup>

In extreme cases, parents are reported to have pulled their children out of classes in protest of the new curriculum:

*“Parents were pulling out children and taking them to class 5 because they didn’t want their children in the CBC class. At the end of the term, students were issued reports and they had scoring marks but now when you give the learner a report without marks, no score, parents are like, ‘our children are not learning and we are paying a lot of money.’ That competition is still in their mind and they are yet to accept the CBC.” - FGD with teachers in Kakuma, August 2021.*

**Varied understanding of the new curriculum:** Understanding of the CBC, and the expectations surrounding parental engagement, varied among parents. Many parents demonstrated a basic understanding of the core philosophy of the CBC curriculum as compared to the 8-4-4 system. As one describes it: *“My understanding of the CBC program is that it has come to uplift all the children. The first program (8-4-4) was discriminating against certain children. Other children could progress while others were left behind. But with this one, all children have a chance to progress because CBC focuses on talents.”*<sup>87</sup> However, some parents said they felt confused about what the switch to the new curriculum meant in practice and required further clarification on how to best support their children. A handful of parents said that they had never heard about the CBC prior to taking part in the present study.<sup>88</sup>

Like some teachers, many parents’ expectations of learning outcomes as a result of the new curriculum centred around talent identification and pursuit from a job-oriented perspective. One parent described CBC as a shortcut to the workforce: *“I see CBC as a shortcut for children who struggle to become successful in their lives. The previous system, children learn from primary to secondary. They go through 10 plus classes but now, the children study focusing on their talents. If the child has a talent in carpentry, they study that, if the talent is in electricity, they study just that. It is a shortcut for the learners to start their journey in life.”*<sup>89</sup>

That being said, most parents have a baseline understanding that CBC requires an engagement on their part in order to ensure its success. The types of support provided most frequently mentioned by parents included

<sup>85</sup> FGD6, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>86</sup> World Bank, “Ending Learning Poverty: What Will It Take?,” 11.

<sup>87</sup> FGD15, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>88</sup> FGD11, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>89</sup> FGD15, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

ensuring children's attendance was maintained, providing necessary resources, and helping children complete homework at home, and following up with teachers on their progress.

*"With the CBC, the parents are directly involved in the learning of their children and also when children go back home, the parents are supposed to support them in their learning. It is the responsibility of the parents to look at the progress of the student and also give advice based on the challenges. Teachers expect us to work together and that is it. (...) As a parent, I also make sure that a student follows what is required and I also have to work together with teachers." – FGD with parents in Kakuma, August 2021.*

Some parents described their role in similar terms as some of the teachers – as one of talent identification and direction. *"As a parent, what I have to do is to observe my children at home to see what talent each has. That will help me when interacting with teachers. I will have known that the child has a certain talent and also the school will have known what talent the child has. Working together will make us enhance the talent of the child."*<sup>90</sup>

**Parental literacy as a stumbling block:** The most commonly given explanatory factor for these different understandings was parental literacy levels as several respondents noted that in cases where parents were illiterate, levels of understanding of and engagement with the CBC tended to be lower.<sup>91</sup> One parent who self-identified as illiterate reported relying more heavily on the direct feedback and instructions of teachers: *"I don't know what they learned from school because I can't read but as a parent, I do some follow up with teachers to monitor them closely."*<sup>92</sup>

Both teachers and parents explained that low levels of literacy among parents poses an important barrier to their ability to support their children in the new curriculum. One headteacher in Dadaab noted: *"Here in this community, most of the parents are illiterate and so they can't read or write, but the few who are literate try to support their children while at home through assessing them."*<sup>93</sup> As a result of this, several parents said that they did not feel equipped to help their children at home.

*"When they come home, they come with homework to be done at home. They come with the new books which have a diagram and ask for help. Though I have not gone to school, I can help explain the picture. The challenge is that because I do not know how to read, I can only interpret what the drawing is trying to convey. The biggest challenge is that you cannot help your child when he is asking for your help." – FGD with parents in Dadaab, August 2021.*

*"I can't read and write but I do shout at my children to make sure that they do the right thing. I don't know what they learnt from school because I can't read but as a parent, I do some follow up with teachers to monitor them closely." – FGD with parents in Dadaab, August 2021*

From a digital literacy perspective, many parents reported using M-Pesa- Kenya's mobile money application and using their phones for messaging. However, digital tool usage utilisation beyond that varies significantly among parents, constrained by both knowledge (or lack thereof) of digital tools, as well as access to the tools themselves. A number of parents underlined that they do not own a smartphone, or lack credit to use the internet, meaning that when children have homework which would benefit from access to internet, they lack the means of doing that. *"I'm using (social messaging apps) frequently depending on the availability of the MB, if I have MB I can even use it 4 time a week."*<sup>94</sup>

The variety in digital tool comfort poses questions around the parents' ability to firstly, support any work the children have to do at home which calls for digital tool usage, and secondly, provided broader support to their children's education through the use of resources found online. Some, positively, have downloaded applications aligned with the new curriculum. *"I have children who are in grade one. I have games for the new curriculum, and I give them to play. I also have a girl who is learning in down country. When she is given work to do, I give her my phone to google her work. That is the work that phone does."*<sup>95</sup> This shows the potential which parental usage of

<sup>90</sup> FGD15, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>91</sup> FGD 8, Focus group discussion with teachers in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>92</sup> FGD18, Focus group discussion with parents in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>93</sup> KI11, Interview with a headteacher in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>94</sup> FGD23, Focus group discussion in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>95</sup> FGD15, Focus group discussion in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

digital tools can offer to support implementation of the CBC – but would require training parents to do so and creating means for them to access technology and the internet more regularly.

**Gendered parenting:** Gendered expectations around parenting may impact how they see themselves playing a role in the parental support around the CBC. Several respondents underlined, for example, that due to gendered expectations around child rearing and supervision in some households, women were more likely than men to be engaged in providing support and guidance to their children to help them complete their homework, and to be involved in follow up visits to the school or meetings with teachers.<sup>96</sup> *“I am the one responsible for the education of my children. As a mother, I get to know at what time the child will go to school, at what time they return, wash dirty clothes, check their papers if there is a problem.”*<sup>97</sup>

*“In most scenarios, the mother works directly with the child. Waking them up in the morning and maybe making them drink some porridge. It is the mother who mostly provides CBC support.”* – FGD with parents in Kakuma, August 2021.

Other key informants noted that men, oftentimes the primary breadwinners of the family, were more likely to be involved in decisions relating to spending on school supplies and related materials.

*“When it comes to child-caring and support for education is mostly for the mother’s responsibility, but the father supports the family in terms of livelihood.”* – with parents in Dadaab, August 2021.

**Economic challenges:** Finally, dissatisfaction and confusion around the CBC are reflective of broader parental backlash against the CBC at the national level. The perceived higher cost levied upon parents to purchase textbooks and other learning resources associated with the new curriculum is a clear driver of frustration. *“Take an example for my colleague who have three children in the CBC classes, and the exercise needed for one learner is 12 exercise books. This one in the market it might cost like 40 ksh, can you multiply with the three kids with the 12 exercise books with the amount of money is very high, and so it will become a real challenge providing all these learning materials.”*<sup>98</sup>

When describing their responsibilities in supporting their children in the CBC, several parents used language referring to their perceived financial role. While UNHCR and IPs provide learning materials, multiple parents reflected on the cost of school necessities. One parent noted: *“In this new system, we have responsibilities as parents. It is mandatory that we put more effort into encouraging our children to follow the necessary steps. With encouragement, just like my colleague has stated, each child has a cost. Each talent area of the child has a cost and that is why we as parents have to provide support for the cost that the child has.”*<sup>99</sup> Another explained *“About school uniforms: they are provided at school, and when they are not there, I buy [them] for my child. It isn’t easy to buy uniforms.”*<sup>100</sup>

More broadly, this is also linked to parents having insufficient information and resources on what CBC entails. One teacher explained: *“the problem is they don’t know what CBC is about. They don’t have information and they need to be educated on the new curriculum.”*<sup>101</sup>

In line with the cost-centred view of their engagement with the CBC proposed by some parents, several parents described challenges with meeting the financial demands to allow their children to do homework at home including reading lights for night-time, pens and paper, and textbooks.<sup>102</sup> One parent explained: *“The challenge is to provide the child with all the materials needed for learning. I don’t work, I do not earn, so how am I going to take care of that?”*<sup>103</sup>

<sup>96</sup> FGD 20, Focus group discussion with parents in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>97</sup> FGD11, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>98</sup> FGD22, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>99</sup> FGD15, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>100</sup> FGD11, Focus group discussion with parents in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021

<sup>101</sup> FGD10, Focus group discussion with parents in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>102</sup> FGD18, Focus group discussion with parents in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021; FGD20, Focus group discussion with parents in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>103</sup> FGD16, Focus group discussion with parents in Dadaab, conducted in August 2021.

Another parent worried:

*“A lot of things or resources have been introduced and so I as a parent, I have to struggle so much to find learning materials and other stationeries because a lot of things are needed. I as a parent I have to struggle to find these things and give my child.”- FGD with parents in Kakuma, August 2021.*

These financial – and conceptual – concerns reflect parental discontent toward CBC expressed at the national level.<sup>104</sup> Recently, this has made its way to the Kenyan judicial system, with one parent – and High Court advocate – petitioning to ‘suspend further implantation of the Competency Based Curriculum’, citing the economic impact on families and lack of planning.<sup>105</sup> Other parents have launched a Twitter campaign, with the hashtag #CBCMustFall with frustration around parental involvement and the more creative elements in particular.

## 2.7. A need for harmonised systems for broader engagement, feedback and collaboration in CBC

### 2.7.1. Existing formal and informal coordination mechanisms

It takes a village to raise a child, says the proverb – and in the case of Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps, it has taken a ‘village’ of coordinating organisations and stakeholders to begin to implement the new curriculum. For example, in both locations, a variety of NGOs have collaborated, along with UNHCR, to support the implementation of the CBC. This has been led through the formal education coordination mechanisms of the education working groups, chaired by UNHCR and the MoE at the sub-country level for both Kakuma and Dadaab. LWF essentially leads the implementation due to their administrative and managing role in pre-primary and primary schools; FCA has played a leading role in Kalobeyei; others like NRC and Humanity International have also contributed to training and inclusion under the CBC:

- In Kakuma, NRC, through their community-based volunteers, have been instrumental in coaching and monitoring of teachers.
- In Dadaab, NRC and Humanity International have also played an instrumental role in accelerated learning and the inclusion of children with disabilities.

*“NRC has the VSOs who have been very instrumental in helping us do the monitoring, and we go with them round the schools with them every Wednesday just to do teacher mentorship and coaching [...] They have been instrumental in supporting our teachers in terms of monitoring and coaching on CBC, we go round with them every Wednesday and they observe and listen to the teachers in the classroom, they also talk to teachers and address some of the challenges they are facing in the implementation of the CBC” KII 22, interview with an education officer in Kakuma, August 2021*

Table 3 below highlights the range of key stakeholders involved in CBC implementation in both camps. This work is of course done under the aegis of the policy direction set by the Ministry of Education at a national level.

Table 3 – Selected key organisational stakeholders in Dadaab and Kakuma Camps for CBC implementation

Camp	Organisation	Role in CBC implementation
Dadaab	UNHCR	Mandate of coordination of the Education Sector in camps Funding of CBC
	Humanity International	Inclusion of children with disability in CBC implementation
	KICD KNEC	Training of teachers on CBC curriculum

<sup>104</sup> Agutu, “‘We Have Heard You!’ KICD Says Parents’ Concerns on CBC to Be Reviewed.”

<sup>105</sup> Muhindi, “Parent Moves to Court to Stop CBC, Cites Economic Burden.”



	LWF	UNHCR CBC implementing partner (Pre-primary and Primary education)
	MoE (Sub-County director of education)	Training of teachers and overall quality assurance
	NRC	Accelerated Education Program
	Save the Children	Use of radio to broadcast education especially during the pandemic
	Teachers Service Commission (TSC)	Training of teachers on CBC
Kakuma	UNHCR	Mandate of coordination of the Education Sector in camps Funding of CBC
	FCA	Implementation of pre-primary and primary education in Kalobeyei
	KICD KNEC	Training of teachers on CBC curriculum
	LWF	UNHCR CBC implementing partner (Pre-primary and Primary education)
	MoE (Sub-County director of education)	Training of teachers and overall quality assurance
	NRC	Teacher mentorship and coaching
	Teachers Service Commission (TSC)	Training of teachers on CBC

While a broad range of organisations work to ensure CBC implementation in both regions, interviewing stakeholders revealed limited mention of initiatives on which they work together; collaboration between NGOs and international organisations requires further investigation and attention. CBC trainings provided by different implementing partners in the camps were also described as lacking a “harmonised approach” in terms of the sequencing and format of trainings.<sup>106</sup> This was seen as leading to discrepancies in CBC trainings provided within the camps. Discussions are in progress to put in place a whole teacher management framework, to support a unified approach.

This is in line with broader efforts to coordinate activities, as all of the education partners present have jointly developed an operational plan which identifies key priorities to ensure these can be funded first. These include for example activities around parental engagement.

Positively, there is evidence of collaboration between the government and some of the INGOs in supporting the initiatives in place to implement CBC. Through national and local-level partnerships in particular, there has been provision of training to teachers and some aspects of parent sensitisation, provision of textbooks and technical materials to schools as well as in curriculum development. Education working groups at the national and sub-national level are chaired by UNHCR and the Ministry of Education / county and sub-county education authorities, and discuss training activities and more.

*“What I know is that we have an education working team that involves all organizations that are implementing the education sector. LWF, NRC, WIK and FCA have regular meetings to find better ways to improve the new curriculum that is CBC.”* – KII16, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.

*“We have partnered with the KICD in terms of curriculum development, we have partnered with suppliers of technical materials especially at the production level for affordable cost. We have also partnered with different trainers’ institutions in terms of training teachers especially on ICT, supply of equipment and training colleges in terms of capacity development for teachers and program managers.”* KII23, Interview with an INGO programme manager in Dadaab, August 2021.

At the national level, the Education Development Partners Coordination Group (EDPCG) chaired by the MoE and UNESCO provides policy direction and guidance around the rollout; education is not a devolved function in

<sup>106</sup> KII35, Interview with an Education Specialist, conducted in September 2021.

Kenya. There is also a Refugee Education Working Group (REWG) at the national level, co-chaired by UNHCR and LWF, that supports partners to translate national-level policy for implementation.

### 2.7.2. Challenges to parent-teacher-stakeholder coordination

A general gap highlighted throughout this research is the absence of systemic approaches for relaying and addressing feedback from parents and education professionals on the CBC's implementation.

Some key informants identified opportunities for parents to provide feedback to teachers to discuss with school management on issues faced with the new curriculum, and for teachers to relay concerns to head teachers. However, these feedback channels were described as limited to the individual school level and did not include clear pathways to following up with implementation partners such as LWF, UNHCR, or governmental actors such as the KICD or MoE.

Previous sections have already highlighted some of the challenges which parents faced in playing their expected role in the CBC. Indeed, across Dadaab and Kakuma camps, parental engagement was reported to be weak, primarily for practical (illiteracy) and financial reasons. Their limited ability to engage on the CBC extends to challenges in coordinating with the parents around the CBC.

*"This is a big challenge not only in the refugee but also the host in Dadaab, the parental involvement is really wanting, in fact some parents were complaining that the curriculum is very expensive since most of them are unable to provide the materials but you know CBC calls for the parental engagement and this is going to work if the parents get involved in the learning of their children."* KII27, interview with education officer in Dadaab, August 2021.

*"We have actually reached out to the parents but you see you cannot emphasize the role of parental engagement in the implementation of the CBC, but a large number of our parents are illiterate and the fact that this is a new thing and we have not done enough mobilization. So the fact that this is new thing, and I also have to say that we have not done enough in terms of mobilization of parents and sensitizing them on CBC has contributed to this. I think we need to do more in terms of parental engagement."* KII22, interview with education officer in Kakuma, August 2021.

Expectations around financial responsibilities linked to the CBC can also create tensions in parent-stakeholder coordination. For example, some key informants perceived parents to be so dependent on UNHCR to provide school materials generally, that this reduced parents' willingness or perceived ability to purchase any additional required materials. In short, key informants reported that such parents felt that it was the responsibility of UNHCR to ensure that their children had all the materials required in school for the CBC as well, rather than their own.

*"You know in the refugee camp they believe that UNHCR should provide everything and that is where we have a problem, so the idea of again engaging the refugee parents who actually know everything will be provided for becomes an issue and trying to convince them might take time or they might not even respond. What should be done is actually advocacy and enough sensitization from the UNHCR side so that they know that there is a role they have to play."* KII24, interview with curriculum officer in Kakuma, August 2021

Picture 7 – Students at New Light Primary School, Kakuma



### 3. CASE STUDY: THE VBE MODEL IN KAKUMA CAMP

#### 3.1. Piloting the Values Based Education approach in Kakuma camp

The Aga Khan Development Network sets as its overall educational goal to “ensure boys and girls are equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to help them interact with the world and be contributing members of society.”<sup>107</sup> In doing so, it places a particular emphasis on pluralism and ethics as the ‘lens’ for its educational work. Recognising the key role of teachers in effecting educational change, the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) together with the Global Center for Pluralism, Dream and Dream, and the Aga Khan Academies, AKF has created four teacher training modules which together form its ‘Values Based Education’ initiative. These modules were developed in collaboration between AKF, the Global Center and the Aga Khan Academies, based on a series of workshops conducted with teachers and local civil society representatives in Kenya, and have since been piloted in 2019 in Pakistan and Kenya.<sup>108</sup>

The change to a competency-based curriculum (CBC) in 2017 provides a fertile and relevant ground for the VBE modules, as this new curriculum requires a different approach to teaching, with additional interactions between teachers and learners - and explicitly gives “values” as a key pillar underpinning the framework.

*“Values are standards that guide an individual on how to respond or behave in a given circumstance. (...) The teaching of values facilitates the achievement of the curriculum reform vision, particularly with respect to developing ethical citizens. The thrust of this is to nurture learners who do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.”<sup>109</sup>*

The VBE training modules have been piloted in the camps to support CBC implementation in these complex contexts, where there is a diversity of population and the values prioritised by the VBE are particularly needed. The VBE Training Modules, however, in their aim, go beyond the CBC values’ scope of focus. Rather than teaching values, one AKF staff describes these modules as seeking to “create space in which teachers can engage in values (...) we are supporting them (teachers) to develop those values and attitudes which will help them to develop stronger relationships with children, which will lead to more child-centred pedagogical approaches”.<sup>110</sup> These “teacher transformation” modules, then, seek to focus on “values and attitudes related to pluralism and ethics”, aligned with the values and competencies in the Kenyan Basic Education Curriculum.<sup>111</sup>

Three training modules were offered to teachers from New Light Primary School in Kakuma Camp, with the following curriculum:

Figure 4 – VBE Curriculum

Module 1 - The Self	Module 2 - My Relationship with Others	My role as an Educator in the Classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•To "gain a deeper understanding of our identity, values and ethics"</li> <li>•"Apply the personal qualities of pluralism and ethics to ourselves"</li> <li>•"To build a supportive community"</li> <li>•"To have fun"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•"To gain a deeper understanding of an ethic of respect for diversity"</li> <li>•"Apply the personal qualities of pluralism and ethics to our interactions with others"</li> <li>•"To build a supportive community"</li> <li>•"To have fun"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•"Gain a deeper understanding of our values, biases and ethics in our interactions with students"</li> <li>•"Apply the personal qualities of pluralism and ethics to foster positive relationships with students"</li> <li>•To strengthen a supportive community"</li> <li>•"To have fun"</li> </ul>

<sup>107</sup> Aga Khan Foundation, “Teacher Development Programme - Teacher Transformation Modules - Module 1 - The Self - Facilitator Guide.”

<sup>108</sup> “Centre Partners on Values-Based Education Project in Mombasa, Kenya.”

<sup>109</sup> Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), “Basic Education Curriculum Framework.”

<sup>110</sup> KII, Interview with AKF, conducted in September 2021.

<sup>111</sup> Aga Khan Foundation, “Teacher Development Programme - Teacher Transformation Modules - Module 1 - The Self - Facilitator Guide.”

The modules and activities therein follow an “Arc of Transformation”, offering participants new experiences and allowing them to test their comfort zone, to enable behavioural shifts and for participants to rethink their meanings of concepts explored.<sup>112</sup>

A key element in the module, explicitly listed in the goals above, is to build a supportive community. In order to do so, the workshops are offered at the school level, and all teachers within a school are encouraged to participate. Ideally, the training will also bring in civil society organisations and partners, building relationships between the school and the broader community, in order to ensure that the training does not have the unintended side effect of creating a barrier between it and the community.<sup>113</sup>

The three modules were led in Kakuma Camp in July and August 2021. Due to logistical constraints in accessing the camps and delays due to COVID-19, the schedule followed was abridged. Whereas normally, participants are given time between the modules for self-reflection, and allowing for small actions based on the modules, given the intensity these can hold for participants, in this case there was only a week between the different modules.

Table 4 – VBE training schedule

Module	Teacher training	BOM training
Module 1	30th and 31st July 2021	2nd and 3rd Aug
Module 2	6th and 7th Aug	9th and 10th Aug
Module 3	11th and 12th Aug	

Trainings conducted on the coast had included an additional element of work with civil society which has not been implemented in Kakuma due to access and timeline limitations. Part of the broader VBE model developed by AKF and its partners, this element calls for working closely with the communities where trainings are happening, to ensure that the impacts of trainings are not felt at an isolated level within schools, creating two different environments within which children must evolve, but rather working towards more cross-cutting transformation.

### 3.2. Training experiences

*“The VBE workshop was very good. First, it differs from other workshops that we have been attending. The VBE workshop training method makes it different from other trainings that I have attended. In this workshop, there are many involving activities. In other trainings, sometimes the teacher could explain about something and then you don’t understand it but with VBE, the teacher explains while doing an activity making it easier to understand what is taught.”<sup>114</sup>*

Overall, feedback on the VBE modules by participants was largely positive. Participants underlined both the content of the trainings as well as the techniques learned during these as directly relevant and usable within their own roles and responsibilities.

*“From this training, I have started applying in the classes I am teaching, and that is about engagement that is engaging learners during the lesson, especially activities that we perform in classes. So they are those learners, which get to understand much better through involving them or interacting with them, rather than lecturing a lot of notes in the classroom.” - FGD with teachers who participated in the VBE training module, Kakuma, August 2021*

One respondent especially highlighted the inclusivity of the approach taken to the training, explaining, *“It was inclusive training, where it wasn’t based on specific ages or religions, they just chose everyone. We had a deaf teacher who had gladly attended (...) and they added money for the interpreter (...) to include her in the training, because she could not hear, which made me see they really respect the diversity. It was just really good and I loved it.”<sup>115</sup>*

<sup>112</sup> Aga Khan Foundation.

<sup>113</sup> KII, Interview with AKF, conducted in September 2021.

<sup>114</sup> KII28, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>115</sup> FGD with teachers who participated in the VBE training module, Kakuma, conducted in August 2021

Further supporting inclusivity, respondents were able to express themselves in both Kiswahili and English during the modules.

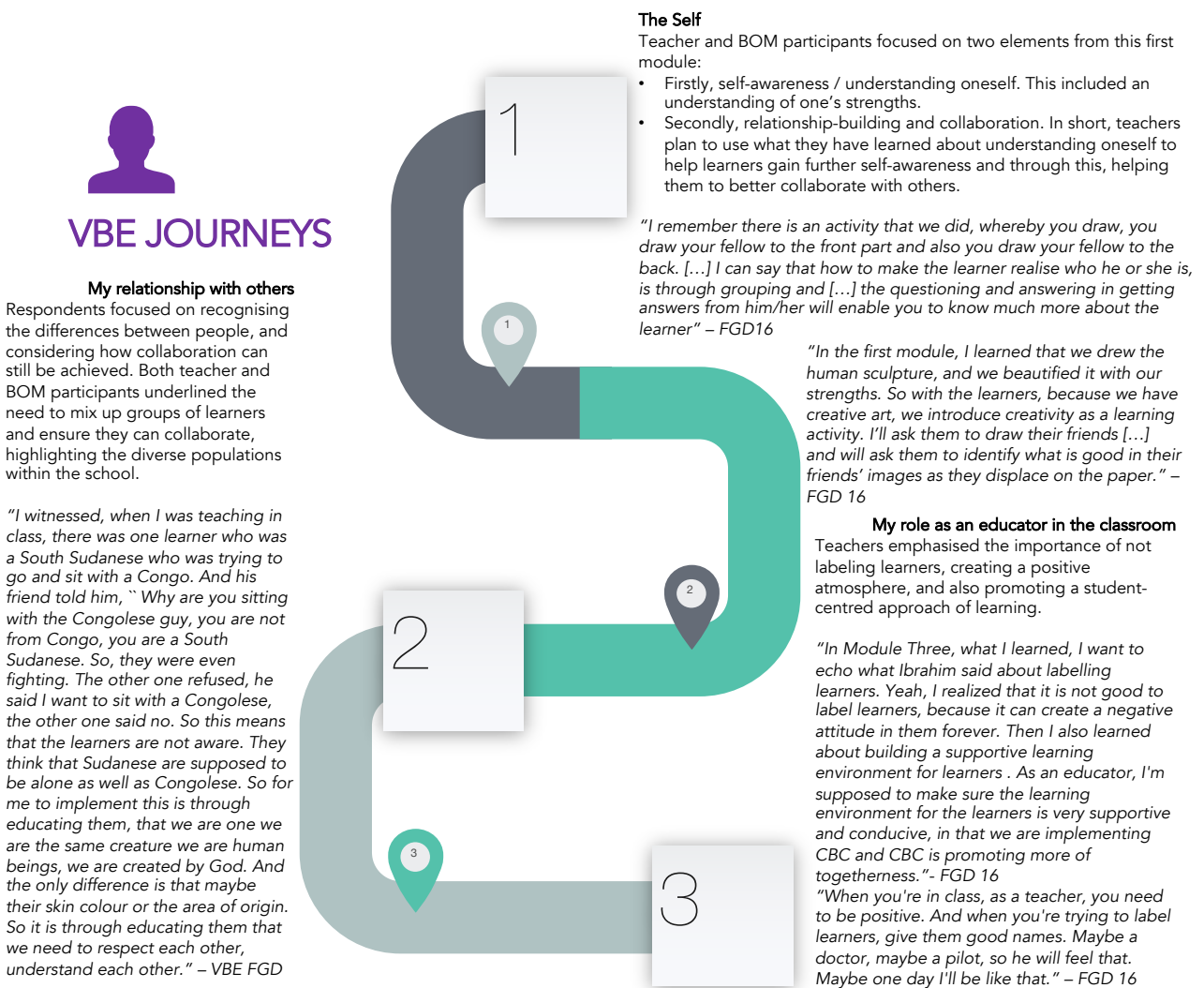
*“We expressed ourselves in either Kiswahili or English – at least the language that we were comfortable using. We had the freedom of choice to use the language and had peace too.”<sup>116</sup>*

While short, the training clearly had a strong impact on several fronts:

1. Participants’ **understanding** of the key concepts which this training sought to promote, in particular around pluralism, relationship-strengthening and more inclusive approaches to learning;
2. Participants’ **attitudes** towards their role as a teacher; and,
3. Participants’ **approaches** towards their students and self-reported **teaching techniques**

Not only do these shifts illustrate a transformative impact on teachers’ pedagogical approaches, at least in the short term, but they also align positively with the adapted approach to teaching called for by the shift from the 8-4-4 curriculum to the CBC. The following details the key learnings underlined by training participants per module.

Figure 6 – VBE Journeys



<sup>116</sup> KII28, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

### 3.2.1 Understanding of and attitudes toward VBE

All training participants interviewed agreed that the term “values-based education” was new to them. While the nomenclature may have been unfamiliar – in and of itself a potential concern, given values-based education’s role as a pillar of the CBC – the concepts raised were recognised as linked to the CBC and much needed for the CBC to succeed:

*“Honestly, I have never heard about values-based education before the training, but we were practicing it through the CBC, only we have been more enlightened by knowing the values, responsibilities and qualities that we are to play.” - KII12, Teacher participant in VBE Module, Kakuma, August 2021*

After participation in the modules, although participants varied in the exact elements of the modules which they highlighted, the broad understandings of VBE put forth by those who had attended were aligned with the objectives highlighted by AKF staff. As one explained, *“What we are trying to do is help teachers to recognise the way in which their own biases impact the way they create relationships, teach children. Rather than teach values, create space in which teachers can engage in values. We also want to take a strengths based approach – not here to teach a deficiency in someone’s values, but rather support schools, communities in their values structure, what do they hold dear, live and behave in a way that reflects that.”<sup>117</sup>*

Across the board, participants expressed enthusiasm for the translation of what they had learned during the training to improve the quality of their teaching, and more broadly as a transformative experience for themselves.

Several concepts in particular were highlighted as coming out from the trainings:

Figure 7 – Key concepts learned in VBE modules

Diversity and stereotypes	Learner engagement	Cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The broad diversity of student profiles - and the challenges and opportunities these offer - was recognised by teacher participants.</li> <li>•To cultural diversity, they added the importance of combating gender stereotypes and negative labeling of students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Techniques taught will promote the engagement of weaker learners in addition to the stronger</li> <li>•VBE facilitators showcased valuable examples of 'modern teacher learning aids'</li> <li>•BOM members will focus on interaction of learners between themselves and with teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•In addition to learner cooperation with each other, BOM members underlined that the training has more broadly implied the school including teacher collaboration.</li> <li>•Some teachers also noted the relevance of VBE to the CBC, and linking learnings from the modules to the community more broadly.</li> </ul>

For a number of the participants, the training modules have led to a marked shift in how they understand their roles as teachers and/or BOM members. Teachers highlighted a new role with regards to how they interact with children, as well as other teachers, while BOM members emphasised a new understanding of their responsibilities within the school. As an example, several noted how the training influenced their approach to disciplining students: *“When you are teaching as a teacher based on VBE, we need to apply qualities of a good teacher and also to be a facilitator. Know the weakness of you student, know the problem they are facing and how you can help them.”<sup>118</sup>*

*“I have an enormous difference with those teachers who have not received the trainings. Previously, the teachers used to punish the learners harshly. For instance, if a child comes late, they tell them to go back home without taking time to listen to what made the child late. For me, who has been trained, I will act differently. I will ask the child why they are late or what happens. I will give them time to explain themselves.” - KII28, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.*

<sup>117</sup> KII Roo

<sup>118</sup> KII12, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

*"In case I find that a teacher is labelling a learner in a negative way, I will advise him/her that it is not good to label a learner because it demoralises him/her and he/she may fear to try to do best once the chance is given. With the value-based education, it assisted me to be reminded of most of the things I learned in college, especially the teaching learning methods, so my fellow colleagues or other teachers who didn't attend the training, I'll encourage them; I'll be a resource person to them during lessons." - FGD with teachers who participated in the VBE training module in Kakuma, August 2021.*

BOM members also expressed positive learning outcomes from the training. *"There is a difference [with BOM from other schools who have not been trained] because we were trained on how to be responsible for our work as BOM and we understood everything, and we are able to apply them in our respective schools. I am able to solve problems that concern us parents."*<sup>119</sup>

Finally, teachers emphasised that they learned how to be more supportive and attentive of learners' needs. *"What I have learned has impact on the learners for example I don't give class work and leave the learners to do it on their own. If I do that, then some learners will do it and others won't do. As I learned from VBE, I as the teacher should give classwork and ensure that the learners have done it before leaving the class. If the learners are struggling, the teacher will get an opportunity to support them."*<sup>120</sup>

### 3.3. Exploring training appropriateness

Both teachers and BOM training participants found the overall contents of the training to be relevant to the Kakuma context, in particular around the three points raised above diversity / stereotypes, learner engagement and cooperation. No negative feedback was given around the relevance of the materials themselves to the training, despite some concerns on the part of Aga Khan staff that these were not specific enough to the context, although some criticisms were underlined around the lack of resources for the implementation of what is taught in the modules (see Section 3.4 below).

*"The content of VBE is relevant and beneficial especially for us the ambassadors who went for the training. If we don't practice it then we will have made it to be off. It is relevant in this school when it comes to embracing diversity since we have diverse learners in this school. We have people coming from DR Congo, some coming from Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan etc. and so we have to embrace all these." - KII 29, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.*

Acknowledgements of the diversity of the community in Kakuma opens up opportunities for building and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships with students as well as other teachers.

*"When I am teaching unit three on cultural activities and relationships, I use to talk about my tribe and also invite the learners to talk about theirs before I summarize by stating the similarities of the tribes. I follow that with an explanation about diversity in the world and also further instruct them to be respectful of others regardless of where they are coming from. This will make them reduce conflict amongst themselves." KII 29, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.*

BOM members who attended the training also focused on this component, arguing that the knowledge gained in the VBE training was important in promoting peaceful coexistence among teachers, community members, and learners. They reiterated that after the training, they could easily guide children to understand each other outside classroom and encourage group cohesion. *"Classmates and schoolmates will become friends and at the same time might form group discussions during their free time. In doing so, it boosts the performance of the*

<sup>119</sup> FGD23, Focus group discussion with teachers in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>120</sup> KII 29, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.



students.<sup>121</sup> Teachers and BOM members even acknowledged that it promoted better understanding and collaboration among adults.<sup>122</sup>

While the fourth module planned by AKF is the one designed to specifically focus on technical pedagogical models that can be used to develop the knowledge and skills to apply diverse approaches, teachers have already begun to report that they will use techniques from the modules to their teaching.

*“Before I was trained in VBE, when I asked learners questions in class and they cannot respond, I ignore them. I didn't give them much thinking time. I learned in the training that a learner should be given some think time when they are asked questions so that they can think and respond. Secondly, I didn't use teaching aids in my class such as those put on the walls (while pointing at some drawings). For instance, in pictures such as the ones in this book (while showing me the pictures) should be drawn on a manila paper and placed on the walls while teaching. I didn't know how to do all these but I learned from the training that these should be done.”*  
KII 28, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, August 2021.

### 3.4. Improving future VBE trainings

Although the feedback on the trainings was globally positive, a few areas for future trainings' improvement were raised, both practical and on content:

Practically, participants recommended:

**Ensuring participants mingle over the course of the training:** *“In order to integrate people from diverse backgrounds in the coming trainings, communication with them must be improved. I think there should be relationship building, collaboration, diversity. The training started well but later on, there was some kind of segregation. People started sitting with whom they know. You could see that the Somalis or Congolese or other people were seated with those they know. I think people need to sit and embrace who they sit with.”*<sup>123</sup>

**Ensuring that the trainings have sufficient time to run smoothly:** as noted above, the training schedule for the modules held in Kakuma was abridged. However, respondents were very engaged, posing clear timing limitations. As one AKF staff member interviewed explained,

*“The [training] had a challenge of time because most of the people there really wanted to share their experiences and during the sessions, they were feeling some kind of a relief, and one thing that the facilitators have been talking about is the need of the institution, the school and even the management to see the need of these kind of trainings and actually allow adequate time for teachers to attend these trainings. Yesterday, they had to do module three but they had to tweak it a bit because they did not have adequate time because teachers had to go to class first then some had to leave early because they stay far away.”* – KII25, Interview with NGO staff member, August 2021.

At the same time, one training participant did note that the trainings were further constrained timewise by the fact that the facilitators came late to the training several times by one or two hours, due to vehicle delays.<sup>124</sup>

From a content perspective:

Teachers reported wishing to implement the more creative means of interaction with their students raised in the VBE training modules but struggling to find sufficient resources to do so. Just as with the CBC, teaching resources are limited, almost all schools lack play materials, and more broadly few teachers could identify low-cost contextually appropriate materials for use.

The message that materials can be improvised has come through, and has been heard: *“It has also taught me that when can improvise materials, we don't need like buy, buy, buy and we can use a cartoon box to max shapes which I have tried and I have seen that my learners the one who were deaf know can be able to identifies the*

<sup>121</sup> FGD4, Focus group discussion with teachers and BOM in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>122</sup> FGD4, Focus group discussion with teachers and BOM in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>123</sup> KII28, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>124</sup> KII29, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

shapes which was tough because I was waiting for the organization to bring but now we can cut them and we have a lot of activities.”<sup>125</sup>

However, the next challenge will be in casting a broader net for potential materials to use.

“First, speaking for my children, we really don’t have materials like, for example, we need to teach them to brush their teeth because they don’t even know there have been in the community, and most of them don’t even know brush, they are used to the stick, but now we are not like training the culture, we’re trying to train them on both sides. For example, they were used to stick to brush but now when they have gone somewhere and have been given the brush, will they be able to use it?”<sup>126</sup>

Picture 9 – New Light Primary School, sports net



Those identified to date include cardboard, paper and ash, with ash used during physical education lessons, and papers collected to form a ball.<sup>127</sup>

“Like during sports games or a ball that can be thrown in class for people to ask or answer questions one at a time. We may be lucky!! But we have the papers that learners tear around the school and can be collected and shaped like a ball. I personally use that and it is a material at no cost.

Maybe we may have plastic water bottles that we use to store water. Learners may decide to make the cars out of it and start playing with it. But when you say low cost, okay, now, like I’m a PE teacher, I’m teaching PE. And then when I was demarcating the field, there were no ropes to tie so that we marked a straight line for running finishing at the cross line. I just use the ashes to demarcate the line.

In addition we can still improvise snacks for storing rice for children that can be used as manila papers. And I saw one teacher using it in class 7 drawing the lung respiratory system.”

FGD, participants in the VBE modules in Kakuma, August 2021.

VBE modules would benefit from a more explicit discussion of low-cost materials development and sharing of good practices on this front between participants, tied to the pedagogical approaches explored in these.<sup>128</sup>

Overall, the VBE modules offer a relevant and impactful means of supporting CBC implementation in the camps. While alone, they cannot not resolve the pedagogical and material challenges with CBC implementation raised earlier in this study, in addition to the clear relevance of the VBE to the CBC values pillar, this analysis identifies direct linkages between participation in the VBE modules and the use of new pedagogical approaches by teachers in line with the CBC. The shift in mindset prompted by the VBE trainings supports the implementation of child-centred pedagogical approaches. The emphasis on more creative approaches to teaching lays the groundwork for low-cost materials usage, although further adaptation is required to support teachers in the exact identification of these. More broadly, the VBE modules have contributed to a changed understanding of their roles as teachers (or BOM, in the members) and recognition of the need for stronger relationships with students, other teachers and community members – in line with the CBC’s approach to education. In short, these modules can support a quality delivery of the CBC.

<sup>125</sup> KII12, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>126</sup> KII12, Interview with a teacher in Kakuma, conducted in August 2021.

<sup>127</sup> KII12, Interview conducted with a teacher in Kakuma, in August 2021.

<sup>128</sup> The Watoto Kwanza programme led by AKF in Zanzibar provides a strong example of how this can be done.

## 4. TOWARDS A STRONGER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CBC IN DADAAB AND KAKUMA

### 4.1. Conclusions

Actors wishing to support the implementation of the CBC in Dadaab and Kakuma Refugee Camps find themselves facing challenges on multiple fronts. Even prior to the COVID-19 crisis, education actors in Dadaab and Kakuma camps faced many challenges, ranging from lack of qualified teachers (as of 2019, the majority of teachers in Dadaab camp were refugee teachers, of which 72% had only secondary school education), to overcrowded classrooms hosting 80-100 learners if not more, out-of-date disciplinary methods, precarious working conditions, and insufficient learning materials.<sup>129 130</sup> With COVID-19, the educational system was further challenged, as in Kenya more broadly: in 2020, over 17 million children in Kenya “experienced limited access to remote learning, missed schooling and faced protection risks as schools remained closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic” meaning close to 75% of children in the country faced limited access to education over the course of the year.<sup>131</sup> The complexity of the shift from the 8-4-4 system and the infrastructural limitations in many parts of the country – not just Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps – have made clear that successful implementation of the CBC in Kenya as a whole will require continued, sustained investment at teacher, school, community and systemic levels.

The present research provides a first detailed examination of the status of CBC implementation in Dadaab and Kakuma camps specifically, as well as a rapid case study of the potential offered by the VBE training developed by AKF in the context of this curricular change. It underlines conceptual and contextual challenges with which actors must grapple to implement the CBC, as well as varying amounts of actor and stakeholder buy-in and engagement. These learnings are more broadly applicable within the country as a whole, given the practical and infrastructural limitations shared in a number of counties nationwide.

**Pedagogical understanding and approaches.** Most parents and teachers interviewed evidence a limited understanding of the full scope of the evolution towards CBC. The change away from the exam-focused 8-4-4 system is clear, along with the addition of newer subjects and the recognition that the CBC requires a different type of teaching and learner engagement. Beyond that, conceptual misconceptions are rife. In some cases, teachers viewed their new role as ‘facilitators’ as lessening the responsibilities they have in the classroom, since learners will learn from each other. In others, they clearly expressed concerns that they do not have the needed background to teach along the new system – which requires a very different set of skills and techniques for teaching than the 8-4-4.

Many parents, meanwhile, do not understand how they are meant to support under this new system. Parental engagement, as has been well documented, represents an additional major change between the 8-4-4 approach to learning and the CBC. The CBC curriculum calls for continued guided learning at home. However, parental engagement in doing so in Dadaab and Kakuma is limited.

Overall, although many teachers and parents are enthusiastic regarding the CBC philosophy around learning and identifying talent, the possibility of engaging learners more, and teachers finding activities more interesting to teach, there remains a significant gap to understand it fully.

This is further complicated by the practical realities of teaching in Dadaab and Kakuma, where teachers face very large class sizes – even before COVID-19 – making it difficult to put in place CBC activities.

**Resources and infrastructure.** Building on the last – successful implementation of the CBC has one major element at the heart of it – namely, a well-trained, constant pool of teachers who understand how to translate the

<sup>129</sup> Duale et al., “Teachers in Displacement: Learning from Dadaab | Forced Migration Review.”

<sup>130</sup> UNHCR, Education Strategy – UNHCR Kakuma Camp

<sup>131</sup> UNICEF, “Kenya Humanitarian Situation Report - 31 December 2020.Pdf.”

new curriculum into teaching. Without well-trained teachers, the impact of material investments will be strongly diminished. High teacher turnover and limited coordination around trainings and training curricula means that even within a school, teachers may have very different levels of capacity with regards to the CBC. This runs the further risk of excluding children who might require additional support to be effectively included in CBC-run classrooms. In some cases, finally, teachers may have gained their understanding of the topic through another teacher, adding another layer of potential misunderstandings. While many teachers were enthusiastic about CBC training received, nearly all called for additional training, both for themselves and other teachers.

Even once teachers were trained, it was not always feasible to see whether or not they had acquired the skills to implement the core components of CBC, as lack of resources and materials prevent them from doing so in the first place. While many have done an admirable job of pivoting towards what is available on hand, this is insufficient to allow for a fulsome implementation of the curriculum. Missing or non-functional ICT makes key parts of the CBC curriculum difficult to put in place. Other play and learning materials are absent (arts and crafts, sports, etc.) limiting the range of activities that can be explored. While textbooks for the CBC were well rated, and have been a prioritised area of support, with improvements in student to textbook ratios, and textbooks in good condition where they exist, the sheer numbers remain insufficient.

The CBC curriculum calls for a different arrangement of classroom furniture, and additional infrastructure (ICT, sports, etc) to allow for the full range of the curriculum to be put into place. In both Dadaab and Kakuma, quite simply, while existing facilities have often been adapted to the CBC to the degree possible, key gaps remain. For example, the furniture supply is generally inadequate, even when the desk arrangements meet CBC requirements, and classrooms overcrowded.

**Parents.** Beyond the fact that a number of parents interviewed did not fully understand the ambitions of the CBC and their purported role in it, their ability to engage on it is further challenged by ‘practical’ realities. For example, some parents are illiterate, and many have limited digital literacy. Others flagged the lack of needed materials for study at home (lamps, papers, books).

More promising, however, are reports from some parents seeing a difference in the children’s attitude towards school since the rollout of the CBC program. Such feedback can be transformed into an avenue for further advocacy and positive engagement around the CBC programme, providing a relevant, real-life example of rapid change based on the CBC. Enthusiasm about engaging with children’s talents / skills, rather than a one-size-fits all curriculum fixated on exam results, offers an intriguing pathway to engagement. It will need to be tempered with expectations around a perceived linkage between skills and jobs, to ensure certain elements of the curriculum are not over-favoured because they are viewed as more employable.

**Stakeholder coordination.** Despite the challenges detailed above, stakeholders of various types have been coordinating within the camps to provide as much support as feasible within financial and capacity constraints, to implement the CBC. At the national level, under the refugee education working group, there is a sub-group on teacher management. UNHCR and other stakeholders working on education have developed an operational plan to help ‘triage’ priorities, to fund crucial interventions (such as teacher training and textbooks). County and sub-county officials at the local level remain willing to coordinate with UNHCR and other stakeholder around implementation in the camps at the current point.<sup>132</sup> More broadly, parents and teachers do not necessarily know where to go to find out more information about the CBC or receive further training to engage more effectively on this new curriculum.

In short, while the evolution from the 8-4-4 system to the CBC brings many opportunities to the Kakuma and Dadaab contexts, as it does nationally in Kenya, the current level of implementation remains superficial due to a range of challenges.

The **AKF VBE modules** offer a particularly effective way of addressing several of these issues in a relatively constrained amount of time, and cost-efficient fashion. These teacher “transformation” modules, while not directly built on the CBC system, contribute to providing teachers with much needed reflection around how they

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<sup>132</sup> This could change rapidly depending on Governmental messaging around camp closures.

teach, confidence in doing so in a more positive and interactive fashion, and techniques which can be used to build and strengthen relationships with students. Both teacher and BOM participants reported a 'paradigm shift' of sorts in how they approach their jobs as a result of the training. The community linkages demonstrated in the implementation of VBE modules in other parts of the country represent a key opportunity to cascade the reflection around values engendered by the modules to the broader community, creating an environment conducive to the implementation of the CBC.

## 4.2. Recommendations

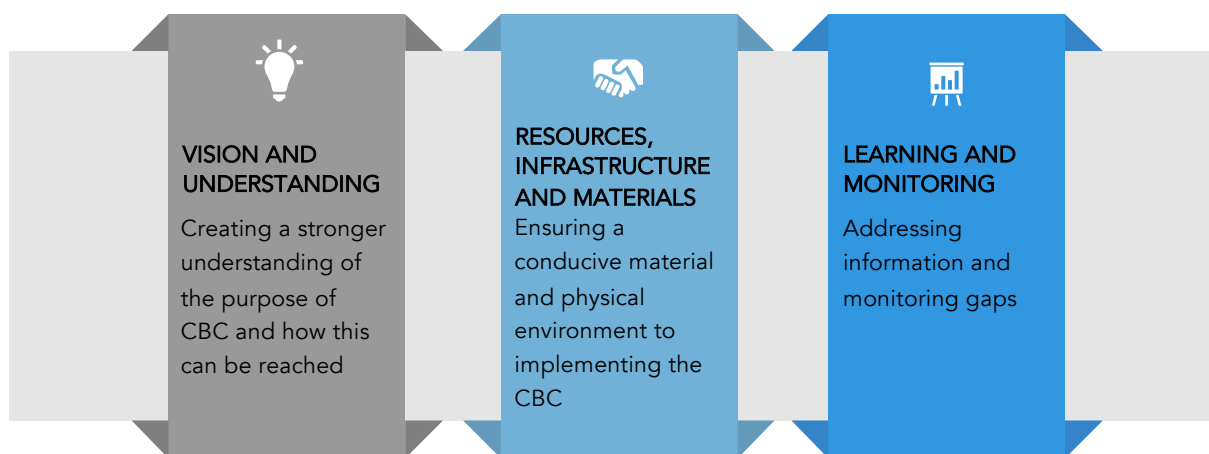
While there are gaps in the current implementation of the CBC, there is a real investment in the new curriculum by actors at different levels who recognise its value. Stakeholders wishing to strengthen this implementation must grapple with how to broaden this recognition and provide actors with the needed information and resources to translate vision and engagement into reality.

Recommendations provided in blue have been identified as **priority** recommendations requiring immediate action to facilitate the implementation of the rest of the recommendations – and make sure they have the expected impact – while taking into account the challenges in resourcing the CBC curriculum. These largely align with the recommendations identified as 'short' rather than 'medium' term from an implementation perspective.

While the recommendations below are proposed based on the current research, they should be considered within the broader Kenyan educational context, in line with the Global Compact on Refugees which calls for the integration of refugees within the national education system. Many, if not most, of the challenges faced in implementing the CBC in Dadaab and Kakuma are not unique to the camp setting, although this setting may exacerbate said challenges.

Rather than solely camp-specific solutions, then, this section seeks to propose recommendations relevant to the CBC as a whole in addition to some that address camp-specific opportunities and needs. While this research provides no easy solutions which could be disseminated nationwide to address these issues, it confirms the relevance of identifying integrated solutions which can be used in both refugee or non-refugee contexts to improve CBC implementation.

Figure 8 – Recommendations – Key areas for action



### 4.2.1. Building a stronger vision and understanding of the CBC in Kenya

This research makes clear that generally, teachers and parents in Dadaab and Kakuma camps have an inconsistent understanding of what the CBC is and what it requires from them for successful implementation. Interviews with teachers revealed pedagogical misunderstandings in a number of cases, while parents raised economic costs and unfamiliarity with how they can provide educational support as challenges to playing their

role in the new system. These trends are replicated nationwide; a number of articles in the media, for example, have recently referenced parental frustrations at being given 'assignments'.<sup>133</sup>

Successful implementation thus requires building a common vision and understanding of the tenets of the CBC – and how it is intended to be implemented – across stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and other educational actors. This requires further attention to systematising the usage of existing MoE and other resources as well as a more inclusive approach to implementation.

## SHORT TERM

**Ensure a stronger pool of pedagogically prepared teachers.** Across the board, stakeholders recognised the central nature of teachers to ensuring the successful implementation of the CBC. Without teachers who not only understand the purpose of the CBC but also have the needed skills to teach along this curriculum, other efforts serve little purpose. Existing research flags “inadequate human resources” as one of the most important challenges to the implementation of the CBC in Kenya more broadly.<sup>134</sup> Like in the camps, many teachers nationwide have limited pedagogical training on the implementation of a CBC-type approach to education. Interviews with teachers underlined the range of approaches being taken in trainings, as well as the differing lengths, meaning that a ‘trained’ teacher will vary significantly in terms of understanding of the CBC and knowledge of how to apply it. CBC implementing actors should ensure that – nationwide – a standard curriculum and training format is used, using MoE CBC training materials, including modules developing: 1/ a clear understanding of why the CBC has been put in place; 2/ pedagogical techniques to be used (e.g., what does ‘facilitation’ actually mean); 3/ how continual assessment should be conducted. These should be administered by trainers who themselves have a detailed understanding of the CBC and its pedagogical requirements; while the utilisation of ‘champions’ can support a rapid initial deployment of the CBC, relying on them for the building of pedagogical understanding runs the risk of incorrect approaches spreading.

**Build parental engagement with the CBC.** Across the board, parental engagement with the CBC was lacking – even when parents expressed enthusiasm for the new system, they lacked understanding, time or skills to play the role which the curriculum envisages for them,<sup>135</sup> and in some cases were not aware of this role. As recommended in past assessments of the CBC in Kenya more broadly,<sup>136</sup> more systemic effort to raise awareness of the programme, adapted to the different background of parents concerned, is needed. The following can be considered, with a prioritisation for low-cost / high dissemination approaches:

- Using radio as a tool to provide information around the CBC’s goals, and how parents and communities can be involved.
- Creation of COVID-19-safe dissemination materials such as short films, which can be screened in a variety of languages, both within the camps and across the many languages used in Kenya.
- Provide parents the opportunity to ‘sit in’ a class occasionally, to see themselves what the new approach entails.

The above must engage with the perceived opportunity cost for parents of engaging in more depth with their children’s education and in particular any play-based learning, highlighted in the Situation Analysis conducted in the light of VBE activities led by AKF on the Kenyan Coast.<sup>137</sup>

**Develop a cohesive understanding of the CBC across all relevant stakeholders in a given area, to promote localised coordination and demand.** Supporting the implementation of the national social mobilisation strategy through community meetings and more can serve to reduce some of the conceptual barriers to community engagement with the CBC and reduce the risk of students receiving differing feedback at home and in school.

## MEDIUM TERM

**Review the curriculum to ensure applicability to children from a range of environments.** While broadly new textbooks and the curriculum were praised as being clear, teachers did flag certain examples as being ill-suited

<sup>133</sup> BBC News, “Kenya’s CBC Education Reform.”

<sup>134</sup> Owala, “Successes and Challenges of Implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya.”

<sup>135</sup> KICD, “Parent’s Roles - Competency Based Curriculum.”

<sup>136</sup> See for example, Jane, Dinah, and Irene, “The Teacher-Parent Nexus in the Competency Based Curriculum Success Equation in Kenya.”

<sup>137</sup> ThinkPlace, “Situation Analysis: Play-Based Learning in Coastal Kenya.”

to building the understanding of children in the camp setting – for example, talk of traffic lights. As this situation is one faced in areas outside of the camps as well, a national-level effort to developing alternative examples and approaches suited to specific types of environments in Kenya would contribute to building student understanding of what is being taught. Alternatively, the textbooks could include further information around examples identified as ‘non-universal’ to support teachers in providing clear explanations around these.

### Leveraging the AKF VBE Approach

In addition to the above-mentioned trainings presenting the CBC materials, aligned nationwide, further dissemination of the AKF VBE training approach offers a clear opportunity to anchor the new curriculum within the values-based pillar of the CBC and comparatively rapidly develop needed teacher skills. The VBE approach, as it was designed on the Kenyan coast, with a greater civil society involvement, created a strong linkage between school and community and prompted broader reflection around the values espoused by the modules. The feedback from Kakuma camp participants was clear: participation in the modules had a transformative effect on their abilities to do their job and in particular implement the CBC appropriately.

- At a small scale, there is an opportunity to work with teacher ‘champions’ to share key learnings from their experiences with the VBE modules. While this is unlikely to provide the same transformative experience as participation in the full programme, it can begin to spread some of the pedagogical learnings from the modules more broadly, providing a short-term stopgap to some of the challenges facing actors supporting CBC implementation. The enthusiasm of teachers who have participated in the programmes suggests they would be keen to cascade learnings. This would of course require clear guidelines for the selection of champions and monitoring of what they share, to avoid ‘disinformation’ being spread.
- For larger scale implementation, additional trainers who can work with teachers nationwide through this series of modules are needed. Ideally, this would be done in conjunction with a network of local CSOs, creating the linkages to other community-level initiatives central to the design of the VBE approach. AKF has been developing plans to use the VBE approach on the coast more broadly over the next few years and identifying means to make it more scalable.

## 4.2.2. Developing needed resources, materials and infrastructure to make the implementation of the CBC materially feasible

### SHORT TERM

**Coordinate across education-related initiatives to optimise efforts and strengthen the CBC.** Funding for improvements to infrastructure and purchase of materials is likely to remain constrained in the immediate future. At a time where in Kenya, additional investment is needed in training and supplies due to the curricular shift, COVID-19 has caused a contraction in GDP growth and commensurate increase in the fiscal deficit.<sup>138</sup> The Ksh503.9 billion budget proposed for the 2021-2022 school year, while representing a 3.3% increase from the previous financial year, only 1 billion of this will go directly to the CBC.<sup>139</sup> International flows to support education to the region as a whole are expected to remain lower than hoped as a result of COVID-19. As such, it is imperative to coordinate initiatives linked to infrastructure investments and materials purchases and ensure that these are developed in light of CBC priorities to avoid missed opportunities or investments which are not in line with needs. Teachers should be consulted in decision-making around materials purchasing to ensure that purchases are aligned with perceived needs for stronger CBC implementation. It may be helpful to initially prioritise larger schools for infrastructure investments to target larger numbers of students rapidly: March 2021 enrolment data for primary schools in Dadaab and Kakuma camps, for example, finds that these range in size from 59 students to 3,556.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Deloitte, “2021 Kenya Budget Highlights - Navigating New Realities.”

<sup>139</sup> Deloitte.

<sup>140</sup> March 2021 enrolment data provided by UNHCR

**Make existing resources usable.** Site observations and teacher interviews revealed several instances where existing, CBC-relevant material was not usable – for example, ICT rooms with tablets lacking power. Before purchasing new materials, actors should prioritise exploring means of ensuring supplies and spaces which are already present can be utilised. In other cases, more limited investments to a communal shared space – potentially even between schools situated near to each other – could address some of these gaps on a short-term basis, for example if one school had suitable athletic fields for use and the other grounds for basic agriculture classes.

**Develop guidance around the use of alternative / low-cost materials to address funding limitations.** While several teachers interviewed referenced attempts to use local materials in lieu of standard ones, as well as making the most of what is available in the context of the camps, such practices were reportedly conducted on an ad hoc basis, and a number of respondents struggled to give examples of these. Based on some targeted workshops as well as existing guidance from other contexts (for example the Watoto Kwanza programme in Zanzibar) a contextually-adapted manual directly linked to the CBC curriculum which could be distributed to teachers for use in camps and more broadly in contexts facing similar material limitations (e.g. in some of the ASALs). This could also take into consideration digital means of materials sharing, building on approaches developed for education during the COVID-19 school closures.

**Address capacity gaps on new subjects.** Teachers identified some of content in the CBC as challenging due to lack of training on these subjects, such as music, agriculture and the arts. Further trainings can then be offered at a more technical level; these can include both formal trainings, and when resources are more limited, the development of mentorship programmes within a school or camp, where teachers with these specific competencies could work with selected other teachers to build their understanding of the new subjects as an intermediary stopgap. These capacity gaps could also be addressed by reaching out to community members, in particular parents. This would come with the added advantage of building parental and community engagement with the CBC. Parents represent a powerful means of strengthening CBC implementation, not just through their role at home but through the knowledge and values which they can bring to the curriculum as a whole. For example, a parent working in agriculture could potentially support teachers in providing ‘lived’ experience on the subject to children.

#### MEDIUM TERM

**Prioritise hiring and retaining trained teachers.** Beyond the needed training for understanding, there is a clear ‘numbers gap’ hindering the implementation of the CBC – with too few teachers per students, successful implementation of the curriculum and its interactive components is rendered significantly more difficult. Ensuring a planned stream of funding for sufficient numbers of teachers should be prioritised over the provision of useful, but less critical, material goods such as say, playgrounds. Once teachers are hired and trained in the CBC, their retention should be prioritised over that of untrained teachers in cases where funding shortfalls require lay-offs, to minimise the need for and cost of additional training.

**Consider new partners for resourcing schools in the camps.** The breadth of activities covered by the CBC – inclusive of for example arts, music, and sports – both creates new supply needs, and opens up new opportunities for partnership with organisations who might wish to provide support to the schools. In addition to traditional actors such as NGOs, private sector organisations or foundations linked to them could be further brought on board.

**Ensure the provision of inclusive materials.** Further attention must be given to providing supplies aligned with the new curriculum to children who may struggle with existing materials due for example, vision problems or limited language skills.

### 4.2.3. Ensuring information sharing and progress monitoring around the CBC

#### SHORT TERM

**Develop easy means of asking questions around the CBC.** Easy access to information around the CBC – in various languages, and which can both be listened to and read, given high parent illiteracy, is needed to build broader understanding around what this curricular shift entails. This could take the form of a website, a phone number which could be called, an SMS platform, an application, or other means of interactive communication.



## MEDIUM TERM

**Monitor CBC teaching regularly to provide pedagogical feedback.** To ensure that the CBC is being implemented as planned, teachers require not just training but regular feedback. This feedback should come from pedagogical experts – ideally, CBC trainers – who could visit schools on a regular basis and provide constructive updates on challenges faced, recommendations on how to address these, and identify any cases of significant misunderstanding of how to teach under the new curriculum.

### 4.2.4. Recommended further areas of research

The research focus on Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps provides a microcosm of CBC implementation in a difficult context, outlining the challenges and opportunities this new curriculum faces and offers. Further research is needed to identify and develop good practices in implementation to take up, in particular:

**Opportunities for economies of scale in materials provision and training.** The cost of needed materials and trainings to better implement the CBC is high; targeted research could explore opportunities for economies of scale by aligning materials orders and coordinating purchases between nearby schools.

**Identifying good practices for stronger implementation of the CBC nationwide.** In particular, this should explore the practicalities of upscaling good practices, including initiatives like the VBE modules, in a cost-efficient fashion.

**Addressing parental concerns around the cost of the CBC.** Given the nationwide outcry on this front, it is imperative to gather detailed data on ‘real’ costs of the CBC to households, in particular in comparison to the 8-4-4 system, to allow stakeholders to understand to what degree these costs are a significant constraint to implementation and develop approaches to address these gaps.

## ANNEXES

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## WORKSHOP FINDINGS

On 19 October 2021, on the last of a series of workshops organised by UNHCR, Samuel Hall and AKF led a discussion on the implementation of the Competency-based Curriculum in refugee contexts and the role of VBE in the process with partners based in Kenya. The workshop specifically sought to identify partner priorities for action to strengthen the implementation of the CBC in Kenya, challenges to these, and learning questions requiring further research to improve approach to the CBC. These are categorised below, in the direct language used in workshop Jamboards.

Priority action points	Challenges to implementation	Learning questions for further investigation
<p><b>Teacher skills / Professional development:</b>            More support for teachers can be done to relate the VBE and CBC. Our teachers are still struggling with CBC            Support teachers to acquire knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver diverse T&amp;L strategies in their classrooms            Teacher professional development around assessment for learning strategies            Intentional allocation of funds in TPD for teachers during planning            Teacher training for the teachers on VBE and CBC</p> <p><b>Parental involvement:</b>            Involve parents more in the affairs of learners, including the awareness creation on key tenets of the CBC &amp; VBE programme (i.e. role of parents etc.)</p> <p><b>Learning materials and approaches:</b>            Adequate resource / TL materials provided            School based teacher guides need to be developed for VBE that teachers can use easily on a day-to-day basis            Sourcing digital materials aligned to VBE / CBC            Inclusion of VBE in the current CBC curriculum implementation</p> <p><b>Further research / planning</b>            Continuous research / learning on how best to meet the needs of teachers in our context            Map out training strategies for teachers on CBC. Use the mapping process report to plan and develop a strategic plan towards teacher professional development.</p>	<p><b>Teacher preparedness and motivation</b>            Shift of teacher attitudes from outcome-based to CBC-based assessments            Inconsistent understanding of CBC            Teacher motivation and appreciation – this is lacking and affects retention after training and capacity building            Retention of teachers in refugee schools especially after investment in training            Lack of post training support and refresher courses for the trained teachers due to funding gaps</p> <p><b>Parental roles</b>            Illiteracy level amongst parents – limiting their involvement in learners’ affairs, especially supporting with assignments that learners are required to execute with the help of parents            Opportunity and financial cost of education to parents and caregivers            Role of parents not very clear. Homework assignments, level of funding to TL resources.            Parental engagement in VBE / CBC</p> <p><b>Financial and material considerations</b>            Cost            Poor working conditions in schools            Access to T&amp;L materials            More time for CBC rollout</p> <p><b>Practical considerations to upscaling VBE</b>            Scale up VBE programme to cover other schools (both within the Kakuma and host communities), including Dadaab.            Government adoption the VBE may be a challenge if they don’t understand it well            Sensitise MoE on VBE and the potential opportunities for implementation            Suitability of VBE for the content delivery intensive levels for secondary education</p>	<p><i>Priority</i>            What economies of scale might be feasible on materials procurement?            How do we respond to parental concerns about opportunity and economic cost / burden of the CBC?            Other than in the refugee settings, have there been efforts to include the VBE in the government teacher professional development Initiative?            To what extent can CBC planning for the camps be directly linked to broader initiatives to support the CBC in Kenya?            How might the VBE modules be delivered with many schools without eroding quality / impact?            How might teachers be supported to deliver the CBC through diverse T&amp;L approaches?            What are cost-effective, high impact models for teacher professional development in low-resource settings?            To what extent have teachers been prepared to monitor and assess the skills gains of the learners?            How can TPD be managed in a way that would support and motivate teachers?</p> <p><i>Medium term</i>            What are education donor perspectives on the CBC and how are they integrating it into their planning / funding?            Key global lessons we can learn from other regions that have implemented VBE?            How are monitoring and learning around CBC and VBE designed for scale up?</p>

## ABOUT SAMUEL HALL

Samuel Hall is a social enterprise that conducts research in countries affected by issues of migration and displacement. Our mandate is to produce research that delivers a contribution to knowledge with an impact on policies, programmes and people. With a rigorous approach and the inclusion of academic experts, field practitioners, and a vast network of national researchers, we access complex settings and gather accurate data.

**Our research connects the voices of communities to change-makers for more inclusive societies.**

Samuel Hall has offices in Afghanistan, Kenya, Germany and Tunisia and a presence in Somalia, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates. For more information, please visit [www.samuelhall.org](http://www.samuelhall.org)



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