Accelerate with Care
Towards Gender-Responsive Secondary Accelerated Education

December 2023

SAEP learners at Bukere Secondary School in Kyaka refugee settlement, Uganda during a menstrual health & hygiene session with their senior women teachers. © Finn Church Aid

Acknowledgements

List of acronyms

AAI	Accelerating Access Initiative
AE	Accelerated Education
AEP	Accelerated Education Programme or Programming
AEWG	Accelerated Education Working Group
ASEP	Accelerated Secondary Education Programme for Teachers
CEC	Community Education Committee
CSE	South Sudan Certificate of Secondary Education
DOP	Drop-Out Programme
ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EiE	Education in Emergencies
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoJ	Government of Jordan
GRE	Gender-Responsive Education
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
KII	Key Informant Interview
MHH	Menstrual Health and Hygiene
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoES	Ministry of Education & Sports
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OOSCY	Out-Of-School Children and Youth
SAEP	Secondary Accelerated Education Programme or Programming
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEWG	Secondary Education Working Group
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics
UCE	Uganda Certificate of Education (Ordinary level or lower secondary level)
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WTI	Windle Trust International

Executive Summary

Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) offer flexible and age-appropriate programmes which run in an accelerated timeframe for overage children and youth. These programmes offer pathways back into education where poverty, marginalisation, conflict, and crises have resulted in major disruptions to learning. Efforts by the Inter- agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG), a group of education partners working in the field of accelerated education, have advocated for harmonised and standardised approached to AEPs to promote programmes which are certified, and which offer equivalency to national curricula through collaboration with local governments and implementing agencies. While evidence has shown the effectiveness, potential, and challenges of implementing of AEPs at primary level, limited research has been conducted at secondary level (Secondary Accelerated Education Programmes, SAEPs).

This report examines the relevance and appropriateness of SAEPs, which are currently available at the lower secondary level, and the extent to which these programmes can respond to the needs of overage learners who are likely to be in later stages of adolescence and youth, and whose socio-economic statuses pose greater challenges for accessing and continuing education. Drawing on a literature review, interviews with Education in Emergency (EiE) experts including AEWG, and a case study in Uganda,

the report has sought to respond to examine: the relevance and appropriateness of SAEPs, the factors that enable and challenge the potential of SAEPs in supporting progressing through and completion of secondary education, and the extent to which SAEPs respond to gender-based needs.

The findings of this report demonstrate that SAEPs offer important and otherwise unavailable opportunities for overage learners; the accelerated timeframe, certification, and flexibility of these programmes are components which are highlighted as significant incentives for learners. **However, the findings reveal tensions between these opportunities and the extent to which programmes offer relevant skills and knowledge to students' lives and are sufficiently flexible**. The findings also speak to factors which are heightened at secondary level, including: limited availability of qualified teachers, challenging teaching environments, funding mechanisms, policy barriers which prevent learners from sitting exams and continuing education. Finally, the report findings provide evidence of the ways in which gender-responsiveness is considered within SAEPs, and issues related to current structures and costs which result in learners facing further discrimination.

To promote SAEP programming which prioritises relevance, flexibility, and gender-responsiveness, this report concludes with a set of recommendations.

SAEP Educators at Adjumani Secondary School in Uganda. The project is implemented by War Child Canada.
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Introduction

This report explores Secondary Accelerated Education Programming (SAEP) at the lower secondary education level. It examines the extent to which these programmes address critical gaps in access to and completion of secondary education, especially within conflict, displacement-affected, and low- and middle-income countries. Secondary Accelerated Education Programmes (SAEPs) seek to enable overage individuals, who have finished primary but who have missed out on opportunities to enter secondary education. Accelerated Education (AE), as defined by the INEE Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG)[1], are:

> *A flexible, age-appropriate programme, run in an accelerated time frame, which aims to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out-of-school children, and youth. (...) The goal of Accelerated Education Programmes is to provide learners with equivalent, certified competencies for basic education using effective teaching and learning approaches that match their level of cognitive maturity.*
> **(AEWG, 2017)**

The demand for flexible learning opportunities for lower secondary education is significant. The greatest drop in enrolment is during the transition from primary to secondary education (INEE 2022). Only around 26 per cent of youth affected by emergencies reach upper secondary education (UNICEF 2018).

In many contexts, girls are also more likely to be out of secondary education than boys. Today, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG4, emphasise the importance of "lifelong learning." SDG4.1 specifically advocates for solutions which ensure that "all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective outcomes."

These goals, however, co-exist with the increasing number of displaced individuals today. By 2023, over 117.2 million people were displaced (UNHCR 2023). Equally, the world faces new kinds of uncertainty resulting from climate-related crises and pandemics. As a result of COVID-19, for example, it is estimated that around 20 million secondary school-aged girls may not return after school (Malala Fund 2020). These disruptions also result in individuals becoming 'overage', exceeding the age ranges typically accepted within secondary education structures. Without flexible and innovative solutions, these disruptions to learning may become permanent.

In South Sudan, Windle Trust International offers targeted SAEP to primary schools teachers who did not have the opportunity to complete their secondary education. © Windle Trust International

AEPs have been designed to offer flexibility and an accelerated pace to address some of these gaps. However, AEP efforts and related research have largely focused on primary education. While this research has shown that AEPs can enable marginalised children and youth to access primary education opportunities, less has been written on the relevance of AEPs for overage learners seeking to enroll in secondary education.

These include the need to assess factors such as: curricula and pedagogies that prepare marginalised youth for post-education pathways, the complexity of condensing secondary education curriculum, and gender-based challenges which may be exacerbated in later years of youth and early adulthood (Bellino et al. 2023; Shah and Choo 2020).

This report seeks to enhance knowledge on AEPs at the secondary level, examining the opportunities and challenges that impact the relevance and appropriateness of these programme. In particular, the report is guided by three aims:

1 **To examine the relevance and appropriateness of SAEPs**, including a better understanding of how SAEPs address varying needs.

2 **To learn what factors enable and challenge the potential of SAEPs** in supporting progression through and completion of secondary education.

3 **To examine how SAEPs consider gender-based needs** and the extent to which they are gender-responsive in design and implementation.

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[1] The AEWG is made up of education partners working in the field of accelerated education, working together to strengthen the quality of AEPs through a harmonised and standardised approach.

Report Methodology

This report draws on multiple sources of data. Firstly, a literature review was conducted to examine current research available on SAEPs and alternative education models at the secondary level. This includes academic literature and grey literature, especially AEWG literature on SAEPs and country-level reports on programmes in Colombia, Jordan, South Sudan, and Uganda. Secondly, interviews at a global level were conducted with EiE experts and with AEWG and SEWG members. Finally, the report draws on research conducted in Uganda for the purpose of this report, as detailed below.

Case Study: Uganda

Data collection was conducted through a small case study in Uganda, which took place in September 2022. The study was conducted across two sites where SAEP is being implemented, in Adjumani and Dzaipi secondary schools in the West Nile region of northwest Uganda. The details of key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted are listed in Annex B.

This case study aimed to gain an understanding of the perspectives of stakeholders on the relevance of SAEPs, as

well as emerging challenges and lessons. Uganda, which is the largest refugee hosting country in Africa with over 1.5 million refugees (UNHCR 2022), also has advanced policies, curricula, and expertise in place for AEPs, especially at primary level and lower secondary education. In recent years, national-level workshops were held with the support of AEWG to contextualise the Accelerated Education: 10 Principles for Effective Practice (AEWG, 2017), which outline the essential components of effective AEPs. The development of national guidelines, curricula, and policies around AEP in Uganda allow for implementing agencies to follow a harmonized approach to implementation.

Limitations

The report largely draws on the perspectives of people served and stakeholders, examining SAEPs more closely in Uganda only. Academic and grey literature were reviewed to guide the findings of this report, though evidence on SAEPs is limited compared to primary AEPs. In Uganda, data collection was limited to SAEPs within the Adjumani District due to financial and time-related constraints. However, several layers of interviews were conducted, covering a wide range of perspectives (see Annexes A and B).

A former SAEP learner at Adjumani Secondary School in Uganda shared challenging and enabling factors based on her experiences. © Jesuit Refugee Service

Members of the Community Education Committee (CEC) are key to the SAEP implemented by War Child Canada at Dzaipi Secondary School and throughout the Adjumani District. © Jesuit Refugee Service

Findings

1: Relevance and Appropriateness of SAEPs

This section analyses the current nature of SAEPs, describing three points of tension which impact the extent to which SAEPs are relevant and appropriate to the needs of learners, including: the targeting of SAEPs, the nature of curriculum and pedagogy, the (in)flexibility of structures, and the speed of acceleration.

1.1 SAEPs: Availability and Targeting across Contexts

The number of SAEPs worldwide remains limited, exacerbating issues of already-scarce funding and inequitable opportunities to access secondary education for displaced and marginalised children and youth. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and implementing agencies in Uganda, stated that SAEPs can address chronic shortages of secondary education opportunities for marginalised communities. Participants, including both current and former SAEP learners, articulated a need for SAEPs. Several felt that the programmes offered a "second chance" after many years of disrupted access to education. Many participants stated that they had not previously envisioned being able to return to education prior to learning about SAEPs, and that the national certification offered by these programmes presented a great advantage over others.

Yet, the shortage of opportunities created significant demand for SAEPs in Uganda. Representatives of implementing agencies stated that in response to demand, SAEPs should target those most marginalised, including: those overage, displaced populations, host communities affected by poverty, and female learners. However, representatives stated that following these vulnerability criteria was not always feasible; the inclusion of refugees was limited due to SAEPs being implemented within settings that were physically inaccessible to them.[2] Equally, learners with disabilities were not always explicitly included in the selection criteria, though representatives stated that this reasoning was due to the limited number of individuals with disabilities who complete primary education nationally.

A review of literature finds that SAEPs are also diverse in their objectives and selection criteria, including age range, structures, and post-SAEP purposes. Table 1 below provides a review of SAEPs across contexts and their varying objectives. These programmes will be referred to throughout the report.

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2   In Uganda, the closure of several SAEPs as a result of funding cuts resulted in a loss of opportunities for refugee communities. Implementing agencies stated that, with renewed funding, plans include the approval of SAEP centres within settings accessible to refugees.

TABLE 1:
SECONDARY AEPS ACROSS COUNTRIES[3]

COLOMBIA[4]

Name Postprimaria Rural	**Name** Secundaria Activa	**Name** Caminar en Secundaria
Year started 1990	**Year started** 2012	**Year started** 1990
Implemented by private NGOs and public schools	**Implemented by** Private NGOs and public schools	**Implemented by** Private NGOs and public schools
Age 12-17	**Age** 11-17	**Age** 13-17
Rate of acceleration dependent on school decision	**Rate of acceleration** dependent on school decision	**Rate of acceleration** condensed language, mathematics, natural and social sciences according to school decision
Certification Secondary certificate, enabling transition into middle grades in mainstream schools.	**Certification** Secondary certificate, enabling transition into middle grades in mainstream schools.	**Certification** Secondary certificate, enabling transition into middle grades in mainstream schools.
Learners targeted rural and overage out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY)	**Learners targeted** Urban students and overage OOSCY learners	**Learners targeted** Overage OOSCY from rural areas
Location Rural districts	**Location** Urban and rural districts	**Location** Rural districts

JORDAN[5]

Name Drop-Out Programme (DOP)

Year started 2003

Implemented by Ministry of Education (MoE) and Questscope

Age male learners between 12-18, female learners between 12-20

Rate of acceleration 18-24 month programme

Certification Grade-10 equivalency to enable enrolment in vocational training or the Home Studies Programme. This does not lead to access to further in-classroom formal education, but allows learners to enter the Home Studies Programme, which is a self-learning pathway allowing learners to sit national exams.

Learners targeted Host communities and refugee students who have been out of school for one or more years.

Location All governorates and Syrian refugee camps

SOUTH SUDAN

Name Accelerated Secondary Education Programme (ASEP) for Women and Teachers

Year started 2017 / 2018

Implemented by Windle Trust International in collaboration with MoE

Age 18+

Rate of acceleration 2.5 years, completed within 46 weeks of learning

Certification Secondary education certificate

Learners targeted Untrained primary teachers who have not completed secondary education, and young women whose education has been disrupted.[6]

Location Across South Sudan

UGANDA[7]

Name Equitable Access To Quality And Transformational Education For Refugee And Host Communities (EQUATE)[8]	**Name** SAEP	**Name** SAEP
Year started 2017 / 2018	**Year started** 2020	**Year started** 2021[9]
Implemented by Windle International	**Implemented by** War Child Canada, SAEP curriculum developed with MoE	**Implemented by** Finn Church Aid
Age 16-25+	**Age** 16-25+	**Age** 16-25+
Rate of acceleration Level 1 (corresponding to Senior Year 1-2 of secondary education) and Level 2 (corresponding to Senior 3-4)	**Rate of acceleration** Level 1 (corresponding to Senior Year 1-2 of secondary education) and Level 2 (corresponding to Senior 3-4)	**Rate of acceleration** Level 1 (corresponding to Senior Year 1-2 of secondary education) and Level 2 (corresponding to Senior 3-4)
Certification AEP at Ordinary (O'Level) and Advanced (A'Level)	**Certification** Learners who finish Level 2 of SAEP can sit national Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE). Learners can then transition into upper secondary education or vocational training.	**Certification** Learners who finish Level 2 of SAEP can sit national Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE).
Learners targeted child mothers, pregnant girls, new refugee arrivals, and other vulnerable youth	**Learners targeted** refugee and host communities in Adjumani district	**Learners targeted** overage learners, child mothers, new arrivals, learners with disabilities
Location West-Nile Sub-Region of Uganda (Imvepi Refugee Settlements, Rhino Camp Refugee Settlements, and Palabek Refugee Settlements)	**Location** Adjumani District	**Location** West Nile and South-West regions

3   Information building on literature review and interview finding
4   https://inee.org/sites/default/files/resources/ACCESS-Colombia-EN-FINAL-v5-1.pdf
5   https://inee.org/sites/default/files/resources/ACCESS-Jordan-EN-FINAL-v4.pdf
6   According to interview findings, the programme is currently only targeting teachers due to priorities set out by MoE to address a limited supply of trained teachers.
7   https://inee.org/sites/default/files/resources/ACCESS-Colombia-EN-FINAL-v5-1.pdf
8   https://windleuganda.org/equitable-access-to-quality-and-transformational-education-for-refugee-and-host-communities-equate-project/
9   According to interview findings, this programme is currently in its pilot stage.

Learners in Windle Trust International's Accelerated Secondary Education Programme in South Sudan. © Windle Trust International

1.2 SAEPs for what Futures? Curricula and Pathways

In principle, SAEPs aim to respond to barriers to access and completion of secondary education for marginalised communities, offering renewed and alternative pathways into secondary education. However, a shared perspective amongst stakeholders dictated that, without contextually based assessments, SAEPs may not be appropriate for all contexts. One respondent, for example, expressed that SAEPs "must make sense for whoever they are designed for" and must therefore draw on an understanding of learners' needs and real opportunities within their local context, especially the education and livelihood opportunities that are available to learners post-SAEP.

The situational needs of learners should thus be a guide for AEPs (Boisvert and Shah 2023). At the secondary level, learners face increased pressure to evaluate the merits of education compared to the opportunities and responsibilities that face them outside of their learning settings and trajectories (Bellino 2021). Literature on alternative education models highlights the importance of education opportunities that are meaningful to learners by responding to their realities and enabling them to navigate inequalities by bringing these experiences into classrooms (McGregor et al. 2015; Moffatt and Riddle 2021).

Current SAEP in Uganda focuses on appropriate pedagogies for overage learners, especially youth and adults who have been out of school for as long as eight to 12 years, including learner-centred, participatory, and competency-based approaches. However, outside of this pedagogical approach, the links between SAEPs and future opportunities are not well-articulated in the design of SAEPs, despite a representative of the MoES in Uganda stating that SAEPs can be "useful and effective" in bridging the gaps between education and vocational training.

The extent to which SAEPs and their curricula are "about pathways to vocational skills" was raised in an interview with an EiE expert. While interviews with donors and implementing agencies focused on the need to align SAEPs with national certification for purposes of equivalency and certification, learners in Uganda expressed concern about their opportunities post-SAEPs, raising important tensions about whether programming should prioritise alignment to national curricula or the unique needs of overage learners.

Learners in Uganda expressed that accreditation was a significant incentive for joining SAEPs, and yet, several learners also voiced their concerns about how these educational opportunities might enable them to pursue jobs or further education. In an interview with former SAEP learners, some expressed that while a small number of their peers were able to continue onto vocational training or better employment opportunities, others were once again "back at home." Equally, implementing agencies and donors stated that the failure to achieve transitions to education beyond lower secondary education was a significant issue.

To address these gaps between SAEPs and future trajectories, many participants across interviews felt SAEPs should introduce content and activities relevant to learners' lives as adults and their individual wellbeing.

In particular, respondents described three components which they felt were needed at SAEP levels: appropriate pedagogical models including learner-centred pedagogy, the addition of subjects related to learners' livelihood opportunities, and the implementation of services through schools such as career counselling and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). The need for MHPSS within accelerated education has been highlighted in findings across other contexts (see INEE AWEG 2022).

Members of the Community Education Committee (CEC) for the SAEP implemented at Adjumani Secondary School by War Child Canada participated in a focus group discussion (FGD) as part of the data collection phase of this research. © Jesuit Refugee Service

Yet, learners and implementing agencies felt that current SAEP funding and design processes do not consider the need for relevant subjects beyond the national curriculum. To date, few SAEPs appear to include subjects related to life skills and vocational skills. Adding on these relevant subjects, however, is challenging due to the need to condense advanced core subjects at the secondary level into an accelerated format (see section 1.3 below for further detail).

1.3 Adulthood, Responsibilities, and Flexible Structures

AEPs aim to provide 'flexible' access to education. Flexibility is a feature that is even more crucial for secondary education. SAEPs offer an opportunity to join lower secondary education for a wider age group, including those who have been out of education for several years. As such, individuals seeking SAEP opportunities are likely to be older than those joining primary AEPs, living with additional responsibilities that require dedication to financial and social duties.

Prospective learners may face further stigma related to the perceived value of returning to education in the face of other responsibilities. Female learners, as found in the Uganda case study, may be further discouraged from pursuing secondary education compared to primary due to their age and their socio-economic circumstances (see section 3).

To accommodate learners' social and economic responsibilities and reduce social barriers to education, SAEPs must be flexible in their structures, timing, and modes of teaching. In Uganda and elsewhere, several barriers appear to impact the extent to which SAEPs are flexible. For

example, learners currently attending SAEPs in Uganda are typically implemented within mainstream secondary schools and follow traditional school hours. In one FGD, learners expressed that SAEPs have rigid hours and are distant from their homes, requiring significant time and resources to ensure daily attendance. These inflexible structures do not consider learners' other responsibilities including employment hours and childcare responsibilities. Although SAEP in Uganda is provided free of charge, additional elements impose significant financial burdens and added pressures related to social and familial responsibilities.

These challenges create obstacles that may hinder marginalised learners' retention and completion of SAEPs. Interviewees stated that in addition to flexible structures and hours, programming must consider learners' livelihoods, including periods such as harvesting seasons.

Flexibility is embedded into other models which enable learners to balance their education with external responsibilities. For example, "flexi" secondary schools do not require daily attendance at schools and allow learners to study at home (Mills and McGregor 2016). Other accelerated adult programmes offer flexible hours of learning, including those which enable learners to receive the US General Education Diploma (GED), a high school equivalency credential, and accelerated university certifications (Sharma et al. 2016).

These programs are flexible both in pace as well as location of learning. The Amala High School Diploma (described in Case Study 1 below) integrates flexibility in its design to support displaced youth and integrates content that is relevant for targeted learners.

CASE STUDY 1

AMALA HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA[10]

The Amala High School Diploma is considered the first international high school diploma designed specifically for displaced youth. The programme targets OOSY aged 16-25 who are refugees, internally displaced, asylum seekers, or youth from host communities who have not had the opportunity to complete their secondary education. It enables them to enrol in a 15-month, blended online and in-person education programme.

The programme features a curriculum that resonates with the learners' life experiences and seeks to equip students with essential knowledge, skills, and tools to enhance their livelihoods and explore additional educational avenues. It has been rolled out in various refugee-hosting settings, including Amman, Jordan and the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. The diploma is structured around five streams of learning, each including two courses. The five streams include:

1 leadership for social innovation
2 towards sustainable peace
3 active participation in societies
4 self and cultural expression; and
5 using evidence to make change.

In addition to their coursework Amala students also receive career counselling to support their continued education or future employment.

Amala's high school diploma has been granted candidate status for accreditation in Jordan and Kenya by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). It is currently working towards full accreditation with both bodies.

10 Based on interview and https://www.amalaeducation.org/diploma-programme

1.4 Acceleration: Importance and Complexities of Timeframes

The timeframe is one of the identifying features of SAEPs. Currently, the curriculum for SAEP in Uganda is decided in collaboration with the MoES, based upon a selection of competencies and skills from the national curricula identified as essential to overage learners. These competencies are provided within a condensed format, resulting in an accelerated learning modality. Most respondents across global interviews and in Uganda felt that the timeframe of SAEPs is important for overage young people and adults who are re-entering education, as it is likely to encourage learners who must weigh the time spent learning against their other duties and responsibilities. Depending on the context, secondary education typically spans four to six years. Some respondents felt that, even if overage learners were able to continue into traditional secondary education pathways, the timeline would pose a particular disadvantage for overage and marginalized individuals due to related costs and economic and domestic responsibilities. Many learners highlighted the importance of the condensed timeframe. Being able to envision a goal that is reachable and near is critical. One learner summarised this sentiment, "In due course, I can see that my future will come true." The importance of time emerges as an incentive for SAEP learners. The guardian of a current SAEP learner also shared thoughts about the importance of an accelerated timeframe:

> *"What motivated my sister to join the SAEP is the duration. Being already an overaged person, she can't imagine herself joining senior one and taking four years. She said, 'there is an accelerated education program where I can join for two years and finish.'"*

Reducing the duration of learning is thus a critical factor in SAEP design. Implementing agencies and curriculum experts agreed that the duration of SAEPs is important for overage and marginalised learners. Respondents were aware that learners become at increased risk of dropping out due to the surrounding socio-economic pressures. However, for SAEPs specifically, the exact speed of acceleration and feasibility of acceleration present challenges in teaching advanced subjects within a condensed timeframe, as described below.

Speed and Selection of Subjects

According to respondents, compared to primary levels, condensing SAEPs is more challenging. Secondary education includes more advanced subjects which require time to enable appropriate comprehension, lab-based work, and practice. Secondly, interview findings reveal that there are critical dilemmas about which content and subjects are important for older students at the secondary level within SAEP timeframes, and whether these should prioritise alignment with national curricula or the integration of skills

While not without challenges, especially for girls, an SAEP learner at Adjumani Secondary School expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to return to school. © Jesuit Refugee Service

which are valuable for overage learners seeking to access improved livelihood opportunities (see section 1.2).

In Uganda, SAEPs are based on an adapted national curriculum which requires learners to be examined on eight subjects, rather than ten as required by mainstream schools. While this reduction in content seeks to enable learners to manage the condensed curriculum, learners felt that the amount of content remained challenging and difficult.[11] Representatives of implementing agencies felt that further adaptation is required to ensure the curriculum is relevant to overage learners' needs and focused on their future livelihood opportunities. For example, one respondent weighed the significance of lessons about former colonial powers and the relevance of this focus against the need to understand local agriculture, lands, and other relevant skills. A representative from an implementing agency voiced similar concerns by suggesting that SAEPs in Uganda overlook more relevant life skills:

"In Uganda, our backbone is agriculture. That is how we survive. So, if the learners are not able to do agriculture, then where are we heading to?"

Teachers and learners equally felt that current SAEP content does not prepare overage learners for post-SAEP

pathways, especially or learners interested in employment or vocational opportunities. For example, one teacher stated:

"You find there are certain topics that have been skipped. Those topics are very good for life skills, but they have been sidelined."

Incorporating these relevant subjects alongside the national curriculum, however, poses challenges given the existing time constraint. While acceleration was a crucial component of SAEPs, students and teachers struggled to cover the necessary material. Learners stated that they may be able to catch up on their learning if the timeframe was lengthened or extended into summer periods and holidays. However, considerations for lengthening instructional time must consider learners' responsibilities, as described in section 1.3 above.

The concerns of learners, however, point more importantly to the need to consider their voices and the content they feel is valuable to their future opportunities. Equally, the findings raise considerations about whether the SAEP curriculum should be less aligned with the national curriculum to ensure its relevance to learners, as well as remain feasible within accelerated timeframes. This can be seen in Colombia, where implementing agencies adapt curricula based on a contextual understanding of needs, following curricula and assessment guidelines (Restrepo-Sáenz and Daniel Agudelo-Navarro, 2020).

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11   Although national certification required passing eight subjects, many SAEP learners expressed their desire to be examined on ten subjects, as in mainstream schools. This would offer them a safety net in case they were not able to pass the core eight subjects offered by SAEP.

2: Enabling and Challenging Factors Impacting SAEPs

This report examined factors which enable and challenge the potential of SAEPs in supporting progression through and completion of secondary education. These include availability of SAEP teachers, policy barriers, and funding.

2.1 SAEP Teachers: Availability and Support
Teacher Availability and Support

The limited availability of qualified teachers constrains the quality and feasibility of SAEPs. Recent estimates show the need for as many as 11.1 million secondary school teachers in sub-Saharan Africa alone, and 44.4 million new secondary education teachers globally to achieve universal basic education by 2030 (UNESCO, 2022c). Furthermore, the gender ratio of existing secondary teachers is strongly unbalanced in favour of male teachers. According to estimates, only 38 per cent of secondary teachers in crisis-affected countries are female, compared to a global average of 54 per cent (INEE, 2021a).

These factors are significant barriers to the successful implementation of SAEPs, as skilled teachers are needed to teach secondary levels within accelerated timelines and in challenging environments. This issue was raised by many respondents, who emphasised that the availability of secondary teachers, especially teacher in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, is extremely limited. Importantly, fewer female teachers were qualified to teach STEM subjects. Yet, research shows that the presence of female teachers correlates strongly with increased attendance rates of girls in conflict-affected settings (Burde et al. 2017). While implementing agencies considered gender parity in hiring teachers, they reported that most teachers, especially those who taught STEM in SAEPs in Uganda were male.

Windle Trust International's Accelerated Secondary Education Programme (ASEP) for teachers in South Sudan for female teachers is an innovative and unique example of an initiative seeking to address the national shortage of qualified secondary teachers. The programme includes a flexible, accelerated timeframe to enable teachers to gain their secondary certificate within 2.5 years and access pathways towards qualification, further training, and improved employment conditions while also strengthening the availability of qualified teachers in the nation (see Case Study 2).

Windle Trust International's Accelerated Secondary Education Programme For Teachers (ASEP) In South Sudan

The Accelerated Secondary Education Programme (ASEP) for teachers implemented by Windle Trust International (WTI) in South Sudan is a targeted program aimed at primary school teachers who did not have the opportunity to complete their secondary education. [12]

The programme's objective is to enable these teachers to obtain their South Sudanese Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). Without a secondary certification, teachers in South Sudan are not able to access further professional development opportunities.

Teachers earn their secondary certification within two and a half years, allowing them to access further training, support, and improved working conditions. The programme was implemented by WTI in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to address the demand for qualified teachers.

The programme has thus been recognised as a cost-effective way of improving the quality of education in primary schools, whilst also introducing an effective incentive for untrained teachers who have not previously had the opportunity to complete their secondary education.

The programme also includes several components that enable it to remain flexible and relevant to targeted learners. In addition to the subjects covered in the regular secondary education curriculum, ASEP includes teacher-specific content such as discussing a code of conduct for teachers and training on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

These additional teacher-training elements equip learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to become better teachers. Additionally, accommodation is part of the ASEP design to facilitate the attendance of targeted learners. Furthermore, classes are scheduled in the afternoon to ensure the programme is flexible and allows learners to continue working as teachers in the morning, protecting their livelihoods.

According to interview findings, the centres also include spaces for learners' children. However, due to limited funding, WTI was not able to hire childcare workers and instead relied on volunteers from the community.

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12 This section is based on information shared by Windle Trust International with the research team and the information gathered from Windle Trust International, 2021

Teacher Professional Development and Teaching Environments

Teachers of SAEPs may face distinct challenges without adequate teacher development opportunities. In Uganda, some teachers felt that the training they received was insufficient and did not enable them to adopt learner-centred methodologies needed to teach adult learners who have missed out on years of education. Equally, teachers reported delays in training, as well as disruptions of new rounds of training to respond to new SAEP curricula, especially in moving from one SAEP curriculum to a competency-based form later introduced in Uganda.

Teachers highlighted the unique challenges that they face in teaching older youth and adults within SAEPs, including issues managing behaviour, teacher-student relationships, and ensuring protection. They noted that learners were much older and had "come from a life that was outside of school." They reported issues related to learners not adhering to appropriate school dress codes and not "respecting teachers" due to teachers being of similar ages to students.

These findings suggest the need for teacher training which considers issues around protection and classroom management specific to the age range typically seen within SAEPs. While teachers felt that their training covered some aspects of inclusivity and gender-responsive education (GRE), some found the material "bulky" and difficult to understand. They expressed a need for training focused on creating inclusive, gender-responsive, and safe learning environments.

Within the Adjumani District, teachers often teach within (secondary) AEP and mainstream school programme. While teachers found teaching SAEPs more demanding, they also felt that some aspects of SAEP were advantageous for learners and their needs. For example, SAEP teachers enjoyed the lower student- to-teacher ratios within the accelerated programme:

> **"Concerning the teacher-student ratio in the (secondary) AEP, I see the student teacher ratio is convenient because we are having one teacher handling approximately 35 students. However, in the mainstream, you'll find that one teacher is handling almost 70 students."**

Teachers affirm that this arrangement, coupled with the SAEP curriculum that prioritises learner-centred approaches, fosters a more balanced participation of female and male learners in classroom activities, enables them to engage more closely with students, and fosters a learning environment where learning can be curated to address individual needs.

COVID-19 school closures heightened vulnerabilities for youth globally and increased the need for flexible pathways for marginalised youth to access and complete secondary school. Schools in Uganda were closed for 22 months; this impacted girls disproportionately, especially in regions such as the West Nile Region, where girls face multiple gendered barriers to education, particularly at the secondary level. © Jesuit Refugee Service

2.2 Alignment and Policy Barriers

The alignment between national policies, national curriculum, and programming is an important element of SAEPs. However, the findings of this report reveal tensions between alignment and national policies related to examinations, as well as restrictions on pregnant female learners, that impact learners' abilities to complete SAEPs.

Access and Barriers to Examination

SAEPs enable learners to progress through secondary education within an accelerated timeframe, typically enabling learners to sit for national exams within two to three years. However, alignment of assessment processes between SAEP timeframes and national guidelines remains lacking in some cases, resulting in SAEP learners being unable to sit exams after completing SAEP. In Uganda, SAEP learners who complete their studies in two years cannot sit national exams for the Ordinary-Level due to a national policy which dictates that examinations are open only to students who began secondary education four years prior. SAEP implementing agencies currently request exceptions to this rule from the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) on a case-by-case basis, requiring exceptional efforts and posing significant risks to learners' successful completion of SAEPs.[13]

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13 SAEP learners who successfully sit O-Level exams are then able to sit for two additional years of upper secondary education (Senior 5 and 6), after which they can sit.

This challenge was similarly found in Kenya. In Kenya, a national policy dictates that the national secondary examination cannot be taken before four years have passed since students finished primary school. This impacted learners who studied in the SAEP previously implemented by RET International in the Dadaab refugee camp.

Per this misalignment between the policy and programme, learners who completed the SAEP within two years needed to wait two additional years before sitting for the national secondary examinations (Boisvert, 2017). This policy issue acts as a deterrent for prospective learners, who are not able to fully benefit from the purpose of SAEPs if they cannot sit national exams within an accelerated timeline.

In Jordan, the Drop-out Programme (DOP) enables learners to receive a Grade-10 equivalency certificate. However, this does not translate into a national-equivalent certificate and thus does not allow learners to transition into formal education. Learners can only use it to continue their education through vocational training or the Home Studies programme[14]. When joining the Home Studies programme, former DOP learners can sit for the grades 9 and 10 exams. Upon passing the grade 10 exam, learners can obtain the national certification. Provided that they are no more than three years older than the expected age for upper secondary education, learners who acquire the grade 10 certificate through the Home Studies Programme can enroll in formal education to complete grades 11 and 12. If they are overage, they can still complete upper secondary by continuing within the Home Studies Programme (Nasrallah, 2022).

Pregnant Learners' Access to Education

In Uganda, a national policy requires pregnant learners to go on mandatory maternity leave once they are three months pregnant, forcing them to miss out on several months of classes. To address these disruptions, Uganda has implemented the *Revised Guidelines on the Prevention and Management of Teenage Pregnancy in School Settings in Uganda* (Government of Uganda, 2020), which aim to prioritise the admission of young mothers after pregnancy.

The guidelines state that schools should be encouraged to maintain contact with pregnant learners and their families to provide necessary support. According to a report by Human Rights Watch (2021), the policy assigns parents responsibility for young mothers' re-entry to school, as "the guidelines send an unequivocal message that all schools should prioritise the admission of the young mothers after pregnancy."

Yet, the alignment of SAEP with national guidelines dictates that SAEP learners who become pregnant have to leave education once more after their first trimester. Adopting this policy within SAEPs is especially problematic because it affects overage learners who have already faced educational interruptions and through SAEPs are promised renewed opportunities to learn. In this case, SAEP structures are not responsive to the realities and needs of overage female learners in secondary education who are more likely to become pregnant due to biological and social factors.

2.3 Funding

Most of the funding for SAEPs comes from foreign, international, or multilateral donors and is typically allocated for short-term funding cycles. The nature of AEP funding poses challenges across all levels of education. These challenges include short funding cycles, as well as funding cycles which do not align with academic year schedules or the timeframe for completing the complete AEP cycle.

This poses a further risk to AEPs, including challenges that are more pronounced at the secondary level, where funding is more restricted, education access is less available, and challenges of teacher training and retention are more prominent.

Literature review and case study findings suggest that short-term funding prevents programme implementors from providing teachers with long-term contracts, leaving teachers in a state of uncertainty about their future livelihoods. At the secondary level, where the availability of qualified teachers who are able and trained to teach SAEP is limited, a high turnover of staff causes further risk to the successful implementation of SAEPs.

Equally, findings from the literature review, global stakeholders, and the Uganda case study indicate that several SAEPs closed, temporarily and sometimes permanently, due to lack of funding, putting older learners at risk of never returning to education. The Accelerated Education: 10 Principles for Effective Practice (AEWG, 2017) state that AEPs should be nationalised when appropriate and funded through national resources, AEPs are also needed most in contexts where funding for education is extremely limited. Respondents in Uganda stated that sustainable funding sources remain inaccessible. In some countries, like Jordan, intermediate solutions have been found, as shown below:

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14 According to Nasrallah (2022), the Home Studies Programme is a self-learning programme in Jordan targetting out-of-school youth. Those who enroll can sit for exams in public schools. If they pass the exam and are not overaged, they can enroll in the subsequent grade in formal schools. If they aree overage, they can continue the Home Study Programme and obtain the Grade 10 certificate. They can also continue and reach upper secondary levels (Grades 11 and 12).

CASE STUDY 3

FUNDING OF SAEP

In Jordan, funding for SAEP comes directly from the Ministry of Education (MoE). This funding approach allows for the long-term planning of interventions. However, funds are not directly sourced by the Government of Jordan (GoJ) but are transferred to it by several international donors as part of the Accelerating Access Initiative (AAI) (Nasralllah, 2022). Under the AAI scheme, Jordan's MoE receives funds to allocate to its education programmes from several countries and international bodies, including Australia, Canada, the European Union, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Arnot and Seeger, 2021). AAI's goal is to allow the GoJ to strengthen its education system and increase learners' access to education by investing in school infrastructure, teacher formation, adopting gender-responsive and inclusive approaches to education, and improving the schools' and the Ministry's data management. (Relief Web, 2022). While this funding scheme falls short of implementing full local ownership and funding of SAEP, it is still an important step that supports long-term programme planning and overall sustainability. However, uncertainty persists about what will happen once the AAI scheme ends (around 2027).

After successfully completing lower secondary through the SAEP implemented by War Child Canada, a refugee student is now attending upper secondary school education as a mainstream learner at Adjumani Secondary School. © Jesuit Refugee Service

3: To what Extent are SAEPs Gender Responsive?

The third aim of this report was to examine the gender responsiveness of SAEPs and understand the extent to which they address gender-related barriers to access and completion of secondary education. This section highlights the promising practices observed in SAEPs concerning gender-responsiveness and analyses gaps that could be addressed to strengthen the overall relevance and outcomes of SAEPs by addressing gendered barriers.

3.1 Structures and Impact On GRE
Holistic Access and Impact on Older Learners

SAEPs seek to address the needs of the most marginalised male and female learners, often targeting young mothers who dropped out of school. According to representatives of MoES and implementing agencies in Uganda, SAEPs are important for overage learners who have competing commitments, especially females, and specific efforts are implemented to ensure that community awareness and outreach are conducted to increase the enrolment of female learners in SAEPs. However, a key issue was the lack of funding and appropriate integration of comprehensive services that enabled SAEPs to be gender responsive. Overage learners in SAEPs are more likely to have social responsibilities correlating with age and learners attending SAEP in Uganda frequently described the challenges they faced as they chose to attend SAEPs despite having jobs and children who required care. In Uganda, learners traveled long distances to attend SAEP. Distance to school and cost of learning barriers were particularly problematic for mothers who stated that it took time and resources away from care for their families. For example, one learner stated:

> *"This time when you're at school here, then you go back home, you need to go and prepare food, do work, and wash clothes [...] I have children at home. They are three in number. They're all at school, and I have to cater for them."*

These findings correlate with those of Boisvert and Shah (2023), which highlight the effects of compounded exclusions caused by family responsibilities, and social expectations can limit older learners' abilities to continue in SAEPs. These responses, along with the testimonies of learners revealed that community members may not always support their decision to re-enroll in education. Therefore, flexible and comprehensive services are needed to reduce these pressures on learners. Learners, for example, expressed that having their children on-site allows them to concentrate on their studies. The importance of child-care facilities was consistently noted as a priority by representatives of implementing agencies. However, they stated that funding remains lacking for these wraparound services.

Implementing agencies consider gender parity in hiring SAEP teachers, but struggle to find and retain qualified female teachers, especially for the STEM subjects. © Jesuit Refugee Service

Offering flexible and comprehensive learning environments for older female learners is increasingly crucial in the face of increasing threats of climate-related crises, pandemics, and conflicts. Recent events, including COVID-19, have also shown that older female learners are most likely to lose permanent access to education (Malala Fund 2020). SAEPs offer the potential to enable female learners to access secondary education despite prolonged disruptions and changes to social circumstances, including marriage and child-related responsibilities. The importance of integrating comprehensive forms of support and flexibility through SAEPs is described in the textbox below.

CASE STUDY 4

UGANDA'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

After the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Uganda (GoU) revised its national guidelines, allowing pregnant girls and breastfeeding child mothers to return to school and be provided accommodation, including within SAEPs. In response, SAEPs in the Adjumani District aimed to create safe and gender-responsive learning environments, particularly for marginalised individuals such as girls who have dropped out of school. Many SAEPs in Uganda include breastfeeding corners, sheds, tents, and child-friendly spaces that allow learners to have their children on-site while learning. An implementing NGO noted an affirmative action strategy they were working on with the GoU, to recruit more female teachers and noted that "female teachers will support the female learners." Another implementing NGO in Uganda provides unconditional cash transfers as part of its SAEP. The only requirement for receiving the cash disbursement, albeit small, is to enroll in the programme.

Impact of Costs on Equity

Learners must also consider the costs associated with attending SAEPs, including transportation, any loss of profit due to reduced work hours, and food-related costs. To address this dilemma, SAEP implementers employ strategies to reduce the direct and indirect costs of the program. For example, the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) Liberia Accelerated Learning Programme offers a specific stream within the program targeted at young mothers. (Nkutu, A., Bang, T., & Toorman, D. (2010)

This initiative includes the provision of school uniforms, meals, learning supplies, and a waiver of all school fees. While NRC's AEP in Liberia focuses on primary-level education, these accommodations are relevant and valuable for secondary AEP programs and can serve as a good practice for replication.

At the secondary level, the costs of facilities, materials, and supplies related to comprehensive Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) are even more critical due to the age of learners. The findings from the Uganda research point to significant shortfalls in providing MHH-compliant Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities. However, representatives of implementing agencies provided dignity kits, including sanitary pads, for female learners to alleviate some of these costs.

The findings show, however, that male learners felt that they received limited support to reduce the financial burdens they faced. Several male learners felt SAEPs provided female learners with more support and resources.

3.2 Bullying and Gender-Based Conflicts
Stigma when Learning as Adults

In the Adjumani District of Uganda, SAEP learners attend school within the same, formal secondary schools but learn separately. These SAEP learners, past and present, experienced bullying from mainstream students and indicated that this kind of discrimination and mistreatment has a significant, negative impact on their well-being and educational experiences.

Bullying of female SAEP learners is often based on their marital status or their roles as young mothers and is, therefore, a form of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV).

SAEP learners shared instances of being blamed for reports of mainstream students misbehaving, such as being accused of misleading them when caught sneaking out at night and engaging in other prohibited activities beyond the school grounds. A representative from an NGO implementing SAEP in another district in Uganda noted,

> *"the (secondary) AEP students (learners) will have to cope with a lot of challenges. There are social challenges between them and the mainstream (learners). The mainstream children (...) cannot yet conceptualise the importance of bringing these (learners) back to school as we have done. So, the (secondary) AEP students (learners), unless they build up a lot of resilience and self-confidence (...) get so discouraged with mainstream students who (are) laughing at them because they are not in uniform. They don't have a uniform because at AEP Centre, we do not emphasise additional burden like putting on uniform and all that that is not for AEP, that is for the mainstream. So, it looks kind of awkward and the mainstream children do not understand it (...) and they kind of mock the (secondary) AEP students (learners)."*

The experiences of both male and female SAEP learners indicate that they often face insults and discouragement from mainstream students. They report feeling belittled and stigmatised, with derogatory remarks suggesting that they are incapable of achieving things on their own and always reliant on others for help. For example, one student noted that:

> *"They say: 'You are a girl as big as that size. You still want to study? Even if you say you're going to study, you will not reach what you want to reach.'"*

This kind of treatment can create a hostile and unwelcoming environment, making it difficult for already disadvantaged SAEP learners to focus on their studies. Overage learners, who may already experience discouraging and discriminatory language outside of schools, must access supportive and safe learning spaces within SAEPs.

A group of overage SAEP learners in South Sudan. © Windle Trust International

SAEP learners at Bukere Secondary School in Kyaka refugee settlement in Uganda.
© Finn Church Aid

Conclusion

"This programme now has come to raise their hope"

Head Teacher, Adjumani Secondary School

SAEPs offer overage and marginalised learners renewed chances to access lower secondary education that leads to national certification. These opportunities address the limited supply of secondary education, increasing dropout rates, and the unprecedented levels of uncertainty and crises young people across the world face. SAEPs, according to interviews and FGDs, are important programmes that remain limited due to less attention and funding being given to the secondary education. The report finds that further funding and efforts are needed to widen access and ensure that young people re-access secondary education through flexible, alternative pathways. Without SAEPs, communities may not be able to access secondary education and attain certification.

The findings of this report, however, also pose important considerations about the extent to which these programmes are relevant and appropriate for learners. Firstly, while certification is a critical component of SAEPs for stakeholders, there remain important questions about whether SAEPs must prioritise national curricula or instead integrate subjects more relevant to overage learners. Secondly, SAEPs enable learners to access education at

later stages of their lives. However, aligning SAEPs with formal education systems also results in a lack of flexibility around policies, structures, and modes of learning. Thirdly, the appropriate pace of acceleration for SAEPs remains a significant question due to the advanced nature of subjects at the secondary level. Together, these findings raise important considerations about the extent to which SAEPs require both flexibility and accelerated timeframes, suggesting that while both components are important incentives for overage learners, they require further adaptation.

This research also aimed to assess the gender responsiveness of SAEPs and examine their effectiveness in overcoming gender-related obstacles to accessing and completing secondary education. Albeit limited, this report highlights that the intersections between age, gender, and socio-economic status pose unique challenges to AEPs at the secondary level. This report reflects on promising practices in SAEPs regarding gender responsiveness while identifying areas of improvement to enhance the overall relevance and outcomes of SAEPs by addressing gender-based barriers.

Recommendations

Relevance and Appropriateness

- Develop specific selection criteria within programme inception and design to ensure that those most marginalised are targeted including displaced youth, learners with disabilities, and learners affected by poverty.

- Increase funding for SAEPs to ensure they are more accessible to those most marginalised without placing further financial and social pressure on learners. The limited supply of both secondary education and SAEPs continues to exclude vulnerable young people from education.

- Ensure that AEP curricula draw on contextualised understandings of communities and their needs in addition to providing pathways back into the formal education system. This includes a deeper understanding of the skills and content that are relevant to learners' lives.

- Strengthen the flexibility of SAEPs through modes and structures that better accommodate learners' socio-economic responsibilities by introducing options like evening classes and hybrid learning methods.

- Examine whether SAEP timeframes are responsive to the complexities of secondary education subjects. Consider extending instructional time e.g., utilising holiday periods or non-weekdays.

- Conduct further research to examine acceleration and flexibility as critical components of SAEPs and their relevance at the secondary level. This includes the need for an ongoing exchange of lessons and insights across organisations working on SAEPs, supported by the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies' Accelerated Education Working Group.

- Include funding and plans to support learners to transition into formal education or vocational programmes. This support could include career counselling, academic guidance, and assistance with application and enrollment processes, as well as collaborations with formal educational institutions and vocational training centres. Where possible, establish agreements with local businesses and/or public institutions to allow for internships or internship-like experiences for SAEP graduates.

Enabling and Challenging Factors

- Strengthen training for SAEP teachers, especially for STEM subjects, to ensure that SAEPs maintain quality. It is also crucial that more female teachers are hired, especially for STEM subjects.

- Strengthen teacher training on challenges specific to the age and needs of learners within SAEPs, including classroom management, protection, and psychosocial support.

- Ensure a thorough review of national policies that act as barriers to learners' continued attendance and successful completion of SAEPs, including policies which prevent SAEP learners from sitting exams and those which prevent pregnant learners from continuing lessons during pregnancy.

- Support multi-year funding solutions which are aligned with academic timelines and are sustainable to reduce staff turnover, disruption of education, and limited ability to plan for the future. This includes supporting local governments to develop sustainable options for funding.

- Continue to support alternative approaches to education to address disruptions and uncertainties caused by crises. Programmes such as SAEPs are critical to protecting flexible access to education.

Gender-responsiveness

- Invest in gender-responsive interventions that nurture learning environments where female and male SAEP learners can more effectively balance their parental and household responsibilities with their educational pursuits. This support can include breastfeeding corners, food allowance and/or provision, supervised childcare facilities, and cash and voucher assistance.

- Ensure that the facilities and structures for SAEPs foster inclusivity and safety so that learners and teachers access programming in buildings that are appropriate and protect them from bullying and discrimination.

- Assess the types of gaps in GRE support and how they can be addressed across implementing NGOs. Coordination across implementing agencies can reduce duplication of efforts and enable them to contribute solutions drawing on their areas of strength.

- Involve SAEP learners, including past and present, female and male, in decision-making processes about SAEPs to ensure that these programmes support a more inclusive and equitable environment for all.

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Glossary

Accelerated Education
A flexible and age-appropriate programming approach that aims to provide disadvantaged groups with access to education in an accelerated timeframe. It is particularly relevant for children and youth who have missed substantial amounts of schooling due to poverty, marginalization, conflict, crises, or climate-related factors. (Source: INEE)

Adaptation
the process of making adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects. Adaptation involves changing processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or benefit from opportunities associated with climate change. Countries and communities need to develop adaptation solutions and implement actions to respond effectively to current and future climate change impacts. (Source: United Nations)

Bridging Programmes
Targeted preparation courses that help students succeed in transitioning to a different type of certified education. They can focus on areas such as language acquisition or bridging existing differences between the home and host education curricula and systems. (Source: INEE)

Catch-Up Programmes
Short-term transitional education programs designed for children and youth who have actively attended school but experienced an educational disruption. Catch-up programs provide an opportunity for students to learn the content they missed during the disruption and support their re-entry into the formal education system. (Source: INEE)

Gender Responsive
Means addressing the different situations, roles, needs, and interests of women, men, girls, and boys in the design and implementation of activities, policies, and programs. A program, policy, or activity that is gender responsive addresses gender-based barriers, respects gender differences, enables structures, systems, and methodologies to be sensitive to gender, ensures gender parity is a wider strategy to advance gender equality, and evolves to close gaps and eradicate gender-based discrimination. (Source: INEE, 2019).

Remedial Programmes
Offer additional support concurrent with regular classes. These programs are designed to assist students who require short-term content or skill support to succeed in their regular formal education. Source: INEE)

SRGBV
SRGBV can be defined as acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes, and enforced by unequal power dynamics. (Source: UNICEF)

Annex A
Summary of Interviews with Global Stakeholders and Case Studies
KIIs

Position	Format
Curriculum experts (2)	Online
EiE Expert	Online
EiE consultant	Online
Donor	Online
Implementing agency in South Sudan	Online

Annex B
Case Study Design Summary
KIIs

Organisation	Position	Location
MoES, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education	Senior Education Officer	Online
MoES, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education	Commissioner	In-person
UNHCR Sub-Office	Assitant Education Officer	In person, Adjumani
Implementing agency 1	Programme Manager	In person
Implementing agency 2	Technical team / Educational lead	In-person
Implementing agency 3	War Child Canada	Education Officer
District Education Office	Principal District	In-person
District Education Office	Education Officer	In-person
Adjumani Secondary School	Head teacher	In-person
Dzaipi Secondary School	Head teacher	In-person

FGDs

Organisation	Position	Location
Adjumani Secondary School	Current SAEP Learners	Adjumani
Adjumani Secondary School	Former SAEP learners	Adjumani
Adjumani Secondary School	Teachers	Teachers
Adjumani Secondary School	Guardians	Adjumani
Adjumani Secondary School	Community Education Committee	Adjumani
Dzaipi Secondary School	Current SAEP Learners	Adjumani
Dzaipi Secondary School	Teachers	Adjumani
Dzaipi Secondary School	Community Education Committee	Adjumani

Annex C
Summary of SAEPs in Uganda

Agency	Sites	Donor	Number of learners (2022)
Finn Church Aid	1	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)	75 (41 M; 34 F; no learners with disabilities)
MoES / implementing partner	3	World Bank	N/A
Windle Trust	2	ECHO (Equate)	524 (340 M; 184 F; no data on disability status)
War Child Canada	2	Mastercard Foundation	261 (174 M; 87 F; 3 learners with disabilities)