



## Impact Assessment Report

2016/2017 Education Project, Kajiado County, Kenya  
10<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018

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## Executive Summary

In October 2018, Aidlink carried out an Impact Assessment of projects carried out in partnership with the Girl Child Network (GCN) in Kajiado County, Kajiado in 2016/17. We set out to assess the impact of our work on 18 target schools, their students and communities in the catchment area; as well as ensuring that key learnings to further enhance the effectiveness of our work were captured.

**There is considerable evidence to confirm the positive impact of the project and the real difference it has made to lives of children and their families in Kajiado County.** Key results in target schools include:

- A 20-30% increase in school enrolment, a 27% reduction in absenteeism among girls, and a 46% increase in the number of girls completing primary school;
- A 22% increase in the average score in the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), equivalent to 52 extra marks;
- 80% of students who sat the KCPE in 2017 continuing on to secondary school, albeit from a low base in terms of numbers sitting the exam.

It is clear from discussions with teachers, students and Board of Management (BoM) members that **attitudes towards education and girls' rights are changing in the community:**

- Girls who had previously dropped out of school are being supported to return;
- Those who are cut (FGM) are continuing their education rather than being married off; and,
- Early marriages are being reported to the authorities.

The Impact Assessment reveals that **software interventions (trainings) are making a significant contribution to change**, the training of school BoM members strengthening our engagement with the community and helping to transform attitudes towards education and harmful cultural practices. These activities have created a “push” factor with communities recognising the importance of education, while hardware interventions (latrines, water tanks etc.) in target schools have created a complementary “pull” factor through the creation of child-friendly and gender-sensitive learning environments.

While early days, **results to-date represent a positive trend that we believe will be sustained** as a result of the enhanced capacity, knowledge and skills of community members themselves. In a rapidly changing context, Aidlink is excited to see what impact the programme can have on these target communities and others as we start to implement a new 3-year programme in Kajiado and Turkana. **With 30-50% of children still out-of-school in target communities, the need for a programme of this nature remains clear.** We anticipate that the community's changed attitude towards education and girls' rights will contribute to even better results in the future.

Aidlink would like to put on record our thanks to the teachers, BoM members and students who we interviewed as part of this Assessment. We would also like to thank the Board and Staff of our partner GCN, in particular Mercy Musomi and Peris Mootian for facilitating our visit, participating in the assessment process, and all other support.

## Introduction

An external [Evaluation](#) of the Aidlink – Girl Child Network (GCN) Schools Sanitation Improvement Project (SSIP)<sup>1</sup> was carried out in 2015 to meet the demands of Irish Aid. Following that evaluation, this project was extended to an additional 18 schools in Kajiado Central and Mashuru sub-Counties – 12 schools in 2016 and 6 in 2017<sup>2</sup>.

This Impact Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that activities were implemented to the highest standards and all potential learning was captured. The assessment was carried out over 5 days in October 2018 by Anne Cleary, CEO, and Tom O'Connor, Senior Programme Officer, accompanied by Mercy Musomi, CEO and Mercy Mootian, Project Coordinator for GCN. 8 of the 18 target schools (44%) were randomly selected to be part of this Assessment. Ultimately, 6 schools (33%) were visited due to logistical challenges.

This report sets out the Results and Key Findings from the Assessment using the OECD-DAC criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Finally, a set of Recommendations has been developed to support Aidlink and GCN in planning for more effective programming as we commence on a new 3-year project together.

We would like to thank the teachers, parents and students who shared their experience of the projects with us, as well as the sub-County Education Office. Particular thanks must also go to Mercy Musomi and Peris Mootian from the Girl Child Network. The staff and Boards of Aidlink and GCN are the intended primary users of this Impact Assessment.

## Objectives

This Impact Assessment had 3 key objectives:

1. To assess the impact of Aidlink and GCN's Education Projects (SSIP/KEEP 2016/17) on target schools, their students and families/communities in Kajiado;
2. To capture learning from 2016/17 and examine progress on recommendations identified in the 2015 End-of-Programme Evaluation;
3. To use learning to further enhance the effectiveness of the new Education Project (2018-2020) in Kajiado and Turkana Counties, and the wider work of Aidlink and GCN.

## Methodology

### Approach

This Impact Assessment employed a 'mixed methods' (quantitative and qualitative) approach incorporating a desk review of monitoring reports, partner reports and results frameworks, contextual analysis and the gathering of data from visits to target schools. All of the above were then triangulated in producing this report.

In line with best practice, 8 of 18 (44%) target schools were selected for the Assessment by GCN, taking into account the need to balance random sampling with the logistical challenges associated with visiting remote, rural schools that are difficult to access. The selection process avoided school visits by Aidlink staff on recent monitoring visits, and took into account that the assessment was being carried out in the last week of term when students were sitting for their end-of-year exams.

6 schools (33%) were visited in total; the result of incremental weather, poor roads and failing light on the second day of the assessment. We are satisfied that the sample is sufficient for an accurate assessment of the impact of the programme on target beneficiaries to-date.

Within target schools, Aidlink conducted semi-structured interviews based around a pre-developed questionnaire (Annex 2) with Head teachers, some teaching staff, and members of the Board of Management (BoM). Where time and exam schedules allowed, we also met student members of the RoC clubs. Mercy Musomi, Executive Director, and

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<sup>1</sup> Part of the Integrated Community Development Programme (ICDP) 2012 – 2016.

<sup>2</sup> A total of 9 schools were targeted in 2017 with the additional 3 in Turkana reflective of Aidlink and GCN's desire to expand our work to meet the needs of new communities in other target Counties. The name of this project was changed from the SSIP to KEEP (Kenya Equity in Education Project) to reflect its implementation at a national level.

Peris Mootian, Project Coordinator, from the Girl Child Network were formally interviewed, and a meeting was held with the Mashuru sub-County Director of Education.

The information gathered has been triangulated and validated against the results frameworks, project reports and County statistics. From this, Aidlink has drawn conclusions about the impact of the project on target schools and communities, captured learning, and developed a set of recommendations which will further enhance the effectiveness of the new Education Project (2018-2020) in Kajiado and Turkana Counties.

## Evaluation Questions

In carrying out this Impact Assessment, Aidlink was seeking to answer a number of key questions regarding the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of this project. These are attached as Annex 2. A separate questionnaire was developed for field work to guide interactions with key stakeholders; this is attached as Annex 3.

## Background

Aidlink and GCN have been working in Kajiado County since 2004 with a specific focus on Mashuru sub-County since late 2016. What originally started as the Sanitary Towel Project – distributing sanitary towels to adolescent school girls – developed into the Schools Sanitation Improvement Project (SSIP) between 2012 and 2016. In 2017, this was renamed the Kenya Equity in Education Project (KEEP) to reflect increased efforts to engage with target communities and out-of-school children, including those with disabilities.

By the end of 2015, Aidlink and GCN had worked in 114 of the 384 (30%) public primary schools in Kajiado. Among the key outcomes identified in the 2015 End-of-Programme Evaluation was the presence of ***‘improved primary school learning environments for girls in target schools with enhanced capacity of staff; school management committee and students to articulate and promote the Rights of the Child’***. This had resulted in ***‘increases in school enrolment, particularly of girls, understanding of rights, decline in numbers of girls undergoing FGM...and progress in women’s and girls’ realising their rights and being seen in decision-making roles’***<sup>3</sup>.

The purpose of this Impact Assessment is to ensure the maintenance of programme quality, assess the impact of adjustments to the project post-2015, most notably the effect of increased engagement with the wider community, confirm that positive results continue to be achieved and ensure that any new and significant learning from the last 2 years (2016/17) was not lost.

## Operating Context

Kajiado County is a semi-arid region located in the Rift Valley, its borders stretching from the suburbs of Nairobi in the North to the Tanzanian border to the South. Approximately 700,000 people live in the County, the vast majority of whom belong to the traditionally nomadic pastoralist Masai tribe. As nomadic pastoralists, the Masai in Kajiado face a myriad of socio-economic, political and environmental challenges. For women and girls, these are even greater. The patriarchal and polygamist nature of Masai society means women are disempowered, prevented from owning either livestock and property, key indicators of one’s status within society. Gender Based Violence (GBV) in the form of sexual harassment and assault, verbal and physical abuse is highly prevalent, as are harmful cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child marriage and early pregnancy. The low social status of girls in Masai culture has a significant impact on their access to education, limiting their opportunities and trapping them in the poverty cycle.

Research by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and the Society for International Development – East Africa (SID-EA) reveals that Kajiado is one of the top five most unequal Counties in Kenya, with those wealthy suburbs of Nairobi which fall within the County boundaries performing significantly better than the more rural, isolated regions such as Kajiado Central and Mashuru sub-County where Aidlink and GCN have worked since 2016. This is despite the introduction of a devolved system of government ‘to bring about more equitable distribution of national resources to address socio-economic inequalities’<sup>4</sup>. As a result of these social and geographical inequalities, the situation exists whereby development indicators for Kajiado County as a whole mask the reality on the ground, as illustrated by the table below comparing literacy and primary school completion rates:

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<sup>3</sup> This was validated by a [review](#) of available data for Kajiado and Kenya over the last 10 years. The key finding was that in terms of enrolment, retention, completion and transition, target schools have, on average, performed better than both the County and National as a whole.

<sup>4</sup> Khisa, C. and Oesterdiekhoff, P (2012)

| <i>Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2014</i> | <b>National Average</b> | <b>Kajiado County</b> | <b>Mashuru sub-County</b>                            |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Literacy Rate</b>                            | 89.7%                   | 86.2%                 | <b>Am waiting for this information from Peris...</b> |
| - <b>Male</b>                                   | 92.3%                   | 89.3%                 |  |
| - <b>Female</b>                                 | 87.1%                   | 83.1%                 |  |
| <b>Primary School Completion Rate</b>           | 24.0%                   | 16.9%                 |  |
| - <b>Male</b>                                   | 23.2%                   | 15.9%                 |  |
| - <b>Female</b>                                 | 24.7%                   | 17.9%                 |  |

Mashuru sub-County is located in Eastern Kajiado, 2 hours' drive from Kajiado Town. The lack of infrastructure means that its residents are isolated and cut off from other areas of the County. The majority continue to live in manyattas, traditional Masai settlements with homes made from mud and wattling, while pastoralism remains the primary source of livelihood. With a new tarmac road linking Mashuru and Kajiado town under construction<sup>5</sup>, we would expect to see significant change in peoples' livelihoods in the foreseeable future.

Devolution has resulted in some benefits for the residents of Mashuru in terms of physical infrastructure. The presence of a County government means there are, for the first time, job opportunities available to those with an education. With local people able to see members of their own community benefitting from employment, there has been a shift in attitudes among the Masai with families increasingly discussing the importance of ensuring that their children complete school.

That being said, the situation with regards to education in Mashuru sub-County remains challenging. Currently, there are a total of 80 public primary schools with a student population of 14,682 (8,182 boys and 6,500 girls). This means that **there are over 8,000 children out-of-school with 48% of girls and 27% of boys** having never attended. According to a baseline study carried out by GCN in early 2017<sup>6</sup>, those who had dropped out identified hunger, child labour, early marriage and teenage pregnancy as the leading causes of their non-attendance. The sub-County Education Office verifies these findings.

## Results 2016/2017

1. Enrolment has increased by between 20-30% on average with 1 school reporting that enrolment had doubled since Aidlink and GCN's intervention.
2. The level of absenteeism among girls has reduced by an average of 27%.
3. The completion rate for girls in target schools has increased by 46% compared to 17% in Mashuru sub-County and 2% in Kajiado County as a whole.
4. The average Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) score for target schools increased by 52 points between 2016 and 2017. In comparison, the average score for the County increased by 13 points.
5. Although the number of students continuing to STD8 is low, at least 80% of those from target schools who sat the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education in 2017 continued to secondary school.
6. Attitudes towards education and girls' rights are changing in the community. Girls who have previously dropped out are being brought back by their parents; girls who are cut are allowed to continue their education rather than being married off; and early marriages are being reported to the authorities by teachers, parents and students who have been trained.
7. School Boards of Management (BoMs) are taking the lead to engage the wider community on the importance of education and tackling harmful cultural practices such as FGM and early marriage.

<sup>5</sup> Plans to construct this road came about as a result of public pressure with community members trained by GCN lobbying County officials during the annual budget meetings.

<sup>6</sup> 34/80 (42.5%) of public primary schools were surveyed as part of this baseline study.

## Key Findings

### Relevance

Enrolment and retention rates have improved in target schools. Nevertheless, Head teachers and BoMs estimate that between 30-50% of children who should be in school remain at home.

Challenges faced by the community, notably culture, poverty and illiteracy, were identified by Head teachers and BoMs as the primary reasons for children not being in school. Nomadic pastoralism remains the dominant way of life for the Masai community with children kept home to assist with chores and looking after the animals. The distance to school (up to 10km) was also highlighted as a significant barrier to education by key stakeholders, particularly in relation to younger children who are unable to walk to school unsupervised. FGM and early marriage remain highly prevalent and acceptable norms in the community. They were identified by Head teachers and BoMs as key factors limiting the participation of adolescent girls in education.

The majority of community members, including those who hold school leadership positions, are uneducated (only 1 school visited had more than 1 BoM member who spoke English). BoM members self-identified as those who have recognised the benefits and opportunities presented by education.

BoMs report that learning about the health issues associated with FGM from GCN was a greater contributor to behaviour change within the community than the government making the practice illegal. Some BoM members expressed their belief that the ban was temporary and the government would “bring FGM back”.

Target schools are identified in partnership with the Ministry of Education according to clear guidelines and criteria. There is evidence that some target schools made contact with GCN, asking to be included in the programme<sup>7</sup>.

### Analysis of Findings

- The programme was, and continues to be highly relevant in meeting the needs of target communities. It has been implemented in rural, isolated areas which have traditionally had poor educational outcomes (low enrolment, attendance, poor performance etc.) and where child rights abuse such as FGM and early marriage are commonplace. As outlined above, up to 50% of children who should be enrolled in school remain at home.
- That GCN have been approached by Head teachers from other schools demonstrates that teachers consider the programme relevant and impactful.
- All 6 schools visited for this assessment meet the criteria for selection. Aidlink does however question the inclusion of school that had received significant levels of support from a large International NGO in recent years. This is indicative of the local Ministry of Education failing to coordinate activities effectively.
- The programme, both in terms of the overall objectives and the activities implemented was in line with the needs and priorities of the Kenyan government as set out in Vision 2030: *To enhance participation in education in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs)*. It was also in line with government policies, most notably: The Basic Education Act, the Children’s Act, the Anti-FGM Bill and the National Action Plan on ending Child Marriages in Kenya.
- The programme conforms to the Vision, Mission and Values of both Aidlink and GCN, and is in line with the Strategic Plans and Objectives of both organisations.
- It is also in line with the priorities of Irish Aid as a key donor.

### Efficiency

Planned interventions were completed on time and largely as planned.

Hardware interventions, specifically the construction of girl-friendly latrines, were identified as having a positive impact in schools. Teachers, in particular, highlighted the improved hygiene and sanitation situation, which they said

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<sup>7</sup> This was the case where teachers transferred from schools where GCN had a presence to new schools.

had contributed to a reduction in absenteeism, particularly among girls. Across target schools, rates of absenteeism have fallen by 27%.

Plans to also construct concrete water tanks in 2016 target schools were revised following the County government's announcement that every school would be provided with a plastic water tank. In several of the schools visited, those tanks received from the government had not been installed and were lying idle and unused, despite teachers and parents complaining that they did not have enough water to meet their needs.

Hardware interventions have had an impact beyond that envisaged with reports of parents copying what they see at school by constructing latrines at home. Furthermore, an International NGO with links to one of the target schools has adapted the design of their own latrines based on their learning.

Hardware interventions were accompanied by an enhanced emphasis on software (training). Head teachers and BoMs identified GCN trainings and the information received as the most effective programme intervention, vital in transforming attitudes towards education and harmful cultural practices among participants and the wider community.

While recognising their roles and responsibilities, BoM members who participated in GCN trainings reported that they believed the community's attitude towards education and cultural practices such as FGM would change much quicker if training was extended to include either more BoM members or the whole community.

### *Analysis of Findings*

- Activities and interventions employed by Aidlink and GCN in these programmes have been efficient and effective in meeting the needs and priorities of target communities.
- The combination of hardware and software has proven complementary in terms of cost-effectiveness and in contributing to the results realised to-date.
- Hardware interventions, in particular the construction of latrine blocks for girls only, have had a positive impact in terms of meeting the hygiene and sanitation, and social needs of all students, male and female. As well as providing girls with a safe space, separate facilities have improved student-latrines ratios for both boys and girls with pre-existing latrine blocks now freed up for boys only. This creation of a safer, healthier learning environment creates a "pull" factor that means children are happier to attend school.
- Software interventions have built local knowledge, skills and capacity, creating a cohort of local champions who are able to influence others and extend the benefits of the programme beyond those who are directly engaged. This has created a "push" factor, as demonstrated by parents bringing their children who dropped out back to school following enrolment campaigns led by the BoM.
- While Head teachers and BoMs identify trainings as the most important intervention, Aidlink believes the effectiveness of the software interventions would be reduced without the accompanying hardware. Hardware interventions meet the initial needs/demands of Head teachers, BoMs and the community, thus engaging them in the programme and enhancing levels of participation.
- The County government's decision to give water tanks resulted in savings for Aidlink and GCN, enabling us to increase the number of schools in the programme. Nevertheless, the fact that many of the tanks lie idle and unused whilst schools and communities continue to suffer from a lack of water is a source of great frustration. Aidlink and GCN are exploring how to support school BoMs to set up rain-water harvesting systems that make use of the tanks.
- Head teachers and BoMs identified school feeding and boarding facilities as the way to ensure every child who should be in school enrolls<sup>8</sup>. Aidlink recognises the value of school feeding and have incorporated a 3-month programme covering target schools during the exam season into the new 2018-2020 programme. To promote sustainability and local ownership, we promote school gardens where possible, and support parents making a supplementary contribution to government funds for school feeding.

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<sup>8</sup> "When there is food, attendance improves and children get used to coming to school every day" – Head teacher.

- Likewise boarding facilities. While we recognise their value in protecting children, particularly girls, from harmful cultural norms, it is not in our remit to construct boarding facilities in public schools. Targeted schools have had success in applying to the Constituency Development Fund and local companies' CSR schemes in the past and Aidlink and GCN continue to encourage this approach.

## Effectiveness

Planned activities in the 18 target schools were completed on time and as agreed, leading to the realisation of 12/13 (92%) targeted outcomes<sup>9</sup>.

The need to strengthen our engagement with the community was one of the biggest learnings from 2012-2015, recognising that the biggest barriers to education were harmful cultural practices perpetrated at the community level. New interventions for 2017 included a greater emphasis on BoM training, the establishment of women's groups and the trialling of community conversations, facilitated by local leaders including the chief.

This reflects a greater emphasis on building local capacity – of teachers and BoMs – as community leaders, responsible for ensuring that children, especially girls, are able to access inclusive, quality education, and harmful cultural practices such as FGM and early marriage are challenged. This approach has resulted in Head teachers and BoM working together to draw up lists of out-of-school children, and visiting their homes to ensure they are enrolled.

This approach has also created stronger links between schools and local authorities, particularly local chiefs. If parents are not prepared to bring their children to school after meeting with the Head teacher and BoM, then school leadership will inform the chief who will intervene to make sure that the law is upheld.

## Analysis of Findings

- The programme has been effective in realising the planned objectives with the biggest immediate impact seen in relation to educational outcomes (enrolment, retention, performance, transition etc.).
- With regards to tackling harmful cultural norms, the impact after 2 years has been less pronounced although trends are positive. Behaviour change takes time, particularly when it relates to norms and practices that are an intrinsic part of a community's culture. With more girls completing school, marriage is being delayed in favour of education. There is considerable evidence to suggest that educated women are less likely to subject their own daughters to FGM and/or early marriage.
- Although hardware interventions have acted as a positive "pull" factor in ensuring children enrol and stay in school, our findings suggest that **it is the community's improved knowledge and understanding of laws, rights and changing attitudes towards education which underpin the positive results to-date.**
- **The effectiveness of community engagement is enhanced by the fact that these changes are being driven from within**, i.e. by BoM members with the support of teachers and the local chief.
- The changing operating context is also contributing to the positive results achieved. Decentralisation has resulted in well-paid positions with the County government, new houses and cars for educated members of the community. This has helped shift the communities' perception of education, creating a fertile environment in which our programmes can have an even bigger impact in terms of educational outcomes.

## Impact

Schools are reporting a significant increase in enrolment with 1 school visited reporting that the number of students had doubled since Aidlink and GCN's intervention.

Absenteeism has also reduced, particularly among girls, with schools reporting a 27% reduction in the number of female students missing 8 or more days per month. Teachers and the BoMs attribute this to both the hardware

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<sup>9</sup> In 2017, Aidlink and GCN had anticipated an increase in average household savings as a result of increased community engagement on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Instead, failed rains and the onset of drought meant that incomes and savings fell as families sought to ensure the survival of their animals.



(sanitation facilities) and software (training of teachers and students) which has made school a healthier and more welcoming environment for students. According to Head teachers, absenteeism has become the exception rather than the norm. If a child does not attend school, they will now contact the parents immediately to request an explanation.

A comparison of Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) scores in target schools pre- and post-intervention highlights a 52-point increase in the target schools' average scores. This is accompanied by an increase in the number of students sitting the exam, and reports from teachers that girls are 'now able to compete with the boys'.

While the number of students in upper classes remains low (often in single figures or the early teens)<sup>10</sup>, transition rates between STD7 and STD8 have improved significantly. In 2018, 100% of students in the schools visited transitioned to STD8 and were entered for the KCPE.

Transition all the way from STD1 to STD8 however remains a challenge. Although drop-out rates have fallen, we continue to see a considerable number of students, particularly girls failing to transition from STD4 to STD5.

At least 80% of students from target schools who sat the KCPE in 2017 enrolled in secondary school in 2018. In contrast, data for Mashuru sub-County reveals that there are only 1,464 students enrolled in secondary school compared to 14,682 in primary school. Of the 1,464 students in secondary school, 65% are boys.

The impact of the programme in tackling harmful cultural practices such as FGM and early marriage is more mixed. Head Teachers and BoM state that at least 90% of girls in the upper classes (STD7 and STD8) have been 'cut' with BoM members reporting that the majority of girls in the community still elect to undergo FGM. It is clear that despite increased knowledge of the negative health risks, the important cultural connotations associated with the practice remain a powerful draw for Masai girls. BoM members were clear that if a girl reported she was to be cut against her will, they would intervene and involve the local chief, but that this is a relatively rare occurrence.

School events attended by parents and 'community conversations' were the main platforms used by BoM members to speak out against FGM and emphasise the value and importance of education. Although drop-out rates remain high (particularly in the transition between STD4 and STD5), the trend of girls returning to school post-FGM would at least suggest that the rate of early marriage is declining.

Confidence levels are growing among participants of the training programme, whether they be students, teachers or BoM members. Teachers reported that students are more "open, confident and motivated to stay in school" while BoM members outlined their own personal growth and development as leaders<sup>11</sup>.

There was a marked difference in the confidence and attitudes of women who had been trained as part of Women's Groups in 2017 as opposed to those who had not. Trained Women's Groups members were more confident, willing to engage and have their voice heard. They were able to articulate the need for change and actions they were taking to end FGM and early marriage and ensure girls stayed in school.

Head teachers and BoM members suggest that the education of parents has proven the most significant intervention, both in terms of the results achieved to-date and efforts to change harmful cultural practices.

### *Analysis of Findings*

- It is clear that the programme continues to have a positive impact in line with the stated project goal: *children, especially girls, have improved access to a child-friendly and gender-sensitive learning environment; and teachers, BoMs and students have enhanced their capacity to articulate and promote the rights of the child.*
- Within 2 years of project activities concluding, there is verifiable evidence of significant improvements in rates of enrolment, retention, performance and transition in target schools. These results can be attributed to the combination of both the hardware ("pull") and software ("push") interventions with the efforts of trained teachers and BoM members to sensitise the wider community on the value of education having a notable effect.

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<sup>10</sup> Compared to 50+ children enrolled in STD1.

<sup>11</sup> "We are not the same people we were 5 years ago and we will not be the same 3 years from now".

- A child-friendly and gender-sensitive environment has proven vital in creating a healthier, happier and safer learning environment that children want to attend. Target schools are now more responsive to the needs and rights of students, particularly girls. This has supported a reduction in absenteeism and improved performance to enable transition.
- The improvement in rates of enrolment, retention, performance and transition in target schools is greater during this period than in previous years where similar activities have been implemented. This may be reflective of the changing context, in particular the impact decentralisation and the establishment of a County government has had on communities' perceptions of the importance and value of education. It highlights the potential for Aidlink and GCN's work to have an even greater impact on target schools and communities in future editions of the Programme.
- Based on our experience<sup>12</sup>, the high prevalence of FGM, and the fact that the majority of girls continue to be 'cut' is in line with our expectations at this point of the programme. Behaviour change takes time, and FGM remains an integral part of traditional Masai culture. Although girls are still being cut, that they are returning to school is a positive step on the path to ending the practice. Evidence shows that women who are educated are less likely to allow their own daughters to be cut or married young.
- The level of engagement of female BoM members illustrated the impact of Women's Groups. Their contribution in terms of boosting confidence among women and creating a cohort of Positive Social Deviants in the community was evident. In that regard, Women's Group fulfil a vital function in ensuring the long term sustainability of results achieved to-date, and efforts to end harmful cultural practices.
- There is a recognition however that despite the improvements in enrolment, between 30-50% of children in the community continue to be out-of-school although evidence suggests that the BoM-led campaigns to enrol out-of-school children are working. Head teachers reported cases in which children who had dropped out were brought back to school by their parents following the BoM's intervention.

## Sustainability

Increasing the number of teachers and BoM members trained has enhanced local ownership and participation, creating a strong 'group' of change agents with the knowledge, skills and capacity to hold school management to account and engage the wider community around tackling negative social norms.

Decentralisation has created a changed political, social and economic context in Kenya, opening up the possibility of important and well-paid jobs for educated community members. This has changed local perceptions of the importance of education and complemented the interventions of Aidlink and GCN within target schools.

Access to clean, safe water and increasingly frequent and severe droughts represent the biggest ongoing challenges to the community and threat to the programme. In one of the schools visited, BoM members reported that they lost 90% of their livestock in the last drought (2015), leading many families to move en masse in search of water and pasture for the remaining animals. While some children were left behind with grandparents and community members who stayed, school attendance fell by over 20%.

GCN's engagement at the meso and macro level, notably their lobbying to ensure that government policies and processes are child-friendly and gender-sensitive has a material impact on the programme at the grassroots. Kenya's Constitution and legal frameworks provide a strong basis, firstly for their training of programme participants, and then for participants themselves as they utilise their learning to sensitise the wider community.

Nevertheless, some teachers and BoM members expressed concerns about the level of ongoing support from GCN. There was a feeling that they would benefit from further mentorship to enable them to more efficiently carry out their roles. This, they said, would enable them to pass their learning onto new teachers and BoM members when they left the school or their term on the BoM expired.

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<sup>12</sup> After 10+ years of working with schools in North Kajiado where communities are more educated and integrated with other ethnic groups, the FGM rate has fallen from 74% to 60%.

Establishing the programme within the legal context has facilitated stronger linkages between school management (including the BoMs) and local authorities, particularly chiefs.

### *Analysis of Findings*

- The effectiveness of community engagement is enhanced by the fact that these changes are being driven from within, i.e. by BoM members with the support of teachers and the local chief.
- Increasing the number of teachers and BoM members trained has enhanced the sustainability of the programme. Widening the knowledge base and building local capacity ensures that the learning isn't lost as a result of staff turnover in schools or the rotation of BoMs in line with best practice and bye-laws.
- The current approach does mean that the level and quality of community engagement is dependent on the personal capacity, time and level of influence of trained participants. Some teachers and BoM members stated a desire for ongoing mentorship and support from GCN to enable them to more efficiently carry out their role. This includes the transfer of knowledge to new teachers/BoM members.
- While the changing social, economic and political context has supported the positive results realised, environmental challenges, most notably drought, presents an ongoing risk. Rains were stable in 2016 and 2017, ensuring that target communities didn't migrate. The sustainability of interventions will be truly tested when the rains next fail.
- The capacity of the sub-County Education Office in Mashuru is weak. Aside from supporting GCN to identify target schools, their level of engagement is limited and it is unclear if they understand what Aidlink and GCN are trying to achieve. As things stand, data indicates that the schools we have worked with are outperforming the rest of the County on almost every educational indicator (enrolment, retention, performance, transition etc.).

### Recommendations

- Aidlink and GCN should continue to build on the most successful elements of the programme, maintaining both the complementary "push" and "pull" factors of hardware and software which have contributed to the strong results achieved to-date.
- GCN should work with school leadership (and local government) to set up rain-water harvesting systems that make use of the government-supplied plastic water tanks in target schools.
- There is scope to strengthen linkages with the Ministry in order to have a positive influence on education across the County, notably in schools where we do not have a presence. GCN should work with local government (including Ministry of Education officials) to enhance their capacity in relation to the coordination of services and activities.
- GCN should establish cost-neutral networks for trainees from across target schools/communities to support one another. Potential options could include: *WhatsApp* groups, establishing school clusters based on locality, or hosting a Head teachers conference.
- Women's Groups should be introduced into the Kenya Inclusive Quality Education Project (KIQEP) 2018 – 2021. Their role and responsibilities are to be clearly defined with linkages to both target schools and community leaders formalised.
- FGM should remain a key focus with the roles and responsibilities of Head teachers, BoMs, Women's Groups and students in relation to efforts to eradicate the practice clearly defined.
- GCN should maintain a flexible attitude to hardware interventions that takes into account the operating context and activities of other actors in order to ensure that there is no duplication of services.

## Conclusion

Aidlink is very satisfied that the programme, implemented in 18 public primary schools in Kajiado Central and Mashuru sub-County in 2016/17 is:

1. Relevant to the needs of target schools and communities;
2. Having a positive impact and making on the lives of children in Kajiado and their families; and,
3. Empowering school leadership and local communities to drive positive change in a manner that is cost-efficient, effective and sustainable.

Although still early days, the results realised to-date represent a positive trend that we believe will be sustained as a result of the enhanced capacity, knowledge and skills of community members themselves.

Results reflects key learning from 14 years of project implementation by Aidlink and GCN in such environments, and we look forward to seeing what impact the changing attitudes towards education and child rights will have on communities in Kajiado and Turkana in the future.

Aidlink would like to put on record our thanks to the teachers, BoM members and students who we interviewed as part of this Assessment. We would also like to thank the Board and Staff of our partner GCN, in particular Mercy Musomi and Peris Mootian for facilitating our visit, responding to our questions and all other support.

## Annexes

### Annex 1: List of Schools

*N.B. Those highlighted are the schools that were visited during this Impact Assessment.*

| <b>2016</b>  |                     |              |              |              |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Kajiado County – Kajiado Central Sub County</b> |                     |              |              |              |
| <b>S/No</b>  | <b>School</b>       | <b>Girls</b> | <b>Boys</b>  | <b>Total</b> |
| 1.   | Torosei             | 339          | 264          | 603          |
| 2.   | Olmanie             | 184          | 246          | 430          |
| 3.   | Ilmisigiyo          | 48           | 64           | 112          |
| 4.   | Esoit               | 198          | 243          | 441          |
| 5.   | Enkeresuna          | 137          | 98           | 235          |
| 6.   | Empukani            | 158          | 151          | 309          |
| 7.   | Ilparua             | 122          | 133          | 255          |
| 8.   | Esilalei            | 174          | 182          | 356          |
| 9.   | Nalepo              | 136          | 120          | 256          |
| 10.  | Enoosampurrmpur     | 57           | 57           | 114          |
| 11.  | Lempalakae          | 56           | 46           | 102          |
| 12.  | Mporokua            | 119          | 160          | 279          |
|  | <b>County Total</b> | <b>1,728</b> | <b>1,764</b> | <b>3,492</b> |

| <b>FY 2017</b>                             |                     |              |             |              |
|--|---------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Kajiado County - Mashuru Sub County</b> |                     |              |             |              |
| <b>S/No</b>                                | <b>School</b>       | <b>Girls</b> | <b>Boys</b> | <b>Total</b> |
| 1  | Oloontulugum        | 158          | 145         | 303          |
| 2  | Nailumpe            | 124          | 133         | 257          |
| 3  | Olperelong'o        | 156          | 161         | 317          |
| 4  | Enkutoto            | 91           | 124         | 215          |
| 5  | Endoinyo wuas       | 77           | 103         | 173          |
| 6  | Osarai              | 56           | 69          | 125          |
|  | <b>County Total</b> | <b>662</b>   | <b>735</b>  | <b>1,397</b> |

### Annex 2: Evaluation Questions

#### **Relevance**

1. To what extent did interventions reflect the needs and priorities of local communities targeted under the Project(s)?
2. To what extent is the SSIP/KEEP aligned with national needs and priorities, as reflected in national strategies and frameworks?

#### **Efficiency**

3. Did the project interventions make the best use of financial and human resources?
  - a. Were activities cost-efficient?
  - b. Were objectives achieved on time?
  - c. Was the project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

#### **Effectiveness**

4. To what extent were project objectives achieved?

- a. Are target schools meeting the UNICEF standards of a Child-Friendly School?
  - b. Are school and community structures (BoMs, PTAs, Positive Social Deviants etc.) functioning effectively?
  - c. Did interventions reach the target constituency of people (students, women, community leaders etc.)?
  - d. What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
5. To what extent was project implementation flexible and adaptive?
- a. Were potential risks to project implementation correctly identified?
  - b. How did the project change to meet unanticipated challenges?
  - c. Were lessons learnt and how have these been subsequently utilised?

**Impact**

6. To what extent did interventions contribute to the stated project goals?
- a. What has been the impact on enrolment, retention, performance and transition among girls in target schools?
  - b. Do target schools perform better in the above measures in comparison to similar non-project schools?
  - c. Is there evidence of a change in attitudes towards gender equality and (girls’) education among key stakeholders?
7. What unintended results – positive and negative – did the intervention produce?
8. What do key stakeholders identify as the most significant change as a result of the project?
- a. What activities are identified as having made the biggest impact?
9. To what extent has the project influenced national, local or institutional priorities?

**Sustainability**

10. To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to be sustained?

[Annex 3: Questionnaire for Key Stakeholders](#)

**Ministry of Education, Science and Technology**

|   |
|---|
| <p>1. What is the role of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kajiado?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Major successes in last 5 years?</li> <li>b. Major challenges?</li> </ul>                                   |
| <p>2. What do you understand as the work of GCN in target schools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What their biggest strength?</li> <li>b. What their most significant contribution to education in Kajiado?</li> </ul>            |
| <p>3. How would you describe the relationship between the Ministry and GCN?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What are the strengths of that relationship?</li> <li>b. Do you envision ongoing cooperation and if so, how?</li> </ul> |
| <p>4. How would you describe a GCN school compared to a non-GCN school?</p>   |
| <p>5. Should this programme be replicated and why?</p>  |
| <p>6. If you were lobbying central government to support this programme – how would you describe the benefits?</p>  |
| <p>7. What are the barriers to education in Kajiado?</p>  |
| <p>8. How are targeted schools chosen?</p>  |

- |  |
|--|
| 9. What role does the ministry play in ensuring that the benefits of GCN's work continue when they withdraw?<br>a. When do they believe that the work of GCN will have been completed? |
|--|

### HEADTEACHERS

- |   |
|---|
| 1. How did this school come to be chosen by GCN?  |
| 2. What did they think GCN would do in the school?  |
| 3. What changes has he/she seen in their school since GCN started working with them?<br>a. In their students?<br>b. in the parent body/community? |
| 4. What do they attribute these changes to? What has been the most important intervention?  |
| 5. How are they working to ensure that the improvements continue?   |

### STUDENTS

- |  |
|--|
| 1. Do you think everyone who should be in school is in school?<br>a. What do some children not come?<br>b. Who job is it to get children to school?<br>c. What advice would you give to a girl or boy at home about school |
| 2. What have you learnt from GCN?  |
| 3. What difference has it made to school / for you?  |
| 4. What are things like now compared to when you first joined the school?<br>a. What is the best thing about school?   |
| 5. What would happen if you found out one of your friends was to be married? (cut?)  |

### BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

- |   |
|---|
| 1. What is their job in the school? What are they responsible for?  |
| 2. What changes have they noticed in the school since GCN started working with them?<br>a. in the students?<br>b. in the community? |
| 3. How will they ensure that the changes continue?  |
| 4. FGM/Early Marriage – Is it possible to be a good Masai while also being modern and going to school?                              |
| 5. What happens if a girl gets pregnant?  |