BACKGROUND

Education in Somaliland

The education system in Somaliland (North West Somalia/self-declared Republic of Somaliland) has historically been weak and deteriorated further during the civil war which started in 1991. With a low enrolment rate, poor attendance and low completion rates, few Somaliland children are accessing their right to basic education. For the academic year of 2005/2006, the gross enrolment rate in primary education was 37%\(^1\). Enrolment is notably low in the rural areas among vulnerable groups, in particular displaced girls. Early marriages, parents’ negative attitude towards girls’ education, and high prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM) among eight to ten year-olds, prevent girls’ school attendance. In addition, schools are often not equipped to meet the specific needs of girls, which forces them to stay at home. For instance, schools often lack gender-segregated latrines and sufficient provision of water. Corporal punishment and physical abuse is adding to girls’ barriers to education. Due to lack of proper teacher training, the quality of teaching is poor. Only 28% of primary teachers hold certification as teachers and education personnel is often given teaching tasks on the basis of their position in the village. Moreover, organisations working on education in Somaliland report that there is also a tendency among male teachers to neglect girl pupils. Only 11.9% of teachers are female\(^2\), which further discourages girls’ enrolment as they have no role models at school. Finally, lack of understanding of human rights issues among the teachers is reported to negatively affect the level of child protection, girls’ enrolment and the ability to impart quality education.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) Ibid
\(^3\) For guidance on gender and education in emergencies, see the INEE Gender Strategies on Recruiting and Supporting Women Teachers; Preventing and Responding to GBV in schools; and Gender-sensitive Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools: [www.ineesite.org/toolkit](http://www.ineesite.org/toolkit)
**NRC’s Education Project**

In the fall of 2005, the Norwegian Refugee Council’s (NRC) initiated an education programme targeting both educators and students. In this programme, NRC’s main support to the education sector in Somaliland was provided through an integrated approach targeting learners and teachers while building the capacity of education authorities to ensure sustainability. NRC runs a variety of Non Formal Education (NFE) projects:

- Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) for out of school children age 10-14 as part of an Alternative Approach to Basic Education (AABE)
- Skills training for youth (Youth Education Pack)
- Numeracy/Literacy training for adults
- School for refugees to Somaliland
- Construction/rehabilitation of school infrastructure
- Capacity building of education authorities, teachers and other education personnel

Through AABE, displaced children age 10-14 follow a 3-year condensed education programme enabling them to enter upper primary school. NRC has an expressed gender policy stating that 50% of the learners are to be girls and at least 40% of the teachers are to be female. NRC counts around 150 AABE teachers teaching learners in Level 1 – 3. To enhance quality education, NRC provides capacity building opportunities to teachers, Community Education Committees (CEC), and Ministry of Education (MoE) officials at national and regional levels. All teachers teaching in the AABE program have undergone training on participatory learning, child-friendly environment and non-discrimination. AABE classes are held in formal schools, and the teachers report to the head masters and are monitored by the local CEC and regional inspectors. NRC also monitors AABE teachers and classes regularly through its own education team.

**HOW THE INEE MINIMUM STANDARDS WERE USED IN THE PROGRAMME**

**The need for a Code of Conduct**

The AABE programme was the first NRC project in Somaliland where the INEE Minimum Standards were used. When the programme started in 2005 the Somaliland MoE was still weak and few policy documents existed. There was no official Code of Conduct (CoC) for teachers or MoE staff. NRC considered that it was essential to have a CoC for teachers and other education staff involved in the AABE programme, as a step towards providing a child-friendly learning environment and enhancing protection. With poor enrolment and very high drop out of girls, teachers had to be made aware of the role they could play as role models and educationalists in ensuring access to quality education for all. The common use of the narcotic stimulant **khat**, even while teaching, also had to be addressed in developing the CoC.

However, NRC was not able to find a CoC from other partners which would suit the AABE program and therefore decided to develop one. With no National Policy or Strategy in place reflecting the values of the Somaliland education system, the CoC had to be based on international standards, yet reflecting the local context. NRC therefore used the INEE Minimum Standards on Teachers and other Education personnel, in particular Standard 2 on Conditions of work\(^4\), which includes two indicators, two guidance notes and an appendix\(^5\) on what a Code of Conduct should comprise of and how it should be developed.

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\(^5\) Ibid, p. 70. Please also see Appendix 1.
INEE Minimum Standards on Teachers and Other Education Personnel Standard 2: Conditions of Work

Key indicator:
- The code of conduct and defined conditions of work are developed in a participatory manner, involving both educational personnel and community members, and there are clear implementation guidelines (see guidance notes 1 and 3).
- The code of conduct is signed and followed by educational personnel, and appropriate measures are documented and applied in cases of misconduct and/or violation of the code of conduct (see guidance notes 1 and 2).


Guidance notes:
- **1. Code of conduct:** The code of conduct should set clear standards of behaviour for educational personnel and specify the mandatory consequences for persons who do not comply with these standards. The code should apply to the learning environment and to education programme events or activities (see Appendix 1/…/for a sample code of conduct).

  The code should ensure the teachers and educational personnel promote a positive learning environment and the well-being of learners. The code should state, among other things, that educational personnel:
  - exhibit professional behaviour by maintaining a high standard of conduct, self-control and moral/ethical behaviour;
  - participate in creating an environment in which all students are accepted;
  - maintain a safe and healthy environment, free from harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, abuse and violence, and discrimination;
  - maintain regular attendance and punctuality;
  - demonstrate professionalism and efficiency in their work; and
  - exhibit other behaviours as deemed appropriate by the community and education stakeholders.

- **2. Code implementation guidelines:** There should be training for all education and non-education personnel, who work in the learning environment, on the code of conduct. Training and support should be provided to community education committee members and education supervisors and managers on their roles and responsibilities in monitoring the implementation of codes of conduct and to identify and incorporate key concerns around codes of conduct into school/non-formal education programme action plans. Supervisory mechanisms should establish transparent reporting and monitoring procedures, which protect the confidentiality of all respective parties. Refer to Standard 3 (Support and Supervision) for additional information.


Utilisation of the INEE Minimum Standards

**Development of the Code of Conduct**

In addition to the indicators, NRC referred to the detailed guidance notes (p. 68) and to the sample Teacher’s Code of Conduct (p. 70), which suggests a CoC should focus on the teacher’s performance at all times, in the classroom, in professional life and in the community.
In particular, NRC used a similar outline for its own CoC, while adapting some of the content to address specific local challenges. While the sample Teacher’s Code of Conduct in the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook focuses on teachers’ relationship with students and parents/community, NRC found it would be important to add provisions pertaining to the relation between teacher colleagues, particularly due to its policy to recruit a high number of female teachers. Therefore, NRC emphasised in the AABE programme CoC that colleagues should relate to each other in a non-discriminatory and supportive manner.

NRC shared the adapted INEE Minimum Standards Code of Conduct among its education staff in Somaliland. Following their feedback the document was revised, and then shared with the MoE which approved it. The CoC was signed by AABE teachers, the MoE and the NRC education manager. All AABE teachers signed the CoC prior to starting teaching.

**Workshops on the Code of Conduct**
The INEE Minimum Standards guidance note on code implementation guidelines (p. 68) underscores the need for training on the Code of Conduct for all teachers and other education personnel. Although NRC did not hold a training exclusively on the CoC, multiple trainings where the CoC was explained and discussed, were held with the objective to improve quality, learning environment and focusing on protection of children:

1. General training of all AABE teachers on child-centered teaching
2. Group discussion with all AABE teachers on the Code of Conduct
3. Training of CECs including head teacher, on roles and responsibilities including protection, human rights (e.g. focus on physical punishment) and gender.
4. Training of CEC on how to address breaches to the Code of Conduct.
5. Training of Regional inspectors of MoE on gender, focusing on ensuring a girl friendly learning environment by advising teachers on girl friendly teaching/learning and to enable teachers to monitor from a gender sensitive perspective.

**Recognition of the Code of Conduct by the MoE**
The NRC Code of Conduct based on the INEE Minimum Standards has paved the way for positive policy developments in Somaliland. In 2006, the Ministry of Education issued a policy, which stated that the NRC CoC was in line with the national education policy, which gives further strength to the CoC. In 2008, the Ministry of Education together with partner NGOs will develop a national CoC which will be mandatory for all formal and non formal teachers and education personnel in Somaliland.

**CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING THE CODE OF CONDUCT**
NRC did not face any particular challenges utilizing the INEE Minimum Standards to develop the Code of Conduct for its AABE programme. However, the implementation of the code was challenging due to multiple factors:

1. **CoC not understood, or not agreed to:** The CoC reflects values that may be perceived uncommon in Somali society and some teachers disagreed with certain principles particularly related to corporal punishment and gender sensitive teaching. Some male teachers also continued to display negative attitudes towards female colleagues. However, through training and monitoring most teachers eventually expressed support to the values of the Code of Conduct.  

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6 For more guidance on respect of the CoC, see Standard 2 on Conditions of Work in Teachers and other Education Personnel category, INEE: INEE Minimum Standards Handbook, 2004 p. 67
2. **Irregular monitoring and supervision:** AABE teachers are monitored by NRC education team and regional inspectors. Some AABE schools are located in remote, sometimes inaccessible areas, thus monitoring can prove challenging. The MoE has limited resources and monitoring by MoE inspectors is ad hoc and limited. More frequent monitoring by the MoE might give greater awareness to the CoC.  

3. **MoE limited resources:** With better communication on the complementarity between the NRC CoC and the MoE policy as well as advocacy by the MoE about the values conveyed in the CoC, it would be easier for NGOs to promote them to teachers and other education personnel.

4. **Tackling breaches:** The Community Education Committee (including head master) has the responsibility of running the school, monitoring teachers and sorting out “minor” breaches to the Code, in collaboration with parents and the community. Decisions on whether a teacher will be given a warning or have his/her contract ended due to a breach of the CoC is made by NRC in collaboration with MoE, with a recommendation from the Community Education Committee, but procedures for how to deal with specific cases vary from village to village.

**LESSONS LEARNT AND GOOD PRACTICES**

The guidance provided in INEE Minimum Standards, in particular Standard 2 on Conditions of Work and the sample teacher’s code of conduct, are valuable to organisations and schools when developing a code of conduct.

**Areas for improvement**

When reflecting on its experience, NRC Somaliland identified three key areas which could be improved:

- **Greater collaboration with the MoE:** A MoE-owned common Code of Conduct valid for formal and non-formal education would have allowed better coordination between partners and given the document more weight as it would be binding for all teachers/education personnel.

- **Greater involvement of teachers in the development of Code of Conduct:** The CoC was developed by NRC staff and approved by MoE. To create better ownership of the CoC, teachers could have been involved in the development of the document by providing input during the induction training they were given prior to their deployment.

- **Enhanced capacity building of management:** The capacity of the entities responsible for monitoring teachers should be further developed. As Community Education Committees are under the direct supervision of MoE it is difficult for NGO partners collaborating with the CEC to have an impact on how it is formed. However, the need for greater representation of women in the CECs should be repeatedly underscored as women are likely to advocate for female participation and protection in education.

**Successful implementation**

Since the adoption of the teacher’s code of conduct based on the INEE Minimum Standards, teachers have displayed eagerness to use participatory learning methodology, encourage girls’ participation and identify alternatives to corporal punishment. As highlighted in the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook, training and monitoring are key for the successful implementation of the Code of Conduct.

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7 For more guidance on CoC monitoring, see Standard 3 on Support and Supervision in Teachers and other Education Personnel category, INEE: INEE Minimum Standards Handbook, 2004 p. 69
8 For more guidance on MoE policy and advocacy, see Standard 1 on Policy Formulation and Enactment in Education Policy and Coordination category, Ibid p. 74
9 For more guidance on measures in cases of misconduct, see Standard 2 on Conditions of Work in Teachers and other Education Personnel category, Ibid p. 67
10 INEE: INEE Minimum Standards Handboook, 2004, p. 67
11 Ibid p. 70. Also please see Appendix 1.
TEACHER’S CODE OF CONDUCT

At all times, the teacher:
- acts in a manner which maintains the honour and dignity of the profession
- protects the confidentiality of anything said by a student in confidence
- protects the students from conditions which interfere with learning or are harmful to the student’s health and safety
- does not take advantage of their position to profit in any way
- does not sexually harass any student nor have any manner of sexual relationship with a student
- is a good, honest role model

In the classroom, the teacher:
- promotes a positive and safe learning environment
- teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all students
- promotes the students’ self-esteem, confidence and self-worth
- promotes high expectations of students and helps each student to reach his/her potential
- encourages students to develop as active, responsible and effective learners
- creates an atmosphere of trust

In their professional life, the teacher:
- displays a basic competence in educational methodology and their subject
- displays an understanding (in their teaching) of how children learn
- is always on time for class and prepared to teach
- does not engage in activities which adversely affect the quality of their teaching
- takes advantage of all professional development opportunities and uses modern, accepted teaching methods
- teaches principles of good citizenship, peace and social responsibility
- honestly represents each student’s performance and examination results

With respect to the community, the teacher:
- encourages parents to support and participate in their children’s learning
- recognises the importance of family and community involvement in school
- supports and promotes a positive image of the school

In addition to the items mentioned here, the teacher is expected to abide by all other rules and policies of the camp and the camp school.