2019 Global Education Monitoring Report on Education and Migration

Submitted by: CARE USA Education Team
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The 2019 GEM Report seeks to explore how migration patterns impact education quality. However, the interplay between education and migration appears to be context specific, varying from country to country, and also within the country, depending on specific sub-group patterns.

CARE’s experiences from girls’ education programming in Somalia, where recurrent, prolonged droughts, economic hardship and conflict are shaping migration patterns, provide evidence in this regard. For instance, fluctuations in access and attendance were observed due to seasonal migration particularly among pastoralist communities. In rural schools, there is an increase of 48% in the number of female students present in class during the rainy season, compared to the end of the dry season. As a result, up to 42% of the female students in rural areas have missed three or more months of school since starting their education, reflecting the pattern of seasonal migration. During the recent severe drought, 28% of the households reported moving. A minority among them (17%) migrated to pursue better education opportunities; however, for most, migration is a coping strategy that is often associated with dropout.

The migration of adolescents is a lesser known phenomenon, which also affects education. During 2016 only, 14 percent of the households reported girls under the age of 18 migrating; 17 percent of the households reported the same for boys. Migrant girls are much less likely to attend school than boys; 55% of the migrant girls are out of school, compared to only 35% of the migrant boys.

CARE is working with rural communities in Somaliland and Somalia to address education issues for pastoralist girls and migrants, through the DFID-GEC funded Somali Girls’ Education Promotion Project (2013-17). The combination of enhanced community awareness of the importance of education, linked to the mobilization of religious leaders, and increased capacity of community education committees to identify and address cases of dropout and out-of-school children in the community, resulted in girls’ enrolment rate increasing from 57% to 74% in a period of three years, mitigating the impact of the drought on students, particularly among adolescent girls. Further, learning outcomes for girls are now significantly higher than at the baseline, largely due to teachers’ and communities’ enhanced capacity to deal with the challenges associated with integrating children affected by migration patterns. As a result, 9,524 girls and 8,709 boys are benefitting from improved literacy and numeracy outcomes, among them at least 3,287 pastoralist girls.

In Zimbabwe, migration is a widespread phenomenon, particularly in boarder areas; however, the migration of adolescents and youth, particularly girls, is less understood. Data from a DFID-funded project, “Improving Girls’ Access through Transforming Education” (IGATE – 2013-2017), implemented by World Vision, CARE and SNV, provides a nuanced perspective of the impact of migration in girls’
education. Despite high enrolment rates, exceeding 90%, 10% of the households reported girls under 16 migrating during the past year, while 6% reported the same for boys. 62% of the migrant girls are out of school, compared to 31% of the boys. In some cases, migration allows adolescents to attend better schools; however, this is not the case for girls. In two IGATE participating districts with high migration levels, an in-depth study indicated that 13.2% of the 2,959 households surveyed had one or more children who left home within the past year. Of the children who had migrated within the past year, 37.3% of the girls and 33% of the boys are attending school - particularly at secondary level due to low numbers of secondary schools available, risk of gender based violence on the way to school especially for girls, low quality of schooling, poverty i.e. inability to pay levies, tuition and exam fees and exam failure by the students themselves. On the other hand, the report also found that the main direction of migratory flow was rural-to-rural for both girls (56.8%) and boys (60.1%) through two main approaches: fostering (where the family sends their child to stay with extended family) and ‘bush boarding’ (where families make informal arrangements for their child to stay near the school for a fee). Both arrangements allow access to education, but also expose girls to gender based violence (especially in the case of bush boarding), as well as child labour, as this is seen as the benefit of accommodating the child for the extended family. IGATE responded by mobilizing and training community volunteers as education champions to follow up on cases of abuse, and by associating them with village savings and lending associations (VSLA), an economic empowerment model. Empowered community champions (mothers’ groups, school development committees) were able to increase the reporting of cases of abuse by 18% in relation to control schools. The retention rate for girls increased significantly compared to a control group, particularly in the transitional grade to secondary.

CARE will be pleased to provide the documentation to the GEM team as necessary, and looks forward to further collaboration. For more information, please contact:

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