

Mobile Non-Formal Education (MNFE) Marsabit County, Kenya

Statement of Need

Pastoralist children and youth are largely neglected by Kenya's national educational system. In the Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) counties of Northern Kenya, including Marsabit County, literacy rates are exceptionally low, especially among nomadic and semi-nomadic communities. Strong gender biases have meant that even as services improve in pastoralist societies, many girls are denied access to education and skills enhancement training. Marginalization of girls in education continues despite efforts made by governments and donors to improve their inclusion. As a result, these girls are deprived of the benefits that come with formal education such as access to better health, economic, and social opportunities. Because the girls have no formal education, they are very likely to be married off in their early teens, limiting their options to tending herds of goats or sheep, raising children, and failing to escape a life of bitter hardship and vulnerability to drought and other stresses.

Program Description

Adeso is implementing a Mobile Non-Formal Education (MNFE) project to enhance access to education for 300 nomadic children aged 13 to 18 years (180 girls and 120 boys) in Marsabit County in Northern Kenya, who are not currently enrolled in any formal schooling. We have received initial funding, and are seeking additional support to develop and provide a Mobile Non-Formal Curriculum in six Non-Formal Education Centers (NFECs) and a tailor-made vocational skills curriculum to be delivered by St. Joseph's Polytechnic in Isiolo County. Adeso will also use the funds to develop a Mobile Non-Formal Education (NFE) Resource Tool Kit, providing supplementary teaching and learning guides on non-formal education for pastoralist communities. This Tool Kit will be shared with Marsabit County, NGOs and potential funders and will support the Ministry of Education and other actors to scale up the NFEC model to cover more pastoralist areas, and ultimately educate all 84,000 out-of-school children (of whom 50,000 are girls).

The project has two key objectives:

- To establish six (6) mobile Non-Formal Education Centers (NFECs) for children aged 13-18 years, each catering to 50 pupils (30 girls and 20 boys);
- To enroll and sponsor 30 girls, five (5) from each NFEC, for vocational training at St. Joseph's Polytechnic (including apprenticeships to businesses in Isiolo, Meru and Nanyuki towns during which they will receive a small monthly stipend) and provide start-up grants to Polytechnic graduates who prepare viable small business proposals.

The project has been adapted to fit the context of pastoralists of diverse ethnic communities in Marsabit. The population is scattered across a vast area in relatively small settlements, requiring long walks to reach the nearest school, which discourages parents from letting children (especially girls) attend, and results in high rates of absenteeism. There are also very few existing school initiatives that provide mobile education to nomadic communities. Our MNFE model aligns project activities with seasonal migratory patterns of pastoralists to ensure they can access education in a way that does not conflict with their livelihoods and nomadic lives. It is designed to avoid pitfalls that have reduced the impact of previous educational approaches among pastoralists.

The goal of this Mobile Non-Formal Education project is to improve the lives of marginalized girls in pastoralist areas of Marsabit County by providing non-formal education and vocational skills training, enabling them to build the basis of sustained prosperity by increasing the enrolment and retention of girls in primary and secondary education.

Adeso Organizational Summary

Adeso is an African-founded and African-led humanitarian and development organization registered as a non-profit organization (NGO) in Kenya, with an affiliated non-profit in the United States and an affiliated charity in England and Wales (registration no.1131711). Adeso was established in 1991 and

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has grown from a small grassroots organization mobilizing and strengthening communities in Somalia to a medium-sized international NGO with programs in Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan. The organization's mission is to work at the roots of African communities to create environments in which they can thrive. Our programming largely focuses on the humanitarian, economic development, and educational needs of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in rural areas throughout the East and Horn of Africa. Adeso's history is rooted in participatory, community-driven projects and an intimate understanding of pastoral livelihoods and traditional structures. Currently Adeso employs roughly 300 staff, with 45 in our Nairobi headquarters. Adeso conducts field programs in Kenya in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) Counties of Marsabit, Isiolo, Garissa, Wajir and Turkana, and roughly 200 field staff at 14 project sites in Somalia, and a small program of around 10 staff people in South Sudan. We have affiliate offices in Washington DC and London.

Track record of delivering successful Non-Formal Education projects

Adeso has over 15 years of experience in delivering tailored educational interventions for pastoralist children to improve their access to education. The Mobile Non-Formal Education project builds on the success of our previous Pastoralist Youth Leadership (PYL) project and its successor Pastoralist Education Project (PEP) in Puntland, Somalia, which addressed the challenges of delivering secondary education to pastoralist or semi-nomadic populations.

PYL and PEP, funded by UNICEF, Oxfam Novib, and the Canadian International Development Agency, were the first projects of their kind in East Africa. They were customized for pastoralist youth by the pastoralists themselves and centered on a 2-year, 4-module curriculum for 14-19 year-olds, 70% of them girls. The curriculum covered community leadership development, human health, animal health, and natural resource management. Local facilitators also helped build a foundation of basic skills in mathematics, English, and science for students to fully understand and apply the information gained through the PYL thematic areas.

Outcomes and Sustained Impacts of Pastoralist Education

The 2011 external final evaluation of the PYL program in Somalia found that:

- 2,740 children and youth (50% girls) were enrolled in formal and non-formal schools;
- Access to formal education by out-of-school children exceeded planned targets by 13%;
- 83% of PYL learners attained a pass rate of 40% and above.

PYL graduates have succeeded in establishing themselves in leadership and income generating activities, by joining existing community organizations or starting their own CBOs, running businesses like veterinary pharmacies or solar cooker sales and repairs, and becoming NFE teachers or teacher assistants in local schools. Many volunteer in activities such as hygiene and sanitation and advocate for female education.

Adeso aims to replicate these successes in the pastoralist landscape of Marsabit County, and demonstrate the impact of the MNFE model so that the results can be shared. We anticipate that positive results from the project will lead the government to adopt this model to reach many more children in the ASALs who have left school, or never attended classes in the first place – specifically focusing on young girls. To strengthen adoption of such policies, we will gather evidence to demonstrate the value of MNFE to provide formal and vocational education to pastoralist children, deepening the knowledge base on how to meet the needs of these highly vulnerable populations. The information will be used by leaders in Kenya's ASAL Counties to strengthen support for Non-Formal Education and Non-Formal Education Centers (NFECs) in pastoralist areas.

Proposed Activities for MNFE Program

1. *MNFE curriculum teaching.* Unlike regular schools where teaching schedules are fixed, the project will follow a flexible calendar suitable for pastoralist communities, and academic

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terms will be based on changing seasonal demands, with more classes held during wet seasons when children are most able to benefit from intensive interaction with teachers.

2. *Development of vocational training curriculum.* A tailor-made accelerated one-year training curriculum developed by St. Joseph's Polytechnic, in collaboration with Adeso and the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), to suit the particular trades of relevance in the ASAL counties.
3. *Vocational training.* Girls who have successfully passed through NFECs will be selected for sponsorship (fees plus living expenses) to attend St. Joseph's Polytechnic in Isiolo town. The training will include practical attachments (apprenticeships) in local businesses, and micro-grants to enable the successful graduates to develop business plans and start micro-enterprises.

MNFE Project Outcomes

- Improved access for pastoralist youth to high-quality mobile NFE by sensitizing communities on the value of education among the participating pastoralists – especially for girls.
- Increased number of out-of-school children enrolled in NFE programs and supported to transit into formal education and vocational training.
- Improved performance of NFE teachers by providing pedagogical training.
- Improved delivery, management and coordination of high-quality mobile NFE.
- Increased employability of vocational training graduates.

Timeline of Activities

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| 1. Development of vocational training curriculum: | August 2014-December 2014 |
| 2. MNFE curriculum teaching: | August 2014-July 2016 |
| 3. Vocational training: | January 2015-July 2016 |