

# Supporting Home Learning in a Crisis

Report



## Lessons from disseminating the EENET/NAD home learning resources in Zambia, Zanzibar, Uganda and Somalia, 2020-2021

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# Acronyms

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CBR	community-based rehabilitation
CEC	Community Education Committee
COVID-19	coronavirus-19
DAF	Disability Aid Foundation
DEO	District Education Officer
DUF	District Union Facilitator
ECD	early childhood development
EENET	Enabling Education Network
FGD	focus group discussion
IECo	Inclusive Education Coordinator
IETT	inclusive education teacher training
KII	key informant interview
MECP-Z	Madrassa Early Childhood Programme – Zanzibar
NAD	Norwegian Association of Disabled
NFA	Norwegian Framework Agreement
NGO	non-government organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NUDIPU	National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda
OPD	organisation of persons with disabilities
PDON	Puntland Disability Organisation Network
SIT	School Inclusion Team
SUZA	State University of Zanzibar
TOFI	Together for Inclusion

# Executive summary

## Introduction

In 2020, as part of the Together for Inclusion (TOFI) consortium programme, Enabling Education Network (EENET) and Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD) worked with partners in Zambia, Zanzibar, and Uganda<sup>1</sup> to create home learning resources for use during COVID-19 school closures. The resources were designed for parents, caregivers, and families of children with and without disabilities. The resources focus on encouraging appropriate, achievable, low-stress learning activities that use the time, skills, and resources available in the family.

This report documents the learning and outcomes from disseminating the resources to families in all three countries. The home learning resources were also adapted, translated, and printed for dissemination in Somalia.<sup>2</sup>

## The situation

School closures in 2020 and 2021 resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic meant that 1.5 billion children were out of school.<sup>3</sup> Parents and caregivers around the world suddenly had to manage temporary home-based learning for their children. An overwhelming number of online home education resources were circulating but these were inaccessible for most children in low-income countries. Learners with disabilities and/or other additional needs were considered some of the most likely to miss out on continued learning.

These global challenges were reflected locally. Results from a rapid investigation conducted by EENET and NAD into the situation in Zambia and Zanzibar showed that parents were under a lot of stress and found supporting their children to learn at home very challenging. Many parents were concerned that they were not qualified to help their children catch up. Governments also struggled to respond. Some school lessons were broadcast on TV and radio, but these devices were not available in many homes. Consideration was also rarely given to learners with disabilities or additional learning needs.

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<sup>1</sup> The partners in each country were: Norwegian Association of Disabled, Zambia; Madrasa Early Childhood Programme Zanzibar and State University of Zanzibar; and National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU).

<sup>2</sup> This was done with support from TOFI partners Save the Children and Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). Unfortunately, due to delays in the process, only initial observations from the dissemination in Puntland state were available at the time of writing the report. Home learning resources will also be disseminated in South Central Somalia in early 2022. A brief appendix containing an overview of the Somalia data and analysis will be added to the report later in 2022.

<sup>3</sup> See UNESCO <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

## **The response from EENET and NAD**

EENET and NAD responded to this situation by working with partners in Zambia, Zanzibar, Uganda, and Somalia. Together they developed and disseminated some short home learning resources for families of children with and without disabilities. The resources focus on:

- empowering parents to support learning;
- family wellbeing;
- different areas of children's development;
- learning and complementing school-based learning.

The resources include a poster of colourful images showing ideas for learning at home and a booklet of activities for children of all ages. Both were designed to draw on pedagogical approaches such as project-based and child-led learning. The central message of the resources is 'learning happens everywhere, anytime, and for everyone'.

## **Project management**

When the pandemic started, EENET and NAD faced the dilemma of putting work on hold or rapidly reconfiguring their plans. Neither organisation wanted to be idle. They recognised that adapting plans and repurposing budgets to suit the new context would benefit the organisations, their partners, and stakeholders. However, ensuring that the whole donor chain was aware of and supported the proposed change of plan caused some delays. The pandemic has highlighted to funders across many development programmes that greater flexibility and rapid decision-making processes are needed in such situations.

EENET designed and delivered the home learning project, using funds from NAD via the latter's Norad Framework Agreement (NFA) and TOFI programme grant. However, the project was not officially included in the results framework as a component of the TOFI programme, making it difficult to link it strategically with other programme activities.

EENET's deeply rooted principle of consultation and collaboration drives it to produce accessible, locally relevant resources. It was challenging to balance this commitment with the need to work quickly on a limited budget. The project's initial research stage was more extensive than the rapid snapshot exercise that was needed.

In Somalia the combination of new partnerships, a challenging working context, protracted identification of local partners, and coronavirus restrictions caused long delays. Dissemination of the home learning resources did not start until December 2021. By contrast, tried-and-tested partnerships in Zambia and Zanzibar, and a solid

foundation of existing inclusive education work, meant the project could start and progress much faster in those countries.

We recommend:

- ✓ EENET, NAD and their partners could use this project as an example when advocating for funders to improve how they flexibly fund inclusive education.
- ✓ Given that emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic will happen again, all programme plans should anticipate emergencies and build in emergency preparedness.
- ✓ Donors should have greater confidence to respond quickly and flexibly in a crisis. They should proactively encourage stakeholders and partners to think strategically and creatively about the best response in a crisis. A theory of change approach to programme design, rather than a rigid results framework, would better facilitate rapid adaptive responses.
- ✓ EENET's management should become stricter at prioritising, especially when faced with similar crisis situations.
- ✓ Where possible, to ensure effective crisis response implementation, organisations like EENET and NAD should work where they have established partnerships that have strong organisational structures and local presence.

## Home learning resource development

The process of developing these resources was consultative. EENET sought to ensure that the resources were culturally appropriate and contextually relevant, with illustrations that could be interpreted easily. Different versions of the poster and booklet were produced for each of the four countries and they were translated into 10 local languages. The local language resources were well received by learners and their families, although translation can take considerable time and budget.

We recommend:

- ✓ EENET, NAD, their partners and other organisations should always prioritise printing copies in local languages that parents, caregivers, and children are more able to engage with.
- ✓ Donors should fund multiple local language translations and printing, even if each language version only reaches a relatively small number of users.



## Home learning resources dissemination

### Recipients

To date, approximately 15,200 posters and 14,180 booklets have been distributed across the four countries. A further 1,000 copies of each resource are due to be disseminated in Somalia in early 2022. Around 70% of the copies were in local languages, the rest in English.

In all countries, distribution was aligned to inclusive education pilot schools involved in the TOFI programme. The demand for home learning resources was high and some stakeholders felt insufficient quantities were disseminated. Not all expectations could be met by such a small-scale project.

#### We recommend:

- ✓ In similar projects, implementers must consider carefully how many families and learners can be reached with the resources. Using cheaper, lower quality printing options is an option, if recipient numbers exceed the available budget, but can reduce the appeal or durability of resources.
- ✓ When deciding who should receive resources, non-governmental organisation (NGO) partners, schools, and local authorities should discuss whether, in their context, it is better to choose specific recipients (e.g., learners with disabilities) or to reach every household in the community.

### Dissemination approaches

In each country, NAD, EENET and other partners used existing networks to identify viable distribution channels for printed resources. Approaches included distribution to large groups of parents and caregivers, COVID-19 restrictions permitting; orientation sessions (Zambia and Zanzibar); and door-to door distribution with the support of local volunteers (Uganda and Somalia).

Parents often need time and support to explore what learning is, where it happens and how they can help their children to learn. Partners also need time to identify parents of children with specific disabilities or other additional learning needs who may require follow-up support to engage with new resources. In Uganda and Somalia, the door-to-door dissemination approach relied heavily on volunteer distributors who were not always sufficiently briefed.

We recommend:

- ✓ Distributors of home learning resources should spend enough time with families to explain the resources, try out some of the activities, and identify families that need follow-up support.
- ✓ Public or community meetings could be used to explain the home learning resources before disseminating them. This would help families and community members become aware of the resources, understand what the project is about, and feel ready and available to receive the resources.
- ✓ All distributors should be orientated on the resources' key messages, principles, and activities, which may take some time. Volunteer disseminators should be sufficiently supported and protected throughout.
- ✓ Local education authorities should participate in an orientation session so that they endorse and support the use of the home learning resources.

### **Initial responses and expectations**

Family poverty often led to high expectations and requests for food, medical care, financial support, and scholastic materials during distribution of the home learning resources. Disseminators also recorded instances of families hiding their children with disabilities at home due to stigma and shame. In all countries the home learning project involved disability NGO partners who could support disability inclusion efforts. For example, in Uganda during dissemination, NUDIPU also collected data on children with disabilities who needed assistive devices to participate in school. They used this data for follow-up work later in the year.

In Uganda many families reported that young children were missing out on education because early childhood development (ECD) centres were closed. EENET and NAD responded by producing a home learning activity booklet for parents and caregivers of younger learners (aged 0-7 years), although this was not completed until January 2022. The booklet focuses on learning through play and the need for stimulation and parental interaction.

We recommend:

- ✓ When distributing home learning resources to families of children with disabilities, project links with disability-inclusion organisations and interventions are vital, and time must be allowed for follow-up.
- ✓ Everyone involved in the dissemination stage needs to understand the project expectations and boundaries. They should know how to respond to unrealistic expectations, and what additional referral advice to give families.
- ✓ Ugandan ECD centres are re-opening in early 2022. EENET, NAD and partners should consider how they can support ECD educators to introduce the ECD home learning activities to families (e.g., through some short workshops).

## Results for learners and their families

### Relevance and usefulness

Review respondents overall found the resources useful and relevant. They suggested various changes for the home learning resources. Some are achievable, others have significant budget or pedagogical implications, such as the request to produce a separate booklet for each age-group or grade. The activities were deliberately designed to be appropriate and adaptable across age groups, and publishing multiple grade-specific booklets would be unaffordable. Follow-up visits could have resolved many such queries and concerns, but budget limitations and competing priorities within the TOFI programme prevented this.

The fact that so many parents and caregivers supported their children to engage with the home learning resources, with only a little support and input from partner organisations, is remarkable. There were some cases however, where parents or caregivers were hesitant to receive the home learning resources or unwilling or unable to support their children's learning at home.

We recommend:

- ✓ Similar dissemination projects need to ensure that disseminators have the mandate and budget for follow-up visits with families, so they can provide more practical advice on how activities can be adapted for children of different ages, grades, abilities, and learning needs.
- ✓ Similar projects in future could include short workshops for parents during the dissemination stage, during which they can raise concerns and questions.
- ✓ Future projects should find out how many parents and caregivers have little or no literacy, and investigate whether links can be made with an adult literacy project or NGO before starting to disseminate the home learning resources.

## **Benefits for learners**

The review found that learners experienced substantial learning and changes in behaviour as a result of using the home learning resources. This included improved acceptance and respect between children with and without disabilities and increased self-esteem and agency for children with disabilities. There was also increased recognition by families of their children's abilities. These are all changes that inclusive education seeks to achieve. Of course, not all such changes can be directly attributed to the home learning project, but there is a clear indication of the far-reaching changes that could be achieved if home learning was routinely integrated into inclusive education programmes.

The findings also remind us that there is a continuum of inclusive learning between home and school, and we should not see inclusive education as solely a school-based phenomenon. All children, but especially those with disabilities or additional learning needs, are likely to benefit from receiving learning support at multiple points on this continuum of home-, community- and school-based learning. Home-based learning should not just be seen as an emergency response when schools are closed. It should be central to all children's learning and integral to every inclusive education project.

### **We recommend:**

- ✓ EENET, NAD, their partners and indeed all NGOs should consider how inclusive home learning can be supported on a larger scale and not just in response to COVID-19. This could include helping ministries of education to develop home learning resources that form part of the official curriculum, but which support a more holistic approach to learning, nurturing skills like creativity, collaboration and problem-solving.
- ✓ EENET, NAD, their partners and other NGOs could support teachers to learn more about the home learning resources and activities, so they can create better links between home and school learning environments. EENET and NAD have developed a teacher training module as part of the TOFI inclusive education teacher training programme which can be used for this purpose.
- ✓ Teachers could be encouraged and supported to assist with dissemination (showing families that the school endorses the resources) and/or with follow-up activities to ensure effective home learning continues beyond a short NGO project.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Project background

The home learning project was designed and managed by Enabling Education Network (EENET), in collaboration with partners in each country. The project was funded by Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD) using funds from its Norad Framework Agreement (NFA) and Together for Inclusion (TOFI) programme grant. A budget for the project was created in early 2020 by repurposing funds that could not be spent on planned inclusive education activities due to COVID-19 lockdowns and travel bans.

TOFI brings together a consortium of Norwegian non-governmental organisations (NGOs), co-ordinated by the Atlas Alliance. The consortium is working on a range of disability-inclusion initiatives across six countries: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. The Atlas Alliance is an umbrella organisation for Norwegian disability organisations.

To promote effective pathways to inclusion in education, the Atlas Alliance has planned a programme that builds on effective work already done in the field. This includes taking forward the participatory inclusive education teacher training (IETT) approach used in Zambia and Zanzibar. The approach was developed over a period of 5-6 years by NAD in partnership with EENET, using NFA funds. NAD Zambia has facilitated the IETT work in Zambia, while in Zanzibar it has been facilitated by the Inclusive Education and Life Skills Unit and State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), and more recently by Madrasa Early Childhood Programme, Zanzibar (MECP-Z).

National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU), Save the Children, and Stromme Foundation in Uganda and Save the Children and Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Somalia are key partners alongside NAD within the TOFI inclusive education programme. EENET is providing technical support to these partners to build the inclusive education capacity of Ugandan and Somali organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs), and to facilitate IETT activities. In Uganda, NUDIPU has district level offices – District Unions – representing people with disabilities in all eight districts participating in the home learning project. In Somalia, Save the Children and ADRA, in partnership with the national organisations Disability Aid Foundation (DAF) and Puntland Disability Organisation Network (PDON), are supporting the dissemination of the home learning resources.

## 1.2. Situation analysis

### 1.2.1. General overview

School closures in 2020 resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic meant that 1.5 billion children were out of school, almost 90% of all previously enrolled learners.<sup>4</sup> Parents<sup>5</sup> and caregivers around the world suddenly had to manage temporary home-based learning for their children. Governments and teachers had no experience with guiding mass learning in this unprecedented situation and many parents were unprepared for this challenge. They were struggling and stressed, especially parents with limited education and/or resources and parents of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

An overwhelming number of home education resources were circulating. Since most of these resources were online, poor access to technology and limited internet connectivity made these resources inaccessible for most children in low-income countries. Learners with disabilities and/or additional needs were some of the most likely to miss out on continued learning. Parents can struggle to support children's learning needs at the best of times and most home learning ideas do not respond to disability and individualised learning needs in resource-poor contexts. Although some governments provided some learning materials for learners to use at home, many children, particularly in low-income countries were not able to access these and did not have teachers or their peers to help them.

EENET and NAD responded to this situation. Working with established partners and existing networks, initially in Zambia and Zanzibar, they sought to help families support appropriate, low-stress learning at home for children with and without disabilities.

EENET conducted three surveys to assess the home learning situation; one in Zambia, one in Zanzibar, and one globally online. These surveys gathered the experiences of parents and caregivers who were supporting learning at home. In Zambia and Zanzibar partners also helped EENET conduct telephone surveys with parents and caregivers from four school catchment areas.<sup>6</sup> Direct communication with stakeholders generated invaluable insights into the challenges families were facing in supporting their children's learning since the closure of schools. The online survey

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<sup>4</sup> See UNESCO <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

<sup>5</sup> For the sake of brevity, we often say only 'parents' but throughout this report readers should interpret 'parents' to mean 'parents, caregivers and guardians'.

<sup>6</sup> A summary report of the home learning phone survey in Zambia and Zanzibar is available on request.

was available in 14 languages.<sup>7</sup> It provided a snapshot of home learning around the world from the perspective of parents and families. The survey findings helped inform the design of the two main home learning resources.

### **1.2.2. Summary of findings from the Zambia and Zanzibar phone survey**

Parents in both Zambia and Zanzibar reported being under a lot of stress, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Several parents and caregivers in Zambia said they had trouble with jobs, money, and food. A common finding was that parents found supporting their children to learn at home very challenging, especially when parents had not attended school or had lower levels of literacy or numeracy. Parents were concerned that they were not qualified to help their children catch-up. It is important to remember too that older siblings are often heads of households and/or caregivers.

Caregivers of children with disabilities in both countries were worried about their children dropping out of education or falling behind. Medicines, rehabilitation services and assistive devices were often not available to help children stay in school. Parents of children with intellectual disabilities, or children who missed school because of health or mobility problems, worried that their children were not keeping up with lessons when schools were open.

Governments were broadcasting school lessons on TV and radio, but survey respondents noted that these devices were not available in many homes. This left many children missing out on their education. Responses rarely considered learners with disabilities or additional needs and their parents and caregivers felt particularly isolated. Most households reported a lack of access to reading and writing materials and other resources they needed to support learning at home.

Parents of children with disabilities in both countries asked for more advice and help to support their children's learning and development. Most parents in both countries wanted more advice on how to help children learn at home, and how to motivate children to learn, particularly when children are young. Advice on preparing for examinations was requested for older children.

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<sup>7</sup> Acholi, Arabic, Armenian, Bahasa Indonesia, English, French, Kiswahili, Luganda, Malay, Portuguese, Runyankole, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian. Zambian local language survey translations were also commissioned but there were problems with quality and timing and EENET did not receive the signed-off texts in time to get them online.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Purpose of the review

The home learning project review provides lessons and recommendations for EENET, NAD, and their partner organisations in the following three areas:

1. **Implementation:** How did EENET and NAD manage the project, given this was an emergency response activity beyond their usual mandate?
2. **Resource development:** How relevant and useful were the home learning resources?
3. **Dissemination results:** Have the resources contributed positively towards the intended changes?

This review is a light-touch learning review. Snapshots are provided for each country, documenting experiences and learning for EENET, NAD, and the wider TOFI consortium. The findings are honest and focused on lessons learned to inform future programmes.

### 2.2. Core research questions

Core research questions were compiled to reflect the broad scope of the review (see Box 1). Partners and stakeholders were given opportunities to suggest what the research questions should cover. For example, in Uganda, the District Union Facilitator (DUF) training in May 2021 provided an opportunity for the District Unions to suggest key questions to include in the review.

The lead consultants used the core research questions to create sets of questions, prompts and facilitation guidance, to be used by themselves and research assistants during key informant interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholder groups. See Appendix 2 for a breakdown of the core questions and related sub-questions.



## **Box 1. Core research questions**

### **The process**

- How did EENET manage this unexpected work?
- What did EENET do well?
- How might EENET respond better in future similar crisis-driven projects?

### **The resources**

- Were the resources delivered to the families that needed them most?
- How relevant and useful were the resources?
- How have children and their families engaged with the resources?

### **The results**

- How do parents and caregivers feel about supporting learning at home?
- What kinds of activities to support learning have children been doing at home (since receiving the resources)?
- How has the dissemination of the home learning project affected inclusive education and/or other aspects of the TOFI programme?
- What are the most effective forms of home learning support for learners and their parents and caregivers?

## **2.3. Data collection**

Research assistants were identified in Zambia, Zanzibar, and Uganda. With support from partner organisations and EENET they reached out to various stakeholder groups to conduct interviews and focus groups and collect data. These research activities did not happen in Somalia since dissemination was delayed. The research assistants included experienced Principal Trainers from the TOFI IETT programme, plus a NAD staff member in Zambia and a District Union member in Uganda.

Qualitative research methods were used.

- The consultants conducted a desk study of the home learning project plans and reports. This included analysis of email and WhatsApp conversations, plus analysis of the initial survey reports.
- Seven key informant interviews were held with staff from EENET, NAD, and the partner organisations in country, many of whom had been involved in planning the project or developing the resources.

- Eight interviews were conducted with education officials from the project districts.
- A total of 63 focus group discussions (FGDs) were facilitated with people who had received the home learning resources. FGDs involved learners, parents and caregivers, community members, teachers, and head teachers. Given that this was intended as a 'light touch' review, this sample size exceeded expectations and attests to the commitment of the in-country partners and research assistants. Respondents were selected from across two or three different locations in each country.
- There were also interviews with head teachers, teachers, and volunteers involved in distributing the resources to families and de-brief meetings with the research assistants after they had finished collecting data.

Appendix 1 provides a list of interviews and FGDs conducted by both the research assistants and lead consultants.

## **2.4. Limitations**

Dissemination of the home learning resources was more extensive in Uganda, so four out of eight districts were initially selected for review. However, due to budget limitations the review was scaled back to just two districts.

The research assistants carried out most (80-90%) of the planned focus groups and key informant interviews successfully. However, they faced some data collection challenges in all three countries, including:

- time consuming travel on poor roads to diverse locations, including scattered villages and refugee settlements;
- travel hampered by heavy rain (Uganda);
- respondents' expectations of payment for their time in addition to receiving refreshments;
- parents' reluctance or inability to answer questions (Zanzibar);
- language barriers requiring research assistants to use interpreters (Uganda);
- limited timeframe for data collection;
- parents' and other respondents' desire to share wider issues and challenges beyond the scope of the review;
- poor and delayed communication about focus group locations leading to respondents not attending and requiring further follow-up visits;

- reduced support from district education officers (e.g., in Zanzibar they were difficult to contact and in Uganda they refused to welcome research assistants due to the lack of an introduction letter).

All research assistants reported that most respondents provided open and honest answers, evident in the consistency of responses across different groups. The data from Zambia was better quality and more detailed than from the other two countries. This could be due in part to the experience and calibre of the research assistants in Zambia (they were experienced Principal Trainers, confident with asking follow-up questions). The long-running IETT programme in Zambia (since 2015) may also have raised stakeholders' awareness of inclusive education and factors influencing children's learning, enabling them to provide more detailed, reflective answers during the review.

## **3. Findings**

This section details the findings from the data collection and analysis. The findings look at project management; resource development; resource dissemination; and results.

### **3.1. Management**

The 'management' section looks at how EENET coped with this unexpected work at the start of the pandemic, what went well, and how it might respond better in future crises. While the home learning project was conducted in partnership with NAD, we focus primarily on analysing EENET's capacity.

#### **3.1.1. EENET's capacity to respond and innovate in a crisis**

##### **Motivation**

There were two distinct motivations behind EENET initiating the home learning project with NAD. At the beginning of 2020 EENET had just started a contract with NAD as technical lead on the IETT and OPD inclusive education capacity building components of TOFI in Uganda and Somalia. However, the pandemic put this on hold. NAD Oslo initially wanted to postpone activities for an undefined period. However, the situation was clearly not going to resolve quickly and EENET already had a team of consultants on board who could not be left idle for months. The financial situation for freelance workers during lockdown presented a moral and budgetary dilemma for EENET's management.

The second, bigger motivating factor was observing how rapidly the school closures globally had led to social media and online platforms being flooded with materials to 'educate your child at home'. These were all online, often overly complicated and academic, and would never be accessible to EENET's primary audience. EENET wanted to support parents and learners and provide something inclusive and focused on family wellbeing. Other organisations seemed to be colluding with the academic mentality and not thinking about what learning needed to be in this new reality. EENET's response demonstrated its confidence and ability to go against the grain when needed and act swiftly in a crisis.

##### **Rapid needs analysis**

The whole EENET team – both volunteers and consultants – came on board very quickly. They discussed core ideas such as 'inclusive pedagogy', 'parental involvement', and 'lack of printed materials' that would underpin the home learning resources. With NAD's approval, EENET conducted a global online survey to better understand needs and test assumptions with the primary audience. A rapid needs

analysis was also conducted via phone surveys with families of learners with and without disabilities, assisted by EENET and NAD's existing contacts in Zambia and Zanzibar.

The passion and willingness of EENET's team members to do things (often voluntarily) meant that some aspects of the home learning project snowballed unexpectedly. There was a desire to gather information on this unique situation more widely. People within and beyond the EENET team volunteered to translate the online survey questions into 14 languages. The investigation expanded rapidly, generating a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data that needed to be analysed. Most of the detailed results and analysis arrived too late to influence the time-constrained resource design. Nevertheless, initial data confirmed the project was moving in a suitable direction. Extensive survey results ultimately fed into a semi-independent research project resulting in various articles, presentations and reports being completed during 2021 and 2022.<sup>8</sup> While this research has the potential for greater impact, at the time the expanding survey took energy away from the priority of project design and implementation in a crisis context.

“As a manager, with hindsight, I should have said stop, enough is enough, but the team passionately wanted to do it and didn't necessarily want to get paid for it... but it ended up being more work than it should have been.”

Ingrid Lewis, Managing Director, EENET.

### **Consultative process**

One EENET consultant was selected to lead the home learning project. The selection was based on her pedagogical expertise, her empathy with the home learning challenge as a parent tackling home schooling, and her availability given the delays to the OPD component of TOFI. She worked alongside another EENET consultant, a visual facilitator and artist with significant experience of conducting in-depth consultations with stakeholders using visual representations and illustrations.

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<sup>8</sup> The home learning survey has been mentioned in the following places:

- four articles in EENET's latest edition of the Enabling Education Review (EER) 10 [www.eenet.org.uk/enabling-education-review/enabling-education-review-10/](http://www.eenet.org.uk/enabling-education-review/enabling-education-review-10/);
- two blog posts [www.ukfiet.org/2021/home-learning-for-children-with-disabilities-in-a-pandemic-an-analysis-of-the-eeenet-home-learning-survey-conducted-in-2020/](http://www.ukfiet.org/2021/home-learning-for-children-with-disabilities-in-a-pandemic-an-analysis-of-the-eeenet-home-learning-survey-conducted-in-2020/) and [www.eenet.org.uk/home-learning-for-children-with-disabilities-in-a-pandemic-an-analysis-of-the-eeenet-home-learning-survey-2020/](http://www.eenet.org.uk/home-learning-for-children-with-disabilities-in-a-pandemic-an-analysis-of-the-eeenet-home-learning-survey-2020/);
- a conference paper for UKFIET 2021: 'Home learning for children with disabilities in a pandemic: an analysis of the EENET home learning survey conducted in 2020' and an academic article under review: 'Home learning for children with disabilities in low-income contexts in a pandemic: an analysis of the EENET home learning survey conducted in 2020', both by Su Corcoran, Helen Pinnock, and Rachel Twigg.

The development of the home learning resources was highly consultative at different levels. EENET and its team members have a reputation for critique, exploration, and questioning and this happened throughout the development of the home learning resources. Communication on project progress was maintained through weekly team meetings. There was collaboration with country partners to ensure that messages and illustrations were culturally appropriate and relevant. This included opportunities for learners to ‘test’ the resources and give feedback on the poster and activities in the booklet. Other organisations often publish illustrations without such consultation.

All partners interviewed during this review reported that EENET managed the project well and responded quickly. They appreciated the participatory process of developing the resources. Partners also appreciated that the resources were translated into multiple local languages to reach a wider audience who needed them.

### **Innovation and the cost to staff wellbeing**

On the flip side, having multiple people checking content and quality, conducting lots of meetings, making many adjustments, and striving for high quality within an emergency situation exceeded the available time. This ultimately took its toll on workers’ wellbeing. EENET team members worked long hours, navigating their own small emergencies while responding to the global emergency.

EENET’s ability to respond quickly and appropriately in a crisis highlighted how flexible the Network’s systems are. However, the effort to stay true to EENET’s core values in the process resulted in a stressed workforce, and workplans and workloads that exceeded the available budget.

“We set ourselves up to do things in a difficult way, because we set out to do new innovative things, to swim upstream. No one else is going to experiment with this ... we build it up to make it harder than it has to be...”

“If we had to put a price to the hours that everyone worked the budget would double.”  
Ingrid Lewis, Managing Director, EENET

EENET recognised that the home learning project was innovative. There were many ‘lightbulb moments’ throughout the discussions on what learning is about and how best to support parents. There was more of a shared reality than during EENET’s other projects since several consultants were parents who suddenly had to juggle earning an income and home-schooling.

### **Stimulating wider change**

The home learning project was a catalyst for EENET using illustrations differently. It opened up the possibilities and boosted the team’s confidence to adopt a new way of working with illustrators. EENET has since worked closely with a Ugandan illustrator

to produce visually engaging training materials for the TOFI OPD inclusive education capacity building training in Uganda and Somalia.

The project helped to promote EENET during a difficult time by driving traffic to its website and opening its audience's eyes to all the other things EENET can offer. The home learning poster has become one of EENET's most popular downloads. It has received a lot of attention on social media and been picked up by many different organisations, including in the UK. This includes a community and education resource centre in the north-east of England. This outcome supports one of EENET's guiding principles 'to reverse the flow of information'. EENET exists to promote south-to-south learning and south-to-north learning and the home learning resources have done that, providing an opportunity for northern countries to learn from the global south.

The urgency of setting up the home learning project influenced EENET's website design so that more sections were added to showcase this project and other NAD/TOFI work. This increased the visibility of EENET's partnership with NAD on the website and social media at a time when other work had been stalled by the pandemic.

Stakeholders in Zambia and Zanzibar have expressed interest in using the resources that have been adapted to context and translated into local languages. The Ministry of Education and OPDs in Zambia, UNICEF, and CBM have copies of the resources which they wish to duplicate to share with their own stakeholders. Copies of the posters have also been requested by and sent to several education organisations in Uganda (not connected with the TOFI programme) and Nigeria.

### **Box 2. Key lessons: EENET's capacity to respond and innovate in a crisis**

- ✓ EENET's management should improve prioritisation, especially when faced with similar crisis situations. In this instance, the research element could and should have been more tightly contained as a rapid snapshot exercise, so as not to impact the time and energy available for creating, testing, and disseminating materials. Snowballing the research component had financial implications for EENET (translation costs) and added to the workload of the project manager and EENET's administrative and management team. More confident management in future should enable EENET to focus on what is essential in a crisis rather than what would be desirable or interesting.

### **3.1.2. Opportunities and challenges for the home learning project**

#### **Initial challenges**

When schools first closed there was discussion within NAD around the extent to which responses to the crisis could be flexible and innovative. For various reasons EENET's team had to wait for permission to start the home learning project. This was stressful while so much other work was on hold. EENET's technical team for the TOFI programme was new, with some team members unknown to NAD, so proposing activities that deviated from the agreed plan was slightly risky. Government funding is often rigid and bureaucratic, but the pandemic offered an opportunity for donors to reassess their systems, ways of thinking, and tendency to 'stick to the script'. However, there was an initial period when the Atlas Alliance and Norad appeared to be waiting for COVID-19 to blow over. In addition, many of the disability organisations receiving Norad funding do not usually work in emergency contexts. Norad perhaps lacked experience of, or confidence in, funding them for rapid crisis response projects. Ultimately, however, NAD and EENET received the go-ahead for the home learning project in late April 2020. Within both TOFI and NFA funding there was sufficient flexibility and support to radically change project plans and innovate.

In April/May 2020, at a GEC/Norad event to discuss NGOs' education responses to COVID-19, NAD's Programme Adviser presented EENET and NAD's home learning project concept. Norad acknowledged the effort of Atlas Alliance member organisations to adjust project plans, although they did not comment on individual projects.

#### **Strategic positioning**

The TOFI programme overall is huge and organised around a complex and relatively inflexible results framework. As an emergency response, the small home learning project did not have a clear location within this results framework. Consequently, despite its intense activity, high-profile outputs, and apparently good results (see Section 3.4), it remains rather a fringe project that could be overlooked in final results analyses. Nevertheless, NAD, other consortium members, partners and EENET's wider network have acknowledged the value of the home learning resources.

#### **Strong partnerships**

A key enabling factor for the home learning project was the strength of partner relationships and a willingness to make the project work at country level. In Zambia and Zanzibar, NAD and EENET had been working intensively with partners and stakeholders for several years. In Uganda, the TOFI consortium relationships were still new. EENET had only recently engaged with NUDIPU, Save the Children, and Stromme Foundation. However, remote scoping studies for the IETT and OPD inclusive education capacity building projects were under way, so relationships had at least started to grow.



## Delays in Somalia

In Somalia, adaptation of the home learning resources started in October 2020. A series of delays meant that the resources were not ready for dissemination until December 2021.

NAD and EENET had not previously worked directly in Somalia and were building new partnerships with Save the Children and ADRA. There were several significant staff changes within the partner organisations and challenges with identifying OPD partners that could disseminate the resources. The identification and selection of OPDs in Somalia was more problematic than in Uganda because Somalia lacks cohesive organisations or an organised disability rights movement.

Further delays occurred because of poor quality Somali translation and a late request from the Ministry of Education to validate the resources. The translation of the home learning resources was not finalised until September 2021, following a validation meeting with the Ministry of Education and experts from universities in August 2021.

There were also delays with printing and delivering the resources to Save the Children and ADRA for dissemination. The Puntland-based printer decided to outsource the printing to Dubai to save money and maximise the number of copies available with the project budget. Unfortunately, the resources then spent time stuck in a shipping container in a Somali port, due partly to COVID-19 restrictions and the challenge of obtaining the correct permission for delivery. They finally reached Save the Children's office in December 2021.

### **Box 3. Key lessons: Opportunities and challenges for the home learning project**

- ✓ EENET, NAD, and their partners should use this project as an example when advocating for funders to improve how they fund inclusive education.
- ✓ Inclusive education is a process that requires flexibility. Wider adoption of a theory of change approach would enable donors and implementing organisations to work more flexibly and responsively, especially when a crisis hits. Stating desired changes and theories for how to achieve those changes allows activities to evolve more fluidly than when we use rigid logframes and results frameworks. A theory of change approach to strategic thinking in the TOFI programme would have enabled the home learning project to emerge as a valid component of work, contributing to desired inclusive education changes in a contextually responsive way – rather than it being seen as a bolt-on activity that does not directly match the results framework.

- ✓ Donors should allow and encourage stakeholders and partners to think strategically about how best to respond in a crisis. They should promote, and help build capacity for using, theory of change approaches to programme design, management, and monitoring – especially since crises like COVID-19 are likely to keep happening. And they should have the confidence to respond quickly and flexibly.
- ✓ Based on the challenges experienced with the Somalia component of the home learning project, EENET and NAD should ensure that future crisis response projects focus on working in locations where they have established partnerships with strong organisational structures and local presence. Attempting to support a crisis response when partnerships do not exist or are very new is far from ideal.

## 3.2. Development of the home learning resources

### 3.2.1. Initial design

Guided by the survey findings and consultation with partners and EENET's wider network, EENET developed some home learning resources that show parents and families what learning can look like at home and in the community. These resources were designed to help families support children's ongoing learning at home, even after schools reopen.

The home learning resources support four key areas:

1. **Empowering parents to support learning.** Many parents, especially those with little formal education, lack the confidence to help their children with school work. They often do not realise that children playing, doing basic household chores, or doing things in the community are important learning opportunities. The home learning resources help parents to recognise that learning happens everywhere, all the time, and that parents are as important as teachers for children's learning.
2. **Family wellbeing.** The resources show how there are many opportunities for low-pressure learning to take place at home, without the extra resources and support from teachers that are found in school. The home learning resources help families and children feel comfortable and confident to learn at home.
3. **Different areas of children's development and learning.** The resources take a holistic approach to learning, which means they help children to develop in many different ways. For example, they are designed to help children develop physically and emotionally.

4. **Complementing what children learn in schools.** The home learning resources are designed to support what children are learning in school in simple and interesting ways. They are not designed to replace the formal curriculum that children follow in school.

An initial plan to create a simple guide for parents and caregivers and a catalogue of existing home learning activities and resources was adjusted following consultations. The resources evolved into:

- **a poster** providing colourful visual images of ideas for how to support learning at home;
- **a booklet of activities** for children of all ages to support learning at home.

This change in focus ensured the resources were as accessible as possible to parents and caregivers with lower levels of literacy and would appeal to learners of different ages. It was also considered important not just to produce another daunting list of web pages and documents,<sup>9</sup> but a manageable selection of activities and ideas that met clear criteria.

The resources are intended to be used directly by learners with and without additional needs, their parents and caregivers and wider family members. Simple guidance to support parents and caregivers in their home education role is provided in the booklet's introduction and on the back of the poster. The guidance was kept short to ensure more people would read it and to reduce the time needed for multiple translation. It also included suggestions for adapting activities for children with specific impairments or learning difficulties, with an emphasis on learning being multi-sensory and fun.

The poster and booklet draw on pedagogical approaches such as project-based and child-led learning. Global evidence shows the importance of learner-centred methodologies in supporting learning. They enable learners to engage with resources and their environment in a more interactive way. A shift towards using these approaches is seen in the syllabi and schemes of work in many countries, including Zambia and Zanzibar, even if they have not yet been fully adopted in practice. The resources also support applied literacy and numeracy through simple activities that can be integrated into daily life, such as cooking or growing food.

The central message of the poster is **'learning happens everywhere, anytime, and for everyone.'** This, and five related messages and sets of illustrations, were developed in consultation with the partner organisations and a core group of EENET consultants.

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<sup>9</sup> UNESCO's list, for instance, is full of great resources but is not presented in a parent-friendly format. See: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-emergencies/coronavirus-school-closures/solutions>

The five messages listed below loosely reflect the commonly recognised five areas of child development (in bold):

- **Social:** 'Every time we listen to each other and life around us';
- **Physical:** 'Every time we play and enjoy being on our own and with someone';
- **Intellectual:** 'Every time we are curious and discover more about ourselves and each other';
- **Creative:** 'Every time we invent and create something with whatever is around';
- **Emotional:** 'Every time we feel safe and loved even when facing difficulties'.

The illustrations were revised multiple times. It was important that they were culturally appropriate and recognisable activities in the different contexts. EENET also needed to ensure that the images could be 'read' and interpreted easily. Visual literacy skills can often be taken for granted. EENET did not want to inadvertently exclude people and create an extra layer of complexity through producing illustrations that are difficult to understand. At the same time, it was important to allow a certain amount of fluidity in the interpretation of the illustrations, supporting the notion that there are no right or wrong answers.

The illustrations were intended to be inclusive in their representation of learners with and without additional needs and disabilities and girls and boys engaging in different types of activities. There are illustrations such as a child in a wheelchair flying a kite, a woman with a visual impairment dancing, and a girl with a hearing impairment communicating with her family.



Figure 1. Photo of the printed home learning poster in English

The following principles were used in the development of the booklet of activities:

- **The activities are context-appropriate:** The activities do not require internet access; use minimal locally available resources; reflect other similar children's activities from that culture/context; do not put parents under pressure to carry out complex preparation or facilitation; and maximise opportunities for peer learning among siblings.
- **Offline access is prioritised:** The activities are available offline in printed booklet format. Booklets are printed and sent to disseminators, or funds made available for local printing.
- **Children can use the activities independently:** Each activity is written and presented so that learners can follow the instructions and pictures themselves and do the activities without extra support. The level of language in English was checked to ensure it was suitable for primary and lower secondary aged learners.<sup>10</sup>
- **All activities are listed and annotated:** The booklet activities are also available in an online catalogue, and users can search for specific activities according to criteria: indoor/outdoor; level of parental/sibling involvement required; pen or pencil or paper required; local resources needed; age suitability.

### 3.2.2. Adaptation

Slightly different versions of the poster and booklet were produced for each of the four countries. Each country went through a consultation process with selected individuals from the partner organisations, to ensure that both resources met the following criteria. In a few cases these individuals were able to engage learners in 'testing' the activities to check they were interesting and the instructions were simple to follow:

- text and illustrations should be culturally appropriate and contextually relevant;
- text and illustrations should be easy to understand and interpret;
- activities and situations depicted in the illustrations should be recognisable in that context;
- activities and illustrations should appeal and be attractive to learners and their families;
- text and illustrations should be accessible for learners with additional needs.

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<sup>10</sup> An online readability checker was used to estimate the language level of the resources: [www.readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php](http://www.readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php)

This consultation resulted in variations in the posters and booklets produced for different countries. Some illustrations and/or activities were adapted, and some were removed altogether. For example, the illustrations on the posters in Zanzibar and Somalia included mostly people wearing Muslim dress to reflect the majority Muslim populations.



Figure 2. An illustration adapted for Somali and Zanzibar (left) and in Zambia and Uganda (right).

The consultation process generated questions about ‘typical’ activities for girls and boys. For example, in Uganda, partners initially requested extra images of girls playing with dolls and cooking, to reflect the reality in their communities. However, these were not added as the resources intended to gently challenge some of the perceptions and stereotypes around gender and disability. Girls are shown building with mud, and boys and men are depicted doing the washing up together. In Somalia, partners were clear that it would be culturally inappropriate and potentially have a negative impact to include the image of a girl riding a bicycle, so the decision was made to remove it.

### 3.2.3. Local language translation

The resources were translated into various local languages to make the resources as accessible as possible for learners and their families. However, the translation and formatting process took much longer than anticipated, contributing in part to delays with disseminating the resources.

Table 1 shows the translations made. In all countries, English versions were provided where requested.



Table 1: Languages the resources were translated into for each country

Country	Language(s)
Zambia	Nyanja, Tonga, English
Zanzibar	Kiswahili, English
Uganda	Acholi, Aringa, Luganda, Madi, Runyakole, Ugandan Kiswahili, English
Somalia	Somali, English

Many NGOs translate resources into ‘international’ languages such as Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, but few invest in local languages. Since the home learning resources were intended for use by learners and their families, translation into local languages was essential.

There were challenges with local language translation. Experienced professional translators in local languages are hard to find, and with limited choice quality is sometimes compromised. In both Zambia and Somalia, the translators initially selected by partners did not produce sufficient quality translations. The work had to start again with new translators. It was important in each country that the translators understood that children would use the resources, so they needed to use simple language and choose words that a primary school child could understand.

In Zambia, ‘high Nyanja’ – a more academic form of the language, not easily understood at community level – was initially used. This translation had to be re-done. Also in Zambia, a few parents requested that the home learning resources be made available in a third local language, Silozi. This had not been identified during the rapid needs assessment as a language spoken in the project areas. The project was unable to do this additional translation due to time and budget constraints.

Although Uganda has a recently standardised orthography of the six selected local languages, this was not always recognised by readers. For example, the standardised written form of Acholi language combines three spoken local languages from one of the project districts. This led to some readers believing it was not accurate, although they could still follow the meaning. The translations had to be checked multiple times for consistency and accuracy. Sometimes the resources had been translated by several different people, leading to inconsistencies. Nevertheless, during dissemination parents and caregivers in all three reviewed countries were happy that the resources had been translated into local languages, rather than only being available in English.

## **Box 4. Key lessons: Development of the resources**

### **Adapting resources**

- ✓ Local level consultation is essential to ensure the cultural relevance and appropriateness of resources, particularly illustrations, as this can influence the successful uptake of the resources.

### **Translation**

- ✓ Donors must be more willing to fund multiple local language translations, even if each language version only reaches a relatively small number of users.
- ✓ Project timelines and expectations should factor in inevitable translation quality assurance challenges.
- ✓ It is essential to prioritise printing copies in local languages that parents, caregivers, and children are more likely to understand.

## **3.3 Dissemination**

### **3.3.1. Recipients**

#### **Scale and quality**

Approximately 14,270 home learning posters were distributed across the three countries (see Table 2 for a breakdown). Around 60% of these were in local languages. The posters for Zambia and Zanzibar were printed in the UK and sent via DHL, as this was more cost-effective. The posters for Uganda were printed in country, where quality poster printing was available at a more affordable price.

All home learning booklets were printed in country. According to partner data, 13,150 home learning booklets were distributed across the three countries (see Table 2). The booklets were printed in colour in Uganda but in black and white in Zambia and Zanzibar due to budget limitations. Although the decision to print in black and white maximised the number of recipients who could receive a copy, it did impact the quality and made the booklet less appealing to children.

See Appendix 3 for a more detailed breakdown of numbers of home learning resources by country and district/school.



Table 2: Numbers of home learning resources distributed by country

Country	Number of posters distributed	Number of booklets distributed
Zambia	3,890	3,900
Zanzibar	1,780	650
Uganda	8,600	8,600
Somalia*	2,000	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,270</b>	<b>15,150</b>

\*Approximate planned figures

A further 2,000 posters and 2,000 booklets have been printed in colour in Somali language for dissemination in Somalia. The total figures for Somalia are approximate. To date, 930 posters and 930 booklets have been distributed in Puntland. No resources were printed in English for dissemination in Somalia based on experience from other countries and low English literacy levels in Somalia.

A small-scale project with a limited budget inevitably cannot reach everyone, meaning some expectations cannot be met. The scale of ambition in Uganda was much higher than in Zambia and Zanzibar. This was due in part to the higher budget in Uganda. It may also be because in Zambia and Zanzibar the IETT project's pilot schools had more well-established school inclusion teams (SITs) and inclusive education co-ordinators (IECOs) who could more tightly prioritise recipient learners and families.

EENET, NAD, and partners could perhaps have focused on reaching fewer communities and distributing to every house in each community, rather than reaching more communities but only distributing to selected households. There is not necessarily a right or wrong answer. Decisions on balancing the scale of dissemination with the output quality are made based on the individual country context and budget.

### Selecting recipients

EENET, NAD, and partners made the strategic decision to link the selection of recipients with the inclusive education pilot schools. This would maximise the impact of the resources and use existing mechanisms – such as SITs and IECOs – to support the home learning project. Where pilot schools and SITs were less well established, partners drew on other existing structures at community level to support the selection process. These included the District Unions and Local Councils in Uganda and the Community Education Committees (CECs) in Somalia. EENET provided guidance to support the process of identifying these structures and marginalised children and their families.

Dissemination mostly focused on families of children with disabilities, but included some other learners in Zambia and Zanzibar. In Uganda and Somalia partners tried to reach out to families of other marginalised learners including internally displaced and refugee children and girls who have dropped out of school due to early marriage or pregnancy. In Somalia partners collected data on how many learners from which marginalised groups received the resources.

The demand for home learning materials was high. In Zambia, Zanzibar, and Uganda the volume of materials was insufficient. Families outside the selected school catchment areas were excluded and even a large proportion of families from the TOFI pilot schools did not directly receive the materials. Some head teachers and teachers in pilot schools expected every enrolled child to receive the materials since most families are marginalised to some extent. It was difficult for the volunteers to skip some families and go to others.

The dissemination process generated a lot of interest in the materials from families, communities and parents who had not been selected but who wanted materials for children in their households. In all countries, disseminators encouraged recipients to share the materials to ensure more children benefitted. There were reports of learners using the materials to interact with friends, extended families, and peers beyond the TOFI pilot schools and in surrounding communities.

In Somalia, by considering how many children are in each household, data has been provided on how many children in total have been reached. By disseminating 930 posters and 930 booklets to 930 families in Puntland, a total of 5,041 learners were reached. This level of data is not available for other countries.

### **Box 5. Key lessons: Recipients of the resources**

#### **Scale and quality**

- ✓ It is vital to consider carefully how many families and learners can be reached with the materials. Using cheaper, lower quality printing is an option, if recipient numbers exceed the available budget, but this can have negative results.
- ✓ A careful assessment of all printing options is needed to determine which compromises in quality will or will not be acceptable. Some compromises could reduce the benefits of the materials. For example, thinner or cheaper paper may tear quickly limiting the lifespan of materials. Laminating will ensure a longer life but may be unaffordable. The cheapest photocopying option may look blurred, reducing the appeal or accessibility of materials. Printing in black and white can make the materials look boring for children. If time is available, test samples of materials in different quality formats, before selecting the option that delivers the best balance of cost and quality.

### Selecting recipients

- ✓ Recipient selection criteria must be discussed with relevant OPDs and NGOs, schools, and local authorities. Identify local structures to help support the selection process. Together, determine whether it is better to choose specific recipients (such as families of children with disabilities) or to reach every household in the community. Unless you have unlimited funding, this decision will determine the geographical scale of distribution too (i.e., your choice may be between reaching specific households in five communities or reaching all households in one community). Each project will decide its own priorities – there is no single right or wrong approach.

## 3.3.2. Dissemination approaches

### Dissemination process

Given the constantly evolving nature of the COVID-19 crisis, EENET wanted to develop flexible dissemination options. Existing NAD and EENET network connections were used to identify viable dissemination channels. This resulted in different approaches to the dissemination being developed in each country.

In Zambia Principal Trainers directly disseminated materials by involving the schools in each selected zone. In Zanzibar the materials were given to head teachers to disseminate. In Uganda, dissemination was conducted through NUDIPU and the District Unions. In all countries dissemination was aligned to NAD's inclusive education pilot schools, but the geographical spread of the schools varies considerably in each country.

In Zambia and Zanzibar parents and caregivers were invited to a central location, usually a school. The lead disseminators provided orientation on, and handed out, the resources. In Uganda resources were delivered door to door. While more time-consuming, this enabled better social distancing to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. It also meant that families did not have to travel far, thus avoiding transport challenges for families of children with disabilities and the extra costs experienced in Zambia and Zanzibar.

In all countries, the disseminators shared public health information on COVID-19 and adhered to government and organisational guidelines. They distributed masks, provided handwashing facilities, and limited the numbers of people gathering to reduce risks of COVID-19 infection.

In Somalia, resources are being disseminated in two locations, Puntland and South-Central Somalia. Dissemination is being facilitated by the lead partners (Save the Children and ADRA) and their respective partner OPDs (PDON and DAF). In both

locations partners are working with selected TOFI pilot schools and local established CECs to select recipients and disseminate the home learning materials. The facilitators of the OPD inclusive education training will work with members of the CECs. In some communities they will disseminate resources from a central location (the pilot school) and in others they will disseminate door-to-door.

Each dissemination approach has advantages and disadvantages. Bringing a larger group together can be more time-efficient, but it presents travel and public health challenges. Door-to-door dissemination offers scope for more individual interaction, but can be tiring and time-consuming. Volunteers in Uganda and Somalia found that there were often long distances between the homes and roads were in poor condition due to heavy rainfall. Often they could only spend a short time with each family, sometimes as little as five minutes. Parents felt this was not enough, asking ‘are you going to come back to explain further?’



Figure 3. A Principal Trainer conducting the orientation on the home learning resources at Shungu Primary and Secondary Inclusive School in Livingstone, Zambia.





Figure 4. The home learning poster being distributed to parents, caregivers and learners in Chwale Primary School, Pemba, Zanzibar.



Figure 5. Families in Sheema district, Uganda receiving the home learning resources.





Figure 6. A volunteer explaining the home learning booklet to a girl and her family in Kamwenge district, Uganda.



Figure 7. Volunteers from the Community Education Committee explaining the resources in Puntland, Somalia

## Volunteer distributors

In Uganda, given the large numbers of resources being disseminated, additional community volunteers were identified to support dissemination. They included young people who had just finished school supported by the village council chairperson, pilot school teachers and/or District Union members of the with disabilities. In Somalia dissemination will also rely on CEC member volunteers to reach all families.

Anecdotal reports from volunteer disseminators and partners show that despite the dissemination process being tiring for some it was also a beneficial learning experience. Partners in Uganda reported that volunteers were doing an excellent job. Many were young and the task gave them a focused opportunity to support their local community during a crisis. Core staff and volunteers also picked up action research skills and experience as part of an emergency response. One lead disseminator in Zambia shared:

“Being part of this project has been really good learning for me, it has made a mark ‘learning can be done at home’ beyond just helping the child with homework, recognising learning in many different ways. When visiting parents and caregivers in their homes I would say ‘You parents, you like benefitting from your children once they go to school, so it is you who should be in the forefront of their education, be there, teach your children at home and let teachers do their part at school’.”

Aubrey Moono, lead research assistant and  
Principal Trainer in inclusive education, Zambia.

Review respondents reported, however, that the orientation provided was often not long enough for volunteers to fully understand the home learning resources. In turn they could not adequately explain the resources to parents and caregivers. Some volunteers in Uganda reported delays in receiving their allowances and also a lack of bags to carry the resources in the rain. In Uganda one female volunteer reported an incident of sexual harassment during the dissemination, which was reported to and followed up by NUDIPU.

Teachers’ involvement in dissemination in Zambia and Uganda gave an informal endorsement to the resources which in turn may have improved families’ initial engagement with them.

In all countries, parents, caregivers, and older siblings received the home learning resources on behalf of their children and/or siblings. In Zambia and Uganda, learners reported that they would have liked to be more involved in dissemination. In Uganda some learners took it upon themselves to promote the resources to their peers. This child-led campaigning made other children want the resources, creating high demand that could not be met by the project’s scope and budget.

### **Briefing disseminators**

EENET provided comprehensive orientation, including written guidance, to partner organisations and lead disseminators in each country. Orientation from EENET was conducted primarily via Zoom. In Uganda and Somalia partners also incorporated home learning orientation into their inclusive education capacity building workshops for the OPDs.<sup>11</sup> The OPDs and partner organisations then provided orientation for all volunteers who were supporting the dissemination at community level. See **Appendix 4** for the written guidance provided.

### **Linking with local education offices**

Effort was made in all countries to inform and involve local education authorities. In Somalia Ministry of Education officials were present and oversaw the dissemination process. In Zambia and Zanzibar, dissemination data shows that key education institutions and local education authorities (e.g., District Education Bureaus and Teacher Centres) received copies of the resources and were introduced to the home learning project from the outset.

While District Unions in Uganda were encouraged to do the same during dissemination planning, there is no reported evidence that local education offices were systematically informed or involved in the project districts. During interviews for this review the District Education Inspectors in Gulu and Kamwenge districts said they had not been properly informed and engaged in the dissemination of the home learning materials. This affected their understanding of the resources and motivation and capacity to endorse them.

The TOFI programme was new in Uganda, so it is possible that links between the local education authorities and the District Unions were not as strong as in Zanzibar and Zambia. In these countries, Principal Trainers (many of whom are head teachers in the pilot schools) were leading and/or involved in the dissemination. They may have better understood local education authority protocol.

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<sup>11</sup> The OPDs in Uganda and Somalia are currently being supported by NAD and EENET to develop inclusive education advocacy capacity, as part of the TOFI programme.



## **Box 6. Key lessons: Dissemination approaches**

### **Methodology**

- ✓ Allow sufficient time for dissemination activities. Disseminators need to spend enough time with parents, caregivers, and learners to explain the resources and 'try-out' some of the activities. If the number of recipients is high this level of engagement may only be possible in group settings.
- ✓ A public or community meeting may be useful to explain the home learning materials before disseminating them. This will raise awareness among families and community members about the project and increase their readiness to receive materials. This could be an informal event but would help to embed key messages about learning at home. Of course such events may not be possible during a crisis like the pandemic.

### **Dissemination briefing and support**

- ✓ Engage community volunteers, such as school leavers, who understand and know the context well. This can help the project identify recipient households quickly and bring benefit for the young volunteers.
- ✓ Distributors should receive comprehensive orientation on key messages, principles, and activities. Partners involved in the current project recommended this orientation should take anything between one day and one week.
- ✓ Volunteer disseminators must be sufficiently supported and protected throughout the process. This includes provision of expenses and material resources, as well as briefing on protection and safeguarding issues and how to report problems and concerns.

### **Linking with local education offices**

- ✓ Local education authorities must be fully on board, have participated in orientation, and be able to endorse and support the use of the home learning resources.

### **3.3.3. Observations and initial responses from recipients**

Partners and volunteer distributors made important observations during dissemination. More detailed information emerged from the Uganda dissemination as each District Union was required to submit an individual report. In Zambia and Zanzibar only brief overall distribution reports were shared.<sup>12</sup> Save the Children

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<sup>12</sup> These individual country dissemination reports are available on request.

Somalia has verbally shared initial observations and responses from the dissemination in Puntland, but not yet submitted a report.

### **Data and information on disability**

In Uganda, the dissemination process generated information and data to support the District Unions and other aspects of the TOFI programme. During dissemination of the home learning resources, the District Unions discovered many children with disabilities who were out of school and 'hidden' by their families. They collected data on these children, contact details of parents and caregivers, and identified children who needed assistive devices to support school attendance.<sup>13</sup> The activity also helped schools involved in dissemination to locate children who had enrolled but were not attending.

Disseminators reported how stigma and shame were issues for many families of children with disabilities. Parents were hiding their children and made comments such as, 'who told you I have a disabled child?'. In Uganda some children with disabilities were observed locked in houses. In some cases, disseminators noted that children with mild impairments had experienced deterioration in their conditions due to neglect. Many children with disabilities were observed living with their grandparents, which is common practice. It can lead to families being dependent on very young carers (with and without disabilities) because the grandparents need support themselves. Grandparents were also more likely to be illiterate and unable to read the home learning resources.

In Uganda many parents and caregivers reported that they did not know children with disabilities could go to school. This may be due to a lack of awareness or entrenched discrimination and beliefs that children with disabilities are not capable of learning.

In all countries the home learning project worked through and alongside disability NGO partners to make links with other disability inclusion efforts. Informing parents that their children with disabilities could go to school was a first step in enabling and supporting the family to enrol their child. This could then be followed up by the TOFI inclusive education programme.

### **Parents' and caregivers' initial responses**

Parents, caregivers, and family members were mostly happy to receive the home learning resources. There was a range of largely positive initial responses and comments across all three countries. In general, they thought that the resources looked interesting and seemed easy to understand. The poster in particular was

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<sup>13</sup> Assistive devices were subsequently distributed to these learners via NUDIPU in late 2021 as part of the TOFI programme.

noted as having a child-friendly design and parents said it would bring creativity to their children.

Parents and caregivers expressed appreciation to the partner organisations for having recognised them and for helping to reduce the stigma affecting their families. In Uganda they particularly commented on the District Union members with disabilities being part of the dissemination team. This provided positive role models for families, demonstrating to parents and caregivers what their children could achieve given the right support. The perception, however, that children with severe disabilities, visual impairments and intellectual disabilities cannot benefit from these resources was widespread.

Some parents noted that only a few parents had been called for orientation and asked how the project would reach other parents and caregivers. Parents also asked some of the questions that had been anticipated and included in the dissemination guidance documents. Questions included, 'how will these resources help my child learn?' and 'how do I assess my child's progress in using these resources?'

In Somalia some parents initially refused to receive the resources as they were cautious and did not understand how the poster and booklet could benefit their children. Other parents felt that the resources would be a distraction for their children and take time away from their Qur'anic studies. They were concerned this would affect their attendance at school. Some parents of children who were out of school also did not want the resources because they saw them as a poor substitute for school enrolment.

Disseminators took time to explain the purpose of the resources and how they would complement rather than replace school-based learning. This helped parents be more receptive to the resources. In a few cases in Somalia parents still did not want the resources and the distributors did not press further.

The range of parental responses, questions and concerns shared during the dissemination process reiterates the need for sufficient time for disseminators to explain the resources to parents at the beginning of the project. In Zambia parents were introduced to the resources through a series of meetings, rather than just a brief one-off orientation meeting. Time is needed to explore parents' understanding of what learning is, where it happens, and how they can support that learning. Time is also needed to identify parents of children with specific disabilities, such as intellectual or visual impairments, who may require individual follow-up support to enable them to engage more effectively with the resources.

## **Managing expectations**

The extreme poverty of some families often resulted in high expectations and community demands for things like food, maize flour, milk, and sanitary pads. Recipients also asked for money to pay for medical care, clothing, and scholastic materials. When disseminators encountered high expectations and community demands they sometimes felt that engaging in discussions about the home learning resources was an inadequate response.

In Somalia some parents initially refused to receive the resources because they were not also offered 'cash cards,' something they have come to expect from Save the Children during community engagement activities.

Parents of children with disabilities also asked for more support and advice on looking after their children in different areas such as nutrition, general health, and stimulation. Some parents indicated a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness making comments such as "What else can I do? When God wishes he can take him".

All projects are likely to experience stakeholder expectations that exceed the support available. Clear explanation of the project is vital to reduce the likelihood of unmet expectations among families. Involving some parents in the process of planning, developing, and disseminating resources may help to pre-empt potential expectations. It may be feasible for some additional expectations to be met – such as distributing pens, pencils and exercise books with the home learning resources. Other expectations, such as access to food or other basic needs, cannot be met directly through this project.

## **Home learning resources for ECD**

In Uganda many families reported that their young children were missing out on early education because early childhood development (ECD) centres were closed. They requested resources specifically to support younger learners.

EENET has responded to requests for ECD home learning resources in Uganda by producing a home learning booklet for parents of younger learners (aged 0-7 years). The booklet focuses on learning through play and the need for stimulation and parental interaction as a key part of supporting learning and development at this level. A new set of illustrations has been produced by a Ugandan artist with additional photos to help parents understand and engage with the resource. As of January 2022, schools and ECD centres in Uganda have re-opened. Families may now feel less need for extra resources to support young children at home. This should be taken into consideration when the resources are disseminated to ensure that parents understand the importance of interacting and playing with their children at home, regardless of whether they are also attending an ECD centre.

## **Box 7. Key lessons: Initial observations and responses**

### **Disability inclusion support**

- ✓ Projects such as the home learning project may specifically seek to reach families of children with disabilities. If implementers are not disability NGOs, they should ensure close links to disability inclusion partners to ensure appropriate follow up when disability inclusion issues arise.

### **Parents' initial responses**

- ✓ More than one meeting should ideally be held with parents as part of the initial dissemination and orientation process. This will allow them time to explore their understanding of learning and how best to support their children's engagement with the resources. Parents who need further follow-up support can also be identified during these meetings.

### **Managing expectations**

- ✓ Disseminators need to provide clear explanations of the project to reduce the likelihood of families having unmet expectations. They should consider carefully which potential expectations can be met and which cannot by the project.
- ✓ Disseminators must be briefed on how to respond and what advice to give families. Provide a signposting document if possible, including information on where to refer families for support and/or which NGOs or government departments to go to report concerns about families.

### **ECD home learning resource**

- ✓ EENET, NAD, and partners need to consider how ECD educators can support parents to introduce and use the ECD home learning resource. For example, there could be a series of 'parent workshops' in which different activities are practised. Parents could be encouraged to engage in increased stimulation and interaction with their children through play at home.
- ✓ Future disseminators of the ECD home learning resource should have access to this home learning review and be supported to apply relevant key lessons.

## **3.4. Results of the resources for learners and their families**

The following section draws on the findings from data collected from focus groups and interviews in Zambia, Zanzibar, and Uganda.

### **3.4.1. Relevance and usefulness of the resources**

#### **Relevance of the resources**

Overall, both the poster and booklet were found to be useful and relevant to the three countries' social, economic, geo-political and cultural settings. Parents, caregivers, and learners in focus groups said they found the materials very useful and liked both the poster and booklet for different reasons. The poster, in its colour format, was reported as being attractive to use, exciting to look at, and easy to understand. Younger learners and some children with disabilities preferred working with the poster, guided by their siblings, caregivers, friends, and parents.

Several learner and parent focus group respondents considered the booklet to have activities and stories that promote learning, are easy to read, and include activities that can be done with minimal help from others. When describing what they liked about the resources parents particularly cited creativity and games, pictures and stories. They also liked activities that promote behaviour such as respect and appreciation of others including older persons, readiness to help others, being supportive at home, and working and playing together.

Some parents felt that the poster shows different activities you can do at home, while the booklet provided guidance on how to put the activities (some of which are shown on the poster) into practice. The drawings and pictures in both the poster and booklet were considered relevant and familiar to most learners. This reportedly inspired learners to make their own drawings and toys using locally available materials, including cows, ploughs, kites, dolls, and boats. A few respondents commented that the inclusive representation in the poster illustrations were positive encouragement for children with disabilities.

Some respondents (parents and teachers) in Zambia and Zanzibar, where the booklet was printed in black and white, said that the booklets were less appealing to children. However, most children in both countries were still able to use, learn from, and participate in activities from the booklet.

#### **Suggested changes to the resources**

In all countries, most children with disabilities were reported as being able to use the home learning resources as effectively as their peers without disabilities. In some cases they required extra support to do this. The effectiveness of the resources was attributed to them being child-friendly and non-academic. The focus groups shared a

range of examples of children with different disabilities engaging with the materials (see the next section for specific examples and case studies).

Some respondents, however, including parents and caregivers, felt that the overall level of language used in the resources was too difficult. They felt this prevented some learners from following the instructions and doing the activities. There were also general comments that some pictures, drawings, games, and other activities were not sufficiently clear and users needed more guidance.

This seemed to be particularly the case in Zanzibar and the Kamwenge district of Uganda where lower literacy levels among parents and caregivers was given as one reason for learners not being able to engage easily with the materials. All four research assistants in Zanzibar reported that some parents did not find the booklet useful and their children preferred the poster because they could look at the pictures which were easier to understand. It was clear that difference in preference between the poster and booklet largely depended on the children's ability to read and understand. In general, children who had difficulties reading, reportedly preferred using the poster but joined in group-led activities using the booklet.

Some parents felt that the booklet would be easier to understand if it had more coloured pictures and illustrations, shorter sentences and more games, and if it were available in larger size print for partially sighted children. Others felt that the materials should have been adapted for use by children with specific disabilities or even organised according to age or grade.

As one research assistant from Uganda said:

“The home learning resources are important for all communities, as we all need basic skills in maths, social knowledge, and so on. However, the language in the booklet should be more simplified, in my view. In Rwamwanja the language and level were a particular challenge. The booklet should also be organised according to year groups in Primary school. However, in general, they liked the pictures and colours on the poster and the activities in the booklet.”

Mr Katabazi, research assistant, Kamwenge district, Uganda.

Families and learners mentioned the need for more local pictures and illustrations on the poster and in the booklet. They also suggested the inclusion of COVID-19 messages and information on preparedness. Some parents and caregivers requested specific home learning materials for children with intellectual and visual impairments. In Zanzibar, respondents said that the absence of specialised support for learners with intellectual disabilities or those who are blind affected their meaningful participation in learning at home using the resources.

In line with initial responses at the dissemination stage, across all countries, families were happy that the materials had been translated into local languages. The materials in the local languages were more in demand than those in English as they were more easily understood.

Multiple specific changes were suggested by respondents during the focus group discussions. Some of these are achievable and could be considered. Others may have significant budget implications or even go against the conceptual basis for the home learning project. For example, the booklet was edited to simplify language between the initial round of dissemination in Zambia and Zanzibar before being adapted and translated for Uganda. This is something that EENET regularly does and should continue to strive to perfect, although it can lead to slower document development.

Although some users requested booklets for different ages or grades, EENET and NAD deliberately chose not to do this because so many activities are not age-bound and can be adapted for diverse age groups. The rapid delivery of materials meant limited time to discuss such conceptual matters with families, leaving some expecting a more traditional school-grade course book, and thus disappointed. Producing booklets by grade would also have huge budget implications – EENET and NAD would have to make 10 grade-level booklets instead of one booklet, far exceeding the remit of this small project.

Parents of children with intellectual and visual impairments needed more time to go through the booklet’s guidance on how to adapt the activities for children with different disabilities. Budget allowing, one-to-one follow-up support visits with these parents could be arranged.

In Uganda, EENET discussed with NUDIPU about producing a braille version of the resources. Despite a few individuals suggesting that braille copies be made, in reality very few learners and their families could read braille. In Zambia and Zanzibar producing the home learning resources in alternative formats was not considered, and was not a budgetary option.

### **Follow-up support**

The review process revealed that some respondents felt the need for more structured delivery of the resources, including follow-up support. The absence of follow-up may have hindered some learners’ engagement with the home learning resources, particularly in Uganda.

“There was no follow-up of materials to discuss and explain to the learners and their families how to use the resources. Families said that there should be teachers that could have followed-up or volunteers who could meet up with children at centres to follow-up on the materials.”

Martin Obote, Principal Trainer and research assistant, Uganda.



In Zambia, evidence suggests that the IECo from at least one pilot school organised some follow-up support independently, without assistance from the partner or project. During dissemination in Somalia, some parents said it would be good to have a designated space where learners can meet to use the home learning resources.

The need for follow-up support was discussed with partner organisations early in the dissemination planning stage. However, due to budget limitations and partner availability, follow-up activities were not consistently planned and carried out. There is clearly scope for schools and teachers to take a greater role in supporting and following up home learning. In Zambia this happened organically where there were already strong school-community links around inclusive education.

### **The home learning resources filled a gap**

In all three countries, governments tried to provide some learning materials for learners when the schools closed. However, most children, particularly in rural areas (including the home learning project districts) were not able to access these.

In Zanzibar, some useful materials were received from diverse partners. Unfortunately, these were reportedly not sufficiently child friendly to enable learners to engage with them on their own.

Ratiko sub-county in Gulu district, Uganda, reportedly received donations of booklets for primary 6 pupils from Save the Children. When the home learning resources were being distributed in Uganda, some families initially thought the government was finally delivering its promised materials. In some Ugandan districts, the local government expected parents to photocopy government learning materials but most could not afford this. It was also reported that the EENET/NAD home learning resources seemed simpler than the Ugandan government materials, more user-friendly, and less academic.

In Zambia, no other materials were reportedly received apart from the EENET/NAD home learning poster and booklet.

## **Box 8. Key lessons: relevance and usefulness of the resources**

### **Relevance**

- ✓ Locally produced photos of learners doing activities with locally available resources should feature more prominently in all country/language adaptations of the home learning materials. This requires an additional budget for local photography or artwork.
- ✓ The preparation stages should assess numbers of recipients who may need materials in alternative formats (braille, large print). This ensures a budget can be sought and no materials are made unnecessarily.

### **Follow-up support**

- ✓ Personnel who support distribution should have the mandate, employer's permission, and budget to conduct follow-up visits with families. They can check on progress with using the materials and start to gather feedback. They may be able to help solve initial problems or boost families' confidence with using the materials.
- ✓ Follow-up activities with parents and teachers can clearly demonstrate how activities can be adapted for children of different ages, grades, abilities, and disabilities.

## **3.4.2. Benefits for learners and families**

### **Two complementary resources**

Overall, the two resources were seen as complementary. Learners reported that the poster led them to participate in and understand the booklet better. The posters were seen as a stepping stone to engagement with the booklet, especially for learners with disabilities and younger children. Confidence was built through engaging with the poster before doing activities in the booklet. This was especially the case where learners initially struggled to follow the activity instructions (as reported in Zanzibar).

Children noted that after looking at the poster and discussing possible activities, they enjoyed drawing and searching their home environment for 'waste materials' to make toys. They also enjoyed doing activities, playing group games, and telling stories.

The range of activities in the booklet was appreciated. Parents reported that the activities generated excitement and curiosity among children and helped increase peer and sibling interaction and creativity. For example, in Zambia, several 12th grade

learners used the booklet to help their younger siblings and younger learners in their communities to share and learn more.

### **Inclusive learning**

Parents commented on children's improved ability to play together and share toys without difficulty, and increased cooperation between siblings and within families. In particular, the home learning resources created opportunities for children with and without disabilities to play and learn together. Several parents were very pleased to see that their children with disabilities were helped to interact, felt included, and participated according to their abilities with children without disabilities. This led to acceptance and respect.

The case of Joshua, a child with autism from Uganda, is a good example of how an activity of his choice from the booklet helped give him focus and enabled him to engage with his peers.

#### **Case study 1: Joshua,<sup>14</sup> Matiko prison primary school, Gulu district, Uganda**

Joshua is ten years old. He has autism and is hyperactive. He used to 'disappear' from home to hunt birds and play with friends. His family received a copy of the EENET/NAD home learning poster and booklet. Joshua looked at the pictures keenly and tried out some activities.

He was inspired by the 'counting game' on the poster and in the booklet, so he dug 32 holes under a mango tree to create a board game known locally as 'Ozero' in Acholi. The game is played by two people and has 64 stones.

At first, he played with his mother and brother, and they helped him to count, add, subtract, and divide. Now many children come from the neighbourhood to play and he welcomes everybody to the game.

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<sup>14</sup> The names of all children in the case studies have been changed to protect identities.



Figure 8. A boy in Uganda collecting stones for a counting activity

Children with and without disabilities have engaged with each other in home learning activities, helping to promote some of the core values of inclusive education.

In Zambia, Petra had low esteem and learning difficulties. With the help of her mother, she regained her confidence, developed reading and social skills, and began to interact positively with her peers. Her mother remarked that children who previously bullied her now play with her.

### **Case study 2: Petra, Shungu Primary school, Zambia**

Petra is 13 years old and lives with her mother in Zambia. Petra was born with a physical impairment. Before the pandemic she was attending an inclusive primary school. It was far from her home because there was no nearby school that would welcome her.

Petra used to avoid helping around the home. She also lacked motivation and confidence to read and learn. Children and other people used to laugh at her and make her cry. It was difficult for her to walk the long distance to and from school and she sometimes missed school because of this.

During the pandemic, her mother received the EENET/NAD home learning materials and guidance. Petra was interested and started spending more time with her mother. She practised reading with her mother's help and enjoyed doing the

activities in the booklet. Her reading improved and she was able to show others how to read.

The pictures and stories in the materials helped her understand that although she has a disability she can still do things like other people. She started helping her mother with household chores and learned how to write a letter from one of the activities in the booklet. She was able to write a letter to her grandma wishing her a 'happy birthday'. Petra also developed an interest in gardening from the activity on taking care of nature, and she plants seeds and takes care of the vegetables in the home garden.

Petra no longer cries. Her peers come to learn from her, and they do the activities together.

"Neighbouring friends have been coming to our home to do activities in the home learning booklet and learn how to read from Petra".

Petra's mother, Zambia

Some parents of deaf children reported that the home learning materials helped their children to practise a range of different activities. These included drawing, reading, making toys, counting games, and helping around the garden and home. Their engagement in these activities enabled family members to recognise their abilities and no longer see them as a burden.

In Zambia, grandparents of Brenda, who is deaf, noticed that their granddaughter's communication skills improved and she was better able to follow instructions.

### **Case study 3: Brenda, Nakowa primary school, Zambia**

Brenda is a 9-year-old from Zambia. She is cared for by her grandfather and was born deaf. She enrolled in her current primary school in 2019.

Brenda's grandfather received the EENET/NAD home learning resources in June 2020, along with extensive guidance in using them. Brenda's grandfather and his wife started teaching Brenda at home when the school was closed. They continued in the evenings when school re-opened.

After using the home learning materials for some months, the family observed changes in Brenda. Her communication improved, and she was better at following instructions and reading. Her family and peers began to recognise her abilities, such as taking care of herself, cleaning the house, and gardening.

When Brenda went back to school after the closures, her teachers noticed abilities they had not previously seen. Her grandfather has also noticed her interest in mathematics, English, and the creative arts since using the home learning materials.

“Previously my granddaughter was unfairly treated at home. The other siblings were very impatient with her. They used to call her names and complained that she wasn’t responding to their communication and following instructions. [After using the home learning materials] from what I have observed about her work, I feel Brenda will be a maths teacher or an artist, due to her love for maths and creative art.”

Brenda’s grandfather, Zambia.

Various examples of substantial learning and behaviour improvements by learners as a result of using the home learning resources were shared during this review. Inclusive education seeks to achieve improved acceptance and respect between children with and without disabilities, increased self-esteem and agency for children with disabilities, and increased recognition by families of their children’s abilities.

Of course, not all changes can be directly attributed to the home learning project. However, it does demonstrate that when home learning is integrated into a wider inclusive education programme then the results can be far-reaching. When parents and caregivers are engaged and motivated and appreciate their role in supporting their children’s learning, then this can contribute to achieving inclusive education goals.

“The home learning project has resulted in a broader understanding of inclusive education. During the distribution of the materials the volunteers explained to families ‘this is an example of inclusive education, it is broader than schooling, this is an initiative to ensure children still continue to learn, it is more than just attending school, learning is for your whole life’.”

Dr Said Juma, SUZA, Zanzibar

### **A focus during lockdown**

Focus group participants mentioned numerous different activities from the booklet that learners enjoyed. These included story-telling, letter writing, making toys, counting games, and drawing. Examples were given of learners actively engaging in these different activities on their own or with support from siblings, friends, and parents.

A common finding was that children carried on doing similar activities, gaining new insights and improving on the written activities. Learners from the Kitongani region, Zanzibar, showed drawings (alphabet and fruit drawings) during a focus group discussion.



During another focus group, one child with an intellectual impairment was trying to teach others how to use the home learning materials through using the pictures.

In all countries, parents were pleased that children spent less time 'wandering around.' The booklet activities gave them a focus and something to do with added learning value. Parents explained that children became fully involved with poster and booklet activities, which helped reduce loitering or mischief. Other benefits were having a clean home free of waste material, their children engaging more in child-friendly chores, and their improved ability to read, write and do several activities on their own or with little guidance.



Figure 9. Drawings inspired by the 'ABC book' activity' shared by learners from a focus group in Zanzibar.

In Zambia, the home learning materials helped give John a focus and re-ignite his interest in school.

#### **Case Study 4: John, Riverview primary school, Zambia**

John is an 18-year-old from Southern Zambia. He was born with a visual impairment which meant he experienced reading difficulties. He was enrolled in a primary school and had progressed to Grade 6, but did not attend school regularly. His overall performance in class was below average. He would loiter around his neighbourhood with friends. This worried his parents and teachers. John's behaviour worsened in 2020 when schools closed.

John's parents received advice on using the EENET/NAD home learning booklet and poster. They started doing the home-learning activities with John, alongside everyday life skills to help him function more independently.

After engaging with the home learning resources, John's interest in school increased. The school monitored the use of the home learning resources and provided support where necessary, which encouraged John and his parents further. His grasp of concepts improved, as did his reading, writing, and drawing. John's creative skills were enhanced and he made toys using locally available materials. There was a noticeable change in his behaviour; his family said he no longer loitered with his peers.

#### **The home-school learning continuum**

In Zambia, when schools re-opened, it was found that children sometimes went to school with the home learning resources in their bags. It was evident that the resources were being used both at home and at school. Some parents showed appreciation that children were excited about taking the home learning to school and bringing back new ideas from school to the home, which created a joint learning and teaching opportunity.

Teachers in Zambia and Zanzibar have also noticed some changes in learners since they returned to school. This included their attendance and interest in school, supporting each other, and interacting better in the classroom and outside the classroom during extra-curricular activities. Some had improved reading, listening, and drawing skills.

Teachers also remarked on parents' and caregivers' increased interest in and attention to their children's education:



“What I have personally observed is that the parents/caregivers attention for their children’s learning needs has been heightened. A number of parents/caregivers have actually been following me at home to ask for more resources to use with their children, something they never used to do before this initiative”.

Nakowa School IECo, Zambia.

Individuals from partner organisations and some teachers said that it would be good to make use of the resources in the school environment.

“We should have these materials in schools as well and increase the scale of schools that the resources are disseminated to, we were only piloting these 6 schools and some parents don’t allow their children to carry their booklets to school because they are afraid ‘it will get lost and not come home’. There are activities that could be applied in different subject areas (at school) – mathematics, English, science. Inclusive education is including all learners in education – methods apply across every subject – here is material that is very inclusive and teachers could go through and see which activities relate to their own subject.”

Aubrey Moono, lead research assistant and  
Principal Trainer in inclusive education, Zambia.

Findings from the home learning project show that inclusive learning or inclusive education is not just the responsibility of school or home but there is a continuum between the two. Many children, particularly those with severe or multiple disabilities, sit somewhere between the two. Inclusive education needs to be understood as being more fluid, where different sites of learning are equally important and can be explored. There are community-based options, formal school options, learning opportunities at home and/or combinations of all of these.<sup>15</sup> The home has much to teach the school, to help shape the way educators think and help address the hierarchical ways of thinking that value academic and school-based learning above all else. Home-based learning should not just be seen as an emergency response, a back-up plan or second-best option. It should be a core part of what learners have access to, and not just when schools are closed.

Changing the status and perception of home learning requires a change of mindset however, and some of the main actors in in this process are the parents and teachers. Findings from this review have already demonstrated that involving teachers in supporting learning at home – through them disseminating resources and providing guidance to parents and follow-up support where needed – can make a big difference. To take this a step further, in 2021 EENET developed a one-day teacher

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<sup>15</sup> Sense International’s inclusive education policy document ‘Inclusive Education for Children with Deafblindness / Multi-sensory Impairment’ (June 2019) written by Ingrid Lewis, contains more details on the home-school learning continuum concept (available on request from EENET). See also EENET (2022) ‘A Continuum for Inclusion. Home learning, education transition, and inclusive school-based learning’: [www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Continuum%20for%20Inclusion%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Continuum%20for%20Inclusion%20-%20FINAL.pdf)

training module on ‘inclusive learning at home and in the community’ as part of the package of IETT modules on. In December 2021 the module was successfully piloted during in-service training with teachers from inclusive education pilot schools in Zambia.

### **Box 9. Key lessons: Learners’ and families’ engagement with the resources**

#### **Inclusive learning**

- ✓ Home learning should be considered an integral part of any inclusive education project. We should all consider how inclusive home learning can be implemented on a larger scale and not just in response to COVID-19. There is a need for home learning ‘extra -curricular’ resources to be developed that can be part of the curriculum and approved by the ministry of education (in Zambia and other countries). ‘Homework’ resources in the mainstream education sector currently exist in Zambia. These have limited value as they are purely academic and intended for the learner to do alone. By contrast the home learning resources support a more holistic approach to learning, nurturing skills like creativity, collaboration and problem-solving as well as supporting academic skills.

#### **The home-school learning continuum**

- ✓ Teachers need orientation on home learning resources and activities to help create better links between the home and school as sites of learning and inclusive education.
- ✓ The IETT home learning teacher training module needs to be trialled and used in more places – in full or selectively, depending on the time available.
- ✓ Teachers could further assist with disseminating home learning resources, as this helps provide an ‘official endorsement’ of the resources from the school. They could also do follow-up activities to ensure home learning is systematised and not just done by NGO staff.

### **3.4.3. Creating learning opportunities**

#### **Perceptions of learning**

Parents often do not consider play to be an integral part of learning. Comments gathered in Uganda and Somalia highlighted this. In Somalia many parents felt that children should not be free to play and be creative. Apart from school, Qur’anic studies and discipline are important and there is little time for other activities or play.

When parents and caregivers were asked during the focus groups in Zambia, Zanzibar, and Uganda to explain where and how they thought learning happens, responses indicated some shifts in understanding as to what constitutes learning and the environments in which it can take place. Parents explained that learning can take place not only in schools but also in workplaces, on the street, in the fields when they are gardening, and at the Madrasa (Zanzibar). Some parents reported that they felt learning should start from home and parental guidance is important. Other parents and caregivers commented that they had not realised that what children are already doing at home is part of learning. As a result, they will try to create more time for their children. Parents also noted that observing their children's activities helped them better identify their talents and understand their weaknesses and strengths.

### **Parents' support for home learning**

Findings revealed numerous ways in which parents provided support and participated in using the home learning resources. Some parents in Zanzibar actively helped their children study the booklet at night, helped to design things like toy boats, and helped with drawings. In Zambia parents enjoyed observing their children read and debate without their regular help. They also supported by sourcing locally available materials for making toys.

One parent collected waste material for toy tower making. Another helped their child to prepare the garden so she could plant her seeds, which later germinated, bringing great excitement to both the child and parent. Some parents also reduced the amount of household chores their children were responsible for, including goat and cattle rearing, which was reported to have helped children find more time to use the booklet.

One or two parents in Uganda bought stationery and other reading materials. A parent in Zambia bought a solar lamp to help their child continue reading and learning at night. Some parents helped their children make timetables for using the home learning resources. Others guided their children through arithmetic calculations, played board games and read stories from the booklet to each other.

In a few cases, to keep the posters and booklets clean and safe, parents hid them, which limited children's access until the parent or older sibling returned home from their daily chores. Despite this, learners still engaged in activities inspired by the resources in their absence. They relied on collective memory and reminded each other of activities in groups so they could continue playing.

### **Cooperation and bonding**

Another common finding in all three countries was that parents found the home learning resources of interest. Their active participation in their children's activities developed into a mutually beneficial teaching and learning experience. It was

reported that increased peer, family, and community bonding resulted from engaging with the home learning resources.

In Zambia, parents and community members showed appreciation of the resources. One lead research assistant in Zambia summarised it as follows:

“Home learning materials are about working together, not competition but cooperation at family, community, and school level. While designed for learners, others including parents, teachers, and community members have benefitted from their use too. In Zambia, these materials have helped highlight the importance of inclusive education and the link between the schools and home environments.”

Aubrey Moono, lead research assistant and  
Principal Trainer in inclusive education, Zambia.

Findings indicated that by supporting their children, most parents felt that they had become much closer to their children. Home learning had given them an opportunity to socialise with their children. Some parents reported having increased interest in working through different games, stories, and illustrations with their children or making toys, boats, planes, and other items. Skills like listening, reading, and learning improved between parents and children, working together as families. As one parent put it in Zambia, ‘we are re-learning.’

An IECo in Zambia commented on the new role that parents had taken on as ‘home teachers’:

“All in all, home learning materials have brought about a lot of change and benefits to learners with disabilities. The good results we are getting from families just shows that learners can still learn from home – from their parents and guardians who are home teachers or substitute teachers.”

Riverview Primary School IECo, Kazungula district in Zambia.

Some parents in Zanzibar, however, reportedly had no interest in helping their children with their home learning and it was discovered during the review process that a few materials had been ‘left’ and not used, remaining in the offices of school authorities. In these cases, the research assistants encouraged school managers to help disseminate them after the interviews.

### **Parents’ own learning**

Although the home learning resources were developed and disseminated for children in and out of school, a common finding in all countries was that parents felt that they were learning a lot. This includes those who had completed their compulsory education but felt that they benefitted from participating in an activity with their child or guiding them. In Zambia, some parents showed interest in going back to school and enrolling in adult education, taking advantage of the adult literacy, life-

long learning programme under the department of Community Development in each district.

Parents appreciated that their children now 'ask more for help'. In Zambia, one parent remarked that: "I feel good when my child asks when he wants to learn more." Another parent said, "I develop more interest to read more when my child wants me to help in getting her to understand what she is going through".

While some illiterate parents could not help much with home learning, findings suggest that children with illiterate parents benefitted from help provided by older siblings, neighbouring parents, and other peers who were able to read and write better. Some parents who could not read and write felt challenged by their own children. On the one hand, this enabled them to learn some activities from their children, creating a child-to-parent learning opportunity. On the other hand, some parents felt concerned that with their low literacy levels, they could not assist their children with the home learning activities. The extended lockdown restrictions also meant that children and parents had little or no access to teachers whom they could have consulted for improved understanding of the use of the home learning materials.

The range of ways parents supported their children to engage with the home learning resources with minimal support and input from the partner organisations is remarkable. The fact that the home learning resources also created many learning opportunities within families, between siblings and peers, and between parents and children, resulting in closer familial relationships and bonds, is an additional unexpected positive outcome.

There were cases, however, where parents or caregivers were hesitant to receive the home learning resources (for example, in Somalia). Some did not believe or understand how their children with disabilities could engage with the resources (Uganda); or they were unwilling to support their children's learning at home as in Zanzibar. There could be many reasons for this, such as a lack of understanding as to the purpose of the resources or low literacy levels. These attitudes could also stem from other deeply rooted or systemic reasons. Lack of familiarity with parental engagement in education (believing it to be the teacher's job) or disbelieving that children with disabilities are able to learn could have been factors.

This all points to a need to provide more support to parents and caregivers, beyond potentially superficial awareness-raising activities, to enable them to understand and embrace their role as their child's first educator.

“I don’t know if there can be a possibility of some trainings, some mindset capacity building training for parents, such books could be learning materials, should be instructional materials to the parents of children with disabilities. Because we may work hard about schools, and we may also work hard about communities, but the biggest challenges of these children are the home where these children come from. These are the parents who hide them, who feel so shameful from the community. So, if we build the capacity of these parents to treat these children like any other child, even communities will definitely change because the family where these children are coming from have already changed.”

Nelson, DU Facilitator, Wakiso district, NUDIPU, Uganda.

### **Box 10. Key lessons: Creating learning opportunities**

#### **Parents’ support for home learning**

- ✓ A short series of short workshops for parents on home learning could help to address their concerns and questions. These events could build parents’ confidence in supporting and engaging in their children’s education. They could also address the imbalance in the home-school learning continuum.
- ✓ It is important to identify how many parents are illiterate or have low literacy levels. Home learning projects could link up with an adult literacy project or NGO before starting to disseminate materials.
- ✓ Disseminators should have information on where parents can be referred for more help with their own literacy and life-long learning opportunities.

## 4. Conclusion

This EENET and NAD initiative delivered a high-quality product. The home learning resources were produced and (on the whole) disseminated quickly. This response to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated an ability to innovate, go against the grain, and act swiftly in a crisis. The review reveals multiple examples of learning and behaviour changes among learners as a result of using the home learning resources. That the resources appear, from initial findings, to have had an impact is not just the result of the efforts made by EENET, NAD, and partners. It also reflects the quality of available education in Zambia, Zanzibar, Uganda, and Somalia – that such a simple resource can fill an important gap and bring something new and valuable to learners and communities.

The fact that the home learning project was integral to a wider inclusive education programme helped to maximise the changes in learner behaviour and experience. Results suggest that parents who are engaged, motivated, and appreciate their role in supporting their children’s learning, can contribute positively to inclusive education goals. We may hypothesise that a home learning activity conducted in isolation from existing inclusive education efforts may have been less successful. This is hinted at by the fact that the best take-up of the home learning process was in Zambia, where arguably NAD’s inclusive education programme has already been strongest.

Home-based learning is not just an emergency response when schools are closed. It should be considered integral to any inclusive education project. Shifting mindsets away from seeing education as the exclusive domain and responsibility of schools, towards understanding learning as more fluid is vital, as is recognising that different sites of learning can be equally important.

This project provides many lessons for NGOs, governments, and donors. Further consideration of how to expand the focus on inclusive home learning is needed. One route could be developing government-approved home learning ‘extra-curricular’ resources, to embed diverse and less-academic learning at home into every learner’s overall package of education. This would require working with teachers and schools to create better links between home and school, and to help teachers provide home learning follow-up. Above all, such a move requires recognition of the role that parents and caregivers play in their children’s education and interventions to build their confidence and capacity to support learning at home.



## 5. Key lessons

This learning review has highlighted what EENET, NAD and partners did well, what we would like to do better next time, and what we suggest should be done by anyone else wishing to embark on – or fund – similar projects.

Below is a summary of the key lessons we have learned and want others to benefit from. For more detailed evidence and analysis each key lesson, see the relevant box in Section 3.

### Project management

- ✓ EENET, NAD and their partners could use this project as an example when advocating for funders to improve how they flexibly fund inclusive education. (Section 3.1 and Box 3)
- ✓ Given that emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic will happen again, all programme plans should anticipate emergencies and build in emergency preparedness. (Section 3.1 and Box 3)
- ✓ Donors should have greater confidence to respond quickly and flexibly in a crisis. They should proactively encourage stakeholders and partners to think strategically and creatively about the best response in a crisis. A theory of change approach to programme design, rather than a rigid results framework, would better facilitate rapid adaptive responses. (Section 3.1 and Box 3)
- ✓ EENET's management should become stricter at prioritising, especially when faced with similar crisis situations. (Section 3.1 and Box 2)
- ✓ Where possible, to ensure effective crisis response implementation, organisations like EENET and NAD should work where they have established partnerships that have strong organisational structures and local presence. (Section 3.1 and Box 3)

### Resource development

- ✓ EENET, NAD, their partners and other organisations should prioritise printing copies in local languages that parents, caregivers, and children are more able to engage with. (Section 3.2 and Box 4)
- ✓ Donors should fund multiple local language translations and printing, even if each language version only reaches a relatively small number of users. (Section 3.2 and Box 4)

## **Dissemination**

### **Recipients**

- ✓ In similar projects, implementers must consider carefully how many families and learners can be reached with the materials. Using cheaper, lower quality printing is an option, if recipient numbers exceed the available budget, but can reduce the appeal or durability of materials. (Section 3.3.1 and Box 5)
- ✓ When deciding who should receive materials, NGO partners, schools, and local authorities should discuss whether, in their context, it is better to choose specific recipients (e.g., learners with disabilities) or to reach every household in the community. (Section 3.3.1 and Box 5)

### **Approaches**

- ✓ Disseminators of home learning resources should spend enough time with families to explain the resources, try out some of the activities, and identify families that need follow-up support. (Section 3.3.2 and Box 6)
- ✓ Public or community meetings could be used to explain the home learning materials before disseminating them. This would help families and community members become aware of the materials, understand what the project is about, and feel ready and available to receive the materials. (Section 3.3.2 and Box 6)
- ✓ All disseminators should be orientated on the materials' key messages, principles, and activities, which may take some time. Volunteers should be sufficiently supported and protected throughout. (Section 3.3.2 and Box 6)
- ✓ Local education authorities should participate in an orientation session so that they endorse and support the use of the home learning resources. (Section 3.3.2 and Box 6)

### **Initial responses and expectations**

- ✓ When disseminating home learning resources to families of children with disabilities, ensure the project has links with disability-inclusion organisations and interventions, and spend time on follow-up. (Section 3.3.3 and Box 7)
- ✓ Ensure everyone involved in the dissemination stage understands the project expectations and boundaries, knows how to respond to unrealistic expectations, and what additional referral advice to give families. (Section 3.3.3 and Box 7)
- ✓ Ugandan ECD centres are re-opening in early 2022. EENET, NAD, and partners should consider how they can support ECD educators to introduce the ECD home learning activities to families (e.g., through some short parent workshops. (Section 3.3.3 and Box 7)

## Results

### Relevance and usefulness

- ✓ Similar dissemination projects need to ensure that disseminators have the mandate and budget for follow-up visits with families, so they can provide more practical advice on how activities can be adapted for children of different ages, grades, abilities, and learning needs. (Section 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 and Box 8 and 10)
- ✓ Similar projects in future could include a series of short workshops for parents during the dissemination stage, during which they can raise concerns and questions. (Section 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 and Box 8 and 10)
- ✓ Future projects should also find out how many parents and caregivers have little or no literacy, and investigate whether links can be made with an adult literacy project or NGO before starting to disseminate the home learning resources. (Section 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 and Box 8 and 10)

### Benefits for learners and families

- ✓ EENET, NAD, their partners, and indeed all NGOs should consider how inclusive home learning can be supported on a larger scale and not just in response to COVID-19. This could include helping ministries of education to develop home learning resources that form part of the official curriculum, but which support a more holistic approach to learning, nurturing skills like creativity, collaboration and problem-solving. (Section 3.4.2 and Box 9)
- ✓ EENET, NAD, their partners, and other NGOs could support teachers to learn more about the home learning resources and activities, so they can create better links between home and school learning environments. EENET and NAD have developed a teacher training module as part of the TOFI inclusive education teacher training programme which can be used for this purpose. Teachers could be encouraged and supported to assist with dissemination (showing families that the school endorses the resources) and/or with follow-up activities to ensure effective home learning continues beyond this short NGO project. (Section 3.4.2 and Box 9)

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Overview of key informant interviews and focus group discussions conducted

<b>Uganda – Gulu and Kamwenge districts</b>		
Interviewee/group discussion	RA/interviewer(s)	Total FGDs/KIIs
Parents/caregivers	Martin Obote (Gulu); Aloysious Katabazi (Kamwenge) (Research assistants)	5 groups
Learners		5 groups
Teachers and teaching staff (including head teachers (HTs) and SIT members)		5 groups
Education official(s)		3 KIIs
Community members	Martin Obote	3 groups
Partner organisation (NUDIPU): Dianah Leah Sera – NUDIPU Louis Muhereza (DUF Sheema district) Nelson Kasenene (DUF Wakiso district)	Alick Nyirenda	3 KIIs
<b>Zambia (Livingstone, Zimba and Kazungula)</b>		
Interviewee/group	RA/interviewer(s)	Total FGDs/KIIs
Parents/caregivers	Aubrey Moono, Bridget Mukwiza (Research assistants)	5 groups
Learners		4 groups
Teachers and teaching staff (including HTs and SIT members)		5 groups
Aubrey Moono (Principal Trainer, PT)	Polly Kirby	
<b>Zanzibar – Pemba and Unguja islands</b>		
Interviewee/group	RA/interviewer(s)	Total FGDs/KIIs
Parents/caregivers	Fatma Saleh, Lulu Omar, Omar Saleh, Salim Omar (Research assistants)	7 groups
Community members		8 groups
Learners		8 groups
Teachers and teaching staff (including HTs and SIT members)		8 groups
Education official(s)		5 KIIs
Dr Said Juma (SUZA) (PT)	Polly Kirby	1 KII
<b>International level – EENET and NAD</b>		
Ingrid Lewis (Managing Director EENET) and Hayley Scrase (EENET)	Polly Kirby Alick Nyirenda	1 KII
Elise Bjastad (Senior Adviser, NAD)	Polly Kirby	1 KII

## Appendix 2: Home learning resources review: core key research questions

Core research questions		Sub-questions
<b>The process</b>		
1	How did EENET cope with this unexpected work?	Why did we do it?! What motivated us to start a totally different project?
2	What did we do well?	How did we decide on/design the rapid response? Who did we talk to/what investigations did we do?
3	How we might respond better in future similar crisis-driven projects?	What steps did we have to take to make the project happen, according to both NAD and EENET systems/protocols (planning, budgeting, etc)? Who did the work? How did we decide who did the work? How extensive was the work? How accurate was our original plan/budget? If not accurate, what went wrong, why was it not accurate? How did we manage the project – what was managed well/less well? What practical challenges did we encounter? How did we overcome them? How could we mitigate similar challenges in future? What were the positive and negative impacts for EENET workers of this rapid response work? How can we mitigate the negative impacts on workers in future? What were positive/negative impacts for EENET as a whole?
<b>The materials</b>		
4	Were the materials delivered to the families that needed them most?	Who received the materials? How were these families identified? Are there other families who should have received the materials? If yes, who and why?
5	How relevant and useful were the materials?	Did the child/family like the poster and the booklet? If yes, what did the child like about the poster and the booklet? If no, what didn't they like? Were children with disabilities able to use the materials? If yes, what enabled them to use the materials? Which activities did they do? If not, why not and what would have helped them to use the activities?
6	How have children and their families engaged with the materials?	How have families and children engaged with the poster? What have they done? How have families and children engaged with the booklet? What activities have they done? What activities haven't they done? Why not?

		<p>What are the different benefits of each resource? (How does each research lend itself to different situations/contexts/audiences? How do they work together?)</p> <p>Have families and children had any challenges in using the poster and booklet? If yes, what were the challenges?</p> <p>What recommendations do they have about the poster and the booklet?</p>
<b>The results</b>		
7	How do parents and caregivers feel about supporting learning at home?	<p>Where and how do parents and caregivers think learning happens? (And has this changed since they received the HL resources?)</p> <p>How do parents and caregivers feel about supporting learning at home? (And has this changed since they received the HL resources?)</p> <p>What examples can parents and caregivers give for how they have supported their children's learning at home?</p> <p>How have parents and caregivers benefited from helping their children to use the HL materials?</p>
8	What kinds of activities to support learning have children being doing at home (since receiving the materials)?	<p>What activities do children do when not at school? Have any of these activities changed since received the HL resources? Please give examples</p> <p>Which of these activities in your opinion support learning? Why?</p> <p>Do any of these activities support/reinforce the learning that children are doing at school? If yes, please give examples.</p>
9	How has the dissemination of the home learning project affected inclusive education/other aspects of the TOFI programme?	<p>Have there been any other outcomes for children and their families from receiving the home learning resources? If yes, please give examples.</p> <p>What other benefits have there been for the TOFI project/partner organisations working on inclusive education from receiving the home learning resources? Please give examples.</p>
10	What are the most effective forms of home learning support for learners and their parents and caregivers?	<p>Apart from using a poster and booklet, what else is needed to ensure home learning is improved? (This could be kept as an 'internal' question, so not focusing on what other resources but rather other approaches/interventions etc).</p> <p>What support for home-learning was provided by others including the ministry of education? (Material support or other) How effective was this support?</p>

## Appendix 3: Numbers of home learning resources disseminated by country

<b>Country: Uganda<sup>16</sup></b>					
<b>District (NUDIPU District Unions)</b>	<b>Posters - English</b>	<b>Posters - local languages</b>	<b>Booklets - English</b>	<b>Booklets - local languages</b>	<b>Total resources</b>
<b>Mayuge</b>	700	200 Luganda	700	200 Luganda	1,800
<b>Moyo</b>	600	300 Madi	600	300 Madi	1,800
<b>Kamwenge</b>	600	800 Runyakole 800 Kiswahili	600	800 Runyakole 800 Kiswahili	4,400
<b>Luuka</b>	200	700 Luganda	200	700 Luganda	1,800
<b>Sheema</b>	600	300 Runyakole	600	300 Runyakole	1,800
<b>Yumbe</b>	300	700 Aringa	300	700 Aringa	2,000
<b>Wakiso</b>	600	300 Luganda	600	300 Luganda	1,800
<b>Gulu</b>	300	600 Acholi	300	600 Acholi	1,800
<b>Totals – Uganda</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>17,200</b>

<b>Country: Zambia</b>						
<b>District</b>	<b>School/ institution</b>	<b>Posters - English</b>	<b>Posters - local languages</b>	<b>Booklets - English</b>	<b>Booklets - local languages</b>	<b>Total resources</b>
<b>Livingstone</b>	CBR/NAD	6	2 Tonga 2 Chinyanja	5	5 Tonga 5 Chinyanja	25
	DEBS	5	5 Tonga 5 Chinyanja			15
	Shungu	400	300 Tonga 280 Chinyanja	500	225 Tonga 150 Chinyanja	1,855
	Nakatindi	250	200 Tonga 180 Chinyanja	250	200 Tonga 100 Chinyanja	1,180

<sup>16</sup> All numbers included in the tables below are approximate and are based on figures reported by in-country partners

<b>Kazungula</b>	DEBS	5	5 Tonga			10
	Katapazi	100	400 Tonga	250	300 Tonga	1,050
	Riverview	204	273 Tonga 83 Chinyanja	345	320 Tonga 45 Chinyanja	1,270
<b>Zimba</b>	DEBS	5	5 Tonga			10
	Luyaba	125	480 Tonga	300	300 Tonga	1,205
	Nakowa	250	320 Tonga	300	300 Tonga	1,170
<b>Totals - Zambia</b>		<b>1,350</b>	<b>2,540</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>7,790</b>

<b>Country: Zanzibar</b>					
<b>Island/ district(s)</b>	<b>School/ institution</b>	<b>Posters - English and local languages</b>	<b>Booklets - English</b>	<b>Booklets - local languages</b>	<b>Total resources</b>
<b>Pemba/ Wete and Chake chake</b>	Chwale	200	50	127 Kiswahili	977
	Al-Swadiq	200			
	Jojo	200			
	Madungu	200			
<b>Unguja/ Kusini, Mjini</b>	Kitongani	200	40	360 Kiswahili	1200
	Kiongoni	200			
	Migombani	200			
	Mkunizini	200			
<b>5 Teacher centres</b> (Chachani, Mitiulaya, Michakani, Mizingani, Wingwi (Pemba); Kiembesamaki, Bububu (Unguja))		140 (20 per TC)	70 (10 per TC)		210
<b>Inclusive Education and Life Skills (IELS) unit</b>		20			40
<b>MECP-Z</b>		10			
<b>SUZA</b>		10			
<b>Totals - Zanzibar</b>		<b>1,780</b>	<b>647</b>		<b>2,427</b>



## Appendix 4: Guidance for disseminating the home-learning resources

This guide is to help with the process of disseminating the home-learning resources to parents, caregivers and families. There are **two resources** as part of the home-learning project:

1. **Poster** – providing lots of pictures on how to support learning at home
2. **A booklet with different activities** to support learning at home

This guide supports dissemination of both resources

### Background to home-learning resources

#### Why were the home-learning resources developed?

The home-learning resources were developed when schools were closed in many countries to limit the spread of Covid-19. Parents and caregivers suddenly found themselves having to help their children to learn at home.

Many parents find it challenging to support their children to learn at home, especially where they have not had a lot of schooling themselves and may struggle to read and write. They are also likely to struggle because they have to work to support their families, do domestic chores and look after many children, including sometimes a child with SEN and/or a disability.

Although governments provided some learning materials for learners to use at home when the schools were closed, many children were not able to access these and did not have teachers or their peers to help them.

Even as schools start to re-open, learners may not return to school at the same time. Some learners, particularly learners with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities may face additional challenges in returning to school.

Even when schools are running 'normally' again, learning at home and in the community supports what children learn at school.

So, these home learning resources have been developed to help show parents and families what learning looks like at home and in the community and help families support their children's ongoing learning at home, even after they return to school.

## What are the main aims of the home-learning resources?

**Focus on family wellbeing:** the resources show how there are many opportunities for learning to take place at home, without extra resources or the support of teachers, like in the school. The resources will help families and children themselves feel comfortable and confident to learn at home.

**Focus on different areas of development:** the resources take a holistic approach to learning, which means that they help children to develop in many different ways. For example, they are designed to help children to develop physically but also emotionally, so they become stronger physically and mentally.

**Complement what children learn in schools:** The resources are designed to support in simple and interesting ways what the children are learning in schools. They are not designed to replace the formal curriculum that children follow at school.

**Empower parents to support learning:** many parents, especially those that have not had a lot of formal education, often feel unconfident about helping their children with their school work. They often do not realise that children playing, doing their normal household chores or doing things in the community are important opportunities for learning. The resources help parents to recognise that learning happens everywhere, all the time and they are as important as teachers for their child's learning.

## Before disseminating the resources, take time to engage with the home-learning resources

### The home-learning poster

Look at the pictures on the poster. Ask yourself:

- Which pictures do you like the most?
- What do you see? What do you think is happening in the pictures?
- What ideas does it give you for learning at home?

Look at each of the key messages on the poster.

- How do these key messages link with the all the key areas of a child's development?  
*Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative and Emotional*

If you are a parent reflect on the ways your own children develop and learn at home.

- Do you recognise any of the learning activities happening at home from your own experience?

Look at the text on the back of the poster. Familiarise yourself with it as this will help you to anticipate and answer some of the parents and caregivers' questions.

## **The home-learning activities booklet**

Look at the contents page in the booklet.

- Are there any activities that you recognise?
- Are these activities that you did yourself as a child or your own children do now?

Read the Introduction:

- This describes in detail who the booklet is for, what the activities are, why the activities were created and how to use the activities.

Read the section on **'Adapting activities for children with special educational needs and disabilities'**

- This is an important section to read as it describes in detail how to adapt the activities for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Reading both of the above two sections will help you to anticipate and answer some of the parents and caregivers' questions.

## **While you are disseminating the resources**

### **1. Have a few posters and booklets (opened to show different pages) on display**

Put them where everyone can see them. Show both the front and the back of the poster.

### **2. Draw attention to the text on the back of the poster and the introduction page in the booklet**

Draw parents' and caregivers' attention to the questions. Tell them that some of the questions they have about the poster and the booklet might be answered here. Suggest to them that if they are not able to read the questions themselves then you can do that for them, or they can ask one of their older children or a friend in the community.

- Who is this poster for? / Who is this resource for?
- What is this poster about? / What are these activities?
- Why was this poster made? / Why were these activities created?
- How to use this poster? / How to use these activities?

Briefly point out how the activities in the booklet are structured and the core information included for each activity. For example, each activity includes the following stages: *You will*

*need; What to do; and the following information in a box at the end: Age, Adult/sibling help; What you will learn; What you will practice; Different ways to do the activity.*

### **3. Draw attention to the ‘adapting activities’ page in the booklet**

Explain that on this page there are general suggestions that can be applied to any activity, but often a child will guide us as to what they need. Tell parents not assume a child cannot do an activity. Say that they can find creative ways to adapt the activity so that anyone can do it. This page also gives examples that can guide parents about how to adapt activities for children with different difficulties and challenges.

### **4. Respond as best you can to the questions parents/caregivers ask**

Some questions might already be answered for you in the text on the back of the poster or in the text at the beginning of the booklet. However, there may be other questions that parents ask. Use your own experience and understanding to answer their questions, but here are some possible questions and answers to help you:

- **Will there be any other materials/resources?**

No, this activity booklet and the poster go together and they are the only two resources available to parents and caregivers as part of this home-learning project.

- **How does this help my children learn?**

The poster shows many key areas of childhood development - social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development - and how they all combine to support learning. The booklet has many different activities that support these areas of childhood development. At the bottom of each activity is a box that shows what knowledge and skills a child will learn from that activity. Each activity helps the child increase their knowledge, or learn a new skill.

- **What about my child with SEN and/or a disability?**

All children can do any of the activities. But some children may need a bit more help or may do the activity differently (such as drawing or speaking rather than writing; or simplifying the activity). All activities in the booklet include ideas for how to do the activity in different ways. The poster also includes many examples of children with SEN and/or disabilities engaged in learning activities alongside their peers.

- **Will we be required to mark/grade our children’s learning?**

No, not all learning needs to be marked or assessed. Allow your child to learn at their own pace. Encourage them with questions and suggestions

- **How will I know if my children are learning?**

If your children are interested in what they are doing, if they are asking questions and motivated to engage in an activity, then they are learning

## **5. Show parents and caregivers where they can find other support**

Families may be experiencing high levels of stress and struggling to cope with all the challenges they face, especially those that have been made worse by Covid, such as a parent losing their job. Be willing and prepared to answer any questions that may come about their situation and have a list of resources in the community that people can contact (make sure you have the contact details for these resources. Some important ones are:

- Clinics in the community where people can get access to doctors, nurses and rehabilitation facilities
- Child and family protection services
- NGOs that can help families in any way

It is important to remember when you are talking to parents and caregivers about the resources that, although we want to be able to support people as much as we can, this is only a small project with limitations. Unfortunately, the project cannot help families with food and health needs. It is only able to help parents and caregivers support learning at home.

## **After disseminating the posters**

### **1. Complete the 'dissemination data collection form'**

This will give us an accurate record of how many posters and booklets have been distributed, in which languages, where and to whom. We will be able to use this information to follow-up at a later stage.

### **2. Make notes of the initial reactions and responses of parents and caregivers**

Write down as many of the comments/questions from the parents and caregivers about the posters and booklets as you can remember. There may be times where you do not agree or are upset by something that was said. Try to capture the question/issue they raised as this will help us to understand the concerns of parents and caregivers or help us to identify where more community awareness is needed. This will help us to focus our advocacy activities in the future.