

Scoping Report: Initiative Africa - Girls' Education in Post-War Tigray Executive Summary

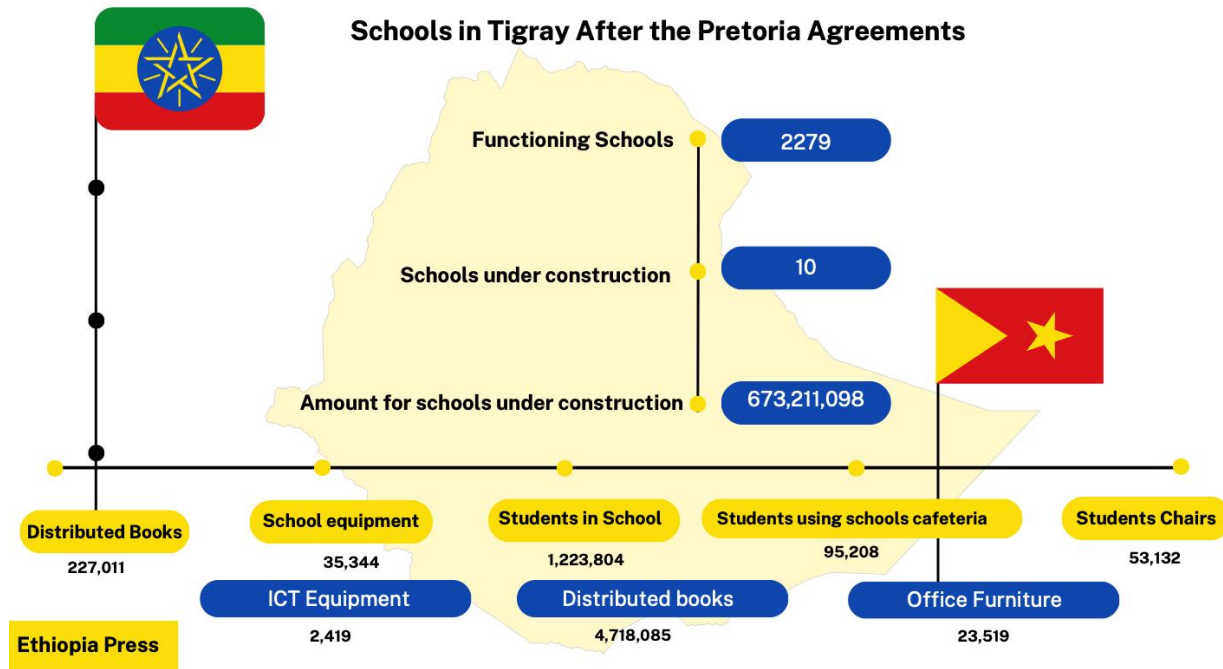
1. Introduction

This scoping report details a three-year project by Initiative Africa (IA) that aims to empower girls in post-war Tigray with quality education. Funded by the Malala Fund, the project addresses the conflict's devastating impact on education, particularly for girls.

The project will span three years and engage 24 schools, reaching 1,000 students across Tigray, Central and Northwest Zone(Aksum,Adwa Weredas,L/Maychew, L/Koraro, T/Koraro and Shire Endaslase woredas). A formal agreement signed on May 12, 2024, between IA and the Tigray Regional Education Bureau solidifies IA's legal capacity to implement the project in the region.

2. Background and Justification

The Tigray War has severely disrupted education in the region. Schools are damaged, displaced, and lack resources. This has disproportionately affected girls, who face increased risks of violence, exploitation, and early marriage due to conflict and economic hardship. This project proposes a multi-sectoral approach to address these challenges and ensure inclusive access to education for girls.



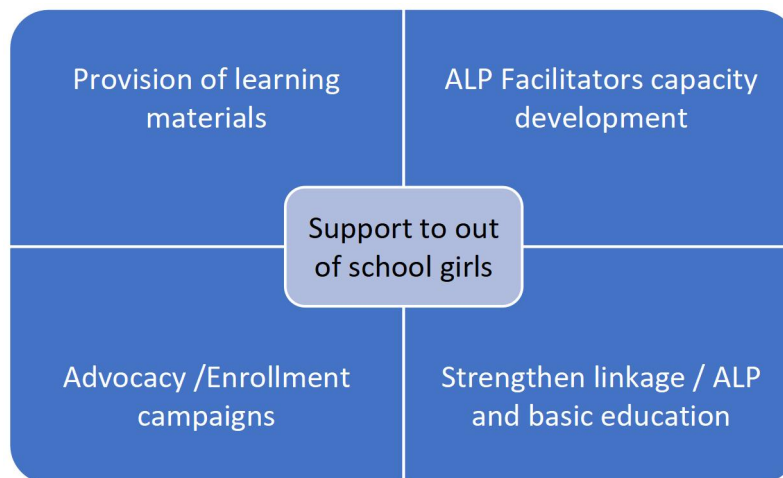
3. Project Objectives

- **General Objective:** Enhance access to quality education and promote girls' education in conflict-affected regions of central Tigray.
- **Specific Objectives:**

- Increase enrollment and graduation rates for 1,000 girls and boys (aged 9-15) through community-based and accelerated learning programs.
- Provide basic literacy, numeracy, life skills, and vocational training to 1,000 adolescent girls and boys (aged 15-24).
- Increase community support for girls' education by 20% through collaboration with parents, communities, and religious leaders.
- Improve safety and mental health support for 500 girls by reducing reported safety issues by 30% and increasing mental health service utilization.
- Advocate for policy changes that prioritize girls' secondary education as a national priority.

4. Expected Results

- Increased enrollment and graduation rates for girls and boys.
- Enhanced life skills and decision-making abilities for adolescents.
- Improved community support for girls' education.
- Enhanced safety and mental well-being of students.
- Policy changes that prioritize and strengthen girls' education.



5. Activities and Strategies

The project will implement various activities to achieve its objectives:

Increasing Access to Education and Completion Rates(EB: 1,508,600BR)

- Community outreach: Organize meetings, roadshows, and information sessions with local leaders, parents, and teachers.
- Accelerated learning programs: Design and deliver flexible, age-appropriate programs to meet the needs of conflict-affected students.

- Psychosocial support: Integrate counseling, group therapy, and peer support groups into the programs.
- Teacher training: Train teachers on accelerated learning methodologies, trauma-informed teaching, and conflict resolution skills.

Enhancing Life Skills and Decision-Making Abilities(EB: 800,000 BR)

- Interactive workshops: Facilitate workshops on communication, critical thinking, and coping skills.
- Mentorship programs: Establish mentorship programs with older adolescents or young adults.
- Life skills clubs: Create clubs within schools or community centers for practicing learned skills.
- Gamification: Integrate life skills development into learning activities.

Fostering Community Support for Girls' Education(EB:482,000BR)

- Community dialogues and mentorship programs: Organize sessions with successful women to share their experiences and the importance of education.
- Awareness campaigns: Utilize local media and community platforms to raise awareness about girls' education.
- Skills training workshops for parents: Equip parents, especially mothers, with practical skills to support their daughters' education.

Improving Mental Health and Well-Being of Students(EB: 128,000BR)

- Psychoeducational workshops: Conduct workshops on stress management, coping mechanisms, and building emotional resilience.
- Peer support groups: Facilitate groups where students can connect and share experiences.
- Creative expression activities: Organize art, music, or drama therapy sessions.
- Mental health awareness campaigns: Develop campaigns to reduce stigma and promote mental health resources.

Advocating for Policy Changes(EB: 1,345,600BR)

- Data collection and research: Document the specific challenges girls face in accessing education.
- Policy briefs and advocacy meetings: Develop policy briefs and organize meetings with stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels.
- Public awareness campaigns: Raise awareness about the importance of girls' education and its benefits for society.
- Partnerships and collaboration: Collaborate with other organizations working on girls' education and child protection issues.

Stakeholder Analysis

This analysis identifies key groups with interests in Initiative Africa's (IA) project to support girls' education in post-war Tigray. Understanding their perspectives and potential roles is crucial for project success.

1. Regional Government of Tigray Education Bureau

- **Interest:** Improved educational access and quality, particularly for girls. Increased capacity of schools and teachers. Their **Role will focus on:**
 - Provide official approval and facilitate project implementation in schools.
 - Collaborate on data collection and needs assessment.
 - Connect IA with relevant zone and woreda education offices.
 - Offer guidance on policy and curriculum alignment.

2. Zone and Woreda Education Focal Offices

- **Interest:** Improved educational outcomes within their jurisdiction. Increased enrollment and retention rates. Their **Role will focus on:**
 - Identify schools in need and facilitate access.
 - Mobilize local communities and teachers to participate.
 - Assist with logistics and resource allocation.
 - Monitor project implementation and report progress.

3. Targeted Schools:

- **Interest:** Improved learning environment for students, particularly girls. Access to training and resources for teachers. Their **Role will be:**
 - Provide space and facilities for program implementation.
 - Recruit and motivate students to participate.
 - Collaborate with teachers in delivering the ALP program.
 - Share feedback and contribute to program improvement.

4. Teachers Involved in the ALP Program

- **Interest:** Enhanced skills and knowledge to support war-affected students. Increased job satisfaction and professional development. Their **Role will be:**
 - Participate in training on accelerated learning methodologies.
 - Deliver the ALP program effectively in their classrooms.
 - Integrate psychosocial support into their teaching approach.
 - Provide individual attention and support to girls facing challenges.
 - Share feedback and contribute to program adaptations.

5. Local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Working on Education

- **Interest:** Improved access to education for girls. Stronger advocacy for education reform. Their **role will be:**
 - Collaborate on outreach and awareness campaigns.
 - Share expertise and best practices in girls' education.
 - Provide additional support services to students, like mentorship or mental health counseling.
 - Advocate alongside IA for policy changes that prioritize girls' education.

Strategies for Effective Stakeholder Engagement

- **Regular communication and information sharing:** Keep stakeholders informed about project progress, goals, and challenges.
- **Capacity building workshops:** Offer training and support to strengthen stakeholders' skills and expertise.
- **Collaborative planning and decision-making:** Involve stakeholders in project design, implementation, and monitoring.
- **Joint advocacy efforts:** Work together to advocate for policy changes that benefit girls' education.

Key Strategic approaches for project Implementation

⇒ ***Use complementary approach***

Leveraging Existing Programs: Due to budget limitations, IA will implement a complementary strategy in Central Tigray. Our program will not replace existing Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) but rather strengthen them. We will work alongside local education authorities to identify gaps and areas where the Malala Fund program can add value.

⇒ ***Focus on Schools and Teachers***

- **Empowering Educators:** The program will prioritize supporting schools and teachers in Central Tigray. Teachers are key to the success of ALP programs.

⇒ ***Girls' Education at the Core***

- **Breaking Barriers:** Girls' education is a central focus of the Malala Fund program. We will implement targeted initiatives to address specific challenges girls face in accessing and completing accelerated learning programs. This may involve addressing safety concerns around school attendance.

⇒ **Community-Driven Monitoring and Feedback:**

- **Collaborative Partnership:** Communities in Central Tigray will play a key role in monitoring the program's effectiveness. This includes:
 - **Teacher Recommendations:** Communities can recommend qualified teachers to participate in the program and contribute to its success.
 - **Student Feedback Collection:** Community leaders can assist in gathering feedback from students to ensure the program meets their needs and addresses any challenges they may face.
 - **Program Monitoring:** Community members can be involved in monitoring the program's implementation and identifying areas for improvement.

Baseline learning: Major Lessons Learned from Other Countries on Implementing Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) on post war situations:

Effective Program Design:

- **Needs Assessment:** A thorough needs assessment is crucial to identify target groups, dropout hotspots, and tailor the program accordingly (e.g., Iraq, Cambodia).
- **Collaboration:** Strong partnerships with the Ministry of Education (MoE) ensure accreditation, resource provision, and program sustainability (e.g., Iraq, Rewrite the Future initiative).
- **Contextualization:** Curriculum and learning materials should be adapted to the local context, promoting culturally relevant examples and problem-solving skills (e.g., Rewrite the Future initiative).

Building Capacity and Support:

- **Teacher Training:** Comprehensive training equips teachers with effective pedagogy for accelerated learning, including managing diverse learning styles, using technology, and supporting students with disabilities (e.g., Rewrite the Future initiative, Sub-Saharan Africa).
- **Pre-service and In-service Training:** A combination of pre-service training before program start and ongoing in-service training throughout the year ensures consistent skill development (e.g., Rewrite the Future initiative).
- **Supportive Supervision:** Regular support from experienced trainers who can observe, demonstrate good practices, and address teacher challenges is vital (e.g., Rewrite the Future initiative).

Community Engagement and Accessibility:

- **Community Involvement:** When communities are involved in program selection, teacher shortlisting, and student feedback collection, they feel more invested and can provide valuable insights
- **Accessibility for Girls:** Location of ALP classes, recruitment of female teachers, and addressing safety concerns are essential to ensure girls' access and participation.
- **Gender Equity:** Demonstrating a commitment to gender equity throughout the program by appointing women to leadership positions and supporting female teachers encourages girls' education

Most successful ALP programs have done the following:

Collaborative and Needs-Based Planning:

- Conduct thorough needs assessments to identify dropout hotspots and tailor the ALP accordingly.
- Build strong partnerships with the Office Education from the beginning to ensure accreditation and resource provision.

- Collaborate with local and international partners for implementation and expertise.

Clear Design and Effective Implementation:

- Develop a detailed implementation plan with clear roles, responsibilities, and timelines.
- Pilot test the ALP with a small group before scaling up to larger programs.

Community Engagement and Effective Program Delivery:

- Develop a communication strategy to raise awareness about the ALP within the community and at all GEO levels.
- Whenever possible, recruit teachers from the community and involve them in program selection.
- Design program elements that consider the local context, such as contextualized learning and culturally appropriate materials.

Gender Equity and Accessibility:

- Locate ALP classes for girls in convenient locations and prioritize female teachers.
- Provide sustained support and training to female teachers, especially in the language of instruction.
- Demonstrate commitment to gender equity throughout the program by appointing women to leadership positions.

Effective Classroom Practices and Holistic Learning:

- Train teachers in positive learning environments, alternative discipline techniques, and assessment methods.
- Integrate life skills, social-emotional learning, and recreational activities into the ALP curriculum.
- Ensure the curriculum is adapted to the local context and promotes investigative and problem-solving skills.

Enhancing Teacher Training and Support:

- Develop clear and well-structured training materials tailored to teacher qualifications.
- Equip teachers with strategies to recognize and support students with learning disabilities.

Assumptions, Potential risks and mitigation

Assumptions, Risks, and Mitigation Strategies of the project

Assumptions

The success of this project hinges on several key assumptions:

- **Demand for Education:** There is a strong and sustained desire for education among girls and their families in Tigray, despite the recent conflict. This assumption is supported by pre-war enrollment data, community surveys, or consultations with local leaders.

- **Security:** The security situation in Tigray will continue to improve, gradually allowing for safe access to schools for girls. While acknowledging ongoing concerns, positive trends and planned security measures indicate a path towards improved safety.
- **Community Support:** Local communities in Tigray will be supportive of the program, welcoming the accelerated learning programs, life skills training, and psychosocial support offered to girls. Past experiences with community development projects provide a basis for this assumption.
- **Teacher Capacity:** A sufficient number of qualified teachers, or those who can be effectively trained quickly, will be available to deliver the program. The project may need to include teacher training or collaborate with existing organizations that support teachers.
- **Regional Government Cooperation:** The regional government will cooperate with the project implementation, providing necessary approvals and facilitating access to resources.

Risks and mitigation measures

While the assumptions provide a foundation for success, implementing the project comes with inherent risks:

- **Security Risks (Rating: Medium):** The ongoing security situation in Tigray poses a threat to project staff and beneficiaries.
 - **Mitigation Measures:**
 - Collaborate with local authorities and security forces to ensure safety.
 - Implement strict security protocols, including safe travel routes and security escorts.
 - Conduct regular risk assessments and adjust project activities based on the evolving situation.
- **School Infrastructure Challenges (Rating: High):** Damaged or destroyed school infrastructure could hinder program implementation.
 - **Mitigation Measures:**
 - Conduct thorough assessments to identify schools needing rehabilitation or repair.
 - Engage local communities and stakeholders in infrastructure improvement for ownership and sustainability.
 - Develop contingency plans to address delays or disruptions due to infrastructure challenges.
- **Socio-Cultural Barriers (Rating: Low):** Cultural norms or beliefs may discourage girls' education.
 - **Mitigation Measures:**
 - Conduct community outreach campaigns to address these norms and highlight the benefits of girls' education.
 - Collaborate with local leaders, religious authorities, and community influencers to promote girls' education.
 - Provide culturally sensitive training for project staff to respect local customs and traditions.
- **Gender-Based Violence (Rating: Medium):** The risk of violence against girls could limit their participation or well-being.

- **Mitigation Measures:**
 - Establish safe spaces within schools and communities for girls to seek support and protection.
 - Conduct training sessions on gender-based violence awareness and prevention for teachers, students, and community members.
 - Strengthen referral systems and partner with organizations that support survivors of gender-based violence.
- **Psychosocial Support Needs (Rating: Medium):** Many girls may require psychosocial support due to conflict-related trauma.
 - **Mitigation Measures:**
 - Integrate psychosocial support services into the program, including counselling, trauma healing, and peer support groups.
 - Train teachers and staff to identify and address students' psychosocial needs, particularly those affected by conflict and displacement.
 - Collaborate with mental health professionals and local organizations to provide specialized support for girls experiencing trauma.

Overall Risk Rating: Medium

The project team will continuously monitor risks and adjust strategies based on ongoing assessments.

Additional Considerations:

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation system is crucial to track progress, identify challenges, and ensure the program's effectiveness.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** The project needs to be flexible and adaptable to respond to unforeseen circumstances and changing contexts.
- **Community Engagement:** Ongoing and meaningful engagement with communities throughout the project cycle is essential for success. This includes involving community members in decision-making, program design, and implementation.