

# Training teachers for a better education in Somaliland



Stuart Freedman/Network/ActionAid UK

Education is one of the best solutions to poverty there is, and yet 113 million children worldwide have no access to primary education at all. Primary school is a luxury for poor families and secondary school becomes an impossibility. ActionAid's diverse education programme covers all aspects of sustainable improvements. We develop educational practices relevant to poor communities. We pressure local and national governments to make education available. We pressure international bodies to play their part in easing that task.

## Introduction

The Republic of Somaliland was formed after its separation from Somalia in 1991. The civil war between 1988 and 1991 in Somalia had caused chaos, with nearly 60,000 people dead, massive population displacement and the destruction of communication and public services. The people of Somaliland have since made considerable progress and now have a stable administration.

However, Somaliland is still desperately poor and the majority of Somali people are pastoral nomads – a lifestyle based on raising sheep, goats, camels and some cattle for subsistence and trade. However, public services have not been well-established in rural areas and so many pastoral nomadic communities lack basic amenities such as healthcare and education. Most efforts to re-establish education in the country have been concentrated in the urban areas leaving nomadic children with few, if any, opportunities.

## The problems

- Existing schools are inaccessible in terms of time as they are often open when the children are required at home to tend livestock, fetch water or carry out other chores. Schools are also an average of four to twenty kilometres away from community settlements, which is a major deterrent as many children are too young to travel such distances unaccompanied.
- Parents often do not see education as having any direct benefits to the family income. Even when parents do decide to send some of their children to schools in town, they are careful to send boys, not girls. It is believed that girls will only benefit their husband's clan, whereas boys stay with their own.
- The continual movement of the nomadic pastoral lifestyle makes it very difficult for children to stay in one place for more than a few months at a time and so their education is abandoned each time their families move on.

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## real lives

Zaynab Diriyeh is a mother of seven children living near Nasiyeh village in the Togdheer region of Somaliland. Zaynab says;

“ We understand that education is good for the future of our children but there are no modern education opportunities in our locality. Therefore, we are obliged to engage our children in household chores and livestock tending. We are happy to send children to educational opportunities; we also need education for the adults. I am personally ready to attend the night shift if the option is there.

Two years ago we lived near a village where there was a two room school in which we wanted to enrol our children, but the problem was that the school operated only in the morning and some of the children had to tend the livestock at that time. ”



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## ActionAid's response

- Working with local communities, ActionAid will develop appropriate alternatives to the traditional schooling systems and set up a rural education system managed by the communities themselves.
- Four senior trainers/educators will be identified and recruited to help develop the system and ensure it is in line with government policies for education.
- Thirty rural teachers will be selected and trained to teach a wider and more appropriate curriculum. This will result in a further 1,400 children learning to read, write and do arithmetic as well as other skills relevant to the nomadic lifestyle.

## Unit costs

- **30 pence** could buy an exercise book for one child.
- **£4.50** could buy one learning kit including books, pens and a small bag.
- **£30** could buy a blackboard for a classroom.
- **£320** could train one teacher in effective and appropriate teaching methods (including accommodation at the training sessions).

Project code: XUKOR05004

60% of the donations will go towards the projects and 40% will be distributed internationally in order of greatest need.

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