



Introducing the Internet-Free Education Resource Bank (IFERB)

February – March 2022

Submission Date: September 2022

Contract Number: EAA-IDD-CT-016-2021

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

- CFS: Child Friendly Spaces
- CP: Child Protection
- DEO: District Education Office
- EAA: Education Above All
- IDP: Internally Displaced People
- IFERB: Internet Free Education Resource Bank
- MoE: Ministry of Education
- PBL: Project Based Learning
- PDT: Positive Discipline Techniques
- WCUK: War Child UK
- YHRP: Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan
- WASH: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Executive Summary

This report captures the results from the pilot of Internet Free Education Resource Bank (IFERB) - Project Based Learning which War Child UK implemented in Al-Mukha and Maqbanah districts, Taiz Governorate, between February and March 2022. The aim of this pilot was to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of 450 boys and girls aged 5 – 15 years old from internally displaced and host communities in two districts of Maqbanah and Al Makha, Taiz Governorate. The project targeted boys and girls who were already enrolled in an existing WCUK child protection project and reached them through six existing child friendly spaces (CFSs) and was able to surpass the initial target and reach 462 boys and girls.

IFERB training was delivered to WCUK's focal points who managed and supervised the implementation of this project. WCUK's Education Officer then delivered the training to 12 male and female facilitators plus two supervisors from each district who were responsible for delivering the numeracy and literacy skills to the children in the CFSs. These 12 facilitators were trained on tools and resources provided by EAA (including IFERB PBL resources, math games and Arabic storybooks) which were translated and contextualized by WCUK in Yemen. The facilitators were also trained on CFS management, the basic principles of psychosocial support, Positive Discipline Techniques, and child safeguarding as part of the wider protection project.

During the facilitators' trainings, a focus group session was held with WCUK's Education Officer, to provide facilitators with a space to raise and discuss some of the challenges they might expect during the implementation of the education package within the CFSs. The focus group discussion allowed facilitators to put forward their own recommendations to counter some of these challenges and fed into an overall implementation plan.

Initially, 12 workbooks were proposed for roll-out, however, due to time and capacity constraints to deliver these, only two were selected for this project: level 2 Numeracy (with 4 projects per book) and level 2 Literacy (4 projects per book), delivering a total of 8 projects in total. Children were selected to participate based on education level and per the recommendations of facilitators who had already been working in the CFSs three months prior to the project's start. Teaching ran over four hours for four days a week– one hour a day for each session.

In all, 462 children were targeted and completed the 8 projects in the CFSs (a slight increase in the proposed 450 target based on facilitator recommendations). Positively, 83% of children enjoyed the programme massively, and 75% said they had learned a lot from the programme, whilst 100% of the CFS facilitators said they would like to use these project workbooks again in future.

I. Introduction

Background of the country and context(s) of implementation

The conflict in Yemen has now entered its eighth year. The United Nations (UN) describes the conflict as the world's worst man-made humanitarian crisis. Alongside the tens of thousands of casualties caused by the conflict, 80% of the population need humanitarian assistance, including an estimated 7.4 million children according to the YHRP - OCHA 2022. Taiz Governorate is considered one of the worst affected governorates, due to the active conflict taking place here, directly affecting thousands of children and their families. As a result, there are a lot of internally displaced families and children.

Pilot context and background of the organization

Yemen is facing an education crisis, with thousands of children's schooling disrupted, leading to disastrous long-term consequences for children. Since the start of the conflict in March 2015, attacks on school children, teachers and education infrastructure have had a devastating impact on the country's education system and on the chances of millions of children to access learning. Taiz is home to a large number of IDPs and 50%-60% of school age children in the area are not enrolled in schools due to the lack of financial resources and the loss of the documentation. The remaining percentage are at risk due to the lack of financial resources which can result in being forced to adopt negative coping mechanisms.

War Child UK was established in Yemen in 2016 and successfully secured its registration to operate in Sana'a and the northern part of the country. Throughout 2019, War Child obtained registration in Aden and started activities in the southern governorates of Yemen. Based on the staggering needs of the population, War Child initially started its intervention with the provision of food assistance programmes; ensuring that children have food to eat remains a priority and we intend to contribute in the form of unconditional direct cash transfers. With the education system on the brink of collapse, War Child expanded its programming with education and protection integrated activities targeting host communities and IDPs affected by the on-going conflict.

War Child UK has been working to support as many schools as possible to complete critical rehabilitation work, including rehabilitation of WASH facilities in schools, and through the establishment of temporary learning centers, providing essential furniture, educational and recreational materials and schools supplies to ensure access to education and a safe and adequate learning environment for children. In addition, trainings have been conducted to support teachers' skills and capacities, including training on education programming in conflict contexts.

II. Pilot Overview

The initial goal of this project was to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of 450 boys and girls of primary school age from the internally displaced people and host communities in two districts of Maqbanah and Al Makha, Taiz Governorate by the end of the project. However, this target was exceeded due to demand and instead, we managed to reach 462 boys and girls.

Mode of Implementation

Education Above All provided the internet free, project-based learning, which is an educational method designed to give students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through engaging projects set around challenges and problems they may face in the real world. Project based learning uses real-world projects to teach math, literacy, science and other subjects covered by national curriculums in addition to non-academic skills, such as collaboration and creativity.

War Child UK implemented this project in an integrated manner with an ongoing child protection project in the Al-Mukha and Maqbanah districts, Taiz Governorate during January to March 2022. The existing child protection project had already set up child friendly spaces where children were being hosted on a daily basis and supported by trained facilitators. This posed a good opportunity to not only provide children with a safe space to learn psychosocial skills but to also integrate education within this.

In all, 462 children at primary school level, all between 4-15 years old but predominantly 8-10 year old, were reached at the six child friendly spaces. These child friendly spaces were managed by 12 experienced male and female facilitators who received IFERB – PBL training. The facilitators were trained on tools and resources provided by EAA . English materials were translated and contextualized by WCUK in Yemen. The facilitators have been trained on child friendly space management, basic principles of psychosocial support, PDT, and child safeguarding as part of the wider protection project. Additionally, two technical supervisors and social workers of WCUK's CP project were trained to direct and support the facilitators when any urgent challenges hinder the facilitators' performance in CFSs. They were supported by War Child UK's Education Officer.

All the three age levels/groups of children are gathered in the same CFS (5-7 years, 8-10 years and 11-14 years). A lack of space in the CFS, this caused difficulty for the facilitators to divide and separate the children into three groups due to their age and education levels. As a solution, we decided to divide the children into different groups depending on their individual/educational levels and their age. Each group included approximately 7 children (2 children from 5 to 7 years old, 3 children from 8 to 10 years old, and 2 children from 11 to 14 years old). This kind of mechanism was done to ensure the other students (usually older students) were able to support younger students with their learning. Not only that, but the facilitators recommend that this is considered one of the effective practice lessons that they carried out in order to manage the children's behavior and sufficient participation.

Family contexts: hardship context, connectivity, education background

The IFERB – PBL projects were selected and contextualized in order to match the students' learning level, environment, supervision level and required supplies to ensure high engagement. Not only this but they were also contextualized to the national curricula and the social group of the parents of the children. This played an important role in ensuring the interest of the families to encourage their children to attend the CFSs and engage with the PBL projects to improve their life skills, creativity skills, and knowledge.

In both locations (Maqbanah and Al-Mukha) children (both IDPs and non IDPs) were attending the CFS from a range of different remote villages. All parents had a large range of educational backgrounds and the project facilitators were able to stay in contact with children's parents via mobile phone to follow up when necessary.

Intervention

War Child UK implemented the IFERB – PBL project by providing different learning and teaching tools for the facilitators and children such as pencils, erasers, and rubbers for children; white stand boards, flipcharts, and markers for the facilitators. This was done to ensure high quality delivery of the projects and sufficient interaction between the facilitators and their students. This helped to setup an effective teaching and learning environment, where the facilitators could build students' curiosity, creativity and reflection skills.

We faced challenges with providing all projects and materials to the students and were ultimately only able to adopt two workbooks (with four projects per workbook so a total of 8) while the remaining 10 workbooks were excluded from this pilot. These challenges are explored further in the sections below. As a result of the challenges, Numeracy 2 and Literacy 2 were selected and continue to be recommended to be taught to children in all of the CFSs across Taiz.

- **List of projects adapted and completed by age or level group and project contextualization, including highlights/challenges emerging from the contextualization exercise:**

#	Age Group		Learning Packages	Delivered Learning Packages	Challenges
1	4 - 7 Years	Level 1	Literacy 1	X	Due to the large number of students attending the CFS, all of whom had varying education levels, it became clear that it would be too difficult to implement more learning packages. As such, we implemented only 2 packages (each with 4 projects) with a focus on 8 to 10 year old.
2			Numeracy 1	X	
3			World Around us 1	X	
4			Social & Emotional Learning 1	X	
5	8 - 10 Years	Level 2	Literacy 2 (4 projects)	√	
6			Numeracy 2 (4 projects)	√	
7			World Around us 2	X	
8			Social & Emotional Learning 2	X	
9	11 -14 Years	Level 3	Literacy 3	X	
10			Numeracy 3	X	
11			World Around us 3	X	
12			Social & Emotional Learning 3	X	
Here is the link to find the 12 learning packages: https://resources.educationaboveall.org/learning-packages					

Prior to rolling out the projects in the CFSs, facilitators were invited to attend a three day training to go over course materials and share their experiences from the CFSs to help develop more nuanced implementation plans. Through these trainings, facilitators became more familiar with the projects and helped contextualize some of the materials. Real-life examples were brought to the training table so that facilitators could prepare for managing their in-person sessions with their students in the CFSs.

Facilitators were also provided with training on how to manage and consider the students' difficult behavior and using differentiating instructions to maintain PBL essence of developing academic and non-academic skills while maintaining students' voice.

The two technical supervisors were also invited to attend the training and gained a broader understanding of the educational importance of this Pilot project and the positive impact on the targeted children. They have since shown their interest in linking and transferring some of the core concepts covered in this project to parents to help support children's ongoing learning, beyond the scope of this project.

A detailed agenda of the training can be found below:

#	Agenda of the Facilitator Training – IFERB	By the end of the training the Facilitator will....
Day 1	<p>1. Introduction of Project Based Learning (PBL) Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What Is Project Based Learning (PBL)? - Why Is PBL A Powerful Tool for Teachers & Students. <p>2. Project Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows an overview of the selection process. - How to Select Projects (By Subject, By Context, by Students’ Level, by Students’ Environment & Interests, by students’ engagement, by Guidance & Resource Requirement) and How? <p>3. Project Contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contextualize Projects Based on: (Students’ Learning Level, Students’ Environment & Relevance, and Available Supplies) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a general overview of what Project Based Learning is and how you can use IFERB projects bank to continue educating your students even if a crisis has emerged. 1. Understand concept of Project-based learning is an educational method designed to give students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through engaging projects set around challenges and problems they may face in the real world. 2. Be familiar with the learning packages that are going to be used for their children: (Get Familiar with Project Documents, Understand the Project, Assess Students’ Previous Learning). 3. Be able to select 1 or more projects that are suitable for your students’ learning level, environment, supervision level and required supplies to ensure high students’ engagement. You will also learn how to select projects based on the subject.
Day 2	<p>1. Project Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview for Project Implementation: - What is Project Implementation? - Remote Communication Channels - Implementation Guidelines Overview - Giving Instructions to Students: - Introduce Activities to Students, differentiating Instructions, fostering Effective Learning Environment, how to setup an effective learning environment? how to Effectively Involve Parents? and guidelines to working with students – KWL framework: - A) Build Curiosity and Interest - B) Create Space for Creativity & Ownership - C) Develop Capacity for Reflection: Receiving Students’ Work, conducting, assessments & Evaluation – Assessment Framework: Baseline & Endline, Assessments, KWL Framework, daily Observations, and Quizzes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Be able to contextualize your IFERB selected project to fit the students’ learning level, environment and available supplies. The more relevant the project is to the students’ context, the higher the engagement and the benefit. 5. By the end of this training, all the participants specially the facilitators have been provided with tools and strategies to deliver the project(s) in the CFSs without compromising the quality of your interaction with their students by using simplified and differentiating instructions. 6. They have been able to setup an effective teaching and learning environment, where you can build students’ curiosity, creativity and reflection skills. They have also learned how to receive their students’ work for assessment purposes.

Day 3	<p>Open Group Discussions: Facilitators, Technical Supervisors, WCUK's Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting the Projects which match the education background of the children. • The mechanism of implementation: Lessons Plan, Home Preparation of the lessons, how to start the daily class through Instructing the children at the beginning, conduct more contextualization of some contexts. • Committing to the attendance of the children, Quizzes, Tracking the progress of the children. • Reporting to the technical supervisor with the unexpected changing circumstances and challenges. • Weekly and monthly reporting to the responsible staff of WCUK.
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- # of children who are 8 to 10 years old, whom the Level 2 Projects, Literacy 2 and Numeracy 2, targeted in the CFSs:

Donor	NGO Partner	Gov	District	# of Children in CFSs in Maqbanah and Mukha 2022				
				#	CFS Name	# of Children from 8 to 10 years		
						M	F	Total
EAA	WAR CHILD	Taiz	Maqbanah	1	Al Hajeb CFS	56	65	121
				2	Al FaKyKa CFS	17	2	19
				3	Al Qatenh CFS	14	3	17
			Mukha	4	Al Haseeb CFS	021	09	3130
				5	Al Shathli CFS	096	58	154
				6	AL Zahra CFS	078	42	120
Total						282	179	462

*To note that 462 completed the workbooks, but an additional 148 (totaling 600) were present at points during the teaching. However due to various reasons, including school exams and other priorities, there were fluctuations in the numbers of children attending regularly and hence only 462 are captured as completing the 8 projects.

III. Results

Here is a summary of results from the delivery of the IFERB programme:

- 462 children completed 2 workbooks, comprising of 8 projects.
 - An additional 148 children were present at many points of the teaching, and therefore benefitted from project learning.
- # students enrolled overall: 600

- # remaining enrolled for whole pilot: 462
 - Male: 47.2% at baseline, 50.5% at endline
 - Female: 52.8% at baseline, 49.5% at endline
- % students self-reporting they learned from projects, then (if differences exist) broken down by: 74.9% learned a lot from the programme
- % students self-reporting the instructions were easy to understand: 88.9%
- % teachers reporting students interacted with the projects: 100%
- % teachers reporting that project instructions were clear and easy to understand: 70%
- % teachers reporting that projects can be implemented with easily accessible resources: 60%
- % teachers satisfied with the program's ability to meet challenges: 60% very satisfied, 40% slightly satisfied
- % teachers reporting intention to continue use of projects: 100%

Teacher Capacity for Project Based Learning

- Change in average capacity of teachers to implement project-based learning, then (if differences exist) broken down by: 72.7% to 90% = 17.3% point change
- % teachers trained to develop project-based learning resources who develop at least one project-based learning project: 63.6% to 80% = 16.4% point change

Student Learning Enhanced

- Change in attitudes towards life aspirations:

Primary School: At baseline 55% said they agreed they would like to complete primary school, compared to 70% at endline. At baseline 44% said they totally agreed, compared to 30% at endline. Positively all children agree they would like to complete primary school, however it is unclear the reason for the shift between agree and totally agree.

Middle School: At baseline 53% of children said they 'agree' they would like to complete this, compared to 64% at endline. As above with primary school, more children (47%) suggested they 'totally agree' at baseline compared to 36% at endline.

High School: Results were more similar at baseline, 52% agree and 48% totally agree, compared to 55% agree and 44% totally agree at endline.
- Change in attitudes towards learning:

At baseline, 42% of children agreed they could learn things on their own, compared to 49% at endline.

For more details, please see the breakdown of the baseline and endline data.

IV. Key Learnings

In this section, include any other reflections on the insights gathered from the pilot experience from all stakeholder groups, as well as details of the post-intervention plan including the sustainability plan to take the approach forward beyond the pilot, if applicable.

Data for the lessons learned can come from program staff and teaching staff survey reflections and/or focus group discussions. What should future implementors know?

The level of education attainment of children in Taiz was much lower than we had anticipated, and the level of support needed from facilitators was higher than initially expected. Despite children having attended school, their skill levels were lower than expected based on the difficulty they had with the learning materials, making it challenging to teach several of the higher levels of workbooks, or more complex subjects. As such, we would recommend that lower education levels of the workbooks are implemented in future, with additional facilitator support (e.g. more time and resources available from facilitators) and guidance based on the needs of children. More interaction and support from facilitators may be needed to ensure children are able to learn more complex materials. Positively though, demand for the classes was extremely high. An additional suggestion for sustainability would be trying to link CFS with schools more formally, so that once the children complete the workbooks they are then able to enter/re-enter formal schooling.

However, while it was positive to see such high demand for the teaching, the numbers of children involved created some challenges for the project team, with limited numbers of facilitators and space available for all the children attending. This was the primary reason the team decided to reduce the number of modules available and bring children of all ages together. In a future version of the project, more time and space would be required to roll out all four projects.

Sustainability

Based on the positive results of this projects, War Child UK will try to integrate the EAA resources when relevant in its future education and child protection programming, integrating successes and lessons learned from the current project and ensuring that adequate resources are budgeted for scaling up activities for at risk children, including IDPs and host communities lacking access to quality learning materials and resources.

For the immediate beneficiaries of this project, we are confident the skills developed during this pilot will continue to be valuable and encourage ongoing learning within families. Indeed, as mentioned above, the CFS facilitators involved in this project, have been eager to explore how to use some of these resources with partners and support at home learnings for children involved.

Annex I: Summary of Projects

Include a summary table of all the projects implemented

Noted above.

Annex II

Other relevant or detailed outputs/activities tables: workshops, trainings, meetings, community mobilization, learning circles, etc.

Detailed above.