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### **Challenges and Opportunities for Inclusive Education in Somalia's Primary Education System**

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#### **Abstract**

This study examined the challenges and opportunities affecting the implementation of inclusive education in Somalia's primary education system. The study aimed to identify the major barriers hindering inclusive education and explore factors that can support equitable learning opportunities for learners with disabilities and other marginalized groups. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected from 135 head teachers from public and private primary schools using structured questionnaires based on a five-point Likert scale. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 24 through descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations. Reliability analysis showed strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89. The findings revealed that inclusive education in Somalia faces several challenges, including inadequate funding, limited educational resources, poor school infrastructure, insufficient government support, unclear policies, teacher workload, and negative social attitudes toward learners with disabilities. The study also identified important enabling factors that can improve implementation, such as educational technology, collaboration with organizations, community awareness, teacher training, professional development, and inclusive school culture. The study concluded that effective implementation of inclusive education in Somalia requires stronger government commitment, improved infrastructure, enhanced teacher capacity, supportive policies, and increased community participation. The study recommends increasing educational financing, improving disability-friendly facilities, strengthening teacher training programs, promoting flexible learning approaches, and encouraging collaboration among stakeholders. It further emphasizes the importance of sustainable and context-sensitive strategies to ensure equal access to quality education for all learners in Somalia.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Primary Education, Learners with Disabilities, Educational Challenges, Educational Opportunities.

## **1. Introduction**

Somalia faces one of the most severe education crises in the world. Decades of civil conflict, political instability, recurrent natural disasters, and chronic underfunding have dismantled what was once a relatively functional national education system. In the 1970s, Somalia allocated nearly half its national budget to education and pioneered mobile schools for nomadic populations (TRT Afrika, 2025). Today, the country has one of the lowest primary school enrollment rates globally, with only approximately 31% of school-age children enrolled at the primary level (Global Partnership for Education [GPE], 2023). More than three million children — out of roughly five million of school age — are currently out of school (UNICEF Somalia, 2024).

Inclusive education — broadly defined as a system that welcomes and supports all learners regardless of gender, disability, displacement status, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background — is a cornerstone of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which calls for quality, equitable, and inclusive education for all. In Somalia, inclusive education remains a distant aspiration rather than a functioning reality. Children with disabilities, girls, internally displaced persons (IDPs), nomadic pastoralist children, and urban poor youth all face disproportionate barriers to accessing and remaining in school.

This literature review synthesizes available scholarly research, policy documents, and organizational reports to examine the key challenges and emerging opportunities for inclusive education within Somalia's primary education system. It draws on sources from the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF, UNESCO, the International Monetary Fund, the Somali Federal Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MOECHE), and peer-reviewed academic literature to present a comprehensive picture of the current landscape.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **A. Structural and Systemic Challenges**

Inclusive education is founded on the idea that all students, regardless of disability or vulnerability, have the right to take an active role in quality education in mainstreamed settings. Recent literature suggests that inclusion is more than just physical location, as it is a process of systemic change that addresses structural, pedagogical, and attitudinal issues (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Amor et al., 2021). Social Justice and Equity Theory positions inclusive education as a reaction to the historical production of inequalities, suggesting that exclusion is a product of institutional arrangements rather than individual shortcomings (Amor et al., 2021). Very much in line with this theoretical stance, the Social Model of Disability separates the concepts of impairment and disability, placing the latter in social, environmental, and educational barriers to participation (Florian, 2008). This theoretical turn has had a significant impact on policy shifts from “fixing learners” to “fixing education.” Ecological Systems Theory by Bronfenbrenner further reinforces this knowledge by emphasizing the importance of alignment within and among interrelated systems, such as policy contexts, school administration, teacher behaviors, and community sentiment, for educational inclusion to occur (Li & Ruppert, 2020). From an educational delivery perspective, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) theory embodies these

tenets by encouraging flexible curricula, multiple means of engagement, and differentiated instruction to support diverse learners (McKenzie & Dalton, 2020). Collectively, these theories provide a rich perspective for examining inclusive education as a system-dependent and multi-level process.

### **1. Low Enrollment and Systemic Capacity Gaps**

The gross enrollment rate for primary education in Somalia stands at approximately 31% — significantly below the sub-Saharan Africa average, which approaches near-universal enrollment (IMF, 2024). According to the 2022 Somalia Integrated Household Budget Survey (SIHBS), nearly 65.5% of the Somali population has no formal education whatsoever, and fewer than 5% have completed secondary schooling. The 2021 Education Sector Analysis identified over 1.8 million school-aged children as excluded from school entirely (Education Out Loud, 2022).

Underlying these enrollment shortfalls is limited institutional capacity. The education sector suffers from an absence of robust system-level policy instruments, weak regulatory structures, and inadequate implementation capacity at both federal and state levels (GPE Country Brief, 2024). The Ministry of Education lacks a comprehensive, integrated Education Management Information System (EMIS), a gap identified by the World Bank as early as 2018. Without reliable data disaggregated by gender, disability, location, and displacement status, evidence-based policy formulation for inclusive education remains severely constrained.

### **2. Infrastructure Deficits and Overcrowding**

School infrastructure across Somalia is inadequate and geographically concentrated. Approximately 89% of all schools are located in urban areas, leaving rural and nomadic populations largely unserved (MOECHE Program Document, 2024). Classrooms that do exist are frequently severely overcrowded, with accounts of more than 65 students sharing a small room designed for far fewer (GPE Country Journeys, 2023). The absence of adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities is a pervasive problem. Most schools lack functioning toilets — particularly separate latrines for girls — which significantly undermines girls' school attendance, especially during menstruation (UNICEF Somalia, 2024).

Infrastructure damage from conflict and climate shocks compounds these deficits. In 2023, El Niño-related floods displaced an estimated 400,000 children and disrupted the learning of nearly 900,000 as schools were damaged or repurposed as emergency shelters (EiE Hub, 2025). Recurrent drought and famine conditions repeatedly force school closures as families migrate for survival, with newly displaced children attending school at rates as low as 21%, compared to 39% for non-displaced peers.

### **3. Teacher Shortages and Quality Deficits**

Somalia faces a severe shortage of qualified teachers. The national teaching workforce lacks standardized training and professional development pathways. A critical dimension of this shortage is gender: fewer than 20% of teachers are women (Borgen Project, 2024), and data from 2023 teacher recruitment suggest only about 15% of newly recruited teachers were female (IMF, 2024). The scarcity of female teachers is identified by multiple sources as a significant barrier to

girls' education, as it limits the availability of female role models and reduces the sense of safety for girl learners (EiE Hub, 2025; UNICEF Somalia, 2024).

Teachers lack training in inclusive pedagogical approaches. Research indicates that Somali teachers have little to no professional preparation for working with children with disabilities, children from nomadic or displaced backgrounds, or learners with diverse cognitive or emotional needs (MOECHE Program Document, 2024). Negative attitudes toward disability among teachers and school administrators further undermine inclusive practice, actively discouraging families from enrolling children with disabilities (ibid.).

#### **4. Financing and Funding Gaps**

Public investment in education remains critically underfunded relative to need. Families are frequently required to cover school fees and associated costs, creating an insurmountable barrier for households experiencing poverty or displacement. Research on post-conflict Mogadishu finds that even nominal fees are prohibitively expensive for displaced families and perpetuate a cycle in which only those with material means can afford formal education (Springer Social Sciences, 2025). Nearly 40% of children between ages 5–14 are engaged in child labor rather than attending school, reflecting the economic pressures that draw children away from formal education (Borgen Project, 2024).

### **B. Social, Cultural, and Demographic Barriers**

#### **1 Gender Inequality and Girls' Education**

Gender disparity in education is one of the most persistent and severe challenges in Somalia. Girls' primary enrollment rates (28%) fall below boys' (approximately 34%), and the disparity grows dramatically at higher levels of schooling: girls' secondary enrollment is a mere 7.9% (GPE, 2024). The gender gap is stark across literacy indicators as well — men's literacy stands at 49.7% compared to just 25.8% for women (Borgen Project, 2024), and only 45% of adult women possess basic literacy skills versus 64% of adult men (EiE Hub, 2025).

Multiple intersecting factors drive female exclusion from schooling. Early and forced marriage — with 45% of girls married by age 18 (UNICEF, cited in Borgen Project, 2024) — removes thousands of girls from school each year. Gender norms that assign girls domestic responsibilities and require them to care for younger siblings further reduce their opportunity to attend. Female genital mutilation (FGM), practiced by approximately 98% of Somali girls according to UNICEF data, results in health complications that lead many girls to withdraw from school (Borgen Project, 2024).

Scholarly research based on the 2022 SIHBS confirms that gender disparities in literacy are not uniform but vary significantly by region, with rural girls facing compounded disadvantage from poor infrastructure, teacher shortages, and insecurity (Springer Discover Education, 2025). This spatial variation — and the risk that national averages conceal severe local inequities — underscores the need for targeted, context-sensitive interventions rather than one-size-fits-all national policies.

## **2 Children with Disabilities**

Children with disabilities face extreme exclusion from Somalia's education system. The MOECHE's own Program Document (2024) acknowledges a lack of clear data on the proportion of the school-age population with disabilities — itself an indicator of how marginalized this group is in education planning. Physical barriers are pervasive: schools lack adaptive facilities, equipment, and assistive technologies. Societal and community-level stigma is widespread, with negative attitudes from teachers, school administrators, and communities regularly discouraging parents from enrolling children with disabilities.

Girls with disabilities face compounded exclusion, confronting both disability-related and gender-based barriers simultaneously (MOECHE, 2024; UNICEF Somalia, 2024). GPE-supported initiatives have begun providing assistive devices and creating more accessible school environments in targeted locations — such as the program at Wamo Stadium Primary and Secondary School in Kismayo District — but coverage remains extremely limited relative to national need (GPE Blog, 2024).

## **3 Nomadic and Pastoralist Children**

Somalia's nomadic pastoralist communities represent one of the most educationally excluded populations. Only 10% of children from nomadic households attend primary school, versus much higher rates in urban settings (IMF, 2024; EiE Hub, 2025). In nomadic areas, approximately 92.5% of the population lacks any formal education (IMF, 2024). The constant mobility of nomadic families makes fixed-location schooling impractical, and the literature notes that inadequate and irrelevant curricula further alienate pastoralist communities who find little economic or cultural value in formal schooling as currently delivered.

Somalia does have historical precedent for mobile education: in the 1970s, the government pioneered mobile schools for nomadic populations (TRT Afrika, 2025). Reviving and modernizing these models is explicitly identified in Somalia's 2020–2024 National Development Plan as a priority, though implementation has lagged considerably (GPE, 2024).

## **4 Conflict, Displacement, and Security**

Armed conflict — particularly ongoing insecurity remains a structural driver of educational exclusion. Schools in conflict-affected areas are frequently targeted, occupied, or abandoned. Conflict-induced displacement creates recurring cycles of educational disruption: children who have been displaced attend school at significantly lower rates than their non-displaced peers (EiE Hub, 2025). Research on Mogadishu examines how the dual system of Western-style formal education and Islamic religious education (dugsi) creates additional complexity for displaced families navigating competing educational paradigms with limited resources (Springer Social Sciences, 2025).

The 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview identifies the cost of education and the lack of schools as the primary barriers for IDP children's enrollment, with limited public school availability in IDP-receiving areas compounding the crisis (Somalia Partnership Compact, 2023). Food insecurity interacts with educational exclusion as well: UNOCHA reported over four million

people facing acute food insecurity in 2023, affecting children's school attendance and cognitive engagement even when schools are accessible.

### **C. Policy Framework and Governance**

Somalia's inclusive education agenda is increasingly embedded within national policy frameworks, though implementation capacity lags behind policy ambition. The Provisional Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia (2012) establishes the right to free education through secondary school for all citizens, and the Children's Rights Act — approved by the Federal Government in August 2023 — further institutionalizes children's rights in law (UNESCO IICBA, 2024). The National Education Sector Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and the 2023–2026 Partnership Compact with the Global Partnership for Education commit the government to expanding equitable access to quality and inclusive education in both rural and urban areas (GPE, 2023).

Despite these commitments, the MOECHE faces significant governance and capacity constraints. The education sector lacks well-resourced regulatory structures, and decentralization to federal member states has produced uneven implementation quality. Research and policy analyses consistently note that sustainable reform requires strengthening government ownership and institutional capacity — not merely building schools — and that Somalia's 2024–2027 GPE funding cycle (US\$81.7 million) places explicit emphasis on system-level transformation alongside infrastructure development (GPE, 2026).

### **D. Opportunities and Promising Interventions**

#### **1 Infrastructure Investment and School Construction**

Large-scale infrastructure investment — supported by GPE, UNICEF, Save the Children, CARE, and Concern Worldwide — has demonstrated measurable impact. A GPE-funded program between 2020 and 2023 rehabilitated and constructed 794 classrooms in 147 schools across multiple federal member states, enabling access for approximately 33,896 previously out-of-school children. Girls' enrollment increased by 59% in supported schools (GPE Country Journeys, 2023). The current 2024–2027 program includes the construction of 20 new girls' schools expected to enroll 15,600 vulnerable girls, and the renovation of WASH facilities in over 70 schools to be gender-segregated and disability-responsive (GPE Blog, 2026).

#### **2 Alternative and Accelerated Education Models**

Alternative Basic Education (ABE) programs have shown considerable promise for reaching out-of-school children in conflict-affected areas. The Bar ama Baro initiative, supported by USAID, successfully enrolled over 100,000 children who had been excluded from formal schooling, with emphasis on equal educational opportunity regardless of gender (INEE, 2024). Such accelerated programs offer a flexible pathway for over-age learners, displaced youth, and those who have never had the opportunity to access formal primary education.

CARE's Educate Your Children II program, operating across Banaadir, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Puntland, and Southwest states, provides fee-free enrollment for ultra-marginalized

children, teacher training in inclusive and non-violent classroom management, and community sensitization — a multi-pronged model that addresses both supply-side and demand-side barriers simultaneously (CARE, 2025).

### **3 Teacher Recruitment and Capacity Building**

The Somali government's announcement in 2022 of 3,000 new teacher positions represents a significant step toward expanding educational capacity (Somalia Partnership Compact, 2023). IMF analysis recommends developing a national teacher training curriculum to standardize education and qualifications, with particular emphasis on increasing female teacher employment — a proven lever for improving girls' enrollment and retention (IMF, 2024). Initiatives such as UNICEF's support for female teacher training in Puntland's Garowe Teachers' College provide models for targeted capacity development.

Oxfam's partnerships with civil society organizations in Somalia — providing in-service training for female teachers, second-chance education scholarships for older girls, and vocational skills for women — illustrate how multi-stakeholder coalitions can complement government capacity where state provision is weak (Oxfam Policy & Practice, 2024).

### **4 Community Engagement and Demand-Side Interventions**

Evidence from Somalia consistently shows that inclusive education requires transforming community attitudes alongside improving physical access. The GPE-supported program in Kismayo demonstrated a ripple effect: when one student with a visual impairment received assistive devices and support, it began shifting community perceptions of disability and education (GPE Blog, 2024). Community education committees — as used in the CARE program — provide local oversight and accountability mechanisms that help sustain enrollment gains.

The Education for All Somalia Coalition (EFASOM), through Education Out Loud funding, focuses explicitly on civil society engagement to hold government accountable for expanding access to inclusive education for the most vulnerable groups — including IDPs, street children, nomadic children, children with disabilities, and disadvantaged girls (Education Out Loud, 2022). Such advocacy coalitions are essential complements to top-down policy reform.

### **5 Positive Momentum: Systems Recovery and Political Will**

Despite the scale of the challenges, there are meaningful signs of positive momentum. The reintroduction of standardized Grade 12 national examinations in 2015, which began with 7,000 participants, had grown to 39,000 participants by the 2024–2025 academic session, including students in previously unreachable areas (TRT Afrika, 2025). The federal government is increasingly taking ownership of education sector reform, a shift recognized by international partners as essential for sustainable, long-term systems change (GPE Blog, 2024). The 2023 Partnership Compact explicitly frames inclusive education as a driver of economic development, poverty reduction, and social cohesion — a political framing that elevates education investment as a national security and development priority.

## **E. Gaps in the Literature and Future Research Directions**

Despite a growing body of evidence, significant gaps remain in the literature on inclusive education in Somalia. First, there is a pronounced absence of rigorous, peer-reviewed empirical research — particularly experimental or quasi-experimental studies — evaluating the effectiveness of specific inclusive education interventions in the Somali context. Most available evidence derives from organizational program evaluations and policy documents with limited methodological transparency.

Second, data on children with disabilities is almost entirely absent. The MOECHE acknowledges this gap, and without reliable prevalence data or enrollment tracking for children with disabilities, it is impossible to design or evaluate disability-inclusive education programs effectively. Third, the intersection of climate change and education exclusion in Somalia is understudied, even as climate shocks increasingly undermine educational access.

Fourth, the role of Islamic religious education (dugsi) in Somalia's education landscape — and its potential integration with or conflict with inclusive formal schooling — warrants deeper analysis. Research on Mogadishu highlights the dual-system challenge families navigate, but cross-context comparative studies across Somalia's diverse regions are lacking. Finally, the literature largely focuses on access (enrollment) at the expense of learning quality and outcomes — future research should attend more carefully to what children actually learn in inclusive settings.

## **3. Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the barriers and enabling factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools. Quantitative data were collected from head teachers of both public and private primary schools using a random sampling technique. The required sample size was determined through the A Priori Compute Required Sample function for linear multiple regression with  $R^2$  increase, considering a 0.05 margin of error, an effect size of 0.15, and a statistical power level of 0.95. The calculation indicated that a minimum of 104 participants was necessary for the study; however, a total of 135 head teachers participated in the survey. Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire consisting of two sections designed on a five-point Likert scale to assess barriers and enablers of inclusive education. The questionnaire included 8 items measuring barriers and 17 items measuring enabling factors. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Descriptive statistical methods, including means and standard deviations, were used to describe the barriers and enablers of inclusive education implementation. The reliability analysis demonstrated excellent internal consistency of the instrument, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89. In addition, the instrument's self-validity, calculated as the square root of the reliability coefficient ( $\sqrt{0.89} \approx 0.943$ ), met the acceptable validity standard.

## 4. Results

### Descriptive Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of barriers to inclusive education rated by participants through means and standard deviations. The data shows that respondents are highly concerned about financial barriers (mean = 4.16, SD = 0.95) and resource availability (mean = 4.10, SD = 1.12), which confirms the view that these structural issues constitute major impediments to the achievement of inclusive education. Other factors such as poor physical infrastructure (mean = 4.04, SD = 1.00) and inadequate support from local government (mean = 4.15, SD = 0.93) have compounded these problems. The absence of clear administrative policies also has a rating of mean (4.04) with a standard deviation of 1.06, while teachers feel overwhelmed by diverse needs with a mean score of 3.98 and standard deviation of 1.02; both reflect systemic concerns within the system itself. In addition to this, cultural attitudes and peer stigma were also rated as significant barriers with scores of 3.69 (SD = 1.07) and 3.92 (SD = 1.06) respectively. All items fall under the "High" rating category indicating that there is widespread acknowledgment of these barriers in an inclusive education context.

Table 1. **Barriers to Inclusive Education**

No.	Statement	Mean	Std Dev (SD)	Level
1	Financial barriers to implementing inclusive education in our school.	4.16	0.95	High (H)
2	There is a lack of resources to support inclusive education.	4.10	1.12	High (H)
3	The physical infrastructure is inadequate.	4.04	1.00	High (H)
4	Insufficient support from the local government.	4.15	0.93	High (H)
5	The school administration lacks a clear policy.	4.04	1.06	High (H)
6	Teachers are often overwhelmed.	3.98	1.02	High (H)
7	Cultural attitudes hinder acceptance.	3.69	1.07	High (H)
8	Students face stigma from peers.	3.92	1.06	High (H)

Scale: Very High (VH) = 4.20-5.00; High (H) = 3.40-4.19; Moderate (M) = 2.60-3.39; Low (L) = 1.80-2.59 and Very Low (VL) = 1.00-1.79.

Table 2. shows a descriptive analysis of the factors that enable inclusive education through the mean scores and standard deviations of participants' perceptions. Results reveal an overwhelming agreement on the role of technology in supporting inclusive practices (mean = 4.06, SD = 0.98), collaboration with local organizations (mean = 4.04, SD = 1.03), and support from international organizations (mean = 4.03, SD = 0.98). Community awareness (mean = 3.96, SD = 0.99) and promotion of an inclusive school culture (mean = 3.84, SD = 1.03) were rated highly as well, indicating that societal engagement is crucial for fostering inclusivity Other notable enablers include effective communication among teachers (mean=3.82; SD=1.05), training programs that are accessible to all (mean=3.70;SD=1.19), and preparedness of teachers(mean=3.69;SD=1.22)—all categorized as high While several other factors such as a flexible curriculum mean(3).52;SD=1).21 and parental involvement mean(3).42;SD=1).16 remain significant they show slightly lower mean scores Notably student participation in decision-making is classified under moderate with a mean score of(3).33;SD=1).33 This indicates an area that may require further attention to enhance inclusive practices The overall rating for all items except for student participation falls under the "High" category which reflects a strong recognition of various enablers in promoting inclusive education.

**Table 2. Enablers of Inclusive Education**

N0	Statement	Mean	Std Dev (SD)	Level
1	Technology can be effectively used.	4.06	0.98	High (H)
2	Collaboration with local organizations.	4.04	1.03	High (H)
3	Support from international organizations.	4.03	0.98	High (H)
4	Community awareness is growing.	3.96	0.99	High (H)
5	School promotes culture of inclusion.	3.84	1.03	High (H)
6	Effective communication among teachers.	3.82	1.05	High (H)
7	Training programs are accessible.	3.70	1.19	High (H)
8	Teachers are well-prepared.	3.69	1.22	High (H)
9	Ongoing professional development.	3.67	1.10	High (H)
10	Clear framework for assessing progress.	3.67	1.10	High (H)
11	Policies are reviewed and updated.	3.59	1.17	High (H)
12	Curriculum is flexible.	3.52	1.21	High (H)
13	Community resources available.	3.49	1.31	High (H)
14	Successful examples in the district.	3.45	1.23	High (H)

15	Parents are actively involved.	3.42	1.16	High (H)
16	Parents receive adequate information.	3.37	1.27	High (H)
17	Students participate in decision-making.	3.33	1.33	Moderate (M)

*Scale: Very High (VH) = 4.20-5.00; High (H) = 3.40-4.19; Moderate (M) = 2.60-3.39; Low (L) = 1.80-2.59 and Very Low (VL) =1.00-1.79.*

## 5. Conclusion

This study examined the barriers and enabling factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in Somalia. The findings revealed that inclusive education remains constrained by multiple interconnected structural, financial, social, and institutional challenges. Respondents strongly agreed that financial limitations, inadequate educational resources, poor physical infrastructure, insufficient government support, unclear administrative policies, and teacher workload significantly hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education. Cultural attitudes and peer stigma also continue to limit the participation and acceptance of learners with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. These findings demonstrate that inclusive education in Somalia is not only an educational issue but also a broader social justice and policy challenge requiring systemic reforms.

The study further established that despite these barriers, there are important enabling factors that can support the successful implementation of inclusive education. Technology integration, collaboration with local and international organizations, community awareness, inclusive school culture, teacher communication, professional development, and accessible training programs were all identified as strong facilitators of inclusive practices. The findings indicate that partnerships between schools, communities, government institutions, and development partners are essential for strengthening inclusive education systems. However, the moderate rating given to student participation in decision-making suggests that learners themselves are still insufficiently involved in shaping inclusive learning environments.

Overall, the study concludes that achieving inclusive education in Somalia requires comprehensive reforms that address infrastructure, financing, teacher capacity, governance, curriculum flexibility, and community attitudes simultaneously. Without coordinated efforts from government authorities, schools, communities, and international stakeholders, many children—particularly girls, children with disabilities, displaced children, and nomadic learners—will continue to face exclusion from quality education. The study therefore highlights the urgent need for sustainable and context-sensitive strategies to transform Somalia’s education system into one that is equitable, accessible, and inclusive for all learners.

## 6. Recommendations

The Federal Government and state education ministries should allocate increased budgetary resources toward inclusive education programs, particularly for infrastructure development, assistive learning materials, and teacher recruitment. Funding mechanisms should prioritize vulnerable and underserved communities to ensure equitable access to education opportunities for all learners.

Teacher training institutions should integrate inclusive education methodologies into both pre-service and in-service training programs. Continuous professional development initiatives should focus on disability inclusion, differentiated instruction, classroom management, and psychosocial support to equip teachers with the competencies required to address diverse learning needs effectively.

Schools should be equipped with disability-friendly infrastructure such as ramps, accessible toilets, assistive devices, and inclusive classroom facilities. Greater attention should be directed toward rural and displacement-affected areas where educational infrastructure remains inadequate and inaccessible for many vulnerable learners.

The Ministry of Education should establish and enforce comprehensive policies and operational guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education. Schools should also receive practical frameworks and monitoring mechanisms that support the effective inclusion of children with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

Community sensitization campaigns should be strengthened to reduce stigma and negative cultural attitudes toward children with disabilities, girls' education, and other marginalized learners. Parents, religious leaders, community elders, and local organizations should actively participate in promoting positive attitudes toward inclusive education within communities.

Schools and education authorities should strengthen collaboration with non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, and international development partners to support inclusive education initiatives. Such partnerships can provide technical expertise, financial support, teacher training opportunities, and essential educational resources that enhance inclusive practices.

Educational institutions should expand the use of affordable and accessible technologies to support diverse learning needs. Digital learning tools, audio-visual materials, and assistive technologies can significantly improve participation, accessibility, and learning outcomes for students with disabilities and learners in remote areas.

Parents and students should be encouraged to actively participate in school decision-making processes related to inclusive education. Schools should establish inclusive platforms that allow learners, including children with disabilities, to express their concerns, share their experiences, and contribute to educational planning and improvement.

The government should strengthen data collection and monitoring systems by establishing a reliable Education Management Information System (EMIS) capable of collecting disaggregated data on disability, gender, displacement, and school participation. Reliable educational data will support evidence-based decision-making, policy formulation, and resource allocation.

Alternative and flexible learning models such as mobile schools, accelerated learning programs, and community-based education initiatives should be expanded to reach nomadic children, displaced learners, and over-age students who are unable to access conventional schooling systems.

Greater emphasis should be placed on promoting gender-responsive inclusive education by addressing barriers affecting girls' participation in schooling. This should include the recruitment of more female teachers, provision of gender-sensitive sanitation facilities, implementation of school safety measures, and awareness programs aimed at reducing early marriage and harmful cultural practices.

Further research should be conducted on inclusive education in Somalia, particularly in areas related to learning outcomes, disability prevalence, climate change impacts on education access, and the relationship between Islamic religious education and formal inclusive schooling systems. Such research will contribute to the development of context-specific and evidence-based educational policies and interventions.

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