

Launch Event for Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG)  
Talking Points by Kate Radford

As you've seen from the video, the AEWG has developed many materials. But Alternative Education (AE) has been around for many years. Why do we need these tools and guidance now?

Global increase in AE programmes to address high rates of out-of-school children and youth

As Ita Sheehy mentioned, although there is a wide agreement on need for AE, but lack of validated doc that provides guidance, standards, and indicators for PCM. AE often implemented in many different ways even within the same country.

In recognition of this, the AEWG identified the need for a more standardized approach and clarity on AE to improve quality.

What was our journey?

**Key programming definitions:** Clarify difference between AE, accelerated learning, catch-up programs, remedial programs, and bridging programs.

**Principles for effective practice for AE:** Clarify essential components of effective AE programs. Each principle contains evidence-informed best practices that are embodied in action points under each principle. These 10 principles are the foundation of all our materials and guidance.

**Next, we developed the guide to the AE principles:** This was first developed in 2016, elaborating on the principles.

We wanted to know how useful and applicable these new tools and guidance were, so field testing was conducted between mid-2016 and March 2017. The testing involved:

1. the development of a checklist, based on the 10 principles and associated action points;
2. the solicitation of feedback from global Accelerated Education experts;
3. and field visits to four Accelerated Education programs in Kenya, Afghanistan, and Sierra Leone, as well as a desk study conducted in Mali.

The purpose was to test the relevance, utility, and application of the Accelerated Education Principles and Guide in various contexts, with different target populations, and at various stages of the program cycle.

Field testing also focused on a series of case studies from Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and two programs in Dadaab refugee camp in northeast Kenya that highlight how contextual differences are managed in assessing adherence to the principles and in ensuring

effectiveness of AE programs generally. The case studies are available online.

Based on the results and recommendations from the field testing, the Accelerated Education Working Group then revised all of the guidance materials. As part of this revision, we identified the need for an Accelerated Education checklist, which is a practical field tool based on the principles that helps determine actions needed to improve Accelerated Education programs.

Recognizing there is also little significant documentation on the impact of such programming, the Accelerated Education Working Group has recently developed a learning agenda for Accelerated Education. The learning agenda is comprised of a set of research questions in priority development areas.

The ultimate aim of these tools and guidance is to strengthen the quality of Accelerated Education programming so we are able to provide access to a flexible, age-appropriate education for some of the 263 million out-of-school children and youth.