

Advancing Learning Outcomes for Transformational Change III (A LOT-Change III)



Endline Evaluation Report - 2024



**African Population and
Health Research Center**

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ABBREVIATIONS

A LOT-Change	Advancing Learning Outcomes for Transformational Change
AMREF ESRC	Ethics and Scientific Review Committee
APHRC	African Population and Health Research Center
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
CASEL	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
DID	Difference in Differences
DIFF	Difference
ESRC	Ethics & Scientific Review Committee
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HH	Household
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDI	In-depth Interview
IRR	Inter-Rater Reliability
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KII	Key Informant Interview
KOCH	Korogocho
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard Error
SER	Social-emotional Resiliency
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TV	Television
VIWA	Viwandani

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SUMMARY FINDINGS

1. Characteristics of Respondents

- The parental guardian questionnaire was responded to by 908 and 835 parents at baseline and endline, respectively.
- The individual schooling history questionnaire was responded to by 909 and 644 adolescents at baseline and endline.
- The individual behavior, life skills, and socio-emotional resilience tools were both responded to by 804 and 644 adolescents at baseline and endline respectively.
- The respondent attrition between baseline and endline was mostly attributed to the COVID-19 disruptions in the academic calendar that necessitated the study participants to stay close to their respective schools, away from the urban informal settlements.
- At the endline, **52%** of the sample was from Korogocho and **48%** from Viwandani.
- A higher percentage of girls than boys was recorded at both baseline and endline at **52%** and **51%** respectively.
- The follow-up cohort was **41%** and **44%** of the adolescents at baseline and endline respectively.
- The proportion of adolescents living with their fathers/male guardians was **59.1%** and **58.1%** at baseline and endline respectively.
- The proportion of adolescents living with their mother/female guardian was **85.5%** and **87.4%** at baseline and endline respectively.
- About **8.7%** and **13.7%** had missed attending school at least one day in the last schooling week preceding the survey at baseline and endline respectively.
 - The new cohort reported higher absenteeism rates at both baseline and endline at **8.9%** and **15.4%**, compared to the follow-up cohort at **8.4%** and **11.4%**.
 - Relatively more adolescent girls (**9.8%**) reported absenteeism compared to boys (**7.6%**) at baseline, with more adolescent boys reporting absenteeism compared to girls at **16.3%** and **11.2%** at endline.
- The two common reasons for missing school at the endline were sickness (**31.8%**) and school fees (**26.1%**).
- More adolescent boys (**38.1%**) than girls (**26.5%**) indicated missing school because of sickness.
- A higher percentage of girls (**42.2%**) compared to boys (**26.2%**) reported absenteeism due to school fees.
- Slightly more adolescents in the follow-up cohort (82%) reported completing their English homework compared to the new cohort (80%).
- About 80% of the adolescents in the follow-up cohort (**80%**) reported completing their Mathematics homework compared to the new cohort (**69%**).
- More adolescent girls (**85%**) reported completing their English homework compared to boys (**77%**).
- The proportion of adolescents reporting to receive homework support from household members was relatively similar at the endline for the follow-up and new cohorts.
 - **57%** and **43%** of adolescents in the follow-up cohort received English and Mathematics homework support compared to 58% and 42% of those in the new cohort respectively.

2. Achievement in Numeracy and Literacy

- The follow-up group performed better in literacy and numeracy, although the differences were not statistically significant. At the endline, the mean differences between the follow-up and new cohort were 15.9 points and 11.8 points for numeracy and literacy respectively.
- Both adolescent boys and girls in the follow-up cohort recorded relatively better mean scores in numeracy and literacy compared to the new cohort, with girls recording higher mean score differences compared to boys between baseline and endline.
- Similar to baseline, boys scored statistically better, in numeracy than girls irrespective of the cohort.
- Adolescent girls outperformed boys in literacy at both baseline and endline, though the differences were not statistically significant.
- Adolescent boys enrolled in single-gender schools performed significantly better in numeracy than boys enrolled in mixed schools and girls enrolled in both mixed and single-gender schools.
- Adolescent boys in single-gender schools performed significantly better in literacy scores than boys in mixed-gender schools.

- Adolescent girls in both single and mixed-gender schools performed relatively better in literacy than boys in single-gender schools.
- Students in boarding schools performed significantly better in both numeracy and literacy compared to their counterparts in day schools.
- On average, students from private schools (though fewer in number) posted lower scores in literacy and numeracy than those in public schools.
- The follow-up cohort performed better in all the numeracy cognitive domains (knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis) compared to the new cohort although the differences were not statistically significant.
- A subsequent increment in age was associated with a reduction in numeracy and literacy scores by 9.6 points (numeracy), 12.5 points (literacy), and 12.4 points (combined numeracy and literacy scores).

3. Pupil Behavior, Parental Involvement, and Life Skills

Delinquent Behavior

- Majority of the items measuring delinquent behavior were at ceiling across sites, sex, and cohort (ranging between **93 %** and **100%**), meaning that a majority of the adolescents had not engaged in that delinquent behavior.
- There was still a proportion of learners involved in fights with peers (**22.4%** at baseline and **19.6%** at endline) or had taken something that did not belong to themselves (**18.7%** at baseline and **12.4%** at endline).

Educational Goals and Future Aspirations

- The follow-up group exhibited significantly higher mean scores on education goals and future aspirations compared to the new cohort at both baseline and endline.
- At both baseline and endline, most adolescents reported feeling self-confident (mean score of above 4.90 out of a possible score of 5).

Self-Confidence and Supporting Others to Feel Confident

- The mean score for the adolescents' ability to support their peers to be self-confident ranged between 2.79 and 2.92 out of a possible score of 4 at baseline and endline respectively.

Parental Involvement and Monitoring

- The majority of the parents indicated that they were aware of where and whom their children spend time with after school, with a slight decrease noted at the endline for both the follow-up and new cohorts, indicating a slight reduction in parental monitoring as the adolescents seek more independence.

Perception of the School Environment

- Whereas the majority of the adolescents had a positive outlook on their school environments;
- **7%** felt that teachers have sexual advances or sometimes have sexual relations with students
- **34%** felt that drinking and drug abuse was a problem in their school
- **47%** agreed that fighting between students was also a big problem in their schools
- **16%** worried about getting harassed by teachers
- **19%** worried about getting harassed by fellow students

Drug and Substance Abuse

- There was a significant increase at baseline and endline of boys using alcohol (**3% to 15%**) and bhanga (**4% to 10%**) respectively.

Sexual Reproductive Health

- There were significant increases in the proportion of adolescent boys engaging in sexual intercourse between baseline and endline at **6.7%** to **14.3%** respectively.
- Although there was a slight increase in the proportion of girls engaging in sexual intercourse, the proportion increase was not statistically significant.
- Adolescents displayed relatively good knowledge of the physiological consequences of engaging in sexual activity such as getting infected with HIV/AIDS, STIs and getting pregnant.
- Peer influence and the need to be popular were the major contributors to the poor knowledge on the social

consequences of engaging in sexual activity.

- About 20% of the adolescents felt that they could not decline sexual advances without losing a friend.

Source of Information on Sex, Drugs, Smoking and Alcohol

- The five greatest sources of information about sex, drugs, smoking, and alcohol were teachers, the A LOT-Change project, friends, television, and social media.
- There was an increase in the number of adolescents reporting friends as a key source of information for all the items with the highest increase recorded for alcohol from **12% to 23%**.
- Social media was also reported as a key source of information on sex by adolescents with an increase from baseline (**11%**) to endline (**17%**).
- There was a decrease in the number of adolescents reporting social media as a key source of information for smoking and alcohol.
- There was a decrease in the percentage of adolescents reporting parents as a key source of information on sex from **7% to 2%** at baseline and endline respectively.

Preferred Persons to Discuss Issues about Puberty

- Majority of the adolescents preferred to discuss puberty issues with their parents with a slight decrease noted between baseline and endline at **44% to 34%** respectively.
- The preference to discuss puberty issues with peers decreased from **21% to 11%** between baseline and endline.

4. Social-Emotional Resiliency

- Although the mean scores were at ceiling at baseline and endline, there were slight increases in all of the sub-scales except for youth community connections and adult-youth connections.
- The new cohort performed significantly better in the Self-regulatory efficacy sub-scale meaning that they were better equipped to resist negative peer pressure as a result of the intervention compared to the follow-up cohort.
- At endline, adolescents in Korogocho scored better in social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, youth community connections and adult-youth connections (significant differences were only for social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, and youth community connections).
- Adolescent boys scored significantly better in social self-efficacy and youth community connections at baseline, and social self-efficacy at endline.
- Adolescent girls scored slightly better than boys on self-regulation (though not statistically significant).

5. Qualitative Results

- The qualitative findings suggested that the community members; including parents, adolescents, mentors, counselors, and local administration, saw huge differences between adolescents and parents enrolled in the A LOT-Change project and those not enrolled.
- For the adolescents, the differences mainly touched on academic achievement, behavior, aspirations, confidence, self-regulation, enhanced parent-adolescent relationship and communication, leadership skills, and engagement in social skills.
- The noted differences among parents were enhanced involvement in their children's education, enhanced parent-child relationship, positive thinking and openness to new information, enhanced financial management, reduced engagement in social ills, and enhanced parental well-being.
- Some key benefits highlighted by the adolescents accruing from the digital literacy sessions included enhanced basic computer knowledge, opportunities for future career opportunities, remaining relevant in the 21st century, and being kept busy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, education systems are being enhanced to respond to the increasing demand of the 21st century that requires students who are both academically, socially, and emotionally competent (Cristóvão, Candeias, & Verdasca, 2017; J. Greenberg, 2014). In this regard, learning, therefore, goes beyond basic academic skills (reading, writing, counting) to promote students' social-emotional competence, character, health, and civic engagement (M. T. Greenberg et al., 2003). Although the term 21st-century skills are relatively challenging to define due to the broad skills and knowledge it encompasses (Button, 2021; Joynes, Rossignoli, & Amonoo-Kuofi, 2019; Voogt & Roblin, 2010), some of the key concepts generally agreed upon include; communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, decision making and digital literacy (Button, 2021). Additionally, these 21st-century skills can be taught in and out of school (Button, 2021). These non-academic competencies include life skills, soft skills, 21st-century skills, transferable skills, social-emotional learning, or psychosocial skills (CASEL, 2015; Cimatti, 2016; World Health Organization, 1994).

The World Health Organization (1994) defines life skills as the psychosocial skills needed to deal with the challenges and demands of everyday life, with a focus on five competencies that include; decision-making and problem-solving, creative thinking and critical thinking, communication and interpersonal skills, self-awareness and empathy, and coping with emotions and coping with stress. The other commonly referenced framework is the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), which defines social and emotional learning as the processes through which children and adults acquire and apply knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve constructive goals, empathize with others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make decisions responsibly (CASEL, 2003, 2015).

These developments have coincided with the ongoing curriculum reform efforts in Kenya to adopt a competency-based approach to equip learners with relevant 21st-century skills, such as communication and collaboration, self-efficacy, critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and imagination, citizenship, digital learning and learning to learn (KICD, 2017). These efforts have already been mainstreamed in other countries, such as the United States of America, where social-emotional learning has been integrated into academic learning (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013).

Importance of Social-Emotional Skills

Extant literature indicates that programs focusing on the social and emotional well-being of students are associated with improved academic achievement, enhanced life and educational aspirations, greater interest in schooling, improved self-confidence, enhanced parent-child relationship; enhanced resistance to negative peer pressure, and increased parental involvement in their children's education and lives (Abuya et al., 2018; Abuya et al., 2015). In addition, research indicates that positive social-emotional outcomes are important determinants of academic achievement (Blake, Piovesan, Montinari, Warneken, & Gino, 2015). A meta-analysis by Durlak, Dymnicki, Taylor, Weissberg, and Schellinger (2011) showed that social-emotional interventions produce significant positive effects on social competencies, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance.

Furthermore, social-emotional programs have been shown to reduce student aggression and bullying in schools (Durlak et al., 2011). Students with social-emotional skills can engage in constructive communication and conflict resolution. This is especially important considering that, over the recent past, Kenyan secondary schools have experienced their fair share of arson attacks. The attacks are exacerbated mainly by the fact that students lack negotiation and conflict resolution skills whenever they disagree with the school administration, thus resulting in such acts (Muhia, 2018; Muhia & Abuya, 2016). With bullying rampant in Kenyan secondary schools (Ndeti et al, 2007), social-emotional skills for students at this level become very critical as a mitigation measure.

Social-emotional development is also an effective classroom management strategy. The argument is that children with healthy social-emotional outcomes such as regulating emotions, conflict resolution, collaboration, and communication skills are less disruptive and effectively participate in the classroom (Jones et al., 2014). In terms of preparing students for the workforce, social-emotional skills have also been shown to be essential for professional life. For instance, a report by the World Economic Forum (2016) proposed that emotional intelligence will be one of the top 10 job skills in 2020.

Given the significance of secondary education as a bridge to students' success in both the workforce and higher education and the importance of having the necessary skills to promote their success, we report on a three-year community-based holiday support program that sought to impart a broad spectrum of life skills using the social-emotional framework to adolescent girls and boys enrolled in secondary school and living in urban informal settlements. We continue to emphasize intervening during adolescence because this phase is characterized by both physical and psychological changes that predispose them to drug and substance abuse, risky sexual behavior, and uninformed decision-making (Blum, Bastos, Kabiru, & Le, 2012; Johnston, 2010; Kabiru & Orpinas, 2009).

Parental Involvement

The importance of parental involvement cannot be understated. Research evidence shows that parental involvement plays a pivotal role in motivating children to study well and improving their well-being (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2003, 2007; Wilder, 2014). For instance, in a cross-sectional survey of grade 6 students in Uganda, active parental involvement was found to have a significant positive effect on students' numeracy and literacy scores (Mahuro & Hungi, 2016). In addition, where parents are involved in their children's education, students report more effort, concentration, attention, and interest in learning, seek challenging tasks, persist through academic challenges, experience satisfaction in schoolwork, are more motivated to read and voluntarily participate in literacy activities (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein, 2005). A study by Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) showed that parental involvement, particularly in discussing school activities and helping children plan their programs, was strongly associated with academic achievement. The study also concluded that parental involvement affected academic achievement irrespective of family background. Parental involvement is not only associated with enhanced academic performance but also with reduced school absenteeism (Hayes, 2012). Some studies also recommend that if both parents are involved, the academic gains for their children are likely to be higher (Perriell, 2015).

Parental involvement is also associated with enhanced sexual reproductive health and rights for adolescent girls. For instance, family characteristics, such as parental involvement, monitoring, and relationship with parents, are associated with the likelihood of engaging in sexual activity, experiencing sexual violence, and engaging in drug and substance use (McBride et al., 2005; Pilgrim & Blum, 2012). In addition, parent-adolescent communication on sexual reproductive health issues is linked to a reduced prevalence of adolescent pregnancy (Kassa, Arowojolu, Odukogbe, & Yalew, 2018). This is especially important considering that adolescents would prefer to discuss Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) issues with their parents as compared to their teachers and peers.

Parental involvement has also been linked to improved well-being among children. For instance, in a study by Flouri and Buchanan (2003), parental involvement was found to contribute to their children's happiness significantly. This is consistent with other studies that indicate that children who discuss the importance of education and future education plans with their parents tend to do better emotionally (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).

Justification for the Study

Extant literature highlights poor education outcomes for learners living in urban informal settlements (Ejakait, Mutisya, Ezeh, Oketch, & Ngware, 2011). For instance, a systematic review of urban poverty and education by Silva-Laya, D'Angelo, García, Zúñiga, and Fernández (2020) highlighted that despite the urban poor accessing school, they are not able to fully attain their right to education due to low academic achievement, low future aspirations, and resource deprivation. A study by APHRC also showed that pupils living in urban informal settlements experienced lower primary school completion and transition to secondary school rates (76 percent and 46 percent) compared to their peers in other urban settings at 92 percent and 72 percent, respectively (Admassu, 2013). Gender inequality issues are also evident, with some studies indicating that boys have enhanced prospects for academic achievement and transition to secondary school and tertiary levels (Ngware, Ciera, Abuya, Oketch, & Mutisya, 2012).

Moreover, adolescents living in urban informal settlements also tend to experience sexual reproductive health and rights challenges (Beguy et al., 2013). For instance, they are more likely to engage in sexual activities at an early age (Dodoo, Zulu, & Ezeh, 2007; Kabiru, Beguy, Undie, Zulu, & Ezeh, 2010; Zulu, Dodoo, & Chika-Ezeh, 2002). Girls living in urban informal settlements also experience frequent sexual harassment and violence in and out of school (Abuya, Onsomu,

Moore, & Sagwe, 2012). The high incidence of poverty also exposes girls and young women to transactional sex to cater to their needs (Stoebenau, Heise, Wamoyi, & Bobrova, 2016). Evidence also indicates that education investments may positively affect sexual and reproductive health. However, the pathways and causal effects are not so clear and direct (Psaki, Chuang, Melnikas, Wilson, & Mensch, 2019). Basic literacy and numeracy skills have also been shown to be a critical foundation for the development of healthy behaviors during adolescence and adulthood as they improve the comprehension of SRHR knowledge (Lloyd, 2007). A study by Marteleto, Lam, and Ranchhod (2008) also showed that adolescents with better literacy and numeracy skills were less likely to become sexually active and drop out of school.

Urban informal settlements are also characterized by high crime rates, with the leading cause of death among male youth and adults being injuries that result from assaults (Mberu, Wamukoya, Oti, & Kyobutungi, 2015), implying high involvement in violent crimes (Ezeh et al., 2017). Consequently, engaging in crime has a detrimental effect on adolescents' academic outcome (Burdick-Will, 2013). On the other hand, improving education can reduce crime among offenders and potential offenders and is thus an important policy tool in the fight against this vice (Lochner & Moretti, 2004; Machin, Marie, & Vujic, 2011).

Parental involvement has also been shown to be low in urban informal settlements. For instance, a study by Oketch, Mutisya, and Sagwe (2012), examining parental aspirations as a mechanism of parental involvement, showed that parents living in slums have lower aspirations for their children's educational attainment when compared to those who live in non-slum areas. The study also highlighted that despite the low aspirations, these parents nevertheless aspire for higher levels of educational attainment for their children than their levels of education. This underscores the need for education interventions to also focus on parental involvement.

In addition to the urban informal challenges, the A LOT-Change adolescents, just like many others who are in secondary school, are sometimes faced with negative experiences when they transition to secondary school. These include increased academic workload, harsh teachers, inability to keep up with learning, finding their way in the new school, school rules, making friends, and bullying (Akos & Galassi, 2004; Moore et al., 2021). These negative experiences are in turn associated with reduced school interest, reduced respect for teachers (Rice, Frederickson, & Seymour, 2011), and increased likelihood of school dropout (Cohen & Smerdon, 2009). The increased investment in education worldwide also means that more young people are now spending more years in school. As a result, they are prone to negative social, emotional, and mental outcomes such as depression and social isolation. For instance, according to Rudolph, Lambert, Clark, and Kurlakowsky (2001), as students transition from elementary to middle school, they are often faced with both academic and emotional stresses as a result of the new setting that comes with complex academic material, strict grading systems, and making a new friend. As a result, young people need to develop skills such as concentration, impulse control, and emotional regulation to overcome such challenges (Lopes & Salovey, 2004).

1.1 The Intervention and Theory of Change

Informed by the numerous challenges affecting adolescent education and well-being in urban informal settlements, the APHRC, in partnership with two local organizations, Miss Koch Kenya and U-Tena Youth Organization, initiated an integrated after-school-support program in 2013 to equip adolescents and their parents with the skills and knowledge to sidestep these challenges. The program is known as the Advancing Learning Outcomes for Transformational Change (A LOT-Change) and is being implemented in two urban informal settlements (Korogocho and Viwandani). The first phase (2013-2015) only targeted adolescent girls in grades 6-8 and comprised homework support in numeracy and literacy, life skills mentoring, parental counseling, and transition to secondary school subsidy. From the successes of the initial phase, the intervention was scaled up in phase 2 (2016-2018) to include a leadership component and target both adolescent boys and girls, with the other components remaining the same. A LOT Change Phase III was a follow-up study of the Phase II cohort who transitioned to secondary school in 2019. In this Phase, APHRC, in liaison with Miss Koch Kenya and U-Tena, tested the feasibility of implementing the A LOT-Change model among older adolescents and established the sustainability of the effects of the intervention as observed in phase II on the adolescents in secondary school.

A breakdown of phase III intervention components is provided below:

- **Mentorship in soft skills:** This module involved mentoring and imparting soft skills (self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) among adolescent boys and girls to enable them to successfully overcome the challenges of growing up as they transition to adulthood. The mentorship was also meant to empower them with the set of tools required to maneuver the new secondary school environment where they have to make new friends, work in teams, overcome peer pressure, and circumvent ills such as bullying. Twenty-four soft skills sessions are undertaken annually.
- **Exposure visits and motivational talks:** These intervention components provided practical opportunities that challenge adolescent girls and boys to start thinking about their prospective future careers and pathways to those careers. Exposure visits introduced adolescents to work environments and institutions of higher learning. On the other hand, professionals in various sectors shared experiences about their professions. They also encouraged adolescents to push themselves out of their comfort zone and raise personal goals and aspirations. Furthermore, these components are vital since it is at the secondary school level (Form 2) that students begin to select subjects that they feel will be more relevant to future aspirations and careers. Therefore, the motivational talks from individuals in different careers gave them some information about what is required academically to excel in that career. Four motivational talks and one exposure visit are planned annually.
- **Service-learning:** The service-learning activities provided a platform for the adolescents to practice what they had learned in the intervention classes. With supervision from their mentors, the adolescents were engaged in identifying a problem they wanted to solve, designing the solution(s), mobilizing for partners, sensitizing community members, undertaking the identified service learning activity, and documenting the lessons learned. This way, they not only owned the process but also felt accountable and responsible for providing solutions. In addition, it was expected that this would promote social responsibility and citizenship skills. One service-learning activity was undertaken annually.
- **Guidance and counseling of parents:** This intervention component sensitized parents and guardians of adolescent boys and girls enrolled in the project on how best to be involved in their children's lives and education. Parents were placed in support groups facilitated by a counselor, where they shared experiences and supported each other on parenting. To achieve this, ten parental counseling sessions are held annually.
- **Holiday homework support:** Here, the peer-to-peer support strategy was used to provide a platform for adolescents to share knowledge on various secondary school subjects and complete their holiday homework. The importance of peer-to-peer support lies in the ability of students from various schools and with varied capabilities to support each other. The group discussions were facilitated by a mentor who assisted the students in identifying and prioritizing topics for discussion. The key difference between the holiday homework support and extra tuition was that there was no teaching involved in the holiday homework support sessions, rather, the adolescents met in the safe spaces provided by the program and supported each other. Twelve holiday homework sessions are conducted annually.
- **Digital literacy:** Under this component, we partnered with local computer colleges to train students on using digital content and devices effectively and safely. It was expected that as a result of the training, students would acquire the requisite knowledge and skills to be computer literate and enable them to effectively and safely interact with various digital content and devices. This component was also important in the Kenyan context, considering that digital literacy is one of the key competencies in the competency-based curriculum (KICD, 2017). This being a short course, students were enrolled for the component in the last year of the project.

In the short-term, these intervention components were expected to broaden the enrolled students' view of prospective future career paths in different sectors and knowledge of what it takes to get there; improve their social responsibility and citizenship skills; improve soft skills knowledge among adolescent boys and girls; improve learning outcomes; enhance their knowledge and skills in the use of digital hardware and related software; and increase parental support for their children's education. In the long term, we hope that by securing the future of these adolescent boys and girls, they will, in turn, transform their communities positively.

A summary of the intervention components and theory of change is shown in Figure 1.

Intervention Packages and Activities	Intermediate Outcomes	Impact
Career Awareness Training • Exposure visits to various institutions. • Motivational talks established individuals within different sectors. • Service-learning through active participation in meaningful, organized community service.	• Broadened view of prospective future career paths in different sectors and knowledge of what it takes to get there. • Improved social responsibility and citizenship skills for adolescent boys and girls. • Improved soft skills knowledge among adolescent boys and girls. • Increased parental involvement in their children's lives and education. • Improved learning outcomes for adolescent boys and girls. • Enhanced knowledge, skills and behaviour in the use of digital content and devices among adolescent boys and girls.	Securing the future of adolescent boys and girls through improved learning outcomes, career awareness and social-emotional development.
Soft Skills (Life Skills, Social-Emotional) Training on: • Self-awareness (Identifying emotions; Accurate self-perception; Recognizing strengths; Self-confidence; Self-efficacy • Self-management (Impulse control; Stress management; Self-discipline; Self-motivation; Goal-setting; Organizational skills) • Social awareness (Perspective-taking; Empathy; Appreciating diversity; Respect for others) • Relationship skills (Communication; Social engagement; Relationship-building; Teamwork) • Responsible decision making (Identifying problems; Analysing situations; Solving problems; Evaluating; Reflecting; ethical responsibility)		
Parental Counseling • Support groups for parents to discuss and support each other on parenting		
Holiday Homework Support • Safe space for beneficiaries to do and support each other to complete their holiday homework		
Digital Literacy • Lessons on the effective and safe use of digital content and devices.		
Policy Engagement Program best practices, evidence and impact documented and contribute to policy practice and scale-up		

Figure 1: The A LOT-Change III program theory of change

1.2 Recruitment, Training and Data Collection

The endline data collection and training were conducted in two phases due to the changes in the academic calendar resulting from the COVID-19 disruptions that meant schools would be in session until the third week of December. As a result, the first phase took place in November and December 2021, targeting parents/guardians, mentors, counselors, and community leaders. The second phase took place in March and April 2022, targeting adolescents who were on their long school holiday. A team of 17 and 11 field staff were engaged during these two phases, respectively. The field staff underwent rigorous training on project objectives, quantitative and qualitative research skills, and research ethics. In addition, all the field staff consented to the APHRC child protection guidelines to enhance their responsibility and accountability in safeguarding the welfare of children when dispensing their duties. The teams were also trained on electronic data collection using SurveyCTO software, uploading the latest version of the data collection tools, and transmitting data to the main database. The training also included mock interviews, and role plays to enhance the comprehension of the content being covered. An Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) test was also administered to measure the extent to which the field staff were assigning the same score to the same variable. These quality control measures enabled trainees to practice and point out areas that the trainers needed to focus on more in the training, consequently ensuring field staff were well equipped for data collection.

After filling out all the relevant tools, data was transmitted to the central database daily to allow the research team to access data and track progress in the field. Where the research team noted inconsistencies in the data, the same was communicated to the field team for immediate correction. Additionally, a WhatsApp group was set up to facilitate communication between the field and research team, for instance, to communicate updated versions of the data collection software.

Field meetings were held weekly for the team to update the field leadership on progress, strategies for mobilizing respondents, lessons learned, challenges, and any matter that needed attention. Field staff were also provided with security to help them access respondents during late hours and as protection for themselves and the field equipment. In addition to the field meetings, field supervisors in the two study sites conducted sit-ins and spot checks for each data collector to minimize data collection errors.

The following quantitative questionnaires were fielded:

- **Individual schooling history questionnaire** was used to collect data on the pupils' schooling history and attendance including the type and location of the school, absenteeism from school, change of school, repetition, and extra tuition.
- **Individual behavior/soft skills questionnaire** collected data on levels of pupils' soft skills (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships, and responsible decision-making). In addition, the questionnaire collected information on people's knowledge, attitudes, and practice on sexual reproductive health and rights and drug and substance abuse.
- **Social-emotional resilience questionnaire** assessed the students' social-emotional resilience by focusing on six key competencies: social self-efficacy (the ability to relate to and communicate effectively with others); self-assertive efficacy (the ability to speak up for one's rights); self-regulatory efficacy (the ability to resist negative peer pressure); youth-community connections: neighborhood support & activities; social competencies; and adult-youth connections outside of home and school.
- **Parental/guardian involvement questionnaire** gathered data on parental involvement in the education of boys and girls in the community regarding the provision of resources, homework support, school follow-up, and follow-up to know how, where, and with whom they spend their time.
- **Literacy and numeracy written assessments.** The literacy assessment \ evaluated the students' ability to read, write, speak, and listen for effective communication. On the other hand, the numeracy assessment evaluated their ability to access, use, interpret, and communicate mathematical information and ideas.

For the qualitative study, 126 respondents, including 75 parents, 32 adolescents, 6 mentors, 4 counselors, and 9 community leaders, were interviewed through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and dialogues, as indicated in Table 1. Daily debriefs were held to discuss interview dynamics, reflect on what went well or not, and identify opportunities for improving future interviews. Below is a description of qualitative respondents and their selection.

- **Selection of pupils:** Four dialogues, two in each site, were held with adolescent boys and girls enrolled in the A LOT-Change project. Separate dialogues were held for adolescent boys and girls. Each dialogue consisted of 8 respondents. Interviews were conducted after seeking consent from their parents and assent from the participants.
- **Selection of parents:** Eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), four in each site, were held with parents. The groups were categorized as follows: fathers with girls in the program, fathers with boys in the program, mothers with girls in the program, and mothers with boys in the program.
- **Selection of mentors and counselors:** Six mentors and four counselors who deliver the after-school support program to adolescents and parental counseling were selected for key informant interviews.
- **Selection of community leaders:** Nine key informant interviews were conducted with one assistant county commissioner, 2 Chiefs, and 6 village elders in Korogocho and Viwandani.

Table 1: Distribution of qualitative interviews

Study Population	Korogocho (n=62)	Viwandani (n=64)	Total (N=126)
Focus group discussions (FGDs)			
Parents	37	38	75
Key informant interviews (KIs)			
Community leaders	4	5	9
Mentors	3	3	6
Counselors	2	2	4
Dialogues			
Adolescent boys and girls	16	16	32

1.3 Data analysis

1.3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

We used a mix of approaches to analyze the endline data as described in this section. Firstly, we conducted descriptive data analyses, which involved means, frequencies, and percentages. Tests such as Chi-square tests, T-tests, and Mann-Whitney tests were used to establish whether there were significant associations or differences between various groups/factors on the outcomes of interest. Secondly, given several indicators, we utilized exploratory factor analysis, a dimension reduction technique to simplify a large number of variables into a smaller number of unobserved variables made up of interrelated items. A latent score measuring the construct of interest was computed using Cronbach's alpha approach for items that were measured using a Likert scale. This approach helped assess whether the items showed internal consistency before computing the averages. The average scores enabled easy mapping back to the original Likert scale response continuum. Additionally, proportions were also used to assess the perceptions of the student's behavior. Thirdly, we used regression analysis to understand the relationships between variables. Finally, the Difference In Differences (DID) approach was used to assess if there were significant differences in the gains between the follow-up group and the new cohort by the end of the third phase. The follow-up group included adolescents who were part of the A LOT-Change Phase II (from 2016 to 2018 and enrolled in the program from grade 6 to 8). The follow-up group was re-enrolled into the third phase as they joined Form 1 in 2019, whereas new-cohort were newly enrolled Form 1 learners from the two study sites. For various sections, the results were categorized by sex, site, and cohort sub-groups among other categories. The results are presented using tables and figures. A detailed description of the approaches used is described in each of the chapters.

1.3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Similar to the baseline study, all the qualitative data were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim in English into Microsoft Word. To enhance the validity of the transcribed data, the transcriptions were crosschecked against audio files. For the coding, the themes of interest were generated both inductively and deductively (Boyatzis, 1998; Crabtree & Miller, 1999) through a coding scheme and fed into NVivo software to make it easier to organize the data. The deductive codes were primarily based on the research questions guiding the qualitative study, while the inductive codes were thematic areas that emerged during the coding process. Similar views from the different categories of respondents were collated during coding. This was important for the study team to deduce general perceptions from the respondents. This was made possible through triangulation where the study team posed a couple of similar questions to the study participants on the same study phenomenon. A coding report organizing the qualitative data into themes of interest was then generated and used to summarize key findings.



2. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

2.1 Sample Characteristics

This section presents the background characteristics of the adolescents (boys and girls) and their parents/guardians who participated in the A LOT-Change Phase III. In particular, this section presents the baseline and endline sample characteristics for the follow-up and the new cohort. The follow-up cohort refers to those study participants who had benefitted from the A LOT-Change Phase II between 2016 to 2018, while the new cohort refers to study participants who were enrolled in the program from 2019 at the beginning of Phase III. At baseline, we had 908 parents who participated in parental guardian interviews, while at the endline, due to attrition the number of parents was reduced to 835. There was also a reduction in the number of adolescents that were reached at the endline to complete the individual schooling questionnaire, that is, from 909 at baseline to 644 at the endline. In addition, the number of adolescents completing the individual behavior and life skills, and the social-emotional resiliency questionnaires were 804 and 644 at baseline and endline periods respectively for both. The attrition was mostly attributed to challenges in reaching the respondents due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions that necessitated the study participants to stay close to their respective schools which were upcountry, away from the urban informal settlements.

At baseline, 49.4% of the sample was from Korogocho, while 50.6% was from Viwandani, while at endline, 52% of the sample was from Korogocho and 48% from Viwandani. Slightly a higher percentage of girls than boys were recorded at both baseline and endline at 52% and 51% respectively (see Table 2). The mean age of learners from Korogocho was significantly higher than those from Viwandani in both time periods (p -value <0.001). The follow-up cohort was 41% and 44% at baseline and endline respectively, this was as a result of attrition by study participants, which indicates that we were able to reach more follow-up participants in the evaluation than the New cohort. A higher percentage of adolescent boys and girls who participated in our study were not orphaned (both parents alive) compared to those who were double orphaned (both parents not alive) or partially orphaned (one parent alive). For instance, results indicate that about three-quarters of adolescent boys and girls at baseline (74.8%) were not orphaned, while this stood at 73.3% at the endline. About two-thirds (66.3%) of the students had not repeated a class as at baseline, whereas at endline, this percentage increased to 70.7%. A higher percentage of students attended a public secondary school than a private secondary school at baseline and endline at 78% and 79%, respectively. Moreover, about half of the learners (53%) studied outside Nairobi county at baseline, whereas at the endline, the percentage of children studying outside Nairobi declined to 48%; this could be attributed to the mobility of learners brought about by several factors including the impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic (Habimana et al., 2022). Table 2 and Table 3 provide more details across the two periods (baseline and endline) and by cohort (Follow-up and Endline), respectively.

Table 2: Learner characteristics (by study site)

		Baseline			Endline		
		Study Site		p-value	Study Site		p-value
		Korogocho	Viwandani		Korogocho	Viwandani	
		N=449	N=460		N=335	N=309	
Learner's sex	Boy	220 (49.0%)	217 (47.2%)	0.580	165 (49.3%)	148 (47.9%)	0.730
	Girl	229 (51.0%)	243 (52.8%)		170 (50.7%)	161 (52.1%)	
Learner's age***		15.6(1.2)	15.0 (1.0)	<0.001	17.8 (1.3)	17.2(1.0)	<0.001
Cohort*	Follow-up	169 (37.6%)	200 (43.5%)	0.073	132 (39.4%)	149 (48.2%)	0.024
	New-Cohort	280 (62.4%)	260 (56.5%)		203 (60.6%)	160 (51.8%)	
Orphan***	Not orphaned	309 (68.8%)	371 (80.7%)	<0.001	235 (70.1%)	237 (76.7%)	0.170
	Partial orphaned	127 (28.3%)	83 (18.0%)		94 (28.1%)	67 (21.7%)	

		Baseline			Endline		
		Study Site		p-value	Study Site		p-value
		Korogocho	Viwandani		Korogocho	Viwandani	
		N=449	N=460		N=335	N=309	
	Double orphaned	13 (2.9%)	6 (1.3%)		6 (1.8%)	5 (1.6%)	
At least one grade repetition	No	298 (66.4%)	305 (66.3%)	0.980	241 (71.9%)	214 (69.3%)	0.450
	Yes	151 (33.6%)	155 (33.7%)		94 (28.1%)	95 (30.7%)	
School type*	Public	339 (75.5%)	369 (80.2%)	0.087	256 (76.4%)	249 (80.6%)	0.200
	Private	110 (24.5%)	91 (19.8%)		79 (23.6%)	60 (19.4%)	
School location***	Within the slum	37 (8.2%)	39 (8.5%)	<0.001	21 (6.3%)	43 (13.9%)	<0.001
	Other slum	15 (3.3%)	28 (6.1%)		8 (2.4%)	20 (6.5%)	
	Other non-slum Nairobi	225 (50.1%)	82 (17.8%)		194 (57.9%)	51 (16.5%)	
	Outside Nairobi	172 (38.3%)	311 (67.6%)		112 (33.4%)	195 (63.1%)	

*significant at 10% level; **significant at 5% level; *** significant at 1% level. For categorical variables, a chi-square test has been conducted whereas for continuous variables, a t-test has been conducted.

Table 3: Learner characteristics (by cohort)

		Baseline			Endline		
		Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value	Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value
		N=369	N=540		N=281	N=363	
Learners's sex	Boy	174 (47.2%)	263 (48.7%)	0.650	137 (48.8%)	176 (48.5%)	0.950
	Girl	195 (52.8%)	277 (51.3%)		144 (51.2%)	187 (51.5%)	
Learner's age***		15.1 (1.0)	15.5 (1.2)	<0.001	17.4 (1.0)	17.7(1.3)	0.002
Study site**	Koch	169 (45.8%)	280 (51.9%)	0.073	132 (47.0%)	203 (55.9%)	0.024
	Viwa	200 (54.2%)	260 (48.1%)		149 (53.0%)	160 (44.1%)	
Orphan	Not orphaned	280 (75.9%)	400 (74.1%)	0.420	209 (74.4%)	263 (72.5%)	0.830
	Partial orphaned	84 (22.8%)	126 (23.3%)		67 (23.8%)	94 (25.9%)	
	Double orphaned	5 (1.4%)	14 (2.6%)		5 (1.8%)	6 (1.7%)	
At least one grade repetition***	No	293 (79.4%)	310 (57.4%)	<0.001	230 (81.9%)	225 (62.0%)	<0.001
	Yes	76 (20.6%)	230 (42.6%)		51 (18.1%)	138 (38.0%)	

		Baseline			Endline		
		Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value	Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value
		N=369	N=540		N=281	N=363	
School type**	Public	301 (81.6%)	407 (75.4%)	0.027	225 (80.1%)	280 (77.1%)	0.370
	Private	68 (18.4%)	133 (24.6%)		56 (19.9%)	83 (22.9%)	
School location**	Within the slum	19 (5.1%)	57 (10.6%)	0.011	20 (7.1%)	44 (12.1%)	0.038
	Other slums	18 (4.9%)	25 (4.6%)		11 (3.9%)	17 (4.7%)	
	Other non-slum Nairobi	118 (32.0%)	189 (35.0%)		100 (35.6%)	145 (39.9%)	
	Outside Nairobi	214 (58.0%)	269 (49.8%)		150 (53.4%)	157 (43.3%)	

* significant at the 10% level; ** significant at the 5% level; *** significant at the 1% level. For categorical variables, a chi-square test was conducted, whereas for continuous variables, a t-test was conducted.

2.2 Parental/Guardian Characteristics

The parental/guardian characteristics in Table 4 indicate that a higher percentage of adolescents had their fathers living in the same households. This was the case for both new and follow-up cohorts at baseline and endline. For instance, at baseline, 59.1% lived with their fathers, while at the endline, the percentage reduced slightly to 58.1%. The percentage of learners living with their mothers/female guardians was higher than that of learners who lived with their fathers/male guardians. For example, at baseline, 85.5% of the learners lived with their mother/female guardian, while at endline, the percentage increased slightly to 87.4%. The frequently reported age group of fathers was 40-49 years at both baseline and endline. On the other hand, the most frequently reported age group for mothers/female guardians was 30-39 years at baseline and 40-49 years at endline. The highest level of education the father/male guardian reached was a secondary school at both baseline and endline and across the cohorts. On the other hand, the majority of mothers had completed primary education level at both baseline and endline and across cohort categories.

Table 4: Parental/guardian characteristics

		Baseline			Endline		
		Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value	Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value
		N=369	N=540		N=281	N=363	
Father/male guardian lives in hh***	No	60 (16.3%)	124 (23.0%)	0.005	47 (16.7%)	76 (20.9%)	0.200
	Yes	241 (65.3%)	296 (54.8%)		174 (61.9%)	200 (55.1%)	
	NA	68 (18.4%)	120 (22.2%)		60 (21.4%)	87 (24.0%)	
Mother/female guardian lives in hh**	No	22 (6.0%)	55 (10.2%)	0.080	11 (3.9%)	36 (9.9%)	0.014
	Yes	324 (87.8%)	453 (83.9%)		254 (90.4%)	309 (85.1%)	
	NA	23 (6.2%)	32 (5.9%)		16 (5.7%)	18 (5.0%)	
Father/male guardian age group*	Below 30 years	3 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)		0	0	
	30-39 years	62 (16.8%)	101 (18.7%)		19 (6.8%)	31 (8.5%)	
	40-49 years	148 (40.1%)	220 (40.7%)		117 (41.6%)	158 (43.5%)	
	50-59 years	69 (18.7%)	77 (14.3%)		69 (24.6%)	72 (19.8%)	
	60 years & above	17 (4.6%)	18 (3.3%)		15 (5.3%)	14 (3.9%)	
	NA	70 (19.0%)	124 (23.0%)		61 (21.7%)	88 (24.2%)	

		Baseline			Endline		
		Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value	Follow-up	New-Cohort	p-value
		N=369	N=540		N=281	N=363	
Mother/female guardian age group	Below 30 years	4 (1.1%)	8 (1.5%)		2 (0.7%)	2 (0.6%)	
	30-39 years	209 (56.6%)	317 (58.7%)		105 (37.4%)	159 (43.8%)	
	40-49 years	101 (27.4%)	151 (28.0%)		123 (43.8%)	143 (39.4%)	
	50-59 years	28 (7.6%)	26 (4.8%)		34 (12.1%)	38 (10.5%)	
	60 years & above	3 (0.8%)	5 (0.9%)		1 (0.4%)	3 (0.8%)	
	NA	24 (6.5%)	33 (6.1%)		16 (5.7%)	18 (5.0%)	
Father/male guardian level of education*	No education	11 (3.0%)	16 (3.0%)	0.052	7 (2.5%)	10 (2.8%)	0.890
	Primary	110 (29.8%)	187 (34.6%)		86 (30.6%)	109 (30.0%)	
	Secondary(O-Level/A-Level)	152 (41.2%)	186 (34.4%)		105 (37.4%)	124 (34.2%)	
	Post-secondary but not university	14 (3.8%)	21 (3.9%)		19 (6.8%)	25 (6.9%)	
	University	12 (3.3%)	6 (1.1%)		3 (1.1%)	7 (1.9%)	
	NA	70 (19.0%)	124 (23.0%)		61 (21.7%)	88 (24.2%)	
Mother/female guardian level of education**	No education	20 (5.4%)	29 (5.4%)	0.012	12 (4.3%)	30 (8.3%)	0.220
	Primary	163 (44.2%)	289 (53.5%)		126 (44.8%)	165 (45.5%)	
	Secondary(O-Level/A-Level)	135 (36.6%)	171 (31.7%)		104 (37.0%)	132 (36.4%)	
	Post-secondary but not university	17 (4.6%)	15 (2.8%)		19 (6.8%)	16 (4.4%)	
	University	10 (2.7%)	3 (0.6%)		4 (1.4%)	2 (0.6%)	
	NA	24 (6.5%)	33 (6.1%)		16 (5.7%)	18 (5.0%)	

*significant at 10% level; **significant at 5% level; *** significant at 1% level. A chi-square test was conducted for categorical variables whereas a t-test was conducted for continuous variables.

2.3 School Attendance and Absenteeism in the Last School Week

Overall, about 8.7% and 13.7% had missed attending school at least one day in the last schooling week preceding the survey at baseline and endline, respectively (See Figure 2). By cohort, the new cohort reported higher absenteeism rates at both baseline and endline at 8.9% and 15.4%, compared to the follow-up cohort at 8.4% and 11.4% during the same period. By student's sex, relatively more adolescent girls (9.8%) reported absenteeism compared to boys (7.6%) at baseline. However, at the endline, more adolescent boys reported absenteeism compared to girls at 16.3% and 11.2%, respectively. By study site, the percentage of absenteeism was slightly higher among the adolescents from Korogocho than those from Viwandani, at both baseline (10.9%) and endline (14.6%). A test of proportions for the differences by cohort, sex, and site indicated that the only statistically significant difference was between the two sites at baseline.

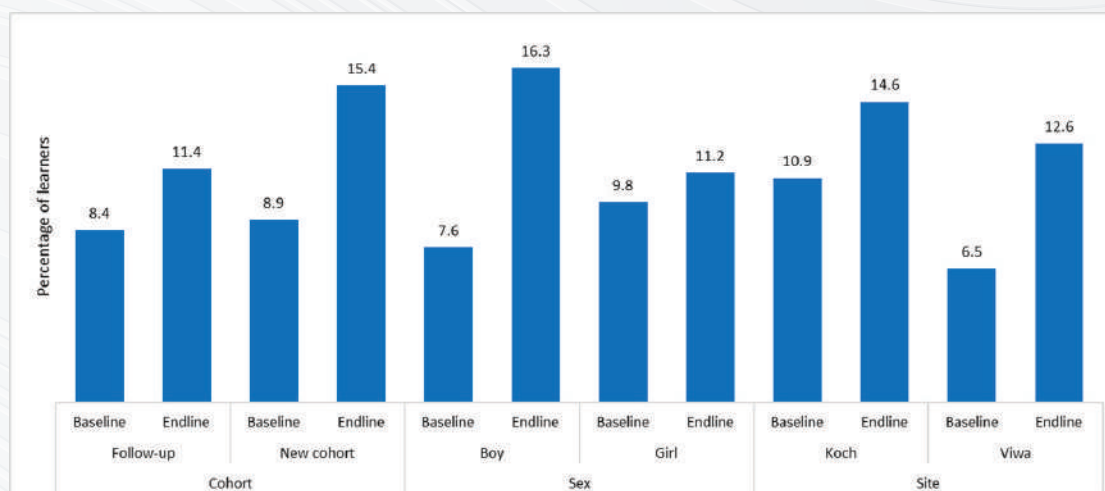


Figure 2: Percentage of learners who missed school at least once in the last schooling week

Overall, the most common reason for absenteeism was lack of school fees, whereby slightly above a third of those who had missed school (34.1%) for this reason, followed by sickness (32.3%) and absence of learning activity in school (15.6%). At the endline, the percentage of those who indicated missing school because of sickness was slightly higher (31.8%) than those who indicated missing school because of school fees (26.1%). By sex, the percentage of adolescent boys who indicated missing school because of sickness (38.1%) was higher than that of girls (26.5%). On the other hand, a higher percentage of girls (42.2%) compared to boys (26.2%) reported absenteeism due to school fees. See Table 5.

Table 5: Reasons for missing school

	Period		Site		Sex		Total
	Baseline	Endline	Korogocho	Viwandani	Boy	Girl	
Lack of school fees	43.0	26.1	31.6	37.7	26.2	42.2	34.1
I was ill/sick	32.9	31.8	28.6	37.7	38.1	26.5	32.3
Done with exams - no learning activity happening then	11.4	19.3	17.4	13.0	15.5	15.7	15.6
Resting - didn't feel like going to school	6.3	6.8	9.2	2.9	7.1	6.0	6.6
Family reasons	1.3	10.2	9.2	1.5	8.3	3.6	6.0
I had to work	1.3	1.1	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	1.2
Bad weather or floods	2.5	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.4	1.2
Suspension	0.0	2.3	1.0	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2
Looking for KCSE registration documents	0.0	2.3	0.0	2.9	2.4	0.0	1.2
Bullying threats	1.3	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.6

2.4 Reading at Home

We assessed the frequency of learners studying at home by asking them how often they read at home with the options: never, once a week, thrice a week, and more than three times a week. Results indicated that the proportion of adolescents who reported 'never' reading at home decreased between baseline and endline in all categories, with the largest change recorded for boys from 8.5% to 2.9%, as shown in Figure 3.

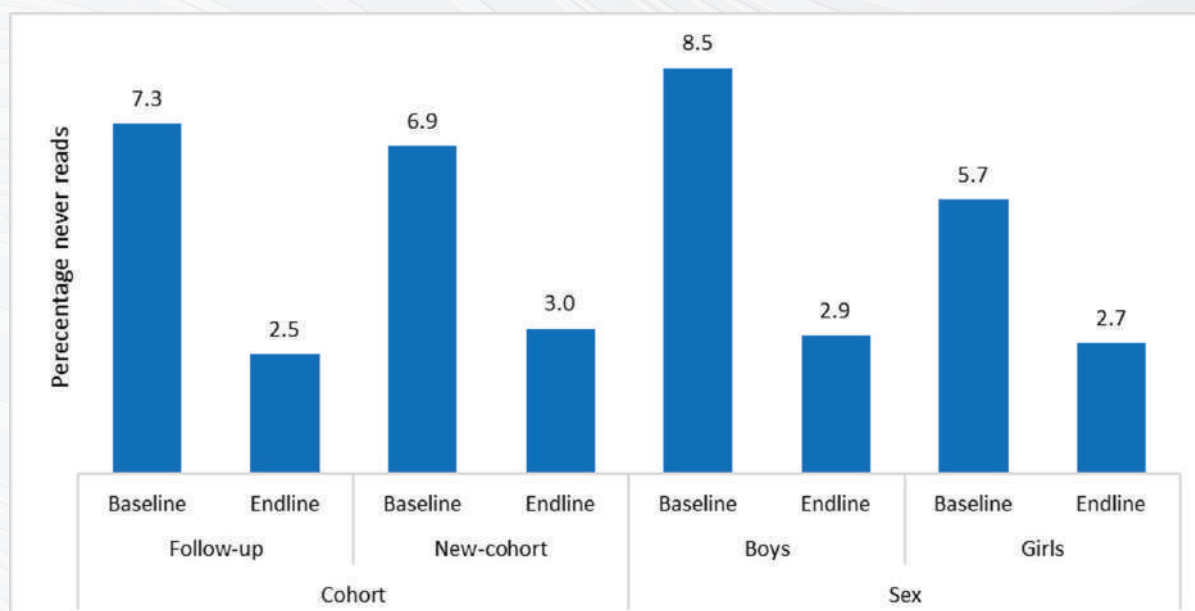


Figure 3: Percentage of adolescents that never read at home

In addition, the majority of the adolescents reported reading at home at least two or more times a week across cohort and sex. See Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency of studying at home by adolescents

	Cohort						Sex					
	Follow-up			New-cohort			Boys			Girls		
	Base line	End line	Total	Base line	End line	Total	Base line	End line	Total	Base line	End line	Total
Never	7.3	2.5	5.2	6.9	3.0	5.3	8.5	2.9	6.1	5.7	2.7	4.5
Once a week	8.4	9.6	8.9	16.5	8.5	13.3	13.0	8.3	11.1	13.4	9.7	11.8
Two times a week	48.0	37.7	43.5	42.2	45.2	43.4	41.2	44.7	42.7	47.7	39.3	44.2
At least three times a week	36.3	50.2	42.3	34.4	43.3	38.0	37.3	44.1	40.1	33.3	48.3	39.5

2.5 Literacy and Numeracy Homework Completion Status

Figure 4 portrays the percentage of learners who always completed their English and Mathematics homework by cohort and sex sub-groups. In comparing the new versus follow-up cohorts, we did not observe a significant difference in the commitment to complete the homework in the two subjects. We generally observed a decrease in the percentage of learners who always completed their English and Mathematics homework from baseline to endline, even though the magnitude was slightly bigger in Mathematics (12.1%) than in English (5.5%). The pattern was similar across cohort and sex categories.

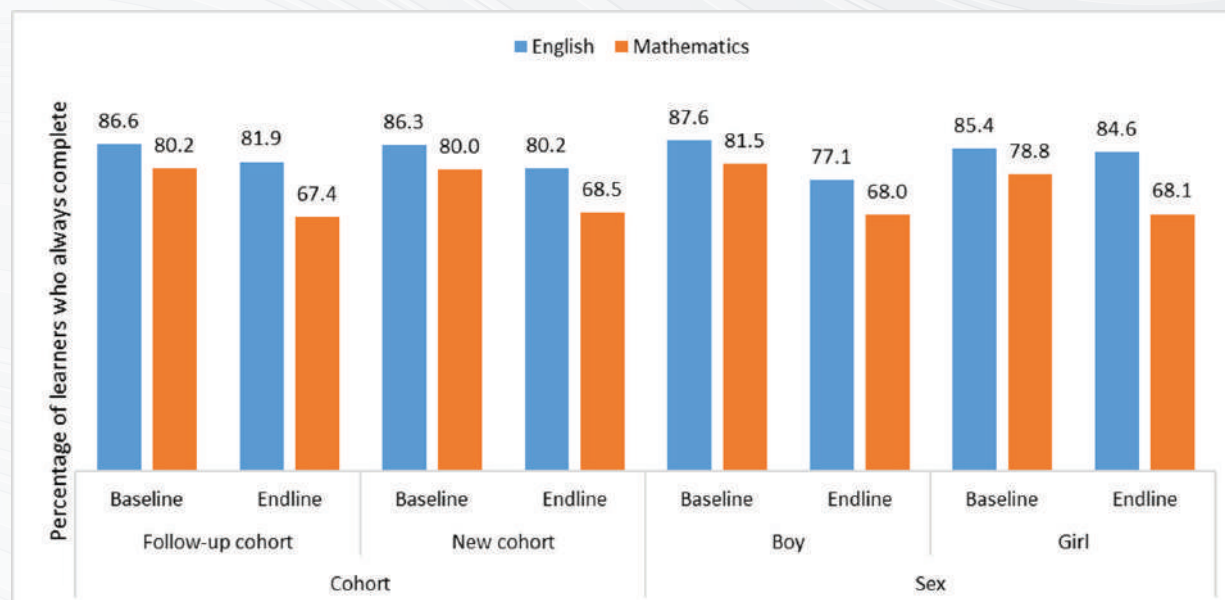


Figure 4: English and Mathematics homework completion status

2.6 Homework Support by Household Members

In terms of support for Mathematics, there was no significant difference in the impact of support to homework from family members on Mathematics by the follow-up cohort or the new cohort. There was a slight decrease in the percentage of those who received support among the new cohort, while at the same time, the percentage of those in the follow-up cohort who received support increased slightly. In English, the difference in the percentage of students who accessed support from family members among the new cohort at baseline and endline was significantly higher at a 10% level (p -value=0.071) than that of the follow-up cohort (see Table 7).

Table 7: Summary of impacts at endline

	Baseline				Endline				Diff-in-Diff	
	New	Follow-up	Diff (F-N)	P>t	New	Follow-up	Diff (F-N)	P>t	DID	P>t
Reading at home	3.04	3.13	0.09	0.105	3.29	3.36	0.07	0.289	-0.02	0.808
Number of days missed school in last schooling week	0.22	0.23	0.02	0.788	0.35	0.25	-0.10	0.164	-0.12	0.217
Completion of English homework	4.78	4.75	-0.03	0.598	4.69	4.72	0.04	0.502	0.06	0.394
Completion of Mathematics homework	4.68	4.66	-0.02	0.658	4.45	4.47	0.02	0.765	0.04	0.606
Assistance with English homework	1.89	2.13	0.25	0.004***	1.90	1.91	0.01	0.902	-0.23	0.071*
Assistance with Mathematics homework	2.18	2.38	0.20	0.019**	2.24	2.24	-0.01	0.951	-0.21	0.113
Access to extra tuition	0.50	0.59	0.09	0.006***	0.61	0.73	0.12	0.003***	0.02	0.630

Figure 5 portrays a graphical representation of the learners who indicated that they had not received any homework support from household members in tackling the assignment of the two subjects by cohort and sex categories(sub-groups).

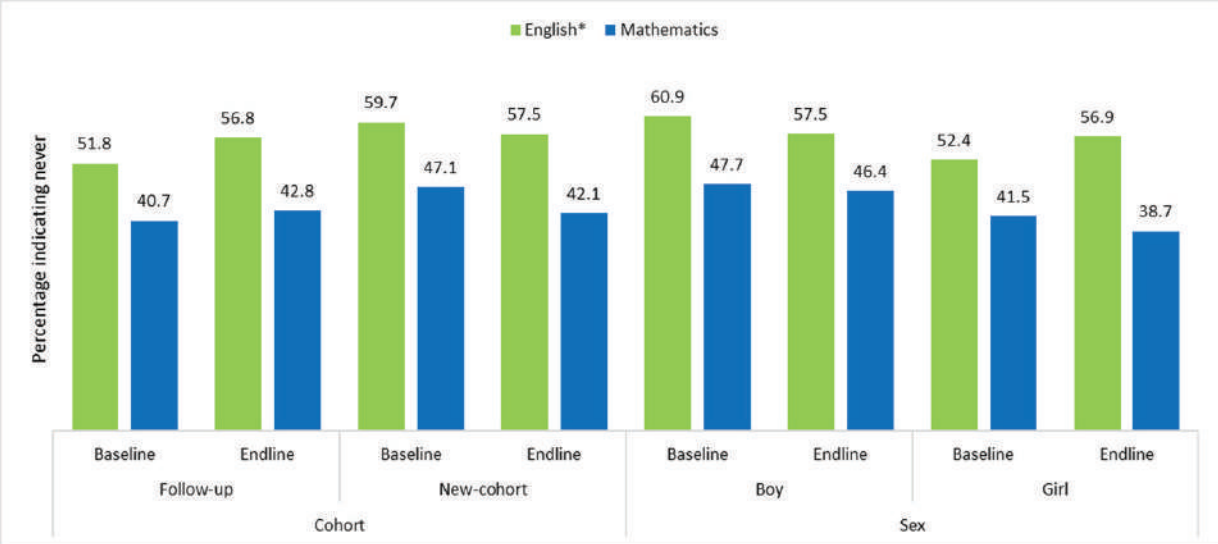


Figure 5: Percentage of learners indicating that they never received homework support from household members



3. ADOLESCENT NUMERACY AND LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT

This chapter presents the pupil assessment achievement in numeracy and literacy at the endline and the baseline-endline differences between the follow-up group and the new cohort. The follow-up cohort participated in an earlier study conducted between 2016 and 2018 while the new cohort was not part of A LOT-Change Phase II (Abuya, et al., 2021). Both the follow-up and new cohorts were assessed on literacy and numeracy achievements at the baseline of phase III of the study in 2019 and the endline in 2022. The baseline was done when the adolescents were in secondary school in form 1.

Pupil achievement was measured using the curriculum for upper primary level and secondary form one grade developed by numeracy and literacy experts for this study. To establish whether there was a baseline balance, we compared achievement mean scores between the new and follow-up cohorts. It is, however, worth noting that any significant differences in the means between the two groups in favor of the follow-up cohort potentially indicate sustained effects of the earlier intervention. The developed numeracy tests consisted of 45 items, with 20 multiple-choice (A to D) items relating to the upper primary content while the remaining 25 relating to secondary Form One content. The Form 1 items were open-ended, and learners were expected to show their work and have a clear, visible answer. The rubric for scoring the open-ended items included awarding a maximum of three points for each item: for applying the correct formula, process, and for an answer. Fifteen of the 20 multiple-choice items attracted one point for choosing the correct response, while the remaining five attracted two points. Thus, the total score for the numeracy items was 100. The numeracy items covered various content areas organized by topics and Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domains (knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis and evaluation).

For the endline assessment, the numeracy reliability index using Cronbach's Alpha was 0.93, slightly higher scores than the baseline's 0.92 for the overall assessment and 0.76 and 0.92 for upper primary and secondary level content items, respectively. All the numeracy items, except three, were loading only to the first factor when examined using factor loadings of at least 0.3. For the exceptional items, one had a loading value of -0.02 for factor 1 and 0.1 for factor 2, meaning it was somehow measuring a different construct. The other two items loaded to factor 1, albeit with low factor loading scores of 0.26 and 0.17, respectively. However, we did not drop the items following a deeper examination that showed they had very little influence once excluded.

Similar to the baseline, at the endline, the literacy assessment was grouped into six-question items, organized in terms of their content area, each with multiple sub-items. The main items included composition (20 points), cloze test (10 points), comprehension (20 points), narrative (20 points), poetry (50 points), and grammar (15 points). The literacy items covered the same four cognitive domains as the numeracy items. The literacy reliability index was 0.81, and all the items were loading to factor 1. The overall assessment that included both literacy and numeracy assessment had a reliability index of 0.91, and as expected, the literacy items significantly loaded into factors 1 and 2, indicating their interrelatedness to the numeracy component.

We used similar approaches to those used during the baseline to analyze the data. The numeracy and literacy assessments were analyzed using Rasch measurement techniques, and the test scores for each subject were transformed into a scale with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. The transformation enabled comparisons in pupil achievement between and across subject content areas and cognitive domains. Besides, the transformation makes it easier to interpret and quantify any observed differences in the overall performance in terms of standard deviations. For instance, a difference of 25 points can be interpreted as one-quarter of a standard deviation (0.25), while a difference of 50 points is one-half of a standard deviation (0.5). However, this interpretation is only relevant to the overall comparisons and not the stratified analysis by gender and study site (Abuya et al., 2021).

3.1 Pupil Achievement in Numeracy and Literacy

Table 8 presents the results of pupil achievement in numeracy and literacy. We compared the new and follow-up cohorts of learners and disaggregated the assessments by gender and study site. For numeracy, we also compared primary and secondary-level items. Overall, the follow-up group achieved better than the new cohort, similar to the baseline

assessment. However, the differences were not statistically significantly different in the overall scores and across all subcategories.

For **numeracy**, the follow-up cohort scored, on average, 15.9 points (0.159 standard deviations) better than the new cohort. When disaggregated by the study site, in Korogocho, the achievement for the follow-up cohort was, on average, 25.3 points (a quarter standard deviation) better than the new cohort, which was a larger difference than that of Viwandani. Regarding gender, the girls in the follow-up cohort performed relatively better on average than the new cohort by 19.6 points (about a fifth standard deviation). In terms of the content by level, there was a small difference on average for both primary level and Form one level items; markedly, the follow-up cohort scored slightly higher on the content at both levels. When comparing across gender, just as it was during the baseline assessment, boys scored statistically significantly higher in numeracy than girls for both new and follow-up cohorts. For instance, when comparing gender performance within the cohorts, boys scored significantly higher than girls by 29.4 points ($P=0.034$) and 39.2 ($P=0.009$) in the follow-up and new cohorts respectively.

For **literacy**, the follow-up cohort posted better overall achievement results (combined score) and when disaggregated by gender and study site, except for Korogocho. Therefore, in Korogocho, the new cohort performed better than the follow-up group. Overall, the follow-up cohort scored on average 0.12 standard deviations more in literacy compared to the new cohort. Regarding literacy achievement, Viwandani (by site) and girls (by gender) seemed to drive the overall differences in achievement between the two cohorts, just as observed at baseline. Similar to the baseline, girls irrespective of the cohort achieved better in literacy than boys in the overall score depicting a difference of 0.3 standard deviations ($p\text{-value}=0.003$), and in the follow-up cohort showing a difference of 0.36 standard deviations ($p\text{-value}=0.011$).

Table 8: Mean scores for numeracy and literacy

(a) Numeracy

		New			Follow-up			Mean Difference	
		n	Mean (C)	SE	n	Mean (T)	SE	T-C	P-value
Overall	Overall	191	491.9	7.4	197	507.8	6.9	15.9	0.118
Site	Korogocho	85	480.2	11.3	84	505.5	11.3	25.3	0.116
	Viwandani	106	501.3	9.8	113	509.5	8.6	8.2	0.529
Sex	Boy	97	511.3	11.4	102	522.7	10.2	11.3	0.460
	Girl	94	471.9	9.1	95	491.9	8.8	20.0	0.119
Level Tests	Primary items	191	493.8	7.4	197	506.0	6.9	12.2	0.230
	Form 1 items	191	491.9	7.4	197	507.9	6.9	16.0	0.115

(b) Literacy

		New			Follow-up			Mean Difference	
		n	Mean (C)	SE	n	Mean (T)	SE	T-C	P-value
Overall	Overall	194	494.1	7.2	194	505.9	7.1	11.8	0.246
Site	Korogocho	88	490.2	11.2	82	484.1	11.0	-6.1	0.699
	Viwandani	106	497.3	9.5	112	521.9	9.1	24.5	0.063
Sex	Boy	99	482.1	10.5	101	488.6	10.2	6.5	0.657
	Girl	95	506.6	9.9	93	524.7	9.6	18.1	0.191

(c) Combined Literacy and Numeracy

		New			Follow-up			Mean Difference	
		n	Mean (C)	SE	n	Mean (T)	SE	T-C	P-value
Overall	Overall	190	492.1	7.6	194	507.7	6.9	15.6	0.127
Site	Korogocho	84	482.3	11.8	82	496.5	10.8	14.2	0.374
	Viwandani	106	499.9	9.8	112	515.9	8.8	16.0	0.226
Sex	Boy	97	499.0	11.5	101	508.8	10.2	9.9	0.520
	Girl	93	485.0	9.8	93	506.5	9.1	21.5	0.109

3.2 Changes in Pupil Scores by Content and Cognitive Domains

Table 9 shows the numeracy mean score in the cognitive areas as per the Blooms Taxonomy. The cognitive areas included knowledge (six items), comprehension (22 items), application (13 items), analysis (3 items), and evaluation (1 item). Overall, similar to the baseline results, the follow-up cohort performed better in all the cognitive domains as compared to the new cohort although the differences were not statistically significant. For instance, the follow-up cohort scored 16.8 points and 16.5 points more in knowledge and application items than the new cohort. The scores for the content areas are not presented since they were spread over various topics as per the curriculum outcome areas.

Table 9: Numeracy mean scores in the cognitive areas by study group

Cognitive Area (#Items in Brackets)	New			Follow-Up			Mean Difference	
	N	Mean (C)	SE	N	Mean (T)	SE	T-C	P-value
Knowledge (6)	191	491.5	7.3	197	508.3	7	16.8	0.098
Comprehension (22)	191	493.6	7.5	197	506.2	6.9	12.6	0.216
Application (13)	191	491.6	7.5	197	508.1	6.8	16.5	0.105
Analysis (3) and evaluation (1)	191	493.6	7	197	506.2	7.3	12.6	0.215

Table 10 shows the scores for each of the assessed literacy content areas, that is, composition, cloze test, comprehension, narrative, poetry, and grammar. In line with other assessments, the scores for each content area were computed separately and standardized to a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. On average, the follow-up cohort scored above the standardized mean of 500 across all the content areas except in composition, while the new cohort was below the mean of 500 across all content areas except the composition. Differences between the follow-up and new cohort were not statistically significant with the exception of the cloze test which had the largest difference of 0.218 standard deviations or 21.8 points. This means the follow-up cohort performed significantly better than the new cohort in the cloze test. The results are consistent with baseline findings, which showed that the cloze test had the largest difference of 0.335 standard deviations (Abuya et al., 2021). At the endline, the cloze test differences were followed by poetry with 19.6 points difference and grammar with a difference of 17.3 points. The cloze test required the students to read a paragraph and fill blank spaces with the most appropriate words. The words were not provided and therefore required a good mastery of the language, while poetry required the students to read a poem and respond to questions related to that poem.

Table 10: Literacy mean scores in the content areas by study group

	New			Follow-Up			Mean Difference	
	N	Mean (C)	SE	N	Mean (T)	SE	T-C	P-value
Composition	194	503.3	7.5	194	496.7	6.9	-6.5	0.522
Cloze test	194	489.1	7.1	194	510.9	7.2	21.8*	0.031
Comprehension	194	496.6	7.4	194	503.4	6.9	6.8	0.501
Narrative	194	498.8	7.0	194	501.2	7.4	2.5	0.806
Poetry	194	490.2	7.2	194	509.8	7.1	19.6	0.054
Grammar	194	491.3	7.5	194	508.7	6.8	17.3	0.088

NB: * indicates significant results at 5% level

3.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 11 presents the results of multiple regression, with pupil achievement in numeracy, literacy, and combined scores in literacy and numeracy. In the regression analysis, there were observed significant differences by school type (public or private), student's age, school boarding status (day, boarding, or mixed boarding and day), and an interaction between student sex and school gender category (single or mixed). In particular, holding other factors constant, boys enrolled in single-gender schools performed significantly better in numeracy than boys enrolled in mixed schools and girls enrolled in both mixed and single-gender schools. Additionally, boys in single-gender schools performed significantly better in literacy scores than boys in mixed-gender schools. However, though not significant, girls in both single and mixed-gender schools performed relatively better in literacy than boys in single-gender schools. In terms of boarding status, after

adjusting for the other factors, students in boarding schools performed significantly better in numeracy and literacy than their counterparts in day schools. Students from private schools posted, on average, lower scores in literacy and numeracy than those in public schools. About 19% of the students were enrolled in private schools. Given the smaller proportion of students enrolled in private schools, we did not explore the interaction between school type and boarding status. The results also showed that older students scored lower on average, holding other factors constant. The student's ages ranged from 15 to 20 years. The results show that a subsequent increment in age was associated with a reduction in numeracy and literacy scores by 9.6 points (numeracy), 12.5 points (literacy), and 12.4 points (combined numeracy and literacy scores).

Table 11: Regression analysis

		Numeracy		Literacy		Combined	
		Coefficient	(SE)	Coefficient	(SE)	Coefficient	(SE)
Cohort:	New (ref)	-		-		-	
	Follow-up	7.6	(8.8)	4.9	(9.1)	7.2	(8.8)
Student & School Gender	Boy # Single (ref)	-		-		-	
	Boy # Mixed	-37.7*	(14.8)	-32.4*	(15.4)	-39.7**	(14.8)
	Girl # Single	-61.7***	(12.2)	7.2	(12.7)	-36.2**	(12.2)
	Girl # Mixed	-61.8***	(15.7)	3.1	(16.3)	-39.2*	(15.7)
Study Site	Korogocho (ref)	-		-		-	
	Viwandani	-10.3	(9.4)	0.3	(9.7)	-6.4	(9.4)
School Type:	Public (ref)	-		-		-	
	Private	-54.8***	(12.3)	-72.1***	(12.7)	-71.3***	(12.3)
Student's Age	Age	-9.6*	(4.3)	-12.5**	(4.4)	-12.4**	(4.2)
Boarding Status:	Day (ref)	-		-		-	
	Boarding	54.9***	(12.8)	31.1*	(13.2)	50.8***	(12.7)
	Mixed Day & Boarding	-14.3	(14.2)	9.6	(14.7)	-4.3	(14.1)
	Constant	696.0***	(78.2)	719.4***	(80.7)	735.8***	(78)
R-squared		0.3		0.2		0.3	
N		388		388		384	

3.4 Intervention Impact on Literacy and Numeracy Scores

The intervention's impact on literacy and numeracy achievement was assessed using the Difference In Differences (DID) approach. The impact assessment was to find out if there were sustained gains in the follow-up group compared to the new cohort. At baseline, the follow-up group performed significantly better across the literacy and numeracy assessments, but this was not evident at the endline. The negative DID values for the numeracy, literacy, and combined scores indicated that the intervention may have had a slightly better advantage among the new cohort than the follow-up cohort, though not statistically significantly different. That means the A LOT-Change intervention had a relatively similar impact on both the follow-up and new cohort. There were also no significant differences (DIDs) by student sex or location (site). See Table 12.

Table 12: Difference in differences (DID) in literacy and numeracy achievements

	Baseline				Endline				DID	
	Control (C)	Treated (T)	(T-C)	P-value	Control (C)	Treated (T)	(T-C)	P-value		P-value
Standardized Numeracy Score	497.8	517.7	19.9	0.040*	491.9	507.8	15.9	0.121	-4.0	0.778
Standardized Literacy Score	500.6	519.7	19.0	0.044*	494.1	505.9	11.8	0.235	-7.2	0.597
Standardized Combined Literacy & Numeracy Score	496.4	520.4	23.9	0.014*	492.1	507.7	15.6	0.125	-8.3	0.554

NB: * means that the value is significant at 5% level; control in this case represented the new cohort and the follow-up cohort is represented treated.

4. ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOR AND LIFE SKILLS

4.1 Delinquent Behavior

Delinquency is conduct that is not in sync with socially acceptable behavior. Children living in informal settlements are exposed to vulnerabilities predisposing them to delinquent behavior. These vulnerabilities may include and are not limited to poverty, negative peer influence, and lack of role models (Abuya et al., 2019). The engagement in various forms of delinquent behavior was assessed using the following frequency options; **"Never"=1, "Once" =2, "2 or 3 times"=3, "4 or 5 times"=4, and "6 or more times"=5**. We reverse-coded the response values to reflect the desired direction of frequency in engaging in delinquent behavior such as **"Never"=5, "Once" =4, "2 or 3 times"=3, "4 or 5 times"=2, and "6 or more times"=1**. The Cronbach alpha score of the seven items was 0.51, a moderate score. This score is similar to what was obtained in ALOT Change Phase II (Abuya et al., 2019), which also enabled us to generate an overall score for delinquency.

The baseline and endline results indicated that the majority of the items measuring delinquent behavior were at ceiling across sites, sex, and cohort (ranging between 93% and 100%), meaning that a majority of the adolescents had not engaged in that delinquent behavior. These items included adolescents who reported that they had never stayed away from home without parental permission, had never carried a weapon for self-defence, had never hit or threatened to hit an adult, and had never used, sold, or delivered drugs or alcohol. The results indicated that there was still a proportion of learners who were involved in fights with peers (22.4% at baseline and 19.6% at endline) or had taken something that did not belong to themselves (18.7% at baseline and 12.4% at endline) as shown in Table 13. The changes in proportion between baseline and endline could be explained by inconsistencies in self-report of delinquent behavior as stated in other studies where there is a tendency to under-report or over-report such behavior (Sibley et al., 2010, Krohn et al., 2013).

Table 13: Delinquent behavior comparison between baseline and endline by cohort

	Baseline			Endline		
	Follow-Up	New Cohort	Total	Follow-Up	New Cohort	Total
Percentage of learners that never fought	79.8	76.1	77.6	79.0	81.5	80.4
Percentage of learners that never stole anything	83.3	79.9	81.3	87.5	87.6	87.6
Percentage of learners that never spent the night away from home without permission	96.7	91.2	93.5	95.4	93.1	94.1
Percentage of learners that never threatened or hit an adult	98.2	94.7	96.1	95.4	96.4	96.0
Percentage of learners that never carried a knife/gun/weapon	99.1	97.7	98.3	97.9	99.2	98.6
Percentage of learners that never sold drugs	98.8	98.5	98.6	98.2	99.5	98.9
Percentage of learners that never sold alcohol	99.7	99.4	99.5	99.6	99.7	99.7

4.2 Educational Goals and Future Aspirations

Educational goals and future aspirations of adolescents in Viwandani and Korogocho were captured using ten items (Abuya et al., 2019). The items assessed the adolescents' aspirations to pursue and complete various levels of formal education and future well-being. The items attracted three responses; 1=Low, 2=Middle (50-50), and 3=High. Educational goals and future aspirations items were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, which stood at 0.74, indicating a high internal consistency. Both at baseline and endline, educational goals and future aspirations were high across learners' sex, site, and cohort, with an average of 2.83 out of a possible 3, which translates to high aspirations. The follow-up group exhibited significantly higher mean scores on education goals and future aspirations than the new cohort at both baseline and

endline, meaning that the intervention gains had been sustained over time. However, the DID in the education goals and future aspirations was not statistically significant meaning that there was minimal change in aspirations among the participants (follow-up and the new cohort) across the two time points.

See Table 14.

Table 14: Adolescent education goals and future aspirations

	Baseline				Endline					DID
	New cohort	Follow -Up	F-N	p-value	New cohort	Follow -Up	F-N	p-value		
Overall	2.83	2.88	0.054	0.001***	2.80	2.83	0.03	0.058*	-0.02	0.376
Boy	2.83	2.89	0.061	0.005***	2.79	2.85	0.06	0.013**	0.00	0.982
Girl	2.80	2.85	0.049	0.034**	2.80	2.81	0.01	0.772	-0.04	0.231
Korogocho	2.80	2.85	0.049	0.044**	2.79	2.80	0.01	0.705	-0.04	0.279
Viwandani	2.85	2.90	0.052	0.007***	2.80	2.85	0.05	0.019**	0.00	0.992

4.3 Self-Confidence and Supporting Others to Feel Confident

Self-confidence was assessed using a set of items that sought to find out how adolescents felt about themselves, how they felt about their peers, and the extent to which they encouraged and influenced their peers to be confident. The adolescents rated their responses using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) or 1 (always) to 4 (never) on five items. A composite score on the five items was computed using Cronbach's alpha, which generated a score of 0.66, which is considered a moderately good score.

As shown on Table 15, the mean score for self-confidence both at baseline and endline was found to be high for the new cohort and the follow-up cohort at above 4.90 out of a possible score of 5 meaning that the majority of the adolescents were already self-confident at both data points. Further analysis using the DID showed no significant difference between baseline and endline, which was expected since the means were at a ceiling. On the other hand, the mean scores for the adolescents' support to their peers' self-confidence ranged between 2.79 and 2.92 out of a possible score of 4 at baseline and endline. Although there were slight positive changes for both the control and treated groups between baseline and endline, the DID was not statistically significant, meaning that the number of adolescents who supported their peers to be confident remained more or less the same.

Table 15: Mean score of adolescent self-confidence at baseline and endline

	Baseline				Endline					DID
	New Cohort	Follow -Up	F-N	p-value	New Cohort	Follow -Up	F-N	p-value		
Confidence	4.90	4.96	0.054	0.016**	4.93	4.96	0.023	0.344	-0.030	0.363
Supporting others to be confident	2.79	2.85	0.053	0.232	2.88	2.92	0.041	0.412	-0.013	0.850

4.4 Parental Involvement and Monitoring

Parental monitoring was assessed using nine attributes (Abuya et al, 2015; Abuya et al, 2019), which captured both parents' and learners' perceptions of parents' knowledge about where and with whom they spent their time, what they did during free time and the type of TV programs they watched. The responses were coded as either "never knows (1)", "sometimes knows (2)" or "usually knows (3)". First, looking at parental perceptions, two items were used to assess parental involvement and monitoring: their awareness of where and with whom their children spend time after school. The two items indicated a high Cronbach Alpha score of 0.87 which depicts a high internal consistency.

As shown on Table 16, the overall mean score at baseline was 2.79 and at endline was 2.67 out of possible 3. There were no significant differences in the overall DID and across sexes. However, there was a significant difference at a 10% level

of significance in the DID (-0.1; p-value=0.084) by site for Viwandani indicating that the intervention in phase III had a relatively positive impact in the new cohort in Viwandani in terms of parental awareness of where and with whom their children spend time after school. Secondly, looking at the adolescents' perceptions, a composite score on parental monitoring was generated from nine items using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded an inter-item reliability of 0.81 (a high-reliability score) and an overall mean of 2.49 at baseline and 2.41 endline out of a possible 3.

The results indicate that there was no significant difference in the DID across sex and site, meaning that the phase III intervention had no impact on the students' perceptions of their parent's involvement and monitoring knowledge. These results are consistent with the findings on parents' perception of monitoring their adolescents where there was also no significant difference in the overall DID.

Table 16: Parental involvement and monitoring

		Baseline				Endline					DID
		New Cohort	Follow-Up	F-N	p-value	New cohort	Follow-Up	F-N	p-value		p-value
Parental awareness of where and who their children spend time with after school											
Overall		2.77	2.82	0.05	0.108	2.66	2.69	0.03	0.422	-0.02	0.608
Sex	Boys	2.81	2.85	0.05	0.268	2.73	2.72	-0.01	0.918	-0.05	0.404
	Girls	2.73	2.78	0.05	0.270	2.59	2.65	0.06	0.252	0.01	0.933
Site	Korogocho	2.72	2.79	0.06	0.202	2.61	2.74	0.13	0.022**	0.07	0.376
	Viwandani	2.82	2.85	0.03	0.416	2.76	2.69	-0.07	0.116	-0.10	0.084*
Adolescents' perceptions about their parent's involvement and monitoring											
Overall		2.48	2.51	0.03	0.380	2.40	2.43	0.03	0.381	0.00	0.949
Sex	Boys	2.40	2.49	0.09	0.040**	2.29	2.35	0.06	0.193	-0.03	0.676
	Girls	2.56	2.52	-0.03	0.417	2.51	2.51	0.00	0.965	0.03	0.611
Site	Koch	2.43	2.41	-0.02	0.911	2.38	2.38	0.01	0.911	0.02	0.722
	Viwa	2.55	2.60	0.05	0.182	2.43	2.47	0.04	0.348	-0.01	0.859



4.5 Perception of Schooling Environment by Adolescents

The perception of the school environment was measured using ten items and scored on a Likert scale from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5. For the analysis, we categorized the responses into a binary variable of agree and disagree, whereby 'agree' was computed by combining 'strongly agree' and 'agree', and 'disagree' was computed by combining 'strongly disagree', 'disagree' and 'not sure'. Whereas the majority of the adolescents agreed that teachers in their respective schools did not have any sexual advances with the students; nevertheless, about 7% felt that teachers have sexual advances or sometimes have sexual relations with students. In addition, 20% of the adolescents agreed that peers in their respective schools did not care about learning or performing well at school. Furthermore, slightly above a third of the adolescents felt that drinking and drug abuse were a problem in their school. In addition, nearly half (47%) of the adolescents agreed that fighting between students was also a big problem in their schools and that some of the pupils were worried about getting harassed by teachers (16%), and fellow students (19%). See Figure 6.

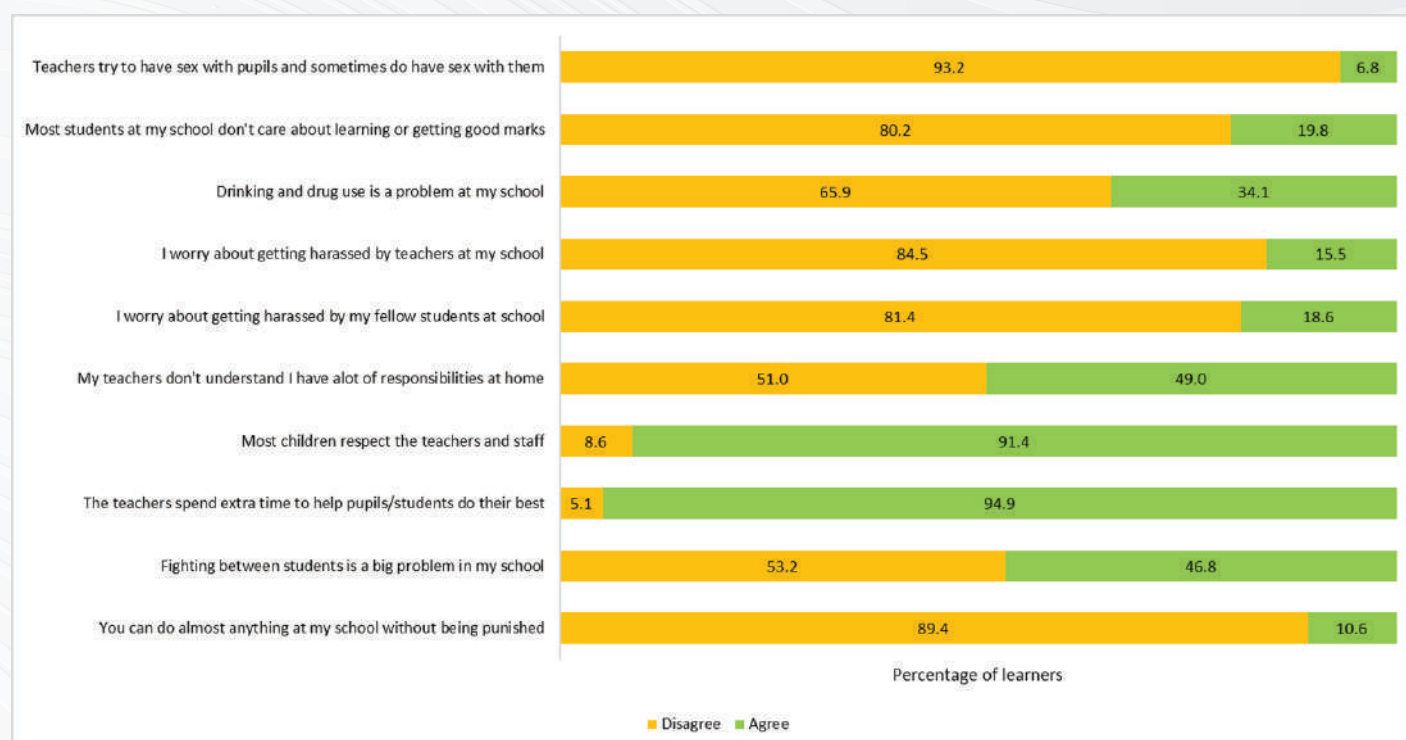


Figure 6: Adolescents' perceptions about their school environment

4.6 Substance Abuse

Drug and substance use in this study was assessed using a total of nine substances. For this report, we highlighted findings on alcohol, bhang, and khat (miraa) as shown in Figure 7. The results were disaggregated by sex, site, and cohort and presented between baseline and endline. By sex, there was a significant increase between baseline and endline of boys using alcohol (3% to 15%) and bhang (4% to 10%), respectively. On the other hand, the proportion of girls using alcohol and bhang also increased between baseline and endline at 2% to 6% and 1% to 2.4%, respectively. In addition, the proportion of boys using these three drugs/substances was significantly higher than that of girls (p -value<0.001). By site, there was a significantly higher proportion of adolescents who reported using alcohol in Viwandani than in Korogocho (p -value=0.009). By cohort, we found that at endline, there was a significantly higher proportion of adolescents in the follow-up cohort consuming alcohol than in the new cohort (p -value=0.044).

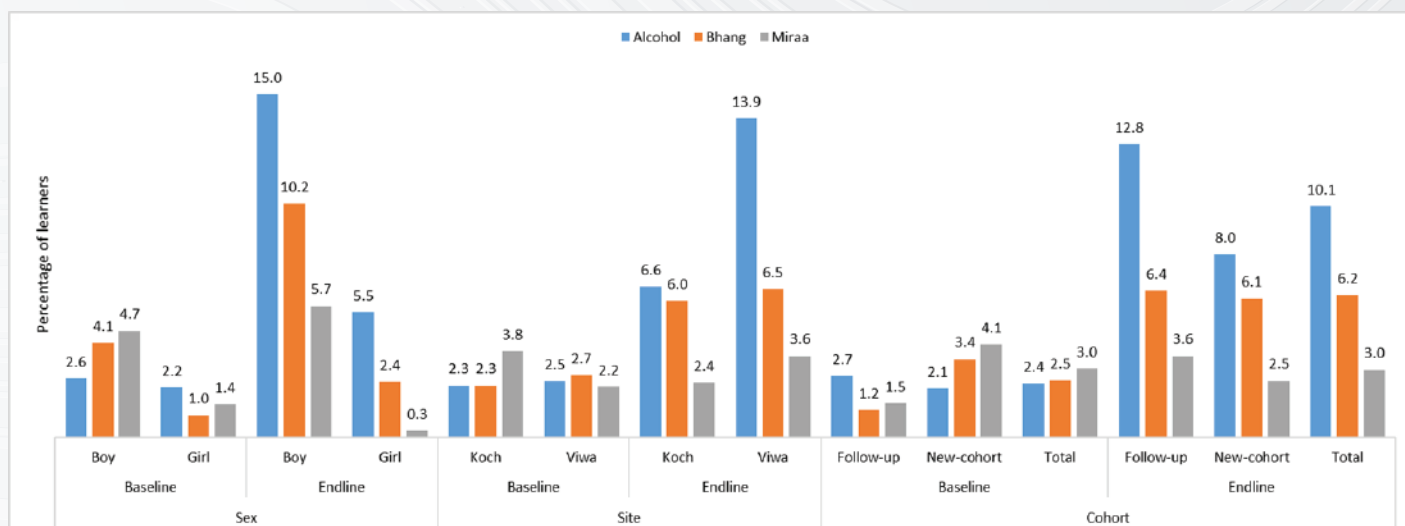


Figure 7: Percentage of learners who ever engaged in alcohol and substance use

4.7 Sexual Reproductive Health

In this section, we sought to understand the pupils' involvement in sexual activities, which included engaging in sex, deep kissing, and fondling; perceptions of the consequences of engaging in early sex; and perceptions of delayed sexual activity. The results indicated that there were significant increases in the proportion of adolescents engaging in sexual activity (such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, foreplay, and heavy petting) between baseline and endline.

However, there were no significant differences in the proportion of adolescents engaging in sexual activity by cohort and site. This implies that the increase was similar between the follow-up and new cohorts. In this report, we highlight the proportion of adolescents that engage in sexual intercourse due to its importance in impacting their sexual reproductive health and well-being (Lara & Abdo, 2016). Results showed that there were significant increases in the proportion of adolescent boys engaging in sexual intercourse between baseline and endline at 6.7% to 14.3%, respectively (p -value <0.001). Although there was a slight increase in the proportion of girls engaging in sexual intercourse, the increase was not statistically significant (p -value <0.225). Moreover, an assessment of the impact showed that the intervention did not have a significant effect on adolescents' engagement in sexual activities, with a DID of 0.02 and a p -value of 0.243, as shown in Figure 8.

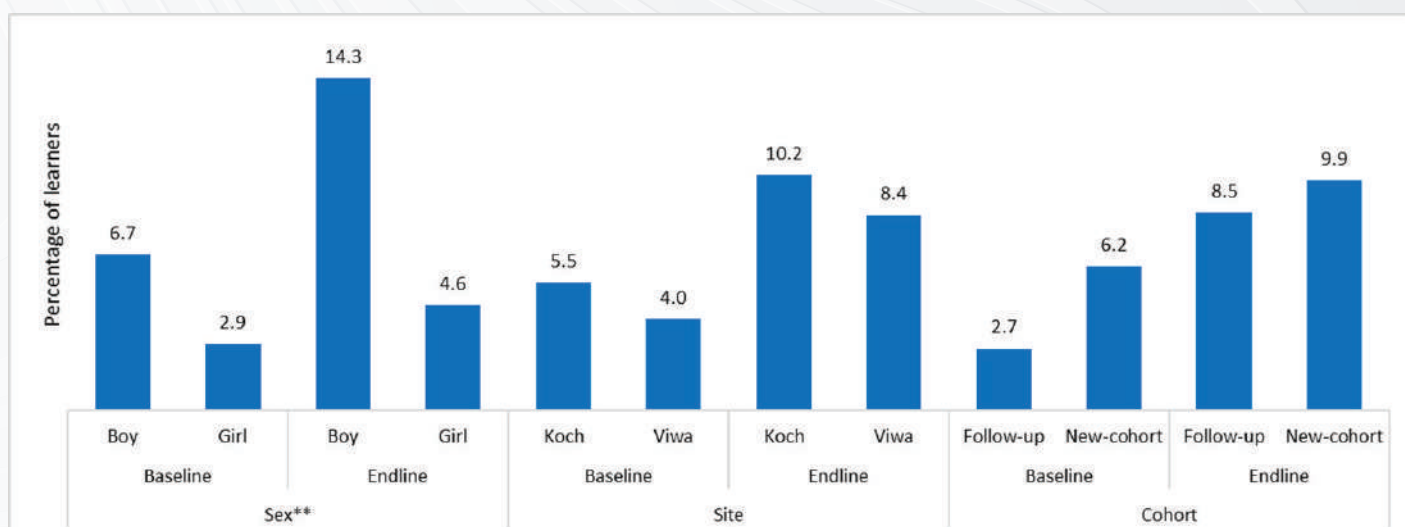


Figure 8: Percentage of adolescents who have ever engaged in sexual intercourse

Results of the adolescents' perceptions of the consequences of engaging in sexual activity were categorized into physiological and social, as shown in Table 17. On one hand, the adolescents displayed relatively good knowledge of the physiological consequences such as getting infected with HIV/AIDs, STIs, and getting pregnant with a proportion of above 96% at baseline and endline. However, peer influence and the need to be popular seemed to contribute to the poor knowledge of the social consequences of engaging in sexual activity. For instance, nearly 30% of adolescents had

the perception that by engaging in sexual activity before marriage, they would be left by their boyfriends and girlfriends or shunned by their friends. In addition, more than 50 percent believed that they would become popular among friends if they engaged in sexual activity.

Table 17: Perceptions of the consequences of sexual activity

	Baseline		Endline	
	Follow-Up	New-Cohort	Follow-Up	New-Cohort
Physiological Consequences				
• Can get HIV/AIDs	97.3%	96.4%	99.3%	99.4%
• Can be infected with other STIs	97.3%	96.6%	99.3%	99.4%
• Can get pregnant or impregnate a girl	96.4%	96.6%	98.9%	98.3%
Other Consequences				
• Dropping out of school	83.0%	83.5%	82.9%	78.5%
• My lover will leave me	67.9%	67.1%	67.3%	62.3%
• Will be shunned by my friends	64.9%	67.1%	56.2%	55.9%
• Becoming popular with my friends	50.6%	57.1%	48.8%	54.3%
• Will be shunned by family	48.2%	48.7%	42.0%	41.6%
• Being liked by my boyfriend/girlfriend	15.2%	17.1%	12.8%	15.4%

The study also sought the adolescents' views on the delay of sexual activity. A relatively high proportion of adolescents reported their ability to say "no" to advances to engage in sexual activity, with proportions of over 95 percent at both baseline and endline. However, nearly 20 percent of the adolescents felt that they did not have the capacity to decline sexual advances without losing a friend. In addition, the results showed slight decreases in the proportion of adolescents who had no plan of engaging in sex while still in school and those willing to wait till marriage to engage in sex. Moreover, there was an increase in those who had gained a boyfriend or girlfriend between baseline and endline. See Table 18.

Table 18: Adolescent views on delay of sexual activity

	Baseline		Endline	
	Follow-up	New- Cohort	Follow-up	New-Cohort
Knows how to say no to sex	97.0%	95.1%	97.2%	96.4%
Knows how to decline sex without losing a friend	77.7%	78.0%	84.7%	82.1%
Believes will lose my boy/girlfriend if they don't engage in sex	28.6%	29.5%	22.4%	22.3%
Have no plan to engage in sex while still in school	95.2%	95.1%	91.8%	92.0%
Willing to wait till marriage to engage in sex	95.2%	92.5%	89.0%	88.2%
No boyfriend/girlfriend at the moment	90.2%	85.0%	82.9%	81.8%
Do not want to impregnate/be impregnated	99.4%	98.1%	98.6%	98.1%
Do not want to get STDs	99.4%	98.7%	99.3%	97.8%

4.8 Source of Information on Sex, Drugs, Smoking and Alcohol

Students were asked about the sources of information on sex, drugs, smoking, and alcohol. The sources included teachers, A LOT-Change implementing partners (Miss Koch Kenya or U-Tena), television, friends, parents and family members, non-governmental organizations or community-based organizations other than the implementing partners, seminars, social media, radio, and newspapers. Table 19 shows the percentages of responses attributed to each source of information. Results showed that the five main sources of information about sex, drugs, smoking, and alcohol came from their teachers, the A LOT-Change implementors (Miss Koch Kenya and U-Tena), friends, television, and social media. From baseline to endline, there was an increase in the number of adolescents reporting friends as a key source of information for all the items, with the highest increase recorded for alcohol from 12% to 23%. In addition, social media was also reported as a key source of information on sex by adolescents, with an increase from baseline (11%) to endline (17%). On the other hand, there was a decrease in the number of adolescents reporting social media as a key source of information for smoking and alcohol. Compared to baseline, there was a decrease in the percentage of adolescents reporting parents as a key source of information on sex, from 7% to 2%.

Table 19: Sources of information about sex, alcohol, smoking, and drugs

	Sex		Drugs		Smoking		Alcohol	
	Base line	End line	Base line	End line	Base line	End line	Base line	End line
Teachers	31.8	29.2	34.2	29.0	35.7	29.4	35.1	27.5
Miss Koch/U-Tena (A LOT – Change Implementers)	17.0	20.7	18.9	20.7	15.9	19.4	17.2	18.6
Friend	11.1	16.9	11.2	18.9	11.9	20.2	11.7	23.1
Television	13.8	9.6	13.3	11.7	13.9	12.4	13.3	11.2
Social Media	4.2	10.6	4.1	4.7	8.0	2.8	9.1	3.9
Others NGOs	5.7	3.9	5.9	2.3	1.6	6.7	1.6	6.7
Seminars	4.5	5.1	2.0	7.0	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.0
Parents & Family	6.6	1.9	4.6	2.8	4.0	2.3	3.4	3.6
Radio	3.5	2.0	3.0	1.9	2.7	2.0	3.2	2.0
Newspapers	1.7	0.2	2.9	1.1	2.5	0.9	1.5	0.5



4.9 Preferred Persons to Discuss Issues About Puberty

Overall, the majority of adolescents preferred to discuss puberty issues with their parents. However, there was a decrease from baseline to endline from 44% to 34%, respectively, as shown in Figure 9. When categorized by sex, a higher proportion of girls preferred to talk to their parents compared to boys. Despite peers being a key source of information for adolescents on puberty at baseline (21%), this preference decreased to 11% at endline. On the other hand, the preference to discuss puberty issues with non-related members of the community increased from 9% to 31% between baseline and endline, with boys reporting a higher preference of 41% compared to girls (21%) at endline.

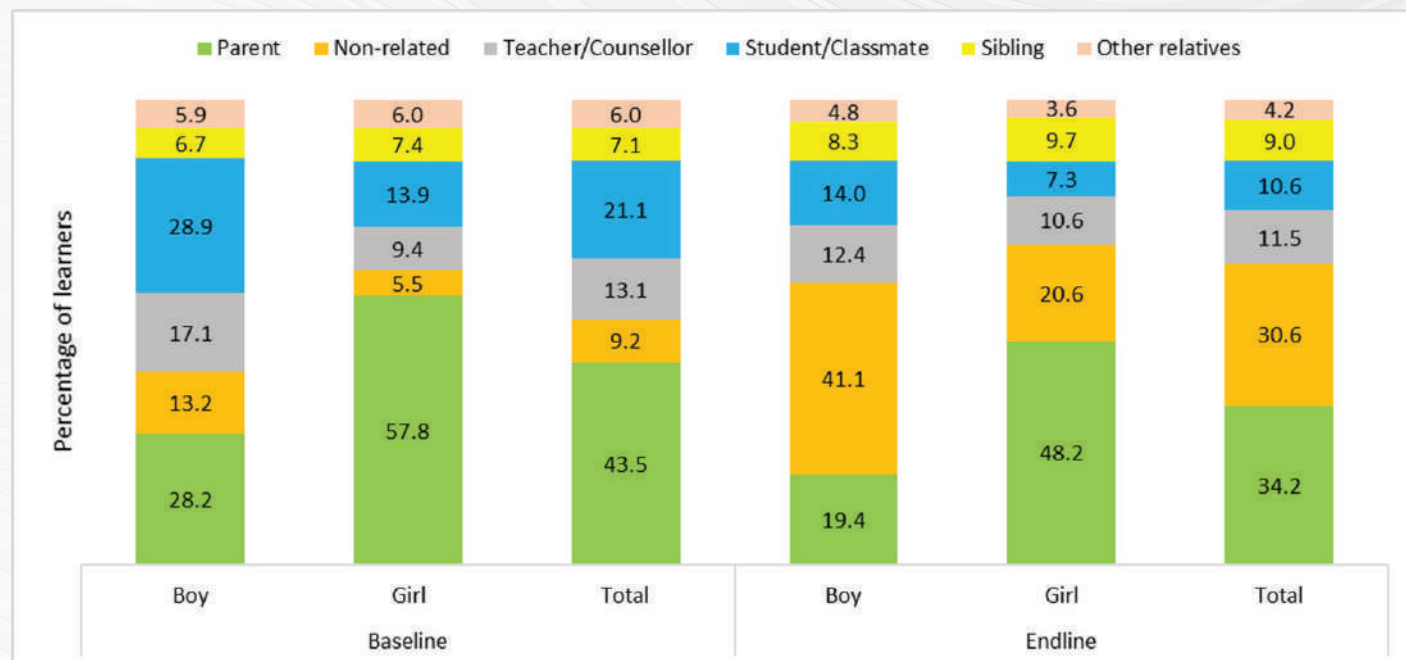


Figure 9: Preferred persons to discuss issues about puberty



5. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

This chapter highlights socio-emotional resiliency scores for adolescents. The socio-emotional resilience questionnaire had 39 items grouped under six subscales: social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, youth-community connections, social competency, and adult-youth connections. The items on each sub-scale are rated by an interviewer on a 3-point Likert scale. A higher rating denotes a more positive response than a lower rating for all the subscales except for the last item on the Youth-Community Connections sub-scale ("People in your neighborhood/community are mean"), which was reverse-coded before further analysis. The response format varies according to the domain: "1" = "not easily at all," "not at all true" or "never" to "3" = "very easily," "completely true," or "always." Below is a detailed description of the subscales.

- Social self-efficacy refers to the capability of an individual to respond proficiently during interpersonal circumstances;
- Self-assertive efficacy is the ability to speak up for one's rights;
- Self-regulatory efficacy is the ability to resist negative peer pressure;
- Youth-community connections is concerned with neighborhood support and neighborhood activities;
- Social competency is the capacity to be sensitive to other people's feelings and experiences (empathy);
- Adult-youth connections are characterized by supportive relationships with adults so that youth perceive the adults as helpful resources for them.

5.1 Baseline and Endline Socio-Emotional Resilience Differences

Generally, there were slight increases in all of the sub-scales between baseline and endline except for youth community connections and adult-youth connections, which recorded slight decreases. The results indicated that the new cohort scored slightly higher in all the socio-emotional sub-scales except for social competencies. The DID was in favor of the new cohort, with significant differences recorded in three subscales, including self-regulatory efficacy (p-value=0.007), social self-efficacy (p-value=0.080), and adult-youth connections (p-value=0.062), as shown in Table 20. The results mean that the new cohort had a greater capacity to resist negative peer pressure, were relatively better at identifying supportive adults within the community, and could respond proficiently during interpersonal circumstances.

Table 20: Socio-emotional resilience sub-scale scores

Sub-Scale	Baseline (n=804)	Endline (n=644)	DID			
	Mean(SD)	Mean(SD)	Min	Max		p-value
Social Self-Efficacy	2.4(0.3)	2.5(0.3)	1	3	-0.06	0.080*
Self-Assertive Efficacy	2.6(0.4)	2.6(0.4)	1	3	-0.03	0.483
Self-Regulatory Efficacy	2.7(0.3)	2.8(0.3)	1	3	-0.09	0.007***
Youth Community Connections	2.3(0.4)	2.2(0.4)	1	3	-0.05	0.258
Social Competences	1.7(0.4)	1.8(0.4)	1	3	0.04	0.283
Adult-Youth Connections	2.3(0.6)	2.2(0.6)	1	3	-0.12	0.062*
Inference: ***p<0.01; ** p<0.05; *p<0.1; Min=Minimum; Max=Maximum; n=sample; SD=Standard Deviation; DID=difference in difference						

5.2 Socio-Emotional Resilience Differences by Site

At baseline, adolescents in Viwandani recorded slightly higher scores for social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, and social competencies compared to those in Korogocho, with statistically significant differences in the mean scores for self-efficacy and social competencies. On the other hand, adolescents in Korogocho scored slightly higher in self-regulatory efficacy, youth community connections, and adult-youth connections, with significant differences recorded for youth community connections. At endline, adolescents in Korogocho scored better in social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, youth community connections, and adult-youth connections. The differences were, however, only significant for social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, and youth community connections. The gap for the social competency scores was also closed at endline, with adolescents from both sites recording similar scores. In both sites, social competency mean scores were the lowest at baseline and endline, while self-regulatory efficacy recorded the highest scores. These results suggest that the A LOT-Change intervention had a more substantial effect in Korogocho due to the positive changes. In contrast, the scores in Viwandani remained relatively the same between baseline and endline. See Figure 10.



Figure 10: Socio-emotional resilience sub-scale scores by study site

5.3 Socio-Emotional Resilience Differences by Sex

As shown in Figure 11, adolescent boys in the A LOT-Change program scored better than girls in all social-emotional resiliency aspects at baseline and endline except for self-regulatory efficacy. The differences were, however, only significant for social self-efficacy and youth community connections at baseline, and social self-efficacy at endline. On the other hand, the finding that adolescent girls scored slightly better than boys on self-regulation was consistent with recent literature where adolescent girls are shown to have higher levels of self-control & self-monitoring (Tetering, Laan, Kogel, Groot, & Jolles, 2020) as well as previous A LOT-Change evaluations where adolescent girls scored better than boys on this aspect (Abuya et al., 2019).

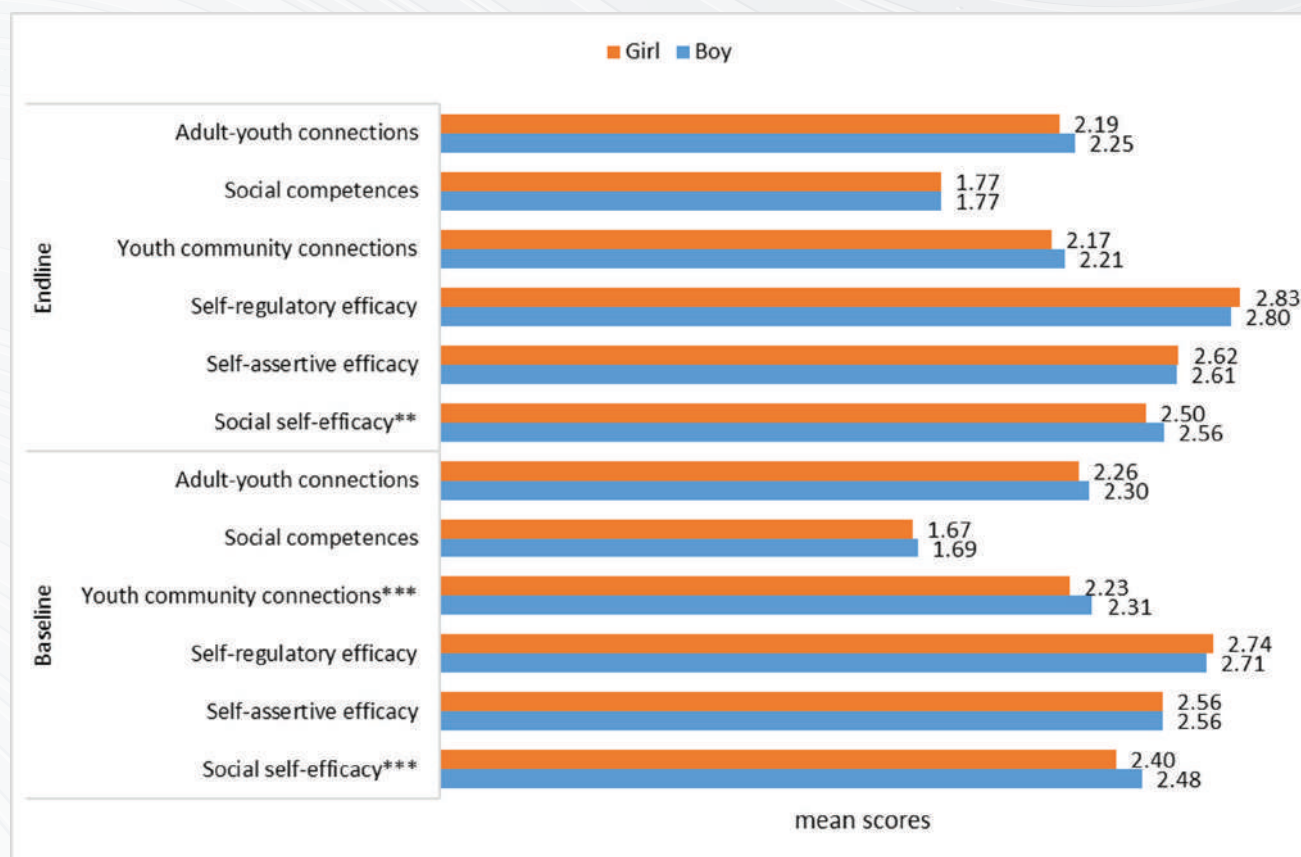


Figure 11: Socio-emotional resilience sub-scale scores by sex

6. QUALITATIVE STUDY RESULTS

This section highlights key differences between adolescents and their parents who are enrolled in the A LOT-Change program compared to their peers who are not enrolled. The differences are those perceived by the study respondents (adolescents, parents, mentors, counselors, community leaders, and village elders) who are involved in the program in various capacities. Adolescents enrolled in the A LOT-Change program were reported to be digitally literate, have better behavior, have enhanced academic outcomes, be more socially-emotionally competent, and have reduced engagement in social ills. On the other hand, parents enrolled in the A LOT-Change program were more involved in their children's education, had better relationships with their children, were more receptive to information, were more financially literate, engaged less in social ills, had enhanced well-being and were motivated to make positive changes in the community. The endline results were also consistent with what was reported at baseline (Abuya et al., 2021), indicating the sustainability of the positive effects of the intervention over time.

6.1 View of the Differences Between Students/Adolescents Enrolled in A LOT-Change and Those not Enrolled

6.1.1 Digital Literacy

a) Enhanced Basic Computer Knowledge

Since the adolescents were coming from urban informal settlements characterized by limited opportunities, gaining basic computer skills was considered a key comparative advantage to other adolescents in the community who were not enrolled in the A LOT-Change program. The adolescents were happy that their parents would not struggle to source funds to pay for the computer sessions. The scarce financial resources would have meant that they would have enrolled in computer sessions after secondary school. This is what adolescents in Korogocho and Viwandani had to say.

R1: I would say we are different from the people who are not in this project because there are opportunities, like now we are studying Computer packages, at least we are having that basic literacy in computing than the others who are not part of the project, they have not got the opportunity. So, I would say we are a step ahead of them.

(Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

R2: This digital learning has saved money for me because my mother had planned that after form four, that time we will be out after school she wanted to take me to college to do a computer course, but due to A LOT-Change she is no longer worried about learning computer. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

R: I would like to say since we were given a chance to go and learn computer, for those who are out there it requires the parents to look for money to enroll the child to learn computer, so for us we have that chance to learn and those others don't have.

(Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho)

The adolescents also mentioned that gaining the basic skills had improved their confidence in interacting with computers. Before the sessions, they would shy away from the digital devices since they did not understand their functionality. For instance, some adolescents admitted that they did not even know how to start a computer before the sessions, while some mentioned how they would just use the computer to play games and watch movies.

R4: This digital literacy has really helped us in U-Tena because there were others who didn't have that confidence on touching the mouse or the keyboard, we have known a lot of things like even Access, Word, we didn't know how to print but now we know, we are proud of that at least we now know something. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

R2:...previously if you told me to open a computer I would tell you I know how to use but I don't know how to start it, I used to have a neighbor who had a computer and I could

find it on and just play around with the mouse, I play videos and look at clips, but I didn't know how to open it, and now since I have been taught when I get the computer I first switch it off even if it was on, I switch it again so as to feel confident that I can switch it on, I can operate it and now use a laptop, I know how to process it and I have gained a lot of confidence and that is thanks to A LOT-Change (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

This was also important for adolescents who did not have the option to undertake computer studies in their current secondary schools since it was not being offered or it was not part of the subjects they had selected. Related to this was the fact that in some schools, computer lessons were said to be taught theoretically, and thus, the ALOT-Change adolescents considered themselves advantaged since they had enough computers and were taught by qualified facilitators.

I think those digital classes are helping us a lot because there are some of us in school where subjects are selected based on streams, such that you may have had the interest of studying computers but your it is not offered in your stream. So, that's the time you have got opportunity to study computers and you have to study it well (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

R6:...we are capable than other schools where you find they do not have a computer they are just going through it theoretically unlike us you find that you can ask where you have not been able to understand and then it is explained to you into deep details, every step by everyone so it has really helped and it has made the parents know that their children have been taught because like for now we are in another generation and technology is also a part of that and you find that in some careers we have to use a computer so you find that when we finish school it will be more easier because we have the skills and knowledge (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

For students who had the opportunity to undertake computer lessons at school, the limited access to computers back at home due to low economic status was cited as a key barrier to them practicing what they had learned. In such cases, the only other option would have been going to cybercafé, but this was not a viable option due to the cost implications.

R3: I can say it has helped me because you find that yes we do computer in school but now I am a slow learner so you find that we are taught the practical but not as much and you know us who live in ghetto we do not have access to computer and laptops so when you say that you want to go to the cyber and practice what you have been taught is expensive so you find that those who live in estates are more advantaged than us because you find that they may have laptops at home [sic]. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

According to the adolescents, when compared to school teachers, the A LOT-Change digital literacy facilitators were seen to be more approachable, making it easier for them to get assistance where they did not understand and thus enhancing their learning experiences. In addition, to having approachable facilitators, peer-to-peer support from students who had some computer skills also enhanced the learning experiences for students who did not have the skills

R8: What I have learnt is that the teachers (A LOT-Change facilitators) appreciate and know that we are young and they teach us like when you are taught in school and if you have not understood then they understand as well and explain well and they just want you to understand...he (school teacher) was teaching once and it is either you understand or if you haven't understood then that is your problem but this teacher (A LOT-Change facilitators) is making sure that you have understood and before going to another step he asks whether you have understood...the teacher was taking time with us and if you want to say that you have failed to understand a certain thing then they are ready to help because they have taken you as a child and then explaining to you like a child and if you do that and give me knowledge then I will be like a child and listen to you [sic]. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

b) Future Career Opportunities

To some adolescents, the digital literacy sessions motivated them to aspire to pursue related courses such as computer science in their higher education. In addition to pursuing computer-related courses, the adolescents also saw opportunities to secure jobs with the knowledge they had gained.

R1: *The computer lessons have really helped us, they have given us an opportunity to further pursue computer studies, those who would like to pursue computer science, maybe, now they have an idea of a computer, and those who would like to develop a Computer will just proceed from there, following your course in computers. It provides you with an opportunity which other people who did not study computers did not get [sic].*
(Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

R3: *Those who are in A LOT-Change, like these computer programs, they get to learn about computers, and it boosts our knowledge and this helps us because when we go out, we can get a job as a secretary or just for managing computers, and still, if you join the university and you get enrolled for computer science course, it will just be a walk in the park.* (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

R2: *The Computer lessons have put me at a higher category because it could even give me a job like going to work in ICT, or even when I complete my Form 4 examinations, they may employ me to work in that ICT department. But looking at those who are not studying Computer, they are slightly behind us because it is difficult for them to be considered for such opportunities [sic].* (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

c) Relevance in the 21st Century

The adolescents appreciated that digital literacy skills would help them adjust more easily to the 21st century, where most activities and services have gone digital. For instance, the adolescents alluded to the fact that a job applicant may be qualified but unable to qualify if they do not have the necessary skills to make an online application.

R3: *I would like to say that learning computers has helped a lot and given me an advantage because we are still in the third world and everything we do is on internet and online, including applying for jobs which are now done online. So, people who have not studied computers are not able to use them to apply the job opportunities that come online, or even sending things via email, they don't know anything about it. So, in that respect, they are disadvantaged. They may be qualified, but because they can't apply via the computer, they end up missing that opportunity [sic].* (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

R7: *For that digital learning, when we are through with its studies, we are at an advantaged position. You see now the world is becoming digital, even in August this year, we will have elections, yeah, and people are getting recruited to support computer systems for the elections, and these are people who have studied computers [sic].*
(Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

d) Digital Sessions Keep Adolescents Occupied

To some of the adolescents, the digital sessions helped keep them occupied and consequently avoided engaging in social ills or staying idle. This was complemented by the fact that the adolescents had gained time management and planning skills from the soft skills sessions, which helped them ensure that they spent their time during school holidays more efficiently compared to those who were not enrolled in the A LOT-Change project. As a result, they were able to allocate time for both household chores and the project intervention activities without compromising on either.

R2: *The difference between us and those who don't attend those digital classes is that for us, our minds are already set such that we already know that there is a time we are supposed to be at a specific place studying computer lessons. So, you won't have time for*

loitering or being idle. You will have a daily schedule, which is good, and you will be managing well your time, and you will know that from 3pm-4pm you should be in class, after that you are washing utensils, after that, you are drawing water for household use. But those others do not have a good plan for their day, they just wake up in the morning and start loitering around, and then later on they start thinking of washing utensils, or washing clothes [sic]. (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

e) Other Unintended Benefits of Digital Literacy Sessions

The adolescents reported that, in addition to gaining digital literacy skills, the session also served as a platform for exchanging other life experiences. In one case, a male adolescent in Viwandani mentioned how the digital literacy facilitators would sometimes talk to them about what to expect at the university, thus enhancing their aspirations to complete their secondary school and transition to tertiary institutions.

***R6:** In terms of computer literacy, it's not that we only receive computer lessons only. There's a time that lecturer takes time and talks to us because he knows what students are going through – from the time they leave secondary school up to when they go to the university. So, the lecturer gives us a preview of the university. (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)*

6.1.2 Behavior Differences

a) Enhanced Discipline

One of the key positive changes alluded to by parents was that their children had become more virtuous compared to the past when they were not participating in the A LOT-Change program. As a result, they had become more trustworthy and could be trusted to make responsible decisions, especially relating to the use of finances. This is what two parents in Korogocho had to say;

***R:** ...even if you leave money he can't take money to go and use it to buy things like sweets or juices or things. If you leave money for him he will use it in an orderly manner and on sensible things; like, if there is no salt or anything else but not just buying anything and if he has gotten any money he can't take it and when you get back he will tell you how he used your money and what it was used to buy. (FGD, Fathers with Boys in the program, Korogocho).*

Another parent added that:

***R:** I have also experienced on the issue to do with money because when it comes to school fees I have never gone to the bank to pay for fees. I send money and he is the one who takes it to the bank to pay, I have never heard that he has lost the money because most of the students eat the money but when it comes to money I do not think he has a problem. (FGD, Fathers with Boys in the program, Korogocho)*

b) Respect for Their Parents and Elders

The respondents pointed out that compared to other children in the community, the A LOT-Change adolescents were more disciplined and respectful to their elders thanks to the life skills sessions, as indicated by an adolescent boy in Korogocho,

***R7:** Our behaviors are totally different. For instance, you cannot quarrel with someone who is older than you, but you will find those people (adolescents not enrolled in the A LOT-Change program) still fighting with people who are older than them because they have not been taught Life Skills, you will find they are still quarreling someone who is older than them. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).*

Another adolescent boy in Viwandani echoed that:

***R7:** Like when we go through those skills (life skills), we are taught how you are supposed*

to behave in terms of discipline – you should respect your parents, your elders, your teachers, your mentors, and such. It teaches you how you are supposed to relate with them and discipline. (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

The fact that this was mentioned several times by the respondents indicated that issues of respect were a key challenge in their community. This was supported by one of the parents who said,

“R6: The ones who are not in the project don’t know how to approach someone for example their elders. They approach you as if you are their age mates. They have not been taught morals and are disrespectful, if you are passing and you slightly bump into them they insult you, “can’t you see”, they have no discipline. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)”.

In one of the examples given by the adolescents, the levels of disrespect by those not in the program can get so bad that some adolescents even engage in social ills such as drug abuse in front of their parents or even fight with them. The enhanced respect also translated to enhanced parent-adolescent relationships.

R2: Our behaviors and the behaviors of those people who have not joined this program are totally different because if you compare those who are not in this project, they don’t have respect for their parents and people who are older than them. So, you find that for us, if your parent sends you to do something, you do it faster, but those others, if they are sent for the same, they tend to shout at their parents, or if they are sent to the shop or elsewhere, they tend to refuse to go, and some of them have engaged in theft. But for us, we have been taught there is no theft back at home [sic]. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

R6: For me, my relationship with my parents is okay because I give them respect since if it were not for them, I would not be here. So, for me, I respect my parents, especially my mother because she is the one I live with and whenever she sends me I go, unlike those people who are not in this program...like I have some friends, you find that someone even takes drugs in the sight of his parents, they don’t fear [sic]. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

These positive changes were also attributed to parents attending the parental counseling sessions where they learned positive parenting strategies for instilling discipline. According to parents, parents who did not attend the counseling sessions were more likely to also have delinquent adolescents.

R2: I think the parents who don’t come for these teachings, their children are still stubborn, they don’t respect parents. Even those parents instead of sitting down with the children and talking to them, talking with the children, they beat them and insult them and the children continue being hard-headed. Yes, these teachings have really helped us [sic]. (FGD, Mother with girls in the program, Korogocho)

c) Taking Perspective

The adolescents were also applauded for ability being able to take the perspective of their parent’s socio-economic situation by being rational when asking for financial resources to cater to their needs, for instance, by postponing their asks until their parents get money. On the other hand, adolescents who were not enrolled in the project were said to opt for negative coping strategies such as fighting their parents or dropping out of school if their needs were not met financially.

R1: If a child is not in the project it also means that her parent is not in parental engagement (counseling). So, you find that in a big way, the way this child related with her parent is very different. You can even find that the child beats up the parent, she doesn’t have patience, if there’s a fee balance of even 5,000 shillings at school she drops out. But for our children, you might have a big fee balance but the child still goes (to school). Even when

they are sent back they keep going because they understand the situation at home [sic].
(FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)

R: You may also find that the parent does not have money and you ask her for money to buy something though not important but you feel you need it, for me since I am in the project I am able to understand the parent and I will ask her to give me the money when she will have it, but those who are not in the project they don't listen to them and they start answering back to their parents because they don't have the skills.

(Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho)

d) Improved General Cleanliness

Interestingly, parents in Korogocho were especially happy that their male children who were enrolled in the program had taken up personal hygiene since joining the A LOT-Change program. There was a notion among parents that boys do not like bathing, and thus embracing personal hygiene was lauded as a great milestone for A LOT-Change adolescents.

R: There is a boy you can look at and know that he has gone for a week without taking a shower but for my son, I see that he takes a shower every day and looks nice but others you find that how they were before is the same as they are now or even worse.

(FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho)

R: There are like two differences but on cleanliness those who are in this program when you compare them with those who roam around in the Korogocho community you can fill in that this boy because you know they are living in the same slum but they are different in terms of cleanliness. (FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho)

6.1.3 Academic Differences

a) Enhanced Interest in Education

On the academic front, the A LOT-Change program was lauded for enhancing the adolescents' attitudes towards education. According to the respondents, adolescents in the program appreciate the value of education, and as a result, they not only have the drive to stay in school but also love being in school. For instance, compared to their peers not enrolled in the program, the A LOT-Change adolescents rarely missed school, made necessary arrangements to get to school early, and made extra time to study without being pushed or incentivized. The enhanced interest in education was especially important for adolescent girls as it enabled them to change their negative attitudes towards participating in STEM subjects. The adolescent girls felt it was important to love all the subjects whether or not they were performing well in them.

R8: So for me, I can say that when you look at those who are in A LOT-Change program and those who are just there and not in the program you find that when you go to school on the first day, they ask you why they would go to school on the first day as if the school belongs to their father "is it a must I achieve, how many have studied and are suffering and do not have money" so you find that interest they do not have and do not know the importance of going to school but for me, you find that I do not want to get to school late ... (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

R1:...so you find the person who is in A LOT-Change is really trying to love all the subjects or all of them are favorites even though she is not passing in all she likes them all but the one who isn't in A LOT-Change has a negative attitude towards subjects like Chemistry you find that they say even their relatives didn't study so how can she and she even gives you an example that like even with all the politicians not having finished school then who is she. So you find someone skips school even for three days or even a week and when you ask them they tell you that they were at home. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

As a result of the positive changes in education interest, parents on the other hand felt they were more motivated to support their children's learning. Parents also appreciated that the positive changes were mainly as a result of the program.

R: ...also academically like there are those young children maybe they are given a lollipop or any form of incentive for him to go to school and that is for those who are not in the program...I can remember there was a certain day he (adolescent in A LOT-Change) told his mother that she should wake him up because he had a lot of homework that she should wake him up at 4 am...his mother I think overslept and forgot, so I woke up and found them arguing because his mother woke him up at 5 am...so you see academically he is someone who has drive. (FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho)

R6: I can say that this organization helped because they were taught and she came and told me when you are a teenager...you know the stage (adolescence) that our daughters are in is dreadful, they were taught the importance of education and the disadvantage of chasing after life. So my daughter knowing this said that she wants to study and refrain from other unnecessary things and that where we are capable we should support her learning. So she has changed. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)

The interest in education was also illustrated by the adolescents voluntarily attending the A LOT-Change sessions without being pushed or incentivized. This is what a mentor in Korogocho had to say about it:

R: I can say the interest in schooling has been so big. They've improved, and their interest now has gone up they like where they can have their peace when having their sessions because when you look at whatever we do, we do not even give them food but they take their time to come to have the sessions then go back home so we can say they're so interested in whatever they're doing (KII, Mentor, Korogocho)

The enhanced interest to study was also visible during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic when schools were closed. According to a counselor in Korogocho who is also a parent to a boy enrolled in the A LOT-Change program, his son and his friends formed a study group and continued learning at home during this period. The engagement in income-generating activities by adolescents during this period was also cited as a contributor towards reduced interest in school especially for those not enrolled in the A LOT-Change program as they were easily swayed to go look for money instead of learning. The life skills such as self-control imparted by the program, therefore, came in handy for the A LOT-Change adolescents who could resist such temptation and continue with their education.

R: ...during the corona period they said there is no studying we didn't have sessions but he came to Miss Koch office and told them that he wanted books... they had formed a study group of 10 by themselves and they were studying on their own without anyone, one brings the issues of their school and the same with others and they combine them if you do not understand English well and there is one who understands, if you do not understand Math there is someone who understands so they used to teach each other. (KII, Counselor, Korogocho).

The mentorship style also contributed to the enhanced interest in education among adolescents. According to the adolescents, the mentors were caring, motivational, and willing to support them in their education. These actions gave them a sense of belonging and motivated them to work hard.

R: I can say, this project has helped us a lot because when we come here we have the interest of continuing with education but those who are out feel there is no one who cares about them and they may lose interest in continuing with education but for us there are people who care and we are able to work hard to achieve our goals. (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho)

R3: *I can say that the students who are in A LOT-Change are more inspired in education than those who are not because at first you find that like our mentors tell us that if you want to live a happy life after school then the obvious thing you have to do is education, they tell us if you want to own your personal car then education first, if you want those luxuries then education so they try to push us that in everything in this life in order to succeed you have to go through education so you are more inspired to learn, I have to work hard, I have to cope with peer pressure so that I cannot engage myself with drug abuse. So you find your mindset is more in education and you are inspired even more to study in order to achieve your goals. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)*

b) Improved Academic Achievement

The holiday homework support component of the A LOT-Change intervention was credited with improved academic achievement for the adolescents who were enrolled in the program. This was because, through this component, adolescents would revise and get assistance for difficult topics. Improvements were reported in both boys and girls. The majority of the respondents reported improvements in mathematics, English, Chemistry, Biology, and Physics.

R2: *This project, considering the Life Skills that we were taught, we have been putting more effort in our studies, and if you compare our academic performance, you will notice it has improved significantly, considering we have moved from very low grades to the grades that we really yearned to achieve. But we can still perform better if we continue getting support from this project. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)*

The peer-to-peer study groups also contributed to the academic improvements since the adolescents could share and learn from each other, considering their varied expertise in the different subjects. For instance, in Mathematics, they reiterated how they learned different formulas from each other and applied them to solve the same problem. In addition, group members who performed well in the various subjects were also seen as an inspiration by others to improve their performance. To some, this kind of informal arrangement enhanced their understanding of difficult subjects better than being taught in a traditional classroom setting as mentioned by one of the adolescents:

R6: *The advantage of studying in groups is that you understand the topic better than you were taught by the teacher. So, A LOT-Change has helped me because I have improved in my academics.” (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)*

R: *...like when we were in form one we were being taught all the subjects so you find that when you meet all of you, you find that one says that she got an A and maybe you failed and got a C- then you are pushed to study harder to at least get to them so you are being inspired to education more than the one who isn't in the A LOT-Change program because the more you get inspired because you were at a C- and you are seeing the friends you are walking with have an A- the next time you will be pushed and even gain more advice from your teachers and mentors and friends. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)*

R: *I can say it has helped me to understand how to solve issues quickly because like if we are in a group discussion and maybe we are three people one of us could have an idea and we discuss it but for those who are at home for them to get an answer they will have to struggle a lot. (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho)*

A parent in Viwandani also echoed the improvements by mentioning how the daughter was now speaking fluent English and Kiswahili rather than the local slang that young people in the community mostly prefer.

R4: *They have improved especially in Maths they never used to understand but now they understand...English they were scoring very low because they never used to speak in 'Sheng' (local slang), but lately, they speak pure English and Kiswahili fluently. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Viwandani)*

The enhanced academic achievement was considered a great milestone for the adolescents considering numerous challenges in the informal settlements that hinder effective learning.

R: ...homework support, has been of great help to them because the topics they come up with are those topics that maybe they did not understand well in school and you see in this informal settlement everything at home is a challenge, music, noise from the neighbors, because the houses are not permanent, so they have been able to improve, in fact there are some like in my group... I have a number of students who entered form one and posted some low marks, but as we talk now in form three, they are in B minus, B plain and B plus, we normally collect their report cards when the school is closed then at least we check and see the impact we are making on them. (KII, Mentor, Viwandani)

R: ...they have been taught life skills they have been assisted to do their homework because you know sometimes these houses are informal and there will not be electricity during the day and therefore a child will help in household chores and do the homework at night, sometimes electricity could be disconnected, it is not normal electricity also, it is borrowed electricity and if one does not pay it is cut off, so if the mentor is available during the day to take you through the homework it makes the difference because you might never get that time and peace of mind to do the homework. (KII, Local administration, Viwandani)

The mentors' qualifications and the effective strategies they put in place were also said to be crucial in contributing to the adolescents' academic success. For instance, a mentor in Viwandani narrated how they would lend a hand when one of them could not solve a problem in a particular subject area for their mentees. This view was also expressed by parents who mentioned that the mentors were seen as positive role models to their children and thus the motivation to work hard.

R: ...then the other thing, you see a single person might not be able to handle all the subjects, so what U-Tena did was to ensure that they brought in mentors with different abilities, like me I am good in mathematics and chemistry, we have another mentor who is good in biology, another one in English so whenever there are problems about mathematics in his or her class, I will be invited to go there and we swap, then she comes in for English or another subject which I am not able to do, so homework support has been very well, and it has had good results on the side of the students. (KII, Mentor, Viwandani)

R8: To add on, the children have changed, they have been with them from class six...and the mentors are graduates or who are still in the university so you see the children feel they also need to study hard...they are people with real experience. (FGD, Mothers with boys in the program, Viwandani)

c) Enhanced Future Education and Life Aspirations

The adolescents expressed their hope and will to study through to university, secure jobs, and consequently enhance their living standards thanks to the A LOT-Change program. According to them, the motivation for the enhanced aspirations was mostly attributed to the life skills taught in the program and enhanced academic achievement that had increased their hope of going further. The adolescents expressed interest in not only completing the secondary school education but also reaching the university level.

R5: Our mentors are educated, so you find that when they teach you they also inspire you to finish school compared to the one who isn't in the program you find that they don't have that inspiration to finish school because they know that education isn't a must like the example my colleague has given where she has said that there is even some who say that having your own shop is still a job and that it pays is not compared to someone who has studied because their work is bigger than one who is at the shop because you can

find that the one who is a doctor has a supermarket where the one who didn't finish is employed by the one who is a doctor so you find that the doctor earns more so I am more determined to study to be a doctor so that I can employ those who do not want to study (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani).

R1: In school, we are putting a lot of effort and we are hoping we are going to pass so that we can go to those higher levels of education so that at least we can study the courses that other people have not studied. So, at that point, the world will depend on us and people are just waiting to hear our testimony because the ranks that we shall have climbed will shock them. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

Additionally, the motivation to have a better life outside the slum was a key motivator for them. According to the adolescents, getting educated enables them to make a good living and consequently provide a better life for themselves and their families.

R2: For me, my interest for schooling is very high because when I consider the way we were being introduced to Life Skills, we were being told even about the future life and how education can help you acquire good jobs that would help you earn a lot of money. So, when you are in school you ask yourself, if you don't read and it is only through education that you will be able to access those jobs that give better salaries, how will it happen? So, it is on this basis that when you are in school you put more effort so that you can be like the mentors who taught us. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

R: I would say it depends with the background where you have come from. I am told that when I go to school I should not look back where I have come from but to focus and when I focus with my education that will help me in the future and when I am successful in life my parents will not live the kind of life they are living now, so when I go to school I have one goal which is to want to focus, so I cannot get the thought of wanting to drop out of school. (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho).

The exposure visits to various institutions under the A LOT-Change program were also reported to have contributed to the positive future aspirations held by the adolescents. According to them, seeing and interacting with various professionals, as well as getting to understand what it takes to achieve their dream careers, motivated them to stay focused on achieving their goals. This was echoed by female adolescents in Viwandani who narrated how a trip to the airport and a university cemented her aspirations of becoming an engineer and joining the university.

R8: ...we have been taken even to universities like Jomo Kenyatta and you say that you want to be an engineer because you have already been taken there. Then now it is only a matter of focusing because I remember even when I am sleeping something rings back in my mind telling me that I should wake up because I can never be an engineer if I oversleep...I said let me be an engineer because I went to the airport and saw how planes are made so that makes me focus than a student who wasn't taken. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

R1: ...there were those who went to Strathmore (university), JKUAT (Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology) ...we have been exposed. Like now I am in A LOT-Change and I have a dream of going somewhere unlike someone who isn't and just stays at home and only goes to school and comes back or goes to visit the relatives that person doesn't have an open mind like me where I can say that as a person I am working towards something and I have kept a goal for one year or a certain year like " [name] you should study so that you can go to Strathmore" but the person who isn't in A LOT-Change like yes they are studying but the mind they have is that they are studying to let's say like Strathmore is a good University which you would want to go to but they do not know what to do in order to go there. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

The experiences shared by mentors during the intervention sessions were also mentioned as a key drive for adolescents to aspire for a better future. The adolescents saw them as positive role models because they could relate to their experiences, being young and hailing from the same communities. Yet, they had been able to sidestep the challenges and become successful.

R: *For us who are participating in A LOT-Change, when we joined Form 1, our mentors had already joined the university, and they were not very old. So, they used to tell us good things about university life, not just stories about education and lectures only. They used to tell us how far it took them to go to university, and the adventures in the university and all that stuff. So, when you are in school, you set your mind that you would like to be like that mentor. Those others are just studying because they want to complete high school. For us, we were studying with a set mind of joining the university, while those others, maybe they had not been told about the university, so they just know that once they complete Form 4, they seek for casual laborers jobs. (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)*

The positive aspirations portrayed by the adolescents were also shared by their parents who attested to putting their best foot forward in ensuring that their children achieve their dreams. For instance, a female parent in Korogocho expressed how she aspired for her son to have a better life for themselves and their parents out of the slums.

R7: *This girl we are with, I am her grandmother, and she is in Form three. She wants to study up to university then get a job and after getting a job she relocates us from Korogocho to another village (FGD, Mothers with girls in the program, Korogocho)*

R4: *My son is doing well, he asks me, "Mum, which university would you like me to join?", and I ask him, "which one would you prefer". He tells me, "Mum, I won't get A-, I want to get A (final examination grade)" because his elder brother got A-. He tells me "Mum, this is little or small I will get A strong and I join medicine", so my son is doing well in high school and he has high expectation for his future. (FGD, Mothers with boys in the program, Viwandani)*

R3: *Thanks again. Our daughters, who are in this project have been taught, they have targets, because now the child can tell you, "Dad, I want to study hard and reach university", she has specific goals and targets because of the teachings she has received here. (FGD, Fathers with girls, Korogocho)*

Some parents also highlighted the link between future aspirations and soft skills. For instance, one female parent in Korogocho described how she advises her daughter that if she wants to be a doctor in the future, she must also have interpersonal skills to enable her to relate well with her patients.

R3: *My daughter said that she wants to study and when she completes form four, she gets a good grade then proceed to university. She desires to be a doctor. So you just keep encouraging her to put in effort and that if you want to become a doctor you have to have a clean heart, not high tempered so that when you encounter good or bad it is all the same because if you are a doctor and you have a bad heart you cannot assist a patient, you will even see some with a dirty wound on the leg or the body and you refuse to touch them. (FGD, Mothers with girls in the program, Korogocho)*

6.1.4 Social-Emotional Differences

a) Enhanced Self-Confidence

Narratives from the study respondents highlighted how the adolescents had gained self-confidence, consequently influencing various aspects of their lives socially and academically. For instance, they could now convey their needs and challenges easily to their parents, had become better public speakers, took up leadership roles, and found it easier to

seek clarifications when faced with academic challenges.

R1: *For me, life skills has helped me in many ways. By the time we started this A LOT-Change project, I used to be shy. So, at least it has helped me to build self-confidence, and now I can talk in front of people, I can lead teams. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)*

R: *Personally it has helped my child and I. My child used to be very timid, he never used to speak, he was very shy to even express himself in front of people, since he begun these sessions he has really improved, he can talk, he can express himself and also how he used to relate to the father. The father is a very harsh person who didn't him to even go outside and talk to people so he used to be very scared, he couldn't even answer you when you ask him a question, but coming here and learning even the life skills have really helped him in life and he has also improved in academics.
(FGD, Mothers with boys in the program, Korogocho)*

A village elder added to the sentiments by pointing out how the A LOT-Change adolescents can express themselves clearly in community forums compared to their peers that were not enrolled.

R: *...when she wants something she knows how to speak out, and to mingle with the community the child is principled, there is a forum we have with the Miss Koch children and if you hear how they speak out and express themselves their audience is very audible.
(KII, Village elder, Korogocho)*

b) Self-Regulatory Efficacy

The knowledge gained from the life skills sessions were highlighted as a key reason why the A LOT-Change adolescents had gained the ability to resist the temptation to engage in risky behaviors that could have otherwise gotten them into trouble. For instance, the sessions touching on peer pressure and drug abuse made them more resilient and thus able to resist engaging in crimes, risky sexual behavior, drug abuse and bullying. As such, they can also make the right decisions and stay out of trouble.

R8: *Like when we were being taught about the life skills or even about peer pressure so you find that the one who has been taught and has the skills from class 6 has the stance to say "I can't use any drugs because I know the harm it causes" but these other ones because of peer pressure are influenced to use the drugs. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)*

R: *About the soft skills, we have been taught discipline to avoid peer pressure, like all of us we are in the stage that I want to do what my friends are doing, even if it is bad I want to do it because she is doing it so we are taught on how to avoid peer pressure from my friends and also to abstain from early sex. (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho)*

R2: *I would like to say that we are totally different because the people who are in the A LOT-Change program, our lives have changed a lot because in these informal settlements there are some boys who could influence us into drug abuse like he has said, and then you find yourself joining that group and then you start using drugs and then your life becomes worse...So, if someone wants to introduce me to drugs, I will say "No", but for someone who has not joined this program, maybe they don't get advised by their parents, they don't tell them the negative consequences of such things. So, such a person does not know that it is bad. (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)*

In addition, the self-management skills also helped the adolescents control their tempers and avoid engaging in fights to solve issues between them. Adolescent boys majorly alluded to this.

R6: Our behaviors are different from their because, just like we were told here by [name], self-control, we underwent those lessons on life skills so that if someone wrongs you, you can use self-control, but those others, when they have used drugs their tempers rise faster such that if someone wrongs them they easily get offended and engage in fights.
(Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

Girls enrolled in the program were also said to make an effort to keep away from risky situations that would impede their sexual reproductive health and rights. In an example shared by an adolescent girl in Korogocho, girls enrolled in the A LOT-Change program do not cave into pressures to engage in sexual activities by motorbike riders in the community, unlike their peers.

R: I can say the behavior is different because you will find girls out there if she passes the motor bike riders and they are pulled, the girl just laughs as if that is nothing, but for me I will say "No". So if I pass these they will know I cannot allow them to touch me because they know I will not touch me and if they do I tell them not to touch me and I don't like their play... (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho)

c) Enhanced Responsibility and Proactiveness

Both parents and adolescents pointed out that compared to their peers who are not in the program, A LOT-Change adolescents have self-initiative. Both respondents provided a common example where this skill is most visible: the adolescents take the initiative to undertake household chores without being reminded to do so.

R5: Okay, for me, my relationship with my guardians, I would say that the respect that I give them, first is very high because you will find that the way this project has taught me, I will not wait for him to tell me something twice so that I can act. So, you will find that whenever there is something that is lacking in the house, you will realize that I must know whatever is missing in the house so that when I get time can find out that it is this and this that are missing, then I go ask for money to go and purchase it. So, you find that there are things that will be needed, so when I am sent for them I run and pick them very fast.
(Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho)

The responsibility skills were complemented by enhanced planning skills, which enabled the adolescents to schedule activities that needed to be done both at home and school and consequently complete them effectively.

R1: There's a big difference. I can say that my sister is self-aware in a way because of the project. The way she allocates her time is totally different from the other children because she has a plan, she knows when she is supposed to go to the library, and you won't find her interacting with students who are not part of the project. So in a big way, it has impacted her behavior and also her education
(FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)

d) Enhanced Communication with Parents

From the parental and adolescent narratives, the life skills sessions were credited with enhanced parent-adolescent communication. As a result, adolescents were said to easily share their challenges with their parents and thus get effective solutions. Of importance to parents was that adolescent girls also felt comfortable talking to their fathers about puberty-related matters.

R: Just to add, I have been a teacher for Home science, the child is now able and free to ask me for the money to buy sanitary towels and I can give her even when the mother is not a round. Again, the child is able to report to me, who is making advances on her, and I can caution her against such and yet in the past such things used to be a big secret. So now the child has been empowered and is so mature and can tell you things that were not reportable in the past. If the child wants money to buy soap, she is able to ask for that

cash and is free to express herself about everything without fear.
(FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Viwandani)

R3: For those of us in A LOT-Change, we were taught social skills and we know how to relate with our parents. You will find that there is a strong bond between the parent and someone in A LOT-Change unlike those who are not members of A LOT-Change who are faced with a lot of pressure, and peer pressure. So, they have joined early teenage marriage and engage in drugs. So, once they are exposed, even their relationship with parents doesn't go well because even if they are told this, they don't listen, even if they are given guidance, they don't take them seriously. But for us who are here at A LOT-Change, we are usually taught and there are mentors who guide us about the good and the bad things and give us way forward and how we can relate well with our parents.
(Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

e) Champions of Change

The undertaking of activities to improve their communities and passing down of the knowledge gained from the A LOT-Change project to other students in the community, including their peers who do not attend the sessions, was praised as one of the positive aspects that the adolescents had. The adolescents were thus seen as champions of change who were taking deliberate steps to make their communities better by applying what they had learned.

R: When schools are closed like on Sundays and they are at home you find that he has taken a spade and he is cleaning the sewage and when he gets these young children he calls them and tutors them or if he has money he buys a book for some who don't have. So, when schools close my house is always like a nursery because of the children where they know that when they come that is their positive moment.
(FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho)

f) Enhanced Leadership Skills

In addition to leadership skills like communication taught in the life skills session, peer-to-peer study groups were mentioned as a platform to practice leadership since the group members had to take up these roles at some point. Mentors said this was a key difference they saw in A LOT-Change adolescents compared to their peers in the community.

R: Yes in the way they participate in school, most of those in A LOT-Change are vibrant they grasp things quickly and during the sessions we teach them about life skills and mostly everyone will have to participate, if we are teaching anything like for example Chemistry there will be rotational leadership so you see from there when he has become a leader there he will not be afraid to be a leader out there but the other ones you see that they are laid back, when you ask them something they are afraid let's say there is another session from another organization and you call the children from A LOT and the others you will notice that those from A LOT are active than the rest. (KII, Mentor, Korogocho)

g) Reduced Engagement in Social Ills

The skills gained from the A LOT-Change project were also credited for enabling the adolescents to avoid engaging in social ills such as risky sexual behavior, robberies, loitering, and drug substance abuse. Of key concern for girls was the rampant adolescent pregnancies in the community, while for the boys, it was engagement in crime and drug abuse. The resultant effect is that the adolescents not only kept from these social ills but also improved in their education since they were able to dedicate more time to their studies. In addition to the skills they had gained from the project, adolescents also highlighted that the other reason why they were able to stay away from social ills successfully was that the A LOT-Change project activities kept them busy and, therefore, left them with little time for delinquency. This was especially important during the 9-month COVID-19 school closure period when students were most prone to social ills due to limited engagement in academic activities. The A LOT-Change life skills sessions were aired on two local radio stations in Korogocho and Viwandani during the school closures, allowing the adolescents to continue accessing vital knowledge and skills.

R: ...especially during this period of COVID-19, many of them dropped out of school. But for us, we got those lessons, so at least even if we stayed at home for 9 months, we did not forget what we were taught because we accessed education during this time. Again, you are not idle, thus you avoid those bad behaviors. However, the person who has not joined the program, would find himself engaged in drugs and after a few days they have forgotten what they had learnt, and if you go to school after those 9 months, and you have not been studying, you find that you have forgotten so many things (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani)

R2: What I have seen, the girls that were not part of the project but were learning with our girls and should now be in form three, almost...almost all my daughter's friends, like six of them are now mothers. I warned her about her friends and she dissociated from them after she joined this program. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)

R: Yes, the behavior is different because when you compare the behavior of children not in A LOT-Change, they have bad behaviors like girls having boyfriends, some who take alcohol, some smoking bang. We can confirm those who have gone through the A LOT-Change program you can see some good behavior change from them, unlike those not in the program. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Viwandani)

Whereas one of the reasons for engagement in social ills identified by the respondents was the push by poverty, the A LOT-Change adolescents were categorical that the life skills learned from the program made them resilient and knowledgeable enough to make the right decisions. For instance, adolescent girls in Viwandani echoed how they changed their perspective of their parent's financial challenges and also kept away from engaging in risky sexual behaviors to earn money.

R2: ...in our area there is a girl who usually fights with the mother like she literally beats the mother and they have a club (bar)...the girl is the elder one and then there are two more girls following and two younger boys then the girl goes to school and the mother doesn't earn a lot. So you find that when she is sent back home due to fee arrears, she goes to the club and starts entertaining the customers...at the end of the day you will find that the customers will go home with that girl and then when the mother finds out they quarrel and then the girl starts insulting the mother. So I was saying that if maybe that girl had come to A LOT-Change and taught that even though the mother has a club she should keep a distance and that she should respect her mother and that when she (her mother) gets even a small amount of money and isn't able to pay the whole fees amount she should be content. (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

Mentors and parents also corroborated this enhanced resilience as a result of the A LOT-Change intervention. To them, adolescents enrolled in the A LOT-Change project were more knowledgeable and equipped to avoid engaging in social ills.

R: Examples I just said, early pregnancies we recorded none, drugs we have not heard about those cases, then when we talk about boy-girl relationship again they have been very minimal in our project, yes, then in terms of decision making these children have been equipped very well as well as assertiveness because without good decision making and assertiveness then that means the students are likely to enter into some challenges without them knowing. (KII, Mentor, Viwandani)

R4: Those children in the program have learnt leadership and counseling skills. These children now know how to take care of themselves and respect themselves, especially sex, they don't do it carelessly, they know how to abstain and negotiate with partner to not to because she will conceive if they had sex but ask him to wait till she completes school. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Viwandani)

6.2 Difference Between Parents/Guardians Enrolled in A LOT-Change and Those Not Enrolled

a) Enhanced Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education and Lives

Enhanced parental involvement in their children's education and lives was mentioned as a key difference between parents enrolled and not enrolled in the A LOT-Change. For instance, A LOT-Change parents were seen to be more motivated to support their children's education despite the financial challenges. For example, when unable to pay the school fees, they did their best to clear the arrears while keeping their children in school, unlike other parents who cope negatively by taking their children out of school or engaging in child labor to raise money. The A LOT-Change parents were also more deliberate in following up on the children's education and lives. For instance, they ensured their children were attending school and not absconding while others supported their children on issues of friendship formation.

R: ...in the beginning he didn't have the motivation, he used to perform but he wasn't putting effort so I had to sacrifice waking him up early so that he can study and tell him later that he has one hour left to sleep and then I would go back and call him when it was time to get ready for school and that has helped him in Form One and Two.

(FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho)

R: There is a difference because those who are in the A LOT Change Program have hope and they know there is somewhere they are getting their support...on the other hand those out there have no hope, maybe when they (adolescents) are in secondary school and they get an ID the mother may tell her to go to Saudi Arabia or drop out and start hustling, but on the other hand those who are on the A LOT-Change program when you tell them to hustle on their own they will tell you they know their rights and they tell the parent you are supposed to provide this and this for me, and that challenges the parent, but the other child does not have a say. (KII, Village elder, Korogocho)

A key reason for the enhanced involvement is that parents appreciated the short and long-term benefits of education. To them, enhanced interest in education not only resulted in improved achievement but also provided an opportunity to have a better life in the future.

R: In the past, someone could herd cattle and benefit. Nowadays if you don't go to school, there's no life. So I tell her to focus as she won't blame me or herself if she throws her attention to others who are loitering around, and that she should retain good behavior. When you complete education a husband will bring himself, but before you finish school, someone may lie to you and ruin your life before you reach somewhere. So every day I tell her to be cautious of such deception and may God help me to raise her and may God help her maintain that good behavior to the end. (FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)

b) Parent-Child Relationship and Communication

Parents echoed that since they began attending the parental counseling sessions, the relationship and communication with their children had greatly improved. One of the most alluded to examples by respondents was parents taking up positive parenting strategies such as steering away from physical punishment as a form of discipline and embracing self-control, where parents were able to reduce their anger and use appropriate language that is less abusive when relating with their children.

R: We have changed behavior, for example in the past I used to get angry very fast, and when I entered the house she used to run away. But now I don't get easily angered, I am friendly with all children and so even when there is a problem I can get it early enough before it is too late and I don't even use a cane, but we sit on around the table and discuss without the use of a cane. If she does not understand she will tell me politely, and I will sit down and discuss in a friendly manner and guide her accordingly. Now I am not easily

angered, and I have changed my bad ways.
(FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Viwandani)

R3: *There is a very big change. There are some parents who are not in the project who are verbally harsh to their children. The parent uses vulgar words to insult the child until you wonder if it is his child. But parents who have attended such meetings like ours get some lessons and cannot relate that way to their children. So there's a big change.*
(FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Viwandani)

The parents also echoed how the enhanced open lines of communication with their children allowed both parties to easily share issues that were troubling them and also reach amicable solutions with them.

R3: *Our communication as parents with the girls has improved considering how it was. These children can now open up, especially to me. If she has a problem, she comes and tells me...She follows the steps as they were taught here (A LOT-Change after-school program). They were told to be open with their parents, whether one or both of them and tell their problems. So when mine has a problem she comes face-to-face and tells me what the problem is. So I can say that the communication between this child and her parent has improved because of the lessons she received here.*
(FGD, Fathers with girls in the program, Korogocho)

Adolescents also shared this notion, appreciating the enhanced relationship and open communication with their parents, thanks to the A LOT-Change parental counseling sessions. An adolescent in Viwandani highlighted how she could relate better with her parents and even discuss pertinent issues without fear.

R: *We are shocked by their positive change, I always ask my mother whether she is still the same person who used to beat me badly when she finds me talking with a friend out there, unlike before when she used to follow me outside to see if it is true I have gone to the toilet, she used to follow me to the toilet (Respondents laugh) Right now mom has given me time and respect, we can now sit down and talk, we can discuss financial issues together and plan together.* (Dialogues, Girls, Viwandani)

c) Positive Thinking and Openness to New Information

The A LOT-Change parents were said to be more receptive to new ideologies and those especially touching on sexual reproductive health issues. As such, they were said to use the gained knowledge to not only support their children but also to inform other parents on how best to support their children on SRHR issues.

R8: *For me I would say our parents have changed from the older days. There is a group we went and were mentored about girls' issues. I came and I told her and she had agreed but her friend was there and she said that those people are not supposed to tell the child things like that and that they are exposing the girl to those things early, those are things we were taught at A LOT-Change. So her friend reacted negatively and she told my mother that she is not supposed to allow me to go to such things. She did not see the importance of us going there, but my mother told her no, a child who is exposed to these things knows what she is doing rather than waiting till the girl is big. It is better when the child is educated early to know what is good and what is bad so that when she grows she will know she was educated on these issues when she was small, because when one is taught something when young it sticks...* (Dialogues, girls, Viwandani)

This was also echoed by one of the community leaders in Korogocho, who mentioned that judging from his interactions with community members, there was a difference in how parents who are enrolled in the A LOT-Change program conveyed their ideas compared to those who are not enrolled. They felt that the parents enrolled in the program had a more positive attitude, that is, they focused on the good in any given situation.

R: I am rating it as their reasoning. Even the meetings we have, you see when we are in meetings and you bring up a point their reasoning is very different. They support positive things. You know, there are some parents who are ever negative, yes. So their reasoning has really changed...because I think the program was well researched before it started because parents are the key and when parents are involved the way they were involved, that is why we are seeing some fruits... (KII, Community leader, Korogocho)

d) Enhanced Financial Management

Parents also reported gaining financial literacy skills through the A LOT-Change parental counseling session. As a result, they felt more confident in managing and utilizing the limited financial resources they had. For instance, one of the male parents in Korogocho advised that in cases of financial difficulty one could substitute meat for beans since they were both protein sources and still enjoy a balanced diet.

*R:...there is one phrase that I found there and I compared it with what we were told in the Miss-Koch and saw that it aligned itself, don't borrow to live like a king and I saw yes it is true...you will find things like meat and they are so expensive and when you go to beans you will find that they are protein and you can feel like today I want to eat beans and leave this meat because my pocket today is not accommodating.
(FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho)*

e) Reduced Engagement in Social Ills

Parents in the A LOT-Change project were also reported to be more resilient in engaging in social ills such as prostitution and drug and substance abuse, which is rampant in the urban informal settlements compared to those not enrolled. The resultant effect of engaging in these vices by some of the parents not enrolled in the program was the neglect of parenting responsibilities, especially in providing for their children. One ripple effect of this neglect was that, in some cases, the children were also forced to engage in the same social ills, such as transactional sex, to cater to their needs.

*R:...those who have gone for counseling there are those who have changed and they have started becoming parents who are able to take responsibility for their homes but those who have not gone, you find that in the morning the parent has woken up, drank tea, has gone to the miraa (khat) vendor and it is a woman...she will be there the whole day...when the child comes, 'mum what are we eating' she tells them to go out and look for something and bring we eat and a child of 8 years. When you tell her for 2 days to go and look for food, where will she go to look for food? By the end of the day, she will be told by her friends that there is this road (alluding to negative ways of getting money) and we can follow this road and if you didn't eat you can find food.
(KII, Village elder, Korogocho)*

It is important to point out that engagement in social ills such as prostitution and selling of illicit brews was mainly due to the widespread poverty levels in the community and was practiced by some parents enrolled in the project, as well as those who were not enrolled. However, the difference came in that parents who were not enrolled in the project often put their children at risk by engaging in the activities in the presence of their children or involving them in the activities.

R: You know, here in slums most of them are depending on those small businesses, so they cannot stop what they are depending on but in terms of parenting they are good. But behavior-wise they are still setting a good example to their kids even if they are doing those things. Even if they are selling alcohol, such things, they are setting a good example...Like initially there are those who used to involve their children in these brewing activities. If you have that brewing business the child helps you. You see it is not encouraged. So as they come for training we encourage them so that those children don't get involved in those businesses of theirs. (KII, Counselor, Viwandani)

R: There are certain behaviors like for now let us say there are women who do work as

sexual workers and there are those who do it in their houses and there are those who didn't mind their children...but now this one is being talked to and has known that that house is hers and her children and it is not a house to bring in men so even though she still does that work, she will move out and go and she isn't doing it in the house so I think that this counseling has helped. (KII, community leader, Korogocho)

In addition, attending the parental counseling sessions enabled parents to realize that their behavior also affected their children and other household members, motivating them to adopt positive behavior attributes.

R: The parents in A LOT Change are very disciplined than those others because I remember, some parents who drink beer and report in the house late and drunk from beer, and the probability of the son drinking is high because the parent is taking and the boy sees no evil in doing that. But parents in A LOT Change you cannot drink and go home like that there must be discipline. (FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Viwandani)

R: You know even when we were starting, others were like "I didn't know doing this kind of behavior was affecting my children". Say like maybe sending them to buy cigarettes, alcohol, or something like that or even coming to the house drunk or even yelling to them or fighting or abusing either the mother or the children. They were not aware how it was affecting either the children or even their spouse so coming to the sessions and learning all this. In the first session about understanding yourself as an individual, they got tips and gained some skills on how they can be able to change some of their habit or behavior... for some of them, it took time to change. (KII, Counselor, Viwandani)

f) Enhanced Parental Well-Being

The parental counseling sessions provided a platform for parents to share and learn from each other, and in the process, enhancing their mental well-being since they felt assured that the challenges they were experiencing were not unique to them. Consequently, they were able to find positive coping strategies and solutions to these challenges as compared to other parents not attending the sessions who were seen to adopt negative coping strategies such as violence.

R1: First of all, the meetings provide an opportunity for parents to talk. You might find that the parent was pressed somewhere and just wanted an avenue to share information and he is given advice which makes him released in a way, know how to handle that situation. On the other hand, the parent who doesn't attend handles the situation very differently, perhaps always fighting, scolding, verbal abuse, and fighting in front of children. The parent who attends knows when to talk as parents and what to talk around children (FGD, Fathers with girls, Korogocho)

R: ...I had three children and I used to ask myself, how will the life of these children be? Sometimes eating became a problem. But the moment when I joined this program and started to be called for meetings, I even met single mothers who had a lot of children and there are elderly men like me who do not have wives...I have seen a difference because we have talked about the life of a single mother and single fathers. (FGD, Fathers with boys, Korogocho)

The parental counseling sessions not only provided parents with a platform to share and learn parenting experiences but also allowed them to seek assistance on other non-parenting issues due to the friendships they had developed with each other. For instance, some parents shared job opportunities that came up at their workplaces for any of the support group members to apply.

g) Champions of Change

Parents also narrated how they passed the knowledge and skills they had learned from the A LOT-Change program to other community members rather than keeping it to themselves. Having attested to the positive changes the project had made in their lives and that of their children, the parents felt the need to also make positive changes to the community.

The reception from other community members was also said to be positive.

R: *Personally I have learned a lot. One time I went home to Muranga and joined my mother's group and I was teaching them on how they can live with children in that women's group, the women were very happy that I taught them how they can live with children and also bring the children close to them and I am very happy. I do not want it (A LOT-Change program) to come to an end (FGD, Mothers with boys in the program, Korogocho)*

Some parents were also said to use the skills they had gained from the project to take up influential leadership positions in the community, like 'nyumba kumi' (a community policing initiative), to make positive changes in the community. This is what a community leader in Korogocho had to say:

R: *It is there because like when they are called for a school meeting or when there is a meeting between parents and children they do attend, and also their relationship and patience with the community members is different. They also know their role in the community, it is not just sitting in the plot and backbiting, they know they have responsibilities. Some are engaged in the Nyumba Kumi initiative in the community because the leadership skills that they have acquired through the A LOT-Change program have spread to the community. So if such parents are called for community leadership meetings they contribute well. (KII, Community leader, Korogocho)*

The adolescents also echoed the positive role modeling by parents, as they felt that their parents demonstrated behaviors that they could emulate.

R3: *I would say like my mum has a big difference as compared to our neighbour. Where we stay you find that most of the parents don't go to work, they just stay outside, they talk stories, but my mother likes doing business so you will not find her staying out with other parents. So I think that is how they are trained because if she is not out doing meaningful things she is in the house resting. So she is kind of setting a good example to me because I say if my mother is busy doing her things then why would I go out to idle around if I don't have anything to do I had better stay indoors or I sleep instead of staying out discussing stories that are not useful. (Dialogue, Girls, Viwandani)*

6.3 Adjusting to Secondary School

In this section, we report the qualitative narratives covering the following areas: what worked well for students as they enrolled in secondary school, challenges that were encountered by the A LOT-Change students, how the intervention tenets enabled the students to adjust to secondary school, and whether the intervention met the expectations of the project beneficiaries.

In terms of what worked well for both pupils and their parents, we report on the link between secondary school and the workforce, respect from parents and peers, increased creativity, nationalism, leadership and analysis of issues, peer-to-peer interaction, and learning, ability to resist peer pressure, and talent improvement in secondary school.

On the challenges faced by the adolescents, we detail the risk of early pregnancy, use of drugs among adolescents, loss of learning time, lack of school fees, and girls wanting to belong. Regarding how A LOT-Change has assisted the pupils in adjusting to secondary school, we highlight academic improvement and knowing what to expect from the stage of adolescence. Finally, we detail the expectations and lack thereof of A LOT-Change program for students, parents, mentors, counselors, and community leaders.

6.3.1 What Worked Well for Students and Parents by Pupils Enrolling in Secondary School?

a) Linking Secondary School and the World of Work

One of the key findings that stood out as having worked well for adolescents who were part of the program and enrolled in secondary school is linking their secondary education to the workforce. Adolescent felt that their performance in secondary school relates to their performance in the outside world. Consequently, they believed that a good performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) is the bridge to exemplary performance outside school. An adolescent boy from Korogocho, attending the dialogues said,

"...how you pass or how you perform in secondary school will determine how you will live in the outside world. So, for example, if you pass KCSE, [this] which will be your bridge to the outside work. So, if I pass, opportunities will come..." (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).

b) Respect from Parents and Peers

Respect for parents emerged as one virtue espoused by the adolescent girls and boys in secondary school. There were two aspects of respect; one was respect from their parents for having been enrolled in secondary school. A boy attending the dialogues from Korogocho said,

"R7: when I was in primary, my parents (did not) respect me because I was in primary. Now I am a more mature, and I get the respect..." (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).

On the other hand, the adolescents intimated that by virtue of being enrolled in secondary school, they got respect from their peers within their community. A girl in Korogocho explained this in the dialogues:

R: What has amused me is that in high school...is that people give you respect. Because, there are those who completed class eight and there is where it ended. And so when I continue, there is that respect you are given, and they say that you are moving. And another thing, is that I got to learn new things not like when I was in primary [sic]... (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho).

From the parents' perspectives, this respect emanated from adolescent girls joining secondary school, whereas neither of their parents had the opportunity to enrol in secondary school. In addition to respecting their adolescent daughters, there was also the pride of being a parent, who had managed to take a girl to secondary school. A father with a girl in the program explained:

R6: When my daughter who is a firstborn joined school, I was very happy. I was thinking to myself that a jua kali artisan like me has a daughter in secondary school, because both I and her mother did not go to secondary school [Emphasis added] but our child has reached [sic]. May God help her to study, I was very happy (FGD, Fathers of girls in the program, Korogocho).

c) Increased Creativity, Nationalism, Leadership, and Analysis of Issues

From the narratives by the adolescents, it was clear that what worked for them as a result of enrolling in secondary school was increased creativity and analysis of issues. The feeling was that secondary school gives students a chance to engage their brains and think compared to primary schools where many of their exams were simply multi-choice. As a result, the students' engagement in the learning process and tackling of issues was more analytic. A boy in the dialogues in Korogocho extrapolated:

R6: High school life has increased my creativity unlike in primary school. [This is] because most of the exams we used to do, the answers were merely A, B, C, D. But in high school, you depend on your brain to think and how you do things. Also, my parents respect me a lot... (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).

In addition, the adolescents affirmed that linked to their increased creativity was the cognitive growth, which improved as a result of enrolling and attending secondary school.

R3: *"As for me, I am pleased to be in secondary school because I have moved into another level of education. I am still growing in terms of cognitive growth, physically and I am getting education to get experiences in high school..." (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani).*

Moreover, the adolescents felt that secondary school provided them a platform to enhance their leadership, nationalism, and critical thinking skills. These young adolescents were exposed to leadership skills while in primary school, which was reinforced through the life skills in Phase III of the intervention. Nationalism was exhibited by young people attending similar secondary schools, yet they attended different primary schools and were from different communities. An adolescent boy attending a dialogue in Korogocho explained,

"...secondary school life is the best for promoting nationalism. And it still helps to enhance your leadership skills, and to think critically..." (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).

d) Peer-to-Peer Interaction and Learning

The adolescents also expressed the importance of peer-to-peer interaction and learning, which they experienced in secondary school, as compared to the experience in primary school. This is because they spent time interacting with their peers through group discussions in secondary school more than they did in primary school. Boys who were attending the dialogues from Korogocho intimated:

R3: *I like secondary school because it is not like primary. In secondary, we work hard, but in primary school, we just used to sleep as we waited for the exam, the KCPE. In secondary school, you will see people are doing their best, they engage in group discussions, unlike primary where there were no group discussions and instead people were reading individually... (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).*

e) Ability to Make Friends and Resist Peer Pressure

One of the outstanding tenets of the A LOT-Change program was the teaching of life skills to the adolescent girls and boys. The adolescents were able to have their behavior aligned to the choices made and particular interactions they had with their peers. At the onset of Phase III, the ability to choose, interact and evaluate good friends was still a virtue that was carried forward by the young adolescents, which persisted to the end of this program. Consequently, the ability to resist peer pressure not only remained a virtue among this cohort of adolescents but also a key tenet that worked and was sustained. An adolescent boy attending a dialogue in Korogocho said:

R7: *Secondary school life has taught me how to distinguish between good and bad friends. You know, in secondary, if you start interacting with bad company, even your good performance goes down, and that will be the end of your future. Secondary school helps you to know how to choose good friends and to decide on how your life should be [Emphasis added]. So, that after secondary school you can get a good job... (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).*

In addition to resisting peer pressure, some of the adolescents added that they also learnt to be independent even as they interacted with others. An adolescent girl attending a dialogue in Korogocho said,

"I have learned to be independent, and not a must every time I run to my parent....I am in school, and there are a lot of people and I have learnt a lot of things in that boarding school..."[sic]. (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho).

Moreover, according to the parents, what worked for them in relation to their children resisting peer pressure was the fact that the adolescent could leave the peer group in an urban informal environment and concentrate on school. This

parent intimates:

...when you see yours agreeing to leave that group, and has agreed to go school, you thank God. So, I was happy. And I saw that even when he joined school, he is putting so much effort. At night he requests for an alarm to be set for him, and immediately it rings he wakes up and leaves.... (FGD, Mothers with boys in the program, Korogocho).

f) Improving on Talents in Secondary School

The adolescents acknowledged that the way the sporting activities are organized in secondary school is way better than they were organized in primary schools. An adolescent boy from Viwandani explained, "R6: What I like is...the first thing was sports. I went ahead and tried all sports, and then the functions that are organized in secondary school make sense, unlike those ones of primary school... (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani). Some of the adolescent boys also explained that when they opened up to other sporting opportunities, they discovered there were other options apart from football. For instance, this adolescent boy intimated that he discovered he had talent in basketball. This is how he extrapolated it:

...In sports, I discovered myself; that I am actually good in Basketball, I wasn't aware of that because where I come from the only thing people engage in is football, so the rest of sports are never quite given attention. I think there is only one basketball court, and it is not even close to where I live, but rather, it is a quite a distance. At least I got a chance, I discovered myself and now I can play Basketball... (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani).

6.3.2 Challenges Faced by A LOT-Change Students and Parents in Secondary School Education

Challenges were anticipated as the young adolescents entered secondary school in form one. These included violence, aggressiveness and bullying, theft of items, loss of concentration in secondary schools, and stress due to the number of subjects offered in secondary school. The narratives of adolescents and parents show that the challenges afflicting these young people seemed to have shifted away from those afflicting new entrants into secondary school, except for a few. Those challenges that manifested themselves among students in form three from the perspective of parents included the risk of early pregnancy, use of drugs among adolescents, loss of learning, lack of school fees, and girls wanting to belong.

a) Risk of Early Pregnancy

One of the challenges, as expressed by the parents, was related to the susceptibility of girls to get pregnant or their adolescent boys to impregnate girls and the added financial implications. This fear was prevalent among fathers with boys in the program, who did not want the responsibility to fall on their sons, as this meant that it was a problem for the parents too. A father of a boy in the program in Korogocho said:

R: Our boys have reached the stage of getting married...They get a girl and tell her he loves her...if the girl gets pregnant it becomes a challenge to both the parents of the girl and of the boy... (FGD, Fathers with boys in the program, Korogocho).

b) Use of Drugs Among Adolescents

At the endline three years after the onset of the follow-up study, a challenge that had once afflicted adolescents in primary school resurfaced—the use of drugs among adolescents. Some of these drugs were sourced within the community, very well disguised, and it was not easy to tell that a young adolescent was using drugs. A father of a boy in the program in Korogocho said:

...that there are drugs that are not easily gotten; they get them from Mukuru; they are like a felt pen that is charged using a phone. They have a very nice scent and if you smell it you cannot tell it is a bad thing. This is in addition to other challenges, early marriages, drugs, and hanging on garbage collectors... (Fathers of Boys in the program, Korogocho). In addition, some of the adolescents were exposed to drugs in schools in which they were

enrolled. This made parents vulnerable when thinking about some of the schools they sent their daughters and sons. A mother of a girl in the program attending an FGD in Korogocho intimated, "...if I had school fees, I would have taken her from there and taken her elsewhere. Because in school they have already started smoking bhang and she comes to tell me they smoke bhang and cigarettes during lunch..." [Emphasis added]. (Mothers of Girls in the program, Korogocho).

c) Loss of Learning Time

From the narratives, another challenge that was experienced by the adolescents in secondary school was related to the loss of learning time as a result of the ravages of COVID-19. The onset of COVID-19 resulted in the isolation of human populations as a containment measure (Savelli, 2020). This necessitated that children stayed at home and did not attend school. The limited school attendance resulted in loss of learning time as schools remained closed, thereby impairing the ability of children to perform well, particularly for children in urban informal settlements (Muhia, Abuya, & Wachira, 2020). A mother of a boy in the program attending an FGD in Korogocho explained:

...A challenge that I saw even affected this child of mine, during COVID (is that) they stayed at home almost nine months...when they went back to school, I noticed he had dropped...when he came home I asked him, you have really dropped, and then he told me "Mother, we have stayed home for so long [Emphasis added] but next time I will improve." (Mothers of Boys in the program, Korogocho).

d) Increased Delinquency

Moreover, the adolescents recorded a drop in their performance due to indiscipline in some schools. As a result, they were suspended, which interfered with their learning journey. A mother of a boy in the program extrapolated her thoughts in an FGD in this way,

"...back again, that time which he had to learn he was home that one week. The form fours burnt a dormitory, then they were sent back home for another two weeks, so he stayed home for about three weeks, because he had been sent back home then he stayed sometime..." [sic]. (Mothers with Boys in the program, Korogocho).

This indiscipline was linked to some of the students lacking the self-drive when it comes to learning, and thereby not ready to sit for their mock examinations (trial examinations before the national examination). The form four class had refused to sit their examinations, jeopardizing learning for the A LOT-Change cohort as well. A mother attending an FGD in Korogocho explained:

R: *Yes, they were sent back home on Wednesday form fours have caused some tension they have refused to do mock saying this time they are not going to burn the dorm while they are in class, actually that Saturday the teachers came and got those boys out it is like the teachers know them...[sic]. (Mothers of boys in the program, Korogocho).*

e) Lack of School Fees

From the qualitative narratives, one of the persistent challenges for the parents was the inadequacy to pay school fees as their adolescent daughters and sons progressed in secondary school. Beyond meeting their children's basic necessities in their own homes, parents placed a high value on their ability to pay school fees. Paying school fees was necessary to keep children enrolled in school, so that learning could continue. Learners felt disillusioned when they were sent home for school fees, and yet their counterparts remained in school learning. A mother of a boy in the program attending an FGD in Korogocho explained:

...the issue of school fees; you see if a child keeps being sent at home because of school fees, they tend to lose hope. They are wondering why me, such that even when they are doing their exams you can just see this child is not fine. There is a way they get confused,

or they get affected, because of the issue of school fees. This is because they are seeing their fellows are in class... (Mothers of boys in the program, Korogocho).

f) Girls Wanting to Belong

As the adolescents progressed through secondary school, the urge to compare themselves with their peers and belong to the respective groups arose. For instance, some adolescents compare how much pocket money they have to others. A mother of a girl in the program explained:

...The challenge I have faced, my daughter is in boarding school and she usually tells me that children there are given a lot of money for pocket money. I tell her we are not the same as them; they have and we will also get and be like them. Therefore don't compare yourself to them...[sic] [Emphasis added] (Mothers of girls in the program, Korogocho).

This challenge of adolescents wanting to belong and conform to their peers was to the extent that they got into vices like stealing from their parents. The hard work of their parents notwithstanding, the adolescents were obsessed with pleasing their friends and not wanting to let them down. The element of pleasing their friends suggests that there could have been a tendency to slip back into peer pressure as they transitioned through secondary school. This adolescent girl from Viwandani intimated:

...mothers bring the Sacco money and that day I said let me just go God will guide me, and I hope that my mother will forgive me. I went and without having mercy, I took KES 2,000 and I went straight to Gikomba (second-hand clothes' market) and purchased the new Air Force sneakers. When that day came, I was brighter than everyone else as I was even the one wearing new sneakers...[sic]. (Dialogue, Girls, Viwandani).

Moreover, this aspect of wanting to belong was also related to the stress that accrued to adolescents in secondary school as a result of wrong choices of subjects. Wrong choice of subjects arose from adolescents following their fellow friends and choosing the same subjects as their friends, and not necessarily that their choices were related to their career choices. A girl attending a dialogue in Viwandani had this to say:

...already continued and then another thing in your school, you want to do three sciences and still there is a course that you want to do part-time. And you cannot do that course without doing that subject so you find that you cannot drop three sciences to do another one. And still these three sciences are determining your career and still this course you are not doing a subject there, it becomes tricky... (Dialogue, Girls, Viwandani).

6.3.3 How the A LOT-Change Program has Assisted in Adjusting to Secondary School and Solve Challenges Affecting Students in Secondary School

The intervention components of holiday support, mentorship, and parental counseling sessions have been crucial in cushioning the adolescents in secondary school against the challenges of secondary school. As told by adolescents themselves or by their parents, these sessions were crucial in several ways.

a) Enabled the Adolescents to Stay Focused on School

One of those attributes mentioned by parents as a way in which the ALOT Change Program cushioned the adolescents in secondary school was that the interventions enabled adolescents to focus on school. This included school attendance, staying focused on what was taught, and completing homework. A father of a girl who was in the program in Korogocho explained,

"R2: It has helped, because now they don't stay idle. Their mind is always on wearing uniform and going to school and doing homework when they come back"
(Fathers of Girls in the program, Korogocho).

Moreover, the sessions kept the adolescents busy during school holidays. The parents called for the continuation of the learning sessions so that when girls and boys closed school, they could attend the sessions. A father of a girls in the program attending an FGD in Korogocho explained:

...that this project continues, especially, for these children even if it is just the learning sessions [Emphasis added]. At least it will keep these girls busy, because when they close school, they will just be coming here to attend the sessions. Continuing with these sessions will focus their mind in one place...

(FGD, Fathers of Girls in the program, Korogocho).

b) Enabled the Students to Improve Academically

From the narratives, the adolescents were able to improve their academics as a result of the holiday support. This was possible because the students brought difficult topics they encountered in secondary school back to the after-school support centers. This ensured that even those who posted low marks in form one could improve in form three. A mentor in Viwandani intimated:

Academic achievement, again they are doing very well, on homework support. It has been of great help to them because the topics they come up with are those topics that maybe they did not understand well in school...in this informal settlement everything at home is a challenge, music, noise from the neighbours, because the houses are not permanent. So, they have been able to improve, in fact there are some like in my group... I have a number of students who entered Form One and posted some low marks, but as we talk now in form three, they are in B minus, B plain and B plus... (KII, Mentor, Viwandani).

Closely related to the academic improvement, the adolescents were able, through the holiday support and mentorship program, to come together and discuss the challenges they had, both academically and in their social lives. As a result, these adolescents could stay focused, and busy with their homework, consequently improving their academic achievement. A community advisory committee member in Korogocho said:

...like during the holiday, during COVID-19 there was that break; they meet together, talk about the challenges. There is kind of mentorship, that also has worked very, very well, that mentorship has helped them (referring to the adolescents) to understand the world and also just open their minds and also to know apart from Korogocho there is also another world... (KII, Community leader, Korogocho).

c) Knowing What to Expect From the Stage of Adolescence

From the narratives of the study participants, A LOT-Change cushioned the students in secondary school through the multifaceted intervention components. In terms of life skills, through topics like self-awareness, adolescents were able to know their potential, limitations, feelings, and position in society. It was the study participants' perception that the intervention components were key in enabling the adolescents to know what to expect during this period of adolescence and how to remedy the situation. A community leader in Viwandani explained,"

...no, A LOT change also has a different component of life skills, leadership skills. So, you find that child is not much affected by peer pressure, adolescences because in these components the adolescents were told this is what we expect...."

(KII, Community leader, Viwandani).

From the dialogues of girls, the knowledge of what to expect during this stage of adolescence was imparted by mentors in both study sites. These mentors were young adults, born and bred in the respective communities where the intervention was implemented. Thus, the mentors were role models, and therefore the knowledge they imparted was also contextual, and the adolescents could relate to it. Girls, in particular, felt close to mentors who were also close to them, and they could confide in them. Therefore, when the mentors noticed something was amiss in the group they mentored, it was easy to bring them back on track.

R: I would like to say that within the A LOT-Change program, we get mentors who monitor us....If your mentor notices that you are just about to lose interest with school, he/she will call you and talk. This is because you have already become friendly. But those who are out there, they do not have someone to talk with them. So, if they get a chance to drop out of school they just drop out, but for us we cannot lose interest because there is someone who is monitoring you...[sic]. (Dialogue, Girls, Korogocho).

The parental counseling sessions also allowed parents to know what to expect from their daughters and sons during this period. Moreover, the parents were also taught to follow up with their adolescent children to forestall some behavior from the peer groups and the community at large. A counselor from Viwandani extrapolated that:

...needs to follow up with school first, whether she goes to the school she knows the kind of friends that her child has. This is because they (the friends) are the ones causing her to have that peer pressure, talking back at her, not obeying and such things. So, she went and did that. When she came...you know when we give the solution, the next session they come and told us that it had it worked... (KII, Counselors, Viwandani).

6.4 Has the A LOT-Change Project Met Your Expectations

6.4.1 Meeting of Expectations from Students

a) The Exposure to Digital Literacy

From the narratives, a vast majority of adolescents, particularly boys, believed that one of the expectations that A LOT-Change program realized for them was the opportunity to be exposed to digital literacy classes, albeit towards the end of the program. This expectation was realized especially for those adolescents who wanted to study computer technology after high school completion. A boy who attended the dialogues from Korogocho, said,

"R3: The expectations that I had have been met. I had joined and expected that my grades would increase. Also, I wanted to study Computers after I complete high school, and also when I join college. I wanted to study Computers; now I have studied Computers and have certificate which I can use to look for jobs.... (Dialogues, Boys, Korogocho).

b) Reinforced Subjects Learnt in School

In addition to digital literacy, what the adolescents said met their expectations was how the mentors in the afterschool support sessions reinforced the subjects taught in school. A boy attending the dialogues in Korogocho put it this way,

"The expectations that I had through this A LOT-Change, in addition to Computers...I was worried about who will teach me, or from where I would get new ideas. But through A LOT-Change, we got teachers and they have taught us all the subjects that we learn in school.... (Dialogue, Boys, Korogocho).

In addition, the adolescents also explained that the implementation of the intervention in high school opened up their understanding of the complex subjects and they could not understand while in school. An adolescent girl in Korogocho explained,

"R: Yes and now when you look at primary, we used to do Maths, English and Life Skills. So, I was praying that even when we continue in high school, we do all the subjects; but when we joined Form One, we were put in groups and got to learn all the subjects...In that state, it didn't boost you in Maths, only but in all the subjects and you find out that you have balanced (referring to the subjects...). (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho).

c) Empowered Adolescents

The adolescents narrated that the A LOT-Change program empowered them, particularly girls. But they also felt that because in the subsequent years, the program included boys, it also added boys to the empowerment programs. This was a step forward for these adolescents because the addition of boys provided a state of gender balance in the program. A young adolescent boy attending dialogues in Viwandani extrapolated,

“R7: So, first of all, for me, what I can say; A LOT-Change has done is, initially A LOT-Change used to support girls only, but it went ahead and included boys. That was a step forward...” (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani).

These sentiments on empowerment were echoed by girls in Korogocho who reinforced the empowerment aspects of A LOT-Change in addition to having the opportunity to share ideas during the group discussions at the mentoring centers. A girl attending dialogues in Korogocho explained:

R1: My expectations were met, most of them have been fulfilled. First, I was expecting my friends to be empowered such that the girl child gets empowered. So, I am happy and proud of the A LOT Change project [Emphasis added]. Another thing is that it has helped us in academics...coming for classes and group discussions, at least it gives us the chance to interact with other members and to share ideas. (Dialogues, Girls, Korogocho).

Moreover, it was the view of the adolescents that the program exposed them to different intervention components, some of which motivated them and sensitized them on the uniqueness of adolescents as a group. Finally, they were able to transition to secondary school. From the boys' dialogues in Viwandani, one adolescent boy intimated,

“The second one is that, more so us who joined when we were in Class 6, used to hear a lot of things about A LOT-Change, regarding the motivation programs and sensitizations. At least many young people were supported at the time we were joining Form 1...” (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani).

Moreover, during the period of COVID-19, the adolescents felt that they were also empowered by the sessions offered during this period and particularly those offered through the radio evaluation nested on the main project. These sessions cushioned adolescents against being idle and they were constantly reminded of what they had studied in their respective schools. A boy attending dialogues in Viwandani said this:

...this period of COVID-19, we were expecting that at least they (referring to mentors) would help us so that we don't just stay idle at home. You do revisions at home until you feel you are exhausted and you even feel you should return to school. With those sessions that we attended, we were reminded about what we studied in school, which was a good thing that A LOT-Change did. (Dialogues, Boys, Viwandani).

6.4.2 Meeting of Expectations from Parents

From the parents' narratives, there are some parents whose expectations were met, while some parents felt that their expectations were not met. For those parents whose expectations were met, it was as a result of what their children, and themselves gained from participating in the intervention. A father of a girl in the program explained what their children gained:

R: Myself also, for whatever small we were given...to top up for school fees up to now they are still benefiting from the mentorship they are getting like during this vacation they will be in session for tuition (referring to the afterschool support) and they will not get time to idle around like others, they will be safe, so we are grateful... (Fathers of girls in the program, Korogocho).

For the parents, the knowledge gained was vital for their continued support of other generations of their children. They felt that the lessons they had learned in this program were valuable, and they would carry these lessons for a long time. Even though the program would eventually end, what they learned was ingrained in them to help their younger children who are still in school. A father of a girl in the program said it in this way:

But this program must come to an end and it will not be with us forever. But the lessons, they will not go with them. The discussion we had with other parents and the knowledge shared will still remain with us [Emphasis added], and the program will not go with them and will help us. I still have children in lower levels, even those to be born and I will still be applying what I have learnt [Emphasis added] in this program, even after it closes down, I will still have the knowledge... (FGD, Fathers of girls in the program, Viwandani).

Some of the parents' expectations were met in part by the payment of the transition subsidies from primary to secondary school (in phase II). However, some of the parents were disappointed that the financial support was not continued in phase III when the adolescents enrolled in secondary. This view was shared by both the fathers with boys in the program and mothers with boys in the program. For this reason, the perception of the parent was such that even though their expectations were met, this dwindled with time. A father with a girl in the program said:

R: I would say my expectations were met because if someone helps you even with very little, it is very important. But, I expected that when the children joined school Miss Koch would be helping us to pay a little and we as parents add a little. But, when they withdrew just like that we were left hanging. We wished they would be helping us with something, and we the parents add to top up, it would not be a heavy burden; in short let us be grateful... (Fathers of girls in the program, Korogocho).

While explaining that their expectations were met, the female parents with boys in the program stated that they did get specific amounts of money that enabled their children to transition to secondary school. A mother with a boy in the program explained:

"...I also received the Ksh. 12,000 when my child joined...really came in handy and helped me a lot. Counseling was very helpful because my child gave me a hard time while in Form One, saying that he wants to go to a boarding school....So, most of the time...used to call him for counseling; so personally, I have really gained from in this program in so many ways.... (Mothers with Boys in the program, Korogocho).

For those parents whose expectations were not met, they explained that they thought that once their children were assisted with the transition subsidy to join form one, this would continue as the adolescents transitioned to the subsequent grades. A father of a boy in the program explained:

...yes another woman who said her child is just in the house.... She had thought that if a child is taken by A LOT-Change or Miss Koch, everything will be catered for Miss Koch or A LOT-Change until the child finishes school, and that is what the parent thought, so it was very hard... (Fathers of boys in the program, Korogocho).

Moreover, those parents whose expectations were not met were eventually persuaded to appreciate the role of A LOT-Change, the implementers, and the adolescents who were beneficiaries of the program. In addition, the parents realized that despite the existence of the program, they still had a role to play in their children's education. Without this support, the children would be ill-equipped to make it in their education, and parents would be ill-prepared to support their children's academic success. Eventually, they realized that their expectations were not realistic, especially on the education of their adolescents throughout the secondary education cycle. A father with a boy in the program extrapolated:

So, what I expected was that when the child joined form one, Miss Koch would take all the responsibility. I changed my thoughts and realized that if I don't put effort into my child

to get an education in school, the child will not reach anywhere. So, I know that Miss Koch has helped but my initial expectations were wrong...

(Fathers of boys in the program, Korogocho).

Parents praised the training they received from the A LOT-Change program, as it provided them with the necessary resources and skills to support their adolescents in their academic pursuits. As a result of the parental counseling training sessions, they were transformed into knowledgeable parents about the ingredients of success for their children. A mother of a boy in the program intimated,

"...as parents we have gained a lot from the training offered to us...we have tried to become different kinds of parents from those who are not in the project..."

(FGD, Mothers of Boys in the Program, Korogocho).

However, in some isolated cases, parents expressed their dissatisfaction, which stemmed from the support of other adolescents as they transitioned into school. These adolescents were part of the education programs that were run simultaneously by the implementing partners in the urban informal settlements. This is how the father of a boy in the program saw it,

"...I saw that there were some children who came from nowhere and were not even in the program, and never attended tuition classes, yet, they were selected, supported and some had lower marks. That was the challenge that I saw...."

(FGD, Fathers of boys in the program, Viwandani).

6.4.3 Meeting of Expectations from Mentors

a) School Retention and Behavior Change of Adolescents

The mentors' ongoing interaction with the adolescents since grade six made them some of the closest figures in their lives. For the very nature of their work with adolescents, they saw many changes among these young people while also getting impacted by the intervention. A male mentor from Korogocho explained,

"...I have seen improvement in class grades, I have seen behavior change, I have seen parents coping well with their kids, what else do I want? Yeah, so it has met its said or its objectives..." (KII, Mentor, Korogocho).

In terms of retention in secondary school, the mentors intimated that through the holiday support and life skills sessions, the young adolescents had been able to stay in school, and it was hoped that they would be able to complete form four beyond the study's duration. A female mentor from Korogocho intimated:

...I will say... most girls and boys are able to be in school because of A LOT-Change for the four year course in high school; they have been in school most of them. We started with them in Class Six they are now in form three and we hope they'll clear school...

(KII, Mentor, Korogocho).

b) Transformed Slum Communities

From the mentors' narratives, it was also apparent that the A LOT-Change program had met their expectations since the key tenets had trickled into the communities through the adolescents and their parents. The mentors expected that the cohort of the A LOT-Change adolescents would be the next generation of leaders within the urban informal settlements. I am a teacher and we as teachers normally want to see a society that is good, a society where we build a better generation and A LOT-Change has been able to meet that [Emphasis added]

...I am sure that if there are almost 500 students who are beneficiaries of A LOT-Change. We are going to have a good generation soon in this Viwandani area [Emphasis added]...

When you see their academic performance, those in national schools are performing very well, while those in county schools are doing very well. So, that means that we are going to have good numbers of professionals in these slums in the coming future...
(KII, Mentor, Viwandani).

Another way of looking at transformation was through the impact that A LOT-Change program had on the mentors' work. The mentors, had their expectations met through their mentoring skills, but also through being able to give back to their respective communities. A female mentor explains,

"I have volunteered, and I have been able to nurture them, because at some time in my life, someone led me by their hand in the community and helped me and I wanted that opportunity to give back; and I got it through A LOT-Change..." (KII, Mentor, Korogocho).

In addition, mentors felt that their expectations had been met as they were able to use the skills they strengthened during the mentorship program. Such skills have been useful for the mentors to positively impact the events and activities around them. This male mentor from Korogocho says,

"I have gotten some few opportunities through that A LOT-Change. So, to me it is impactful to me as a mentor. It has impacted me positively in the activities around me. So, it has met whatever it wanted for the mentors and also for the kids..."
(KII, Mentor, Korogocho).

6.4.4 Meeting of Expectations from Counselors

The counselors in the A LOT-Change program were responsible for counseling parents to support their children to attend and complete school. From the narratives, the counselors' expectations were met as they worked with parents who acquired the skills to enable them to support the children in the program, as well as those parents and adolescents not in the program. A counsellor from Viwandani explained:

I always tell parents when we are in these sessions they are not just there basically for them and their children who are in the A LOT-Change project. You (referring to the parents) can also implement those skills...You are learning for the other children who are the siblings. So, maybe for some of the adolescents, the relationship between them and the parents was not that close; so, counselors tried to build that relationship back...
(KII, Counselor, Viwandani).

In addition, the counselors also intimated that one of the key benefits of the A LOT-Change program was the enhanced ability of parents to understand their role better. Parents had changed their way of doing things so that they could better support the adolescents to achieve their aspirations. A female counselor from Korogocho said,

"...counseling parents; I have achieved; I have helped many parents, they have become different parents from the way they were ...and I know that has made our girls and boys who are in school..."(KII, Counselors, Korogocho).

Moreover, just like the mentors, the counselors also expressed their satisfaction with the program as emanating from the growth that they had attained from the counseling sessions. The counselors said that as they interacted with adolescents and their parents, they also improved their skills as counselors. A counselor from Viwandani said,

"...I have grown as an individual, not only mentally, mentoring the adolescents, and supporting the parents; even as an individual I have grown..." (KII, Counselor, Viwandani).

6.4.5 Meeting of Expectations from Community Leaders

From the narratives of the community leaders, it was apparent that their expectations were met to a certain extent due to the focus of the A LOT-Change program on elements of sustainability. Sustainability was seen in how the program used community resources to deliver the intervention. For instance, the use of mentors to deliver holiday homework support and counselors to deliver the counseling sessions that exposed parents to ways of supporting the adolescents to achieve their potential in school. The community leaders, felt that the A LOT-Change program had focussed on ensuring that the root causes of the problems afflicting girls in the community had been addressed in addition to using the community resources thereby making sure that the tenets of the A LOT-Change would have roots in the community even after the program ends. A community leader intimated that:

I expect the funders to increase funds towards the same; because of what A LOT is doing, A LOT-Change is addressing the sustainability.... But A LOT-Change is addressing the roots and given time...I expect that there is a time when even if the program will stop, they will come back and see that it worked.... (KII, Community leader, Korogocho).

Moreover, the community leaders felt that their expectations were met, with the implementation of the program's interventions. Therefore, they wanted to see this validated through the adolescents' performance in school, as their grades improved. A community leader from Viwandani said,

"...were able to keep up to their promises; they did whatever they said. So, what I am waiting for now is to see how those children (referring to the adolescents) will perform in form four..." (KII, Community leader, Viwandani).

In addition, the community leaders also felt that by the very nature of the program bringing parents and their adolescent girls and boys together, it was paramount that parental support, inculcated into these young people the need to work hard, stay focussed and complete school. The community leader from Viwandani explained,

"...So when we were bringing these children and the parents together, the hope was that then they can achieve more. One thing we have seen now; if we bring them together, they complete school, they are able to get the value of education..." (KII, Community leader, Viwandani).



7. DISCUSSION

A LOT-Change phase III was a follow-up study of the phase II cohort who transitioned to secondary school in 2019. In this Phase, APHRC in collaboration with Miss Korogocho Kenya and U-Tena sought to test the feasibility of implementing the A LOT-Change model among older adolescents and establish the sustainability of the effects of the intervention as observed in phase II on the adolescents as they transitioned to secondary school.

In terms of sustainability, the study found that at baseline, program benefits were sustained for literacy and numeracy scores (Abuya et al., 2021). Indeed, one year after the intervention, there was a clear head start for the adolescents who had been in the program earlier in 2016 compared to the new cohort of adolescents who joined the program in 2019.

Overall, at the endline, in 2022, the follow-up group performed better in the **literacy and numeracy** assessments, seemingly maintaining the head start they had at baseline in 2019 (Abuya et al., 2021; Abuya et al., 2019). At endline, the follow-up cohort scored better in numeracy and literacy by 15.9 points and 11.8 points respectively compared to the new cohort. When categorized by sex, the results indicated that adolescent boys and girls in the follow-up cohort recorded relatively better mean scores in numeracy and literacy compared to the new cohort, with girls recording higher mean score differences than boys between baseline and endline. However, similar to baseline, boys scored significantly better, in numeracy than girls irrespective of the cohort. On the other hand, adolescent girls outperformed boys in literacy at both baseline and endline, though the differences were not statistically significant. In addition, whereas adolescents in Korogocho recorded better gains in numeracy than their counterparts in Viwandani, their literacy mean score reduced by 6.1 points at endline.

The gender inequalities in numeracy and literacy are not only aligned to existing literature but have also increasingly become a key concern for both policy and program actors. For instance, in a study looking at cross-country comparable large-scale international assessments, gender inequalities were noted, with male students outperforming girls in numeracy and reverse for literacy, where girls performed relatively better compared to their male counterparts (Borgonovi et al., 2018). Studies also highlight that these inequalities tend to widen with age (Hungu et al., 2014). These gender inequalities were also shown by Thomas et al. (2022), who highlighted differences in numeracy and literacy skills in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test undertaken by all Australian students in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9.

In addition to enhanced academic performance, improved numeracy and literacy skills have also been shown to enhance health outcomes. For instance, F Dieckmann et al. (2015) found that enhanced numeracy cognitive skills have a unique protective effect on health behaviors. We therefore call for concerted efforts to reduce the gender gap in numeracy and literacy skills to ensure that both male and female adolescents enjoy the academic and health benefits that accrue from these skills. One of the proven interventions to reduce gender gaps in academic achievement across the various levels is differentiated instruction, where learners are supported according to their differences, such as readiness level, learning profiles, interests, socioeconomic status, personality, and social skills to ensure that no student is left behind (Lai et al., 2020; Reis et al., 2011; Tomlinson et al., 2003; Valiandes, 2015).

Our results also showed that at baseline the follow-up group performed significantly better in both literacy and numeracy assessments, but this was not evident at the endline. This implies that the strength of the intervention waned in the 6th year, with sustainability possible in the 4th year, before the onset of Phase III, where the follow-up cohort was exhibiting statistically significant bigger gains, than the new cohort. This implies that the optimum intervention time for an after-school support program such as the ALOT-Change program may be between 3 and 4 years. We also propose that there is a need to adapt interventions for older adolescents further; and that continuing with the similar facets of the intervention such as activities and reference materials may not be feasible for older adolescents. This is consistent with research evidence that the efficacy of interventions targeting adolescents tend to decline with age (Yeager et al., 2015) and thus a need for age-specific programs that fit their needs.

Regarding **education goals and future aspirations**, the follow-up group showed higher mean scores compared to the new cohort at baseline and endline, meaning that the intervention gains had been sustained within the follow-up cohort over time. However, the DID in the education goals and future aspirations was not statistically significant, inferring minimal change in aspirations among the two cohorts across the two time points. This was expected considering that educational goals and future aspirations were already high across learner sex, site, and cohort at both baseline and endline. Even though the impact of the intervention was minimal on aspirations, the study acknowledges that the high education and future aspirations exhibited by adolescents wield a strong effect on their post-secondary school education attainment and decision-making as they transition into adulthood, similar to other studies (Sharp et al., 2020).

On **parental involvement and monitoring**, the intervention in phase III had a relatively positive impact on the new cohort in Viwandani. There was however no significant difference in the DID across sex and site, meaning that the phase III intervention had no impact on the students' perceptions of the knowledge their parents had on parental involvement and monitoring. Similarly, the findings on parental perception on monitoring of their adolescent's whereabouts showed no statistically significant differences in the DID. This finding is similar to other studies (Cottrell et al., 2003), which found that parents and adolescents may perceive the magnitude of parental monitoring efforts differently even when both parties know the activities that the adolescents are involved in. According to Cottrell et al. (2003), parents may sometimes perceive themselves as having more information about the adolescents' whereabouts and activities than is reported by the adolescents. At baseline, in 2019 the knowledge exhibited by parents about where the child spent time after school and with whom was significantly higher for girls, and for the site of Viwandani compared to Korogocho. These results echo findings from other studies showing that parental monitoring reduces with increased age of adolescents. For instance, Savioja et al. (2017) found that the association of parental involvement on adolescent sexual reproductive health outcomes was highest among younger adolescents, and diminished gradually with age. Adolescent age has also been shown to be significant factor affecting parental involvement, with parental involvement reducing as adolescents grow older and in the upper grades, especially in secondary school (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Jafarov, 2015). Studies have also highlighted that parents frequently perceive secondary schools as unwelcoming and thus, their dismal involvement at this level compared to the primary school level (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

We also measured drug and substance use among adolescent girls and boys. The study findings showed an increase in the proportion of boys using alcohol (3% to 15%) and bhang (4% to 10%) from baseline to endline. Though relatively smaller compared to boys, the proportion of girls who used alcohol (2% to 6%), and bhang (1% to 2.4%) also increased between baseline and endline. The proportion of boys using these three drugs/substances was significantly higher than girls ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$). Moreover, alcohol was consumed more in Viwandani than in Korogocho ($p\text{-value} = 0.009$), and there was a significantly higher proportion of adolescents in the follow-up cohort consuming alcohol than in the new cohort ($p\text{-value} = 0.044$) at endline. These findings suggest that as adolescents grow older, they become curious and begin to explore the use of these substances, the reason we see the increases between baseline and endline. This age range is similar to the findings in similar studies (Gopiram & Kishore, 2014; Sharma, 2015), where the age at initiation to substance abuse was found to be 15-18 years, and a majority of adolescents started using these substances despite being aware of the potential negative effects. These study findings are consistent with research evidence which highlights the growing epidemic of substance abuse among adolescents (Sharma, 2015). Research evidence posits that key psychosocial factors that explain the initiation and increase in substance abuse among adolescents are peer influence, curiosity, and a sense of growing up (Gopiram & Kishore, 2014). These findings call for a need to enhance social controls as well as parental engagement and empowerment on supporting the well-being of adolescents generally, but more so older adolescents.

In terms of **engaging in sexual intercourse**, results showed that there were significant increases in the proportion of adolescent boys engaging in sexual intercourse between baseline and endline, standing at 6.7% to 14.3%, respectively ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$). There was a slight increase in the proportion of girls engaging in sexual intercourse, which was not statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.225$). Moreover, an assessment of the impact showed that the intervention did not have an effect on adolescents' engagement in sexual activities with a DID of 0.021 and a $p\text{-value}$ of 0.243. The increases can be explained by the reduced social controls as the adolescents grow older and begin to engage in sexual intercourse (Savioja et al., 2017). Moreover, the double increase in boys' engagement in sexual intercourse is a manifestation of how

young men may enact their masculinities (Izugbara & Egesa, 2020) which ends up finding expression through violence or sexual performance when compared to female partners (Groes-Green, 2009).

We also examined the **sources of information on sex, alcohol, smoking, and drugs**. At endline, there was an increase in the number of adolescents who reported friends as a key source of information for all the items, with alcohol being the highest reported 12% to 23%. In addition, social media was the key source of information on sex for adolescents, who reported 11% at baseline and 17% at endline. On the other hand, there was a decrease in the number of adolescents who reported social media as a key source of information for smoking and alcohol. Compared to the baseline, there was a decrease in the percentage of adolescents reporting parents as a key source of information on sex, from 7% to 2%. The decrease in the number of adolescents reporting parents as their source of information on sex could be explained by the decrease in social control by parents as the adolescents left home to attend various secondary schools in the Country. However, other studies contend that ideally adolescents and youth should be able to receive sex information from their parents. Still, the reality is such that this information is often obtained from friends and the media (Lagus et al., 2011). On pubertal issues, parents were still most preferred, with a majority of the adolescents preferring to discuss puberty issues with their parents. However, the proportion of adolescents who preferred pubertal discussions with parents decreased from baseline to endline from 44% to 34% respectively. In addition, the magnitude of decrease between baseline and endline at phase III was larger compared to phase II (Abuya et al., 2019) suggesting that the adolescents' preference to discuss pubertal issues with their parents had reduced as they grew older. At endline, more girls than boys preferred to discuss these issues with their parents, with boys preferring to discuss puberty issues non-related members of the community. Whereas parent-adolescent communication on sexual reproductive health could be happening, existing literature has shown that most often this communication is too general to inform substantial sexual knowledge and behavior, calling for enhanced capacity building for parents on sexual reproductive health (Aliyu & Aransiola, 2023; Payne et al., 2023). These results also add to existing literature that peers play an important role in adolescent development – in decision-making, academics, behavior, and socio-emotional well-being (Pattanayak et al., 2021) and thus a need to consider peer group influence when designing and implementing interventions targeting adolescents.

In terms of **socio-emotional resilience**, the results indicate that the new cohort scored slightly higher in all the socio-emotional sub-scales except for the social competencies (the capacity to be sensitive to other peoples' feelings). The DID results were in favor of the new cohort but were only significant in three subscales, including self-regulatory efficacy (p-value=0.007), social self-efficacy (p-value=0.080), and adult-youth connections (p-value=0.062). The results infer that the new cohort was better equipped to resist negative peer pressure, respond effectively when faced with interpersonal circumstances, and identify supportive adults within the community due to the intervention compared to the follow-up cohort. On the other hand, these results point to a level of saturation within the follow-up cohort and the changes seen in the new cohort may have resulted from being exposed afresh to the intervention.

By site, the pattern in performance on the **socio-emotional resilience** indicators reversed from what they were at baseline (Abuya et al., 2021). For instance, adolescents in Korogocho scored better in social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, youth community connections, and adult-youth connections. However, the differences were only significant for social self-efficacy, self-assertive efficacy, and youth community connections. In both sites, social competency mean scores were the lowest at baseline and endline, while self-regulatory efficacy recorded the highest scores. These results suggest that the A LOT-Change intervention had a stronger effect in Korogocho as a result of the positive changes observed. In contrast, the scores in Viwandani remained relatively the same between baseline and endline. The fact that girls scored slightly better than boys on self-regulation—the ability to resist negative peer pressure—was consistent with recent literature where adolescent girls are shown to have higher levels of self-control and self-monitoring (Abuya, et al., 2019; Tetering et al., 2020).

To explain the differences between those students who were enrolled in the A LOT-Change program and those who were not enrolled in the program, the study manifested the differences in various ways. Digital literacy, which was one of the intervention activities geared to enable adolescents to gain basic computer skills, became one of the key comparative advantages for those adolescents who were enrolled in the program. Exposure to digital literacy had several advantages; the parents did not have to struggle to source funds to pay for the computer sessions, the basic skills gained by the adolescents improved their confidence to interact with computers, enhanced learning experiences in computer

skills for those who had no prior knowledge, and the sessions motivated adolescents to aspire to pursue related courses such as computer science in higher education. According to the adolescents, the digital literacy sessions came at the right time to equip them with the much needed skills to succeed in the 21st-century.

In terms of **adjustment to secondary school**, adolescents who were part of the A LOT-Change program had the following positive attributes: First, they were able to link their secondary education to the outside world of work; secondly, their enrolment in secondary school enabled adolescents increased creativity, nationalism, leadership and analysis of issues; thirdly, the adolescent interactions within the afterschool support and life skills centers prompted increased interactions in secondary school, consequently leading to key tenets of the intervention being sustained; fourthly, the program imparted knowledge to the adolescents of what to expect during this stage of adolescence, which was contextual and the adolescents could relate to it. The qualitative narratives further indicated that one challenge that befell the adolescents in secondary school, was the tendency of these adolescents to slip back into the negative influence of peer pressure. This would lead us to presuppose diminishing social control between parents and older adolescents as they navigate secondary school, as seen in our explanation of the increases in substance abuse among older adolescents between baseline and endline.

In terms of the A LOT-Change intervention **meeting the expectations of the different stakeholders**, the findings showed the following; that the program empowered the adolescents and particularly girls, while the inclusion of boys in subsequent years provided a state of gender balance in the program. In addition, parents realized that despite the existence of the intervention program, they still had a role to play in their children's education. Without their support, the children would be ill-equipped to make it in their education and life aspirations, and parents would be ill-prepared to support their children's academic success. Moreover, the mentors intimated that the A LOT-Change program had met their expectations through the trickling effects of the program into the communities, championed by the adolescents, and their parents who were the beneficiaries. The mentors expect a cohort of A LOT-Change adolescents, who are going to be the next generation of young leaders to transform the Urban Informal settlements. Of importance is the transformation of mentors and counselors in the transformation of their skills to provide mentorship and counseling skills to adolescents and parents respectively. Finally, the community leaders' expectations had been met in the sense that they felt that the A LOT-Change program had ensured that the root causes of the problems afflicting girls in the community had been addressed. This is going a long way to ensure that adolescents continue with their education, thrive, and participate in the transformation of their respective communities.

In **conclusion**, the A LOT-Change phase III findings have substantial implications for programming, for future interventions. Our findings pointed to literacy scores being lower in Korogocho than in Viwandani. On the one hand, Viwandani is often considered a more dynamic urban informal settlement next to the industrial zone. On the other hand, Korogocho is often a more stable settlement, far removed from the major industrial zone. The fact that literacy scores were low in Korogocho leads us to recommend that in terms of future programming, Korogocho would likely have more mentors than Viwandani to boost the literacy intervention. More so, we would pay more attention to boys during the literacy sessions and to girls in the numeracy sessions of the after-school homework support. We also found that a subsequent increase in age was associated with a reduction in numeracy and literacy scores by 9.6 points (numeracy), 12.5 points (literacy), and 12.4 points (combined numeracy and literacy scores). This points to programs paying special attention to and instituting different program tenets for younger and older adolescents.

The differential impact of the intervention on literacy and numeracy scores between baseline and endline showed that the strength of the intervention may have waned in the 6th year, with sustainability possible in the 4th year, before the onset of phase III, with the follow-up cohort exhibiting bigger gains, than the new cohort which was statistically significant. If the new cohort received the intervention in 2019, it means that for an after-school support program such as this, the intervention timeline should go up to three years for it to exhibit bigger gains. However, a caveat remains that programs may need to adapt interventions for older adolescents further and that continuing with similar components of the intervention may not be feasible for older adolescents. Moreover, the proportion increase of adolescents exposed to substance abuse, and those initiating sexual intercourse points to the fact that social control by parents diminishes by age, consequently impacting how well adolescents can sustain the impact of an intervention on the use of drugs and sexual initiation. This means there is a need for parental engagement on how they can deal with older adolescents, and instituting innovative ways of parental engagement with older adolescents in marginalized communities.

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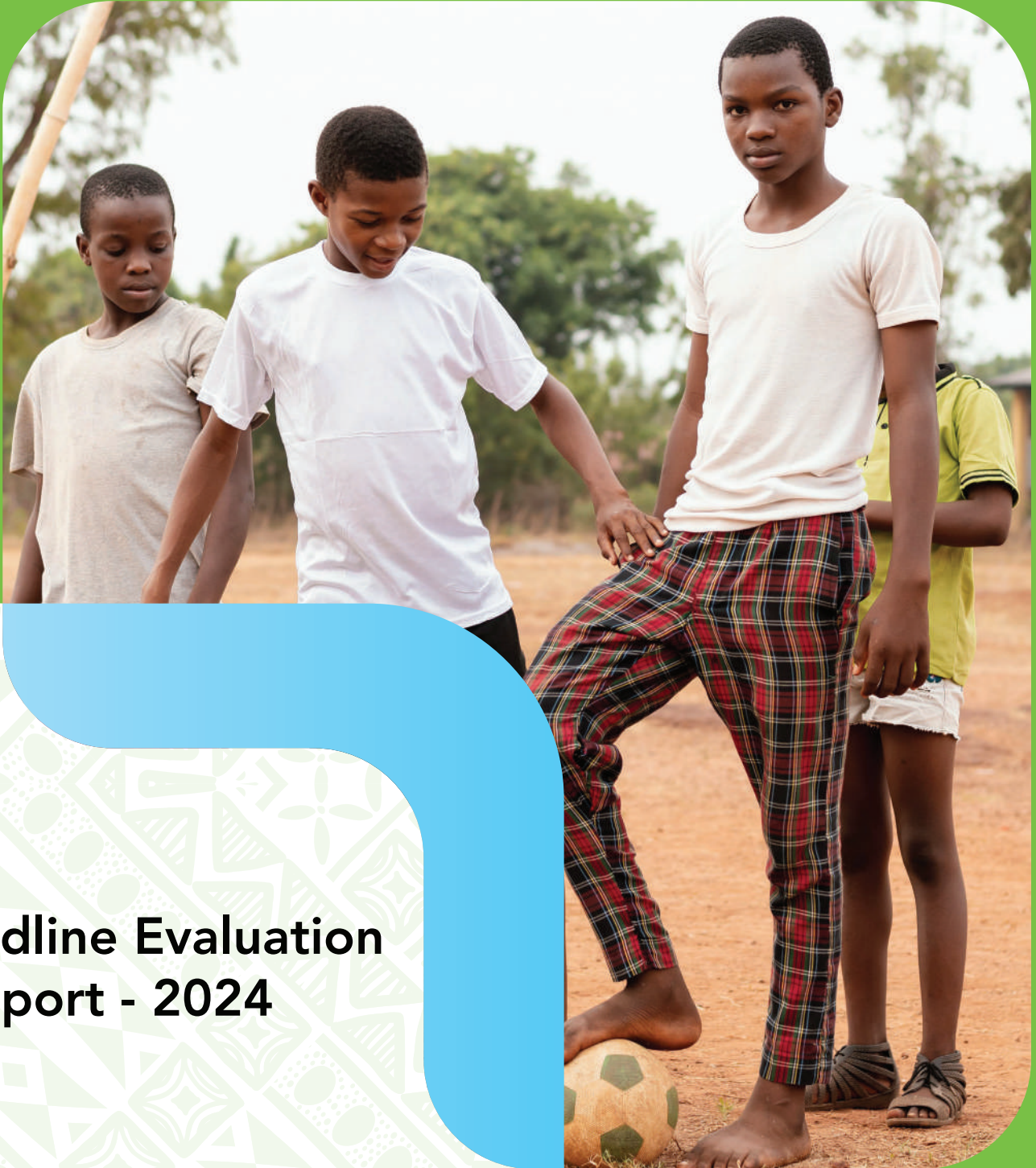
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