

Operational Guidance

Self-Learning Programme for Out-of-School Children

1. Introduction

1.1. Aim of self-learning programme

The self-learning programme is defined as an outreach education opportunity for out-of-school children (OOSC) who have missed out on regular schooling due to insecurity, multiple displacement, and other constraints. The Syrian Ministry of Education, UNRWA and UNICEF have jointly reviewed and revised the existing self-learning materials in line with the Syrian national curriculum. The central aim of self-learning programme is to enable OOSC to continue learning at home or community learning centres (CLCs) and prepare for the national exams ahead of the annual school registration. The participation in the programme does not necessarily offer the children school accreditation and certification.

1.2. Contents of self-learning materials

The self-learning materials are designed as condensed and fast-tracked learning materials. The contents cover all relevant basic education subjects in grades 1-9 (see Table 1). The contents of each subject are made age-appropriate for the end users.

Table 1: Grades and subjects to be covered by self-learning materials

Subject/grade	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Arabic (Semester 1&2)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
English	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Math	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Science	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Algebra								x	x
Geometry								x	x
Biology							x	x	x
Physics & Chemistry							x	x	x

1.3. Target group

The self-learning programme aims to target the following groups:

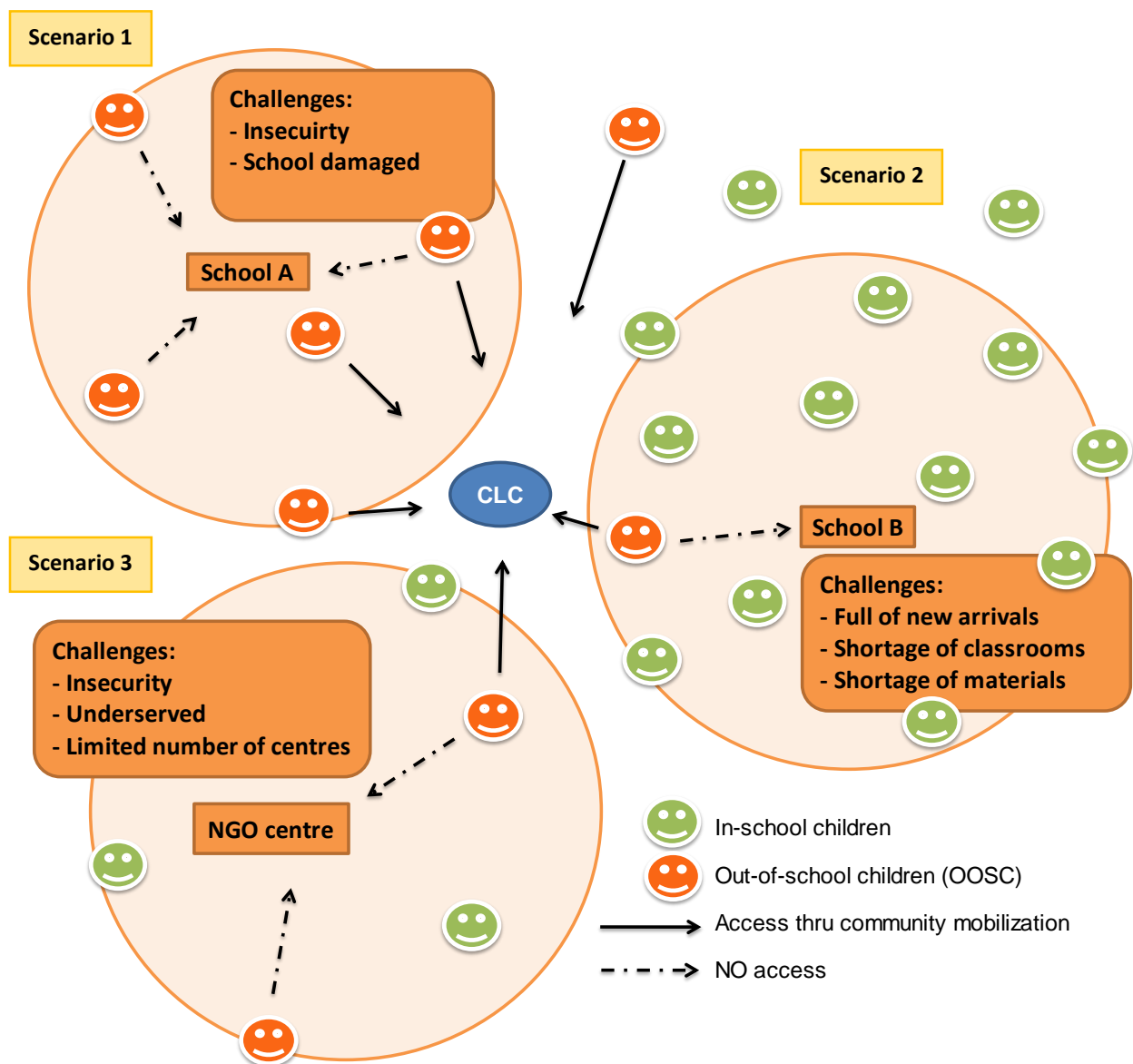
- Boys and girls who are mainly 6-15 years old (grades 1-9)
- Boys and girls who miss out on schooling for more than one month
- Boys and girls who have no access to school in their community

2. Operationalization

2.1. Establishment of CLCs

NGOs, SARC and other partners, with support from the Ministry of Education, the Directorates of Education, and UNICEF, are key players in the programme implementation. The establishment of community learning centres (CLCs) is an outreach approach to OOSC. CLCs can be the already existing space, such as the IDP collection centres, a corner of mosques, NGO centres, and even a room of community member's house, where OOSC can come and learn using the self-learning materials.

The below diagram indicates three different scenarios. It shows how a CLC would capture vulnerable children who are excluded from formal schools and other facilities like NGO centres.

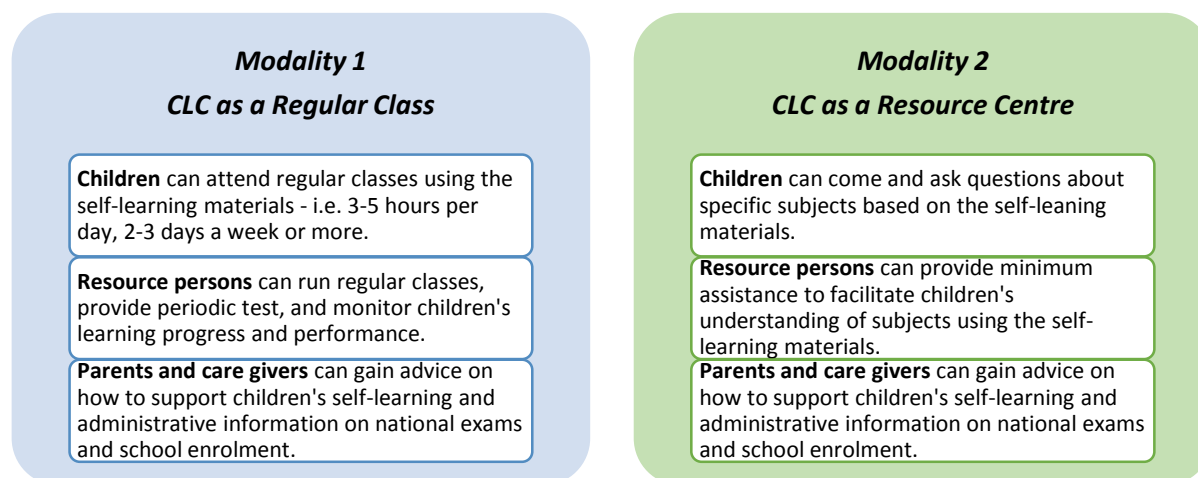


2.2. Resource persons in CLCs

The proper use of the self-learning materials for OOSC requires adequate support and assistance by adult resource persons. The resource persons can be community members, parents, internally-displaced teachers, NGO staff members, and young people who are equipped with basic knowledge and skills to help the children to enjoy meaningful learning.

A CLC should have one resource person or two who are responsible for providing essential support to child learners and parents, whilst monitoring children's learning progress on a regular basis. A CLC, located in the selected community, should have two functioning modalities, depending on different capacity and specific needs in the community.

Two functional modalities of CLCs



2.3. Reward for resource persons

The community ownership is central to the implementation of self-learning programme in a sustainable fashion. Therefore, resource persons should be encouraged by NGOs and SARC to support CLCs on a voluntary basis. In principle, no incentive or payment will be made for resource persons. However, partial financial support is to be considered on a case-by-case basis (i.e. community members who are neither paid nor employed). If resource persons are school teachers who are registered under the government payroll, they are already paid under the MoE procedures, and therefore they will not be provided extra reward.

3. Roles and responsibilities of stake holders

The Ministry of Education

- Provide overall guidance and support to the planning, implementation and monitoring of self-learning programme at national and governorate levels.
- Facilitate the Directorates of Education in supporting NGOs and SARC to implement and monitor the self-learning programme in the selected governorates.
- Develop viable procedures for registration and accreditation of children attending self-learning programme to be mainstreamed into education system or to enable to take the national exams.

The Directorate of Education

- Facilitate NGOs and SARC for smooth programme implementation, such as target selection, supply delivery, establishment of CLCs and project site monitoring.
- Provide technical support to NGOs and SARC in preparing pre-test, post-test and other evaluation tools for OOSC who participate in the self-learning programme.
- Implement the policy on registration, accreditation and examination.

NGOs, SARC and partners

- Select the target locations/beneficiary groups and establish CLCs for the programme implementation in coordination with the Ministry of Education, Directorates of Education, UNICEF and other partners.
- Manage self-learning programme to ensure OOSC have access to CLCs where they can learn with age-appropriate self-learning materials under supervision and care of resource persons.
- Create the registration database/list of children using the self-learning materials in order to trace and monitor who take the national exams and who enroll/re-enrol schools.
- Plan and organize introduction sessions for resource persons on how to operationalize/run CLCs with support from NGOs/SARC and how to support OOSC to learn using self-learning materials.
- Plan and organize introduction/feedback sessions for family members (i.e. parents, care givers) on how to encourage children to use self-learning at home and how to register with the national exam in the nearest schools.

UNICEF and UNRWA

- Provide support to the Ministry of Education and partners in rolling out the self-learning programme in line with the agreed operational frameworks.
- Provide support in developing, printing and procuring the self-learning materials and delivering to CLCs in coordination with the Ministry of Education and other partners.
- Provide technical support to the Ministry of Education in aligning the self-learning programme with the national education system and the existing official examination procedures. This aims to enable OOSC who learn using the self-learning materials to take the national exams for the accreditation and certification.