Out-of-School Children Strategy
Launch Event

21 June 2022

DRAFT

Out-of-School Children Study – Findings Overview

Profile findings: Major characteristics were poverty and OVC

- **Poverty** remains the overarching barrier to access.
  - 85% of participants in the prioritisation exercise cited *money* as one of the four most significant barriers to education

- **Orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC)**
  - One or both of a child's parents have died, or child headed households
  - Resilience to shock, lack of encouragement, low HH income

- **Children With Disabilities (CWDs)** are overrepresented in OOSC in SL.
  - ⅔ of PWD in 2018 had never been to school and less than 10% had completed SSS

- **Girls** are more likely to be OOS at SSS levels.
  - In 2019, of girls aged 15-19, 21% had given birth or were pregnant with their first child

- Children living in **hard-to-reach** areas are more likely to be OOS and more likely to have to move for JSS

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Scale: After FQSE, enrolment increased by 33.9%, but Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) remains particularly low in rural areas

- There is no mechanism to identify children unable to attend school

- Only 70–73% of basic edu schools receive government support, and only 21% at pre-primary

- Weak progression through to JSS and to SSS.

- The low GER indicates high rates of OOSC at Secondary Schools (77% and 57%).

- GER for SSS girls is 4% points lower than for boys

Districts, 2019	Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)	
	JSS	SSS
Bo	87%	60%
Bombali	94%	76%
Bonthe	58%	36%
Falaba	31%	10%
Kailahun	47%	30%
Kambia	75%	40%
Karene	60%	23%
Kenema	85%	65%
Koinadugu	67%	44%
Kono	82%	49%
Moyamba	59%	22%
Port Loko	86%	45%
Pujehun	30%	10%
Tonkolili	67%	37%
Western Area Rural	113%	94%
Western Area Urban	98%	114%
National	77%	57%
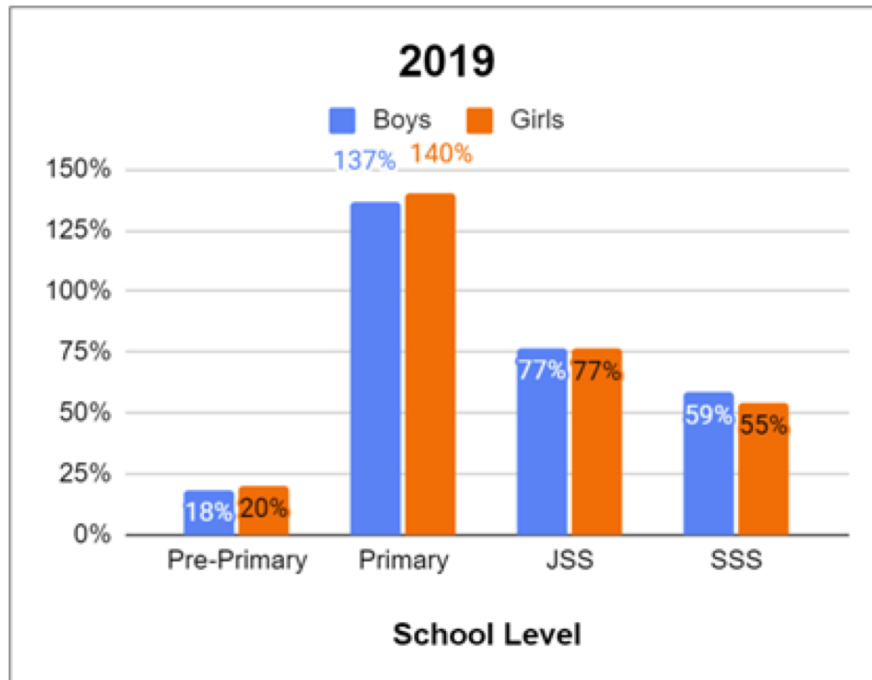
Holistic development must be inclusive and equitable: simply *providing* services doesn't make them *accessible*

- Challenges / barriers to people accessing services which promote development are complex and varied:
  - they **span sectors** (the below an example of types of barriers from many sectors which impede schooling)
  - they strike at both **service *supply*/provision** (pull factors) and **individual's ability to *demand*** (push factors)
- Marginalised people particularly likely to fall through cracks - inclusion requires more than *'rising tide lifts all boats'*

Key barriers to education in Sierra Leone: Findings from the 2021 study
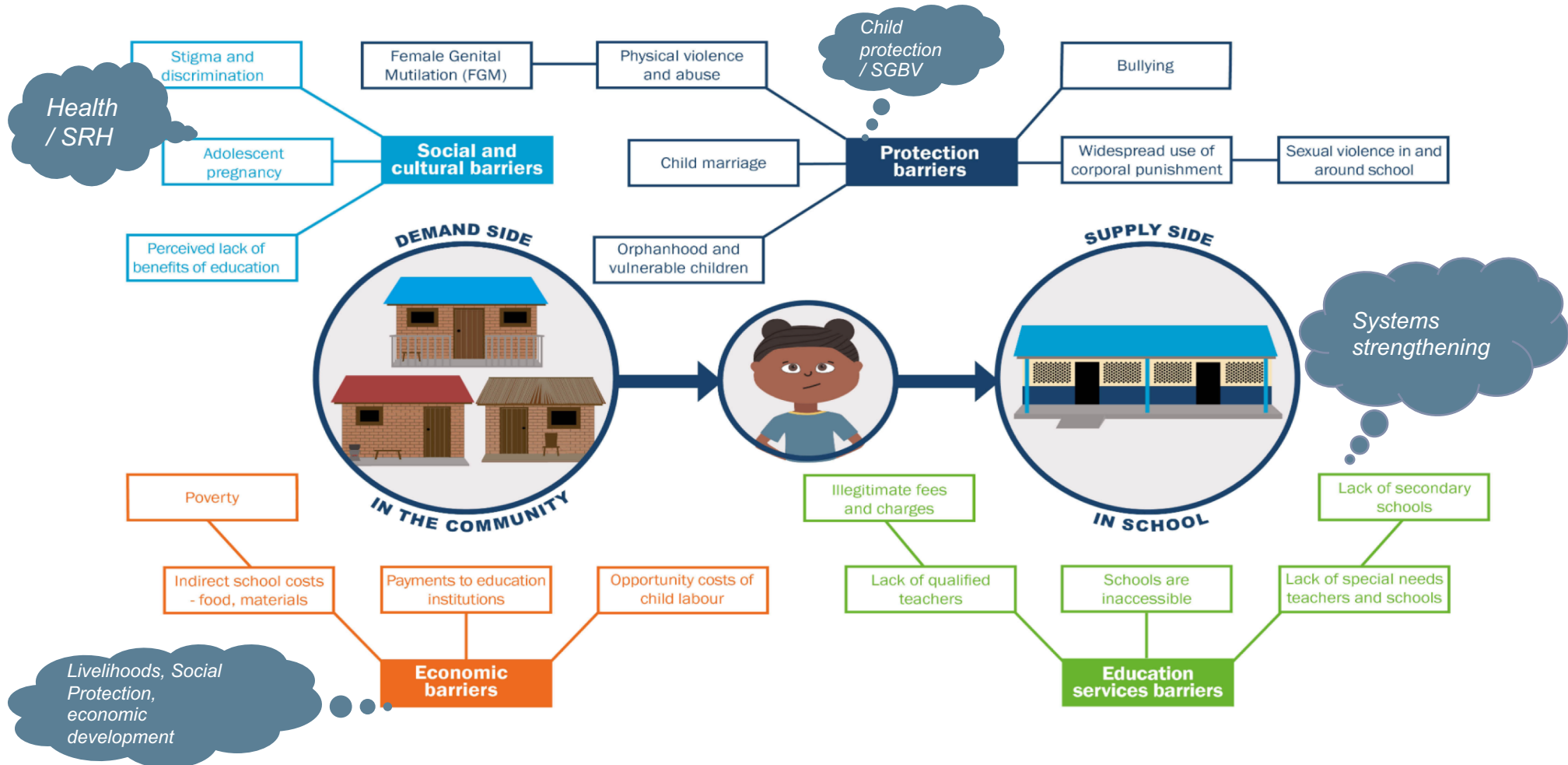
Out-of-School Children Strategy – Activities Overview

Create safe schools and safe communities

- Expand non-formal education, including developing a policy and updating the curricula
- Develop a mechanism to report and support children unable to attend school
- Strengthen the mentor network, teach CSE, and encourage girls' sports
- Provide transparency on school fees and reduce uniform expenditure
- Childcare provision and advice
- Confidential health services, including contraception and sanitary products
- Educate children in detention and hospitals
- Design, share and communicate a welcome to school kit for late or re-enrolment

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Create safe schools and safe communities

- Provide screening and devices for children with disabilities
- Improve access to current school buildings and teacher training
- Establish more special needs primary schools

- Increase SSS availability, improve school transport
- Expand access to free WASSCE

- Increase rewards and sanctions for teachers, e.g. rural retention allowance
- Provide training schemes and qualification routes for unqualified teachers

- Further develop a comprehensive Management Information System to enable efficient teacher deployment
- Incentivise school clusters that reduce the rate of OOSC to zero, prevent drop-out, and achieve smooth transition across classes

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Demand for education: Inform and support decisions to prioritise education

- Implement social behaviour change to address attitudes to universal education, safeguarding, and early childhood education
- Local power structures to ensure children protected and in school
- Capacitate SMCs to implement inclusion strategies in their communities

- Social Safety Net that targets poor and vulnerable households
- In-school cash transfers for the most at risk of drop-out
- Expand school feeding programmes beyond government primary schools

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Systems Strengthening: Join up and resource systems to fulfil all children's rights

- Harmonise child marriage policies and outlaw female genital mutilation

- Improve capacity of MoSW, MoGCA, and FSU to respond to Child Protection and Well-being cases

- Establish Child Welfare Committees consistently and sustainably

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Any questions?

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