

Accelerating Progress to 2015

South Sudan

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Global Education First Initiative

The UN Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This working paper is one in a series of country reports commissioned by the UN Special Envoy for Global Education and coordinated by the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. The report was prepared for the Learning for All Ministerial Meeting on April 18, 2013, co-hosted by the World Bank Group President, the UN Secretary-General, and the UN Special Envoy for Global Education. The meeting brings together ministers of finance and education from eight countries that are home to nearly half the world's out-of-school children. It aims to focus on concrete steps that will accelerate progress toward the 2015 deadline of ensuring that all children can go to school and learn.

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The report builds on contributions of many stakeholders, but the findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of all the contributors or their institutions or governments they represent.

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Foreword by Gordon Brown © 2013

FOREWORD

Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy for Global Education

Thirteen years ago the international community came together and made a commitment, through the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All, to achieve universal education. While we have made significant progress by securing education for over 40 million more children, we have an unfinished agenda. There are still 61 million children that do not go to school and 250 million children who cannot read. The statistics for youth at the secondary level are even more shocking—especially for girls.

Now, fewer than 1,000 days from our deadline, the clock is ticking. And thanks to the leadership of the United Nations Secretary-General and his Global Education First Initiative, focusing on access, quality and global citizenship, the wheels of progress are in motion. By convening the global community to focus on the goal of quality, relevant and inclusive education for all children and youth, the Secretary-General is inspiring action in all corners of the globe. His initiative acknowledges that if we are to hold true to our commitment of ensuring every child in every marginalized slum or forgotten village has access to education, we must take action.

President Jim Kim of the World Bank is focused on solutions for our global challenges as evidenced by his path-breaking speech on April 2nd of this year on the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals and his commitment to abolish extreme poverty and work for shared prosperity. His leadership in convening the *Learning for All Ministerial* meetings represents an unprecedented turning point for global education.

Both the Secretary-General and President Kim are providing an opportunity for collective partnership between the international community and countries themselves to address the critical bottlenecks that are holding us back by creating a set of action plans with concrete outcomes. Their leadership has inspired the participation of ministers of finance and education from eight countries, representing nearly half of the world's out of school population, and leaders from partner governments, international institutions and civil society. Other countries will come before a set of meetings in September of this year.

In preparation for the ministerial meeting, we have commissioned reports on the eight participating countries so that our time together would be spent realizing the vision of the Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative and discussing what will be done. I am grateful to the Global Partnership for Education and the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution for their major contributions to this exercise and to the support of international development partners in every continent.

The proposals in this report represent a snapshot of the ongoing conversations within countries and with the international community. Considered a “living document,” the working paper on South Sudan is an initial set of proposals to accelerate progress on education.

Based on the recommendations in this report and in collaboration with the respective government, international institutions and civil society during the *Learning for All Ministerial* meetings, we have an opportunity to change the course of history and deliver meaningful change to children across the globe.

When you read this report you will see glossy pages, graphs, charts and statistics. While the data is critical, I implore you to take a moment to think about the stories that the statistics represent. They represent the young girl, rising-up against the cultural norm of early marriage in hopes of realizing her dreams. They represent the young boy, struggling to realize his potential, studying under a tree. They represent a child with disabilities, with all of the talents and aspirations to be a world leader. They represent the hopes and dreams that are the right of every human being.

Past generations have developed only some of the potential of some of our children. We can be the first generation to realize all of the potential of all of the world's young people through education. I hope that the ideas brought together through global consultations and synthesized in this report can guide our discussions in realizing the vision of the Secretary-General and the leadership of President Kim aimed at creating a world in school and learning by 2015. ✍️

ACRONYMS

BSF	Basic Services Fund
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Accords
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRSS	Government of the Republic of South Sudan
JPA	Joint Plan of Action
LSS	Local Services Support
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MoGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
NEF	National Education Forum
NER	Net enrollment rate
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SDF	Service delivery framework
SSTEP	South Sudan Teacher Education Initiative
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

South Sudan is facing an education emergency. Recent years have seen some progress toward the Education for All (EFA) goals, with South Sudan's people demonstrating extraordinary resilience in their efforts to expand learning opportunities for their children. Yet Africa's newest nation still has some of the world's worst indicators for education. Low levels of enrollment and transition to secondary school, poor education quality, and high levels of gender disparity typify the current state of affairs. With the country facing a protracted fiscal crisis, there is now a real danger that progress toward the EFA goals will stall or be thrown into reverse gear. Yet this outcome is avoidable—and accelerated progress is possible. But in the absence of a strong commitment on the part of donor governments and the country's other development partners, South Sudan's children and youth face a future of diminished opportunity in education.

Such an outcome would have devastating consequences. As President Salva Kiir has recognized, education holds the key to South Sudan's future. It is vital to poverty reduction and the development of strategies aimed at building an inclusive, peaceful, and resilient society. With one of the world's youngest populations, South Sudan needs education to create jobs and strengthen livelihoods. And without expanded opportunities for schooling, there will be no progress toward gender equity.

This paper makes the case for a concerted international effort to pull South Sudan back from the brink of a reversal in education. It starts from a simple premise: There will be no winners from a failure to act decisively. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) needs to demonstrate to its citizens that the country's children have the prospect of a better future—and South Sudan's parents see education as the key to that future. Several donors have provided strong support to South Sudan. Their financial and technical support has helped to put in place the foundations of a national education system. Allowing these foundations to be eroded would represent an inefficient use of scarce aid resources. Ultimately, however, the real losers from inaction will be South Sudan's children.

The headline numbers tell their own story on the state of education in South Sudan. Half of all primary school-age children—some 1.3 million in total—are out of school. Dropout rates are very high, especially between grades 4 and 7, and few children make it through to secondary education. Gender disparities are marked at all levels. There are only about 600 girls in the last grade of secondary education. And those children who are in school have limited prospects of learning. The school infrastructure is limited, classrooms are overcrowded, and there are chronic shortages of learning materials. However, the greatest barrier to effective learning is a shortage of adequately trained and properly supported teachers.

South Sudan's challenges in education cannot be viewed in isolation. High levels of poverty, food insecurity, and parental illiteracy transmit educational disadvantages from parents to children. Many out-of-school children live in remote rural areas, often in pastoralist communities requiring nonformal and often mobile learning options. Conflict and insecurity are a perennial threat across large areas of the country, with aggression on the part of the Republic of Sudan and violence between communities contributing.

Set against these deficits and constraints, South Sudan has the potential to make a breakthrough in education. Many of the elements for success are in place. The country's people have an extraordinary resilience, matched by a commitment to education. Learning is widely seen as an exit route from poverty, and demand for education is high. Having developed a credible and ambitious national planning strategy for education, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) is well placed to provide leadership in meeting that demand through the development of a national education system. While the donor pool is relatively shallow, aid agencies have greatly strengthened coordination and cooperation behind the government's strategy. South Sudan also hosts a range of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with a capacity for innovation, cost-effectiveness, and the delivery of results, even in the most difficult areas.

This paper has been prepared by the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution as a background document for the EFA Ministerial Summit scheduled for April 17–18, 2013, during the Spring Meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington. Contributions from a number of organizations and individuals have helped to inform the analysis and recommendations. Special mention should be made in this context of contributions from MoGEI, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, education donors, UN agencies, and the NGOs that make up the National Education Forum (NEF) in South Sudan.

The paper sets out concrete proposals in a number of areas with the potential to generate tangible gains for South Sudan's children, while at the same time strengthening capacity in the education system. It should be emphasized that the proposals are not intended as a comprehensive response to the wide range of challenges facing South Sudan. The objective, set out in the terms of reference for the ministerial summit, is to identify a small number of areas where strengthened cooperation might add value to current efforts. Several priority areas stand out:

- **Strengthening the capacity of devolved education authorities to deliver good-quality education, building on current initiatives developed by the ministries of finance and education with the support of donors.** Front-loaded support for devolved education would deliver results on the ground and help to mitigate the potentially damaging effects of the fiscal crisis.
- **Creating incentives that increase the demand for education, especially on the part of young girls.** Relatively modest financial interventions have the potential to expand opportunities for many children currently out-of-school as a result of household poverty and gender disadvantages.
- **Expanding in-service training and support for teachers and increasing the recruitment of female teachers.** Unless South Sudan's teachers are equipped and supported to deliver better learning outcomes, an improvement in education quality is unlikely.
- **Developing the school infrastructure through a package of low-cost school construction, textbook supply, and community support initiatives.** While school buildings will not in themselves guarantee a high-quality education, the learning environment for South Sudan's children is currently unacceptable and could be improved.

- **Responding to the needs of children and communities caught up in conflict.** Armed conflict is a barrier to expanded opportunity in South Sudan, and the current humanitarian aid architecture is inadequate.

In addressing these priorities, this paper develops three specific proposals, each of which sets tangible targets and associated financing requirements. The implementation period envisaged for the proposals is 2013–16.

Taken collectively, the three proposals envisage average annual financing from increased aid of about \$180 million. Part of the financing would be channeled through a new pooled fund in education. More than 2 million children would benefit from the proposals. These children would have expanded opportunities—not just to attend school but also to receive the quality of education they need to realize their potential. If successfully implemented, the proposals would have the effect of:

- Bringing an additional 300,000 children into the school system.
- Raising the standard of instruction for 1.5 million young learners.
- Extending education opportunities through a stipend program paying \$10 per girl for 500,000 girls in grades 1–4, reducing the risk of dropping out and creating incentives for girls' school attendance.
- Strengthening local government education delivery mechanisms, with the potential to improve access, reduce dropping out, and improving quality across the education system.
- Addressing the needs of thousands of children affected by humanitarian emergencies.

Fiscal pressures limit the scope for additional government financing in the near term. However, the GRSS would be expected to increase its share in recurrent and capital expenditure from 2016, as oil revenues return to pre-crisis levels. Looking ahead, the GRSS needs urgently to reconsider national budget priorities, and to act on its commitment to spend 10 percent of the budget on education. Spending on education and other basic services is currently being crowded out by excessive military spending.

Given the depth of the fiscal crisis, aid donors will need to provide the bulk of the financing required for implementing the proposals. While this implies a sizable increase of current aid commitments—just over \$140 million in 2012–13—there is scope for broadening and deepening the donor presence in the country. It is important that any increase in aid is delivered through mechanisms that limit transaction costs, increase efficiency, and strengthen coordination within a results-based framework linked to the national education strategy. To that end, this paper proposes the creation of a pooled fund—the EFA Acceleration Facility—that builds on the best practices of the (now closed) Basic Services Fund, mirroring developments in the health sector.

I. The Context: Progress toward EFA

During the seven years that have passed since the Comprehensive Peace Accords (CPA), South Sudan has made considerable progress in education. Yet hopes for a full education peace dividend have been thwarted. There is little prospect of South Sudan achieving the EFA goals—and a real and present danger of slippage. The country is now in the midst of a fiscal crisis that threatens to slow its implementation of an ambitious national education plan, leaving schools unbuilt and teachers unpaid in the process.

The government's education strategy sets out a wide range of goals in education (GRSS 2011c). These include universal primary education by 2022. While capacity remains limited, the GRSS has made remarkable progress in building the institutional base for improving service delivery. The Education Management and Information System (EMIS) has been set up, providing vital information for education planning (GRSS 2012c). Efforts have been made to develop the school curriculum and set standards for teacher training and certification.

As government systems have been strengthened, the effectiveness of aid has also improved. While South Sudan has a relatively small pool of donors, development assistance has made a difference. Donor coordination and engagement with the GRSS have been strengthened over time. This is especially true at the central government level, where the establishment of the NEF has provided a focal point for dialogue. However, coordination at the state and county levels is still insufficient. While we do not explore aid governance issues in this paper, it is important to emphasize that any successful intervention depends critically on the Ministry of General Education and Instruction and its partners maintaining a picture of who is doing what where. That picture remains uneven at present, in part because of a proliferation of project-based initiatives. Notwithstanding the need for improved joint planning and implementation, NGOs, many of them working in partnership with the government, are delivering results in very difficult contexts.

I.1 Progress toward the 2015 Goals: Limited and Probably Slowing

The state of education in South Sudan has been well documented (UNESCO 2011a, World Bank 2012, Brown 2011). In this section, we briefly note some of the key indicators and provide a snapshot of progress toward some of the key EFA goals.

Building from a Narrow and Fragile Base

Any assessment of progress in education has to begin by recognizing where South Sudan started. The GRSS, which was created with the signing of the CPA in 2005, inherited none of the institutions associated with

an independent state (Grawert 2010). The country's new government was faced less with the challenge of post-conflict reconstruction than post-conflict construction.

Much has been achieved since the CPA. Primary school enrollment has risen spectacularly, with another 1.5 million children entering the basic education system. Between 2005 and 2010, enrollments were increasing on average by 20 percent a year. That outcome reflects the strong drive of parents to get their children into school. Household surveys consistently document the importance that parents attach to education. As the government's Social Sector Development Plan puts it: "Stakeholders consistently placed basic health and education among their top development priorities on the grounds that these services provide not only an immediate benefit, but are linked to the nation's economic future by building the foundation for a stronger, more highly skilled labor force." More than half of children and youth participating in one UNICEF survey identified education as their principal interest (UNICEF 2011).

The planning environment for education has also improved. South Sudan is in the process of adopting an Education Act that will give every child a legislative right to education. Many new classrooms have been built. The government has developed a five-year General Education Sector Plan (2012–17), which is supported by its donors and endorsed and supported by its development partners (GRSS 2012d). In 2012, The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) announced that it would be providing a grant of \$36 million over three years to support the national plan.

The Human Development Backdrop

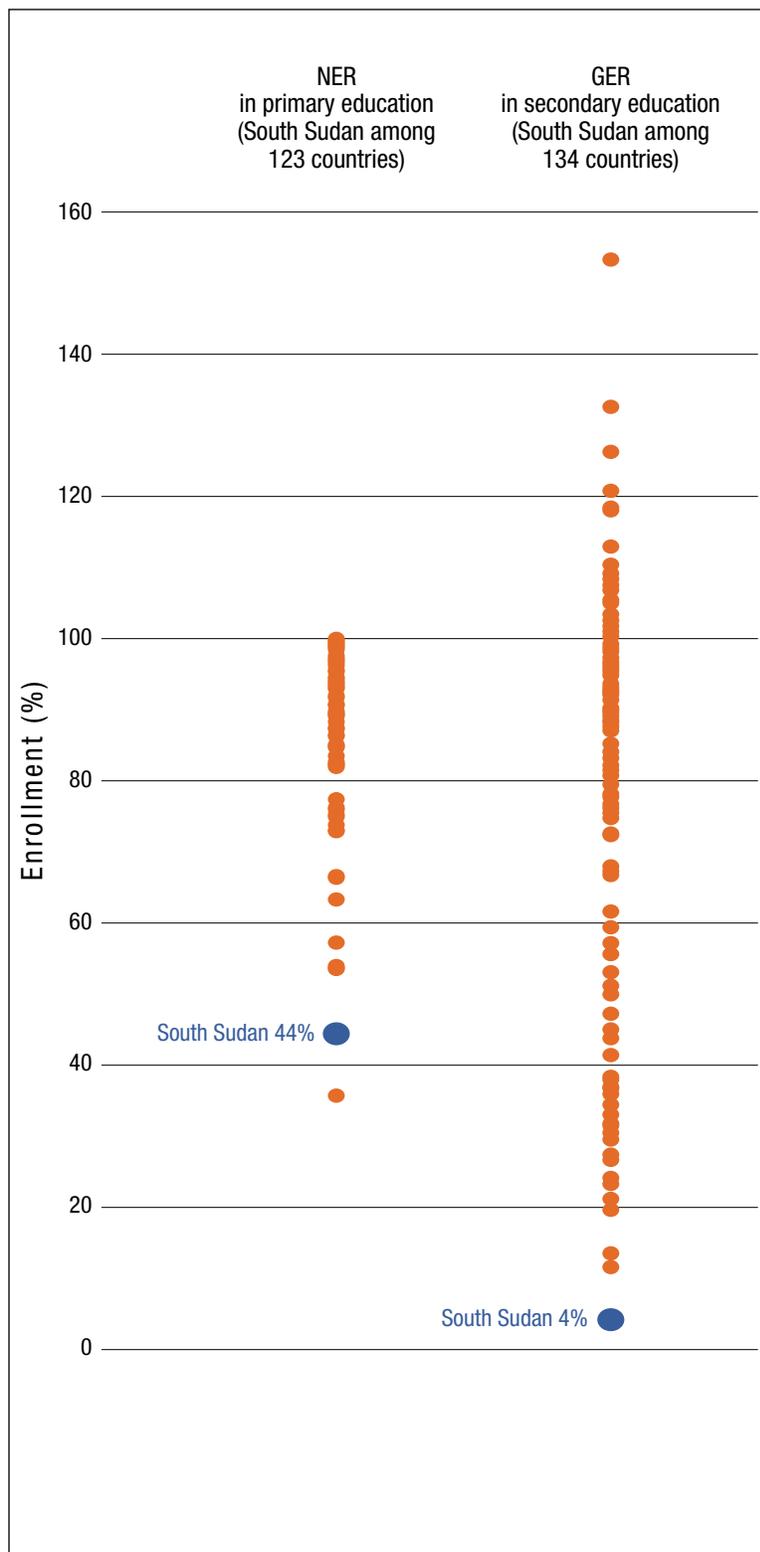
Prospects for progress in education are inevitably influenced by the wider state of human development. South Sudan is one of the world's least-developed countries, with widespread poverty and food insecurity.

Even a brief summary of some core indicators captures the extent of deprivation. About half of South Sudan's population lives below the national poverty line (using the \$1.25 a day threshold) (South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics 2012). The country has one of the world's highest levels of maternal mortality, with fewer than one in five births attended by skilled personnel (DFID 2011). Under-five mortality is also very high, reflecting the limited provision and restricted coverage of basic services. Hunger and food insecurity are endemic; about one-fifth of the population is unable to meet basic food needs in a typical year (South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics 2010).

Adult literacy is limited, with just 15 percent of women and 39 percent of men able to read and write (South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics 2010). The literacy backdrop is important, since it means that the vast majority of actual and potential new entrants to the school system are first-generation learners whose parents are poorly equipped to provide support.

Insecurity is another source of concern. Conflict with the Republic of Sudan and between ethnic groups poses ongoing threats. Alongside the cross-border conflicts, intracommunal, inter-tribal, and militia-based violence—notably in the states of Warrap, Unity, Upper Nile, Jonglei and Lakes—continue to cause

FIGURE I. SOUTH SUDAN ENROLLMENT GLOBAL RANKING



Source: UNESCO 2011

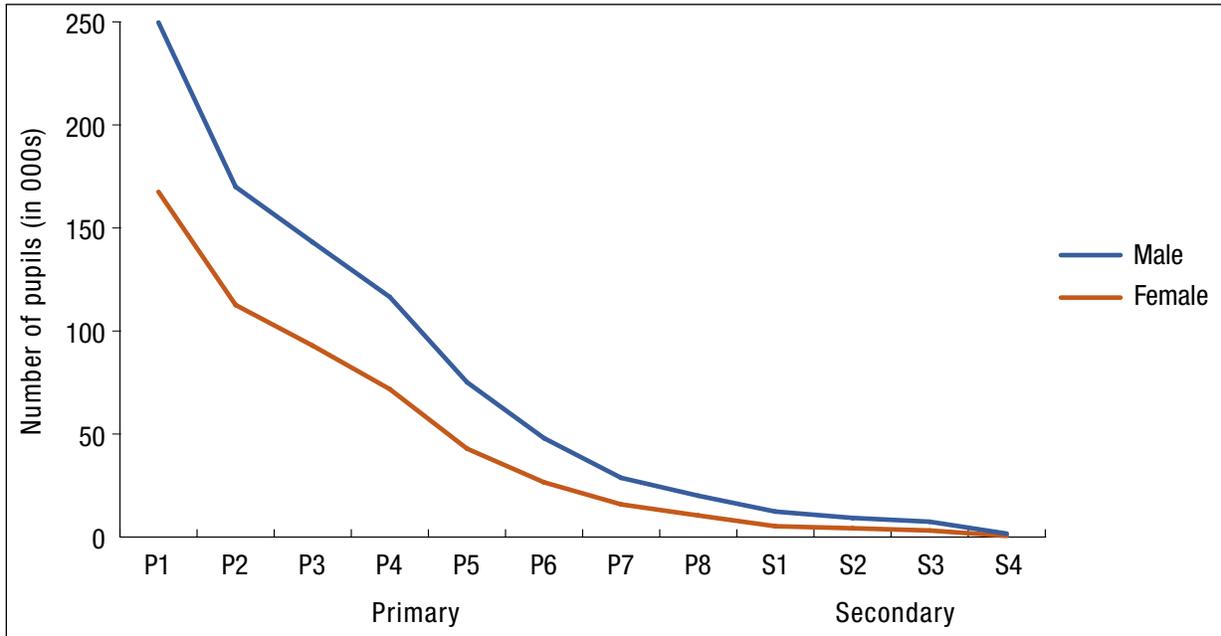
displacement. During 2011, it is estimated that over 300,000 people were displaced in South Sudan as a result of armed conflict. Education provision for these children is limited. The children of families returning to South Sudan from the Republic of Sudan have also faced acute problems in securing education (Watkins 2012).

Distance from the 2015 Targets

Set against the very real achievements and progress made, the education situation in South Sudan can only be described as dire. The country is a long way from achieving the 2015 EFA goals. Today, South Sudan is in a catch-up phase—but it is starting from a low base and moving relatively slowly.

South Sudan has one of the lowest net enrollment rates in the world. Of the 123 countries for which comparable data are available, it ranks second lowest. For secondary enrollment, South Sudan is ranked the last out of 134 countries (figure 1). On any measure of the distribution of opportunity in education, South Sudan’s children stand in a highly disadvantaged position. The odds of a child reaching school-going age today making it through the education system and into higher education are less than 1 percent, which is far below the average for Sub-Saharan Africa (figure 2).

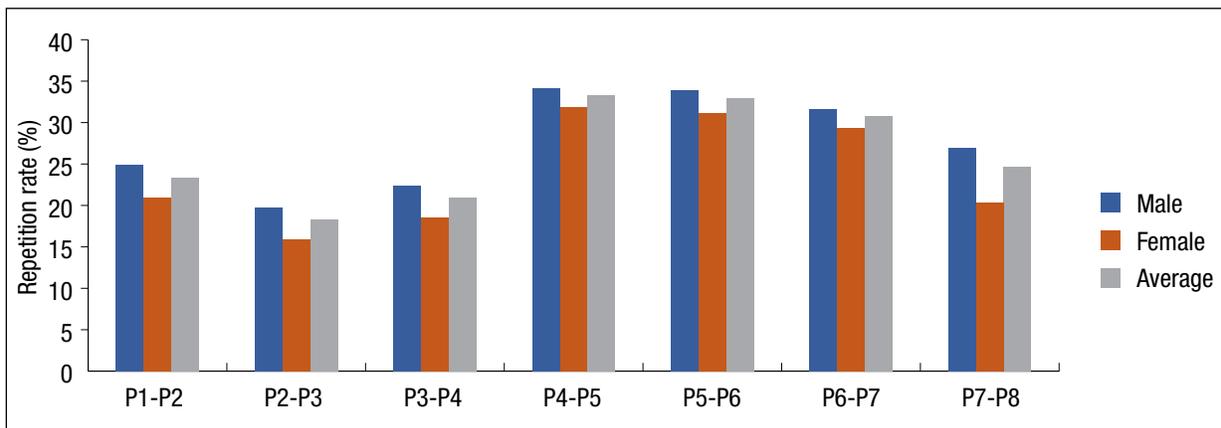
FIGURE 2. NUMBER OF PUPILS BY GRADE AND GENDER, 2011



Source: EMIS 2011

There are currently some 1.3 million children of primary school-age (6–14 years) out of school. Only a minority of those entering the education system progress through primary and on to secondary school. Dropout rates are high in the early grades but steepen in grades 4 and 5 (figure 3). Looking across the primary school grades in 2010, there were 426,000 pupils in grade 1 and just 22,000 in the final year of secondary education.

FIGURE 3. PRIMARY SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE BY GRADE AND GENDER, 2010–11

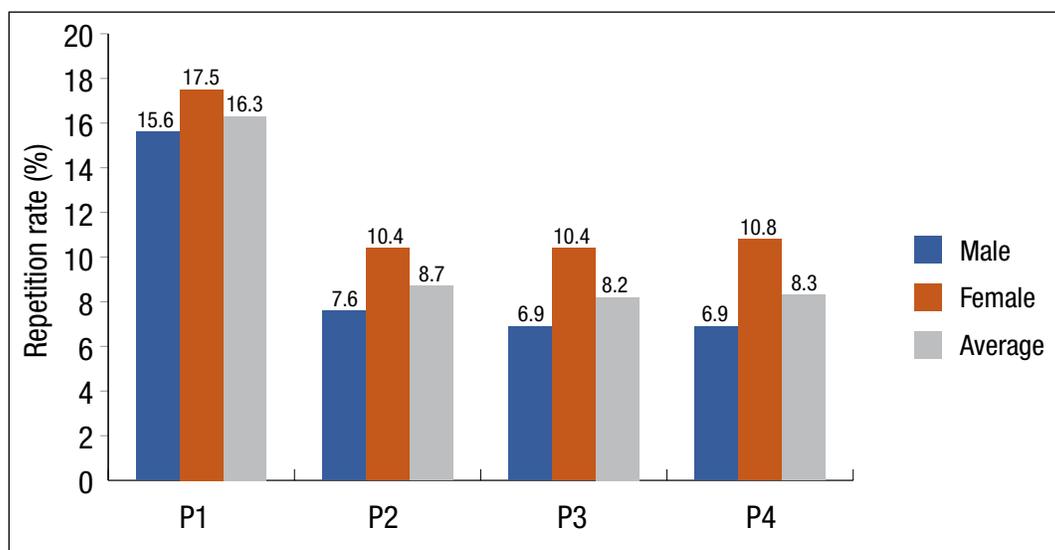


Source: EMIS 2011

Surveys provide some insight into why so many children are out of school. The National Baseline Household Survey included questions asking parents why their children were not attending schooling (South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics 2010). The two main factors were “money for school costs” and “school too far from home.” Unsurprisingly, distance to school was a far more serious constraint for rural families. This survey evidence underlines the importance of reducing costs and bringing schools closer to the communities they serve.

Grade repetition is often a precursor to dropping out. Some 16 percent of children repeat grade 1 (figure 4). This is a strong indicator of poor quality and a source of inefficiency. When students repeat grades, it places a strain on the overall system, adding to problems of classroom overcrowding in the early grades (which in turn harms the quality of provision) and increasing the cost per child of a completed year of schooling. There is also evidence that repetition increases the risk of dropping out. Apart from raising the direct and opportunity costs of schooling, with a large proportion of children starting school late, many of South Sudan’s children are still in the early grades when they reach adolescence—a period when pressures to join labor markets or enter early marriage intensify.

FIGURE 4. PRIMARY SCHOOL REPETITION RATE BY GRADE AND GENDER, 2010–11



Source: EMIS 2011

Gender disparities in South Sudan’s education system are among the widest in the world. Young girls in South Sudan are less likely to progress through to the end of primary school than they are to die in childbirth. Girls are more likely to repeat grades. Both boys and girls have high dropout rates throughout the primary school cycle. Almost half of those entering grade 1 drop out before grade 3. The vast majority of girls drop out before grade 5. Girls account for two in every three out-of-school children. In the country as a whole, there are just 591 girls in the last grade of secondary education, one-third of the number for boys. Gender disparities reflect wider sociocultural practices that disadvantage girls, including early marriage and the persistence of the dowry system.

Demography is adding to the pressure on South Sudan's education system. The country has to run in terms of school numbers just to stand still on enrollment rates. This is because the school-age population is growing. South Sudan is a young country, not just by virtue of its recent independence but also in terms of its age profile. One-third of the population is between 5 and 16 years of age. In 2008, there were about 1.2 million children in South Sudan between 0 and 5 years, more than double the population age 20 to 25. Ensuring that there are places available in school for these children, or that there are alternative learning opportunities, is critical not just for the children in question but also for South Sudan's human development prospects.

South Sudan's social and human geography adds to the complexity of the challenges facing its education planners. The majority of the country's population is made up of agro-pastoralists. It is estimated that 70 percent of the 1.3 million children out of school live in pastoralist communities. It follows that increasing access to education in South Sudan will require increasing the provision of nonformal education options, with a premium on mobile and flexible provision. Currently, there is very limited provision through the Pastoralist Mobile School program. In total, there are just 4,000 mobile learners, most of them in grades 1 and 2. Low levels of population density create another layer of difficulty. Responding effectively to the needs of dispersed and often remote rural populations requires a strong emphasis on local delivery.

Access to primary education cannot be viewed in isolation. There is international evidence that progress toward universal primary enrollment is linked to advances in secondary school participation (UNESCO 2010). In the case of South Sudan, the very low secondary enrollment rates may be contributing to the high dropout rates after grade 4. With parents uncertain about the prospects of their children progressing to secondary school, many may be unwilling to incur the direct costs and opportunity costs of keeping their children in school (the opportunity costs of education in pastoralist societies—where children play a critical role in herding, tending animals, and collecting water—are very high). Technical and vocational training options are also extremely limited.

The very limited coverage of upper secondary and tertiary education has consequences for basic education. There are just 25,000 students in higher education in a country of about 10 million people. While accelerated progress toward universal primary education is vital, South Sudan cannot build its future on primary education alone. The country needs teachers, doctors, health workers, engineers, and a civil service with the requisite skills to deliver effective administration.

Disparities across States

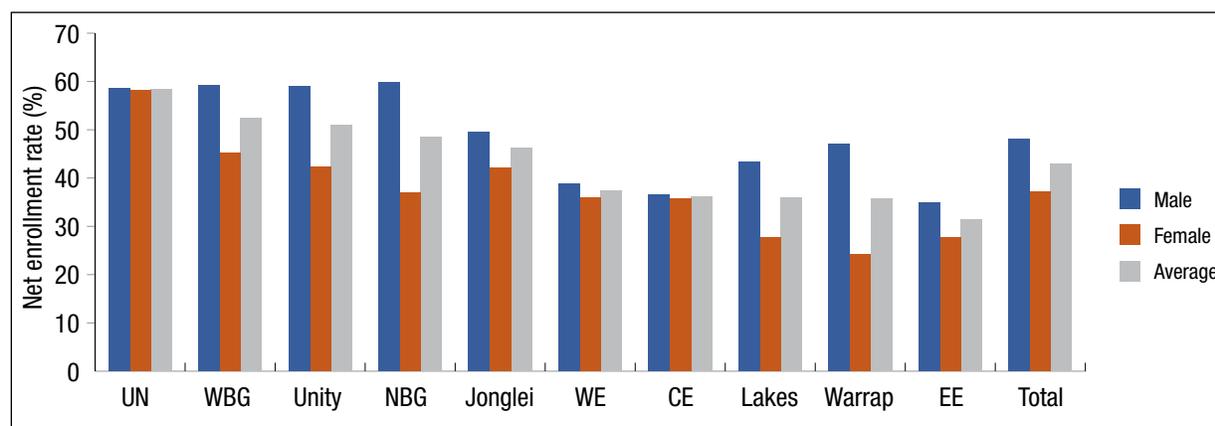
National average figures obscure some disparities both across and within South Sudan's states. The data on these disparities need to be treated with some caution because the quality of reporting varies across states. But it is evident that South Sudan faces a range of equity challenges.

Reported enrollment rates vary enormously (figure 5). Whereas the Western Equatoria, Upper Nile, and Central Equatoria states have gross enrollment rates in excess of 90 percent, the figure falls to 67 percent for Unity State and about 50 percent or less for the Jonglei, Warrap, and Eastern Equatoria states.

While some efforts have been made to address disparities across states, budget resources have been insufficient. Within each state, there are also large pockets of marginalization and disadvantage, often linked to the marginalization of specific ethnic groups.

Gender disparities intersect with state disparities (figure 5). The Western and Central Equatoria states have near gender parity at very low levels of enrollment, while Upper Nile State combines higher levels of enrollment with high levels of gender disparity. Lakes State combines low levels of enrollment with high levels of gender disparity. These disparities underline the importance for policymakers of understanding the specific constraints facing young girls in the nation’s various states.

FIGURE 5. PRIMARY SCHOOL NET ENROLLMENT RATE (NER) BY STATE AND GENDER, 2011



Source: EMIS 2011

Wealth gaps in education are also marked. Children from the wealthiest quintile of households are 32 percent more likely to enroll in grade 1 than children from the poorest quintile. They are also far less likely to drop out (World Bank 2012).

Another source of inequality, not captured in the EMIS, is the widespread practice of sending children to be educated in neighboring countries, especially Uganda (which may partially account for the low reported enrollment rates in the Equatoria states) and Kenya. The majority of parents who can afford to send their children to school in neighboring countries do so, creating an situation whereby educational resources (in terms of both money and motivated students) that could strengthen the South Sudanese system are instead leaving the country. Retaining these students will require the establishment of improved schools that are regionally competitive.

THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF CONFLICT

Armed conflict has hampered progress in education in South Sudan. Displacement and the flow of refugees in order areas and group-based violence affect large numbers of children each year, disrupting their education and, in many cases, leaving them traumatized and insecure.

Vulnerability analysis carried out by the humanitarian cluster has identified Jonglei and Unity as the most vulnerable states (South Sudan Education Cluster 2013). However, armed conflict is a country-wide threat. Some states have also had to deal with large numbers of returnees, with Warrap and Jonglei the worst affected. During 2011, an estimated 152,000 primary and secondary school-aged children returned to South Sudan from the north, putting pressure on already overstretched education systems. Meanwhile, large-scale displacement and the disruption of schooling have been caused by ethnic rivalries; disputes over land, water, and cattle; and long-standing political disputes.

There has been some progress in mitigating the effects of armed violence on education. Since 2010, the education cluster has worked to strengthen emergency coordination. The cluster has increased access to protected learning spaces and trained almost 2,000 teachers in emergency-affected areas.

However, the aid system has not responded effectively to the education challenge posed by displacement. Humanitarian appeals are seldom fully funded—and education is usually a peripheral concern in such appeals. The revised 2011–12 financing requirement for delivering education in emergencies was estimated at about \$40 million, with some 229,000 children needing support. By midyear, pledges received amounted to less than half of the request, with the slow disbursement of funds further delaying the implementation of projects.

The upshot is that many displaced children—probably numbering in the hundreds of thousands—are receiving at best limited provision, and at worst no education support at all. This is damaging not just because of the harmful effects on education but also because children are losing access to a potential source of security. Schools can provide a haven and sense of normality during and after episodes of conflict, enabling children to rebuild their lives. Moreover, the education system can act as a force for peace, challenging the stereotypes and the received wisdoms that fuel violence.

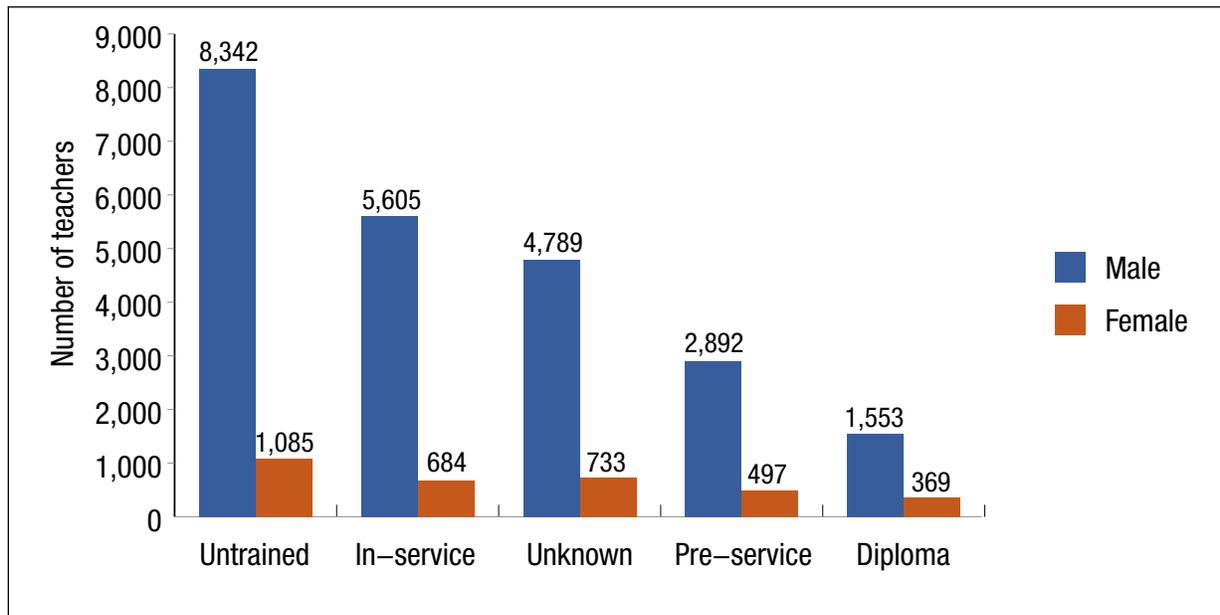
1.2 The Learning Infrastructure and Outcomes

South Sudan's "learning infrastructure" leaves much to be desired. The school infrastructure is overstretched, classrooms are overcrowded, and there is an inadequate provision of textbooks. South Sudan's teacher workforce is not well equipped to deliver effective teaching. Many are untrained or undertrained, and there is little in-service support. Unsurprising against this backdrop, learning achievement levels are very low.

Teachers

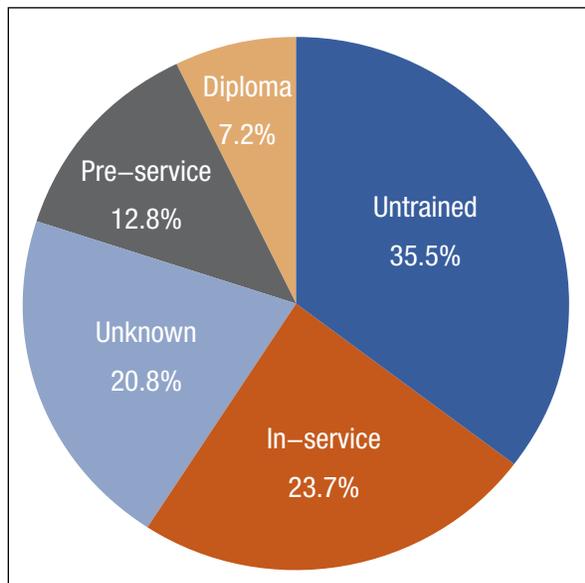
South Sudan's teacher workforce has grown rapidly. There are about 28,000 teachers across the country. But many of these teachers are unqualified—and most receive little support (figures 6a and 6b).

FIGURE 6A. NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS BY PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION AND GENDER, 2011



Source: EMIS 2011

FIGURE 6B. PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS BY PROFESSION, 2011



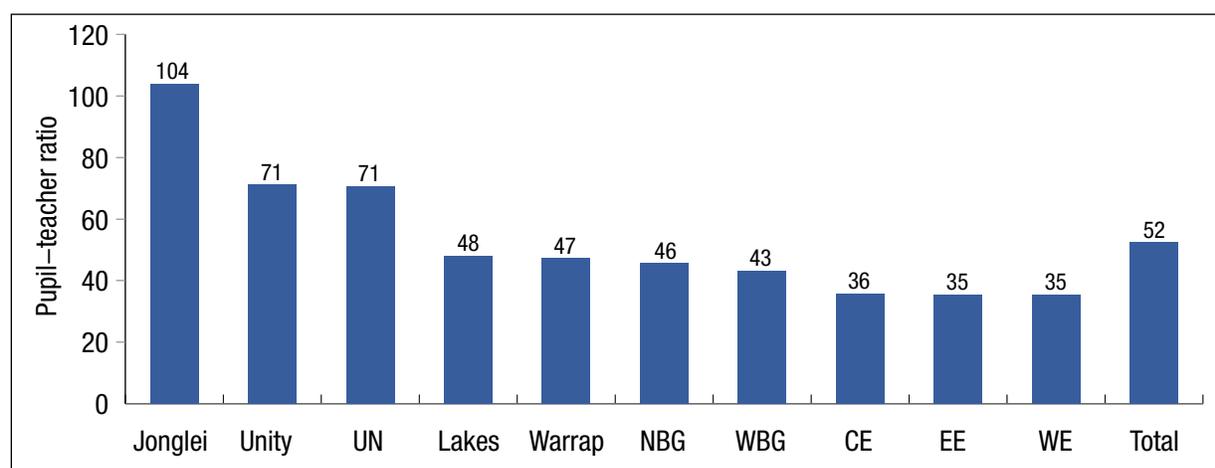
Source: EMIS 2011

Not all teachers are on the government payroll. Estimates suggest that about 8,000 teachers work on an informal basis. These teachers are typically paid through school charges, which are in turn keeping many children out of school (Charlie Goldsmith Associates 2011).

There are relatively few women in the teaching profession. In 2012, just 13 percent of the teacher workforce at the primary level was female, and this rate fell to 10 percent at the secondary level. The limited number of female teachers almost certainly plays a part in reinforcing gender disparities, not least by depriving young girls of access to potential role models.

The average pupil/teacher ratio has been increasing over time. The national ratio in 2012 stood at 52:1—one of the highest in the world (figure 7). Yet this figure understates the problem. In Unity and Upper Nile states, the pupil/teacher ratio is 71:1, rising to 104:1 in Jonglei. And the ratio of pupils to *qualified* teachers is 117:1. Behind these headline numbers is an issue that goes to the heart of the learning shortfalls in South Sudan’s education system: the chronic shortage of qualified teachers.

FIGURE 7. PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO (PTR) BY STATE, 2011



Source: EMIS 2011

One-third of South Sudan’s teachers have only a primary school education. The qualification status of 20 percent of South Sudan’s teachers is unknown. This means that fewer than half of the country’s teachers have received training, though in most cases this is likely to cover only limited in-service training. Just 16 percent of those teaching in primary schools have professional qualifications. There are marked variations across states, with Unity, Jonglei, and Eastern Equatoria having very low shares of qualified teachers in the workforce.

Although representative surveys are lacking, there is evidence that the subject knowledge of the teacher workforce is weak. Many teachers would struggle to master the curriculum they are supposed to teach. One survey carried out by the World Bank found that only 28 percent of teachers in mathematics and 31 percent in languages were able to score in the highest grade of primary school tests (Charlie Goldsmith Associates 2011). This lack of content knowledge is allied to weaknesses in basic pedagogical skills,

particularly with respect to teaching literacy and numeracy to first-generation learners. Critically, while Arabic is widely spoken in South Sudan, English is the primary language of instruction. Given that the majority of teachers have limited understanding of English, this is a serious challenge to education quality.

Despite the urgent need for skills upgrading, very few teachers receive effective support. About two-thirds of teachers report having no pre-service training, while in-service training is limited in coverage, and largely unknown in terms of qualitative outcomes (World Bank 2012).

Moreover, teachers' time on task is inadequate due to high pupil/teacher ratios, inadequate training, salary-related problems, and the "three Hs"—housing, health, and hardship (World Bank 2012). Evidence from four states suggests that a majority of teachers are actively teaching for fewer than 10 hours a week, compared with best practice norms of more than 30 hours. Unsurprisingly, the majority of schools and teachers do not currently cover the syllabus they are expected to teach. Only about one-quarter of schools are able to offer a cycle of teaching that extends from grades 1 through 7, and just 13 percent cover up to grade 8.

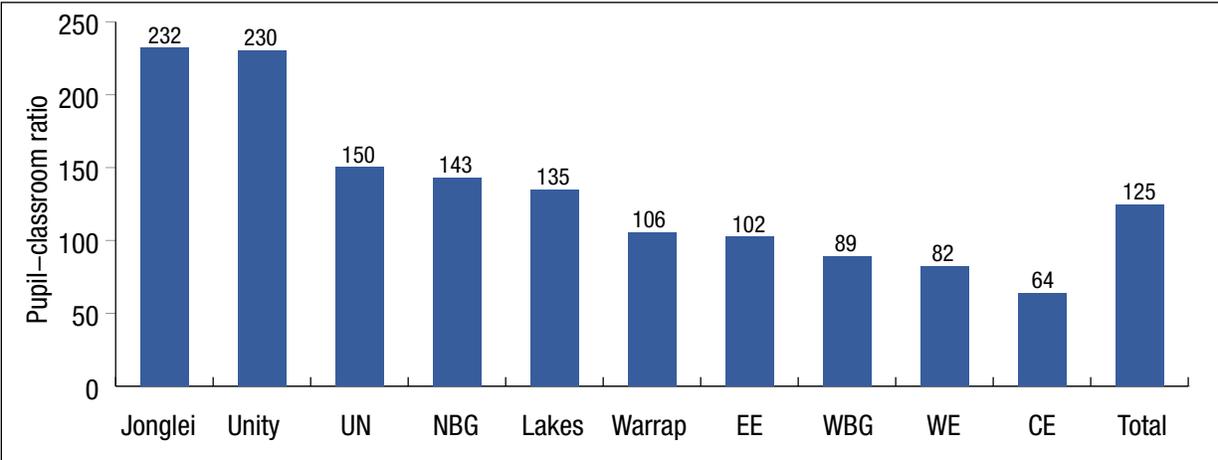
Detailed analytical work on teacher supply graphically illustrates the mountain that South Sudan must climb. Based on current census data, South Sudan would need 60,000 teachers to stay within a pupil/teacher ratio of 50:1 under conditions of universal enrollment. This implies a deficit of somewhere between 32,000 and 43,000 teachers, depending on whether the reference point is the current workforce or the number of teachers on the payroll. The current forecast for teachers graduating from teacher training institutes is just 1,100 (700 from government institutes, and 400 from nongovernment institutes). Against this backdrop, there is an urgent need to raise the skills level of the volunteer workforces and to expand the flow of teachers who have received training—an issue to which we return below.

School Infrastructure

School infrastructure constraints magnify the problems that come with an overstretched and under-trained teacher workforce. Far too many of South Sudan's children are sitting in classrooms that are not equipped for effective learning—and far too many are sitting in the open air.

Rising enrollment has placed strains on classroom availability. The number of classrooms available has increased far more slowly than the rise in enrollment. Average enrollment per school has increased from 2,922 in 2006 to over 3,200 (GRSS 2012c). Currently, there is a ratio of 125 pupils to each classroom (figure 8).

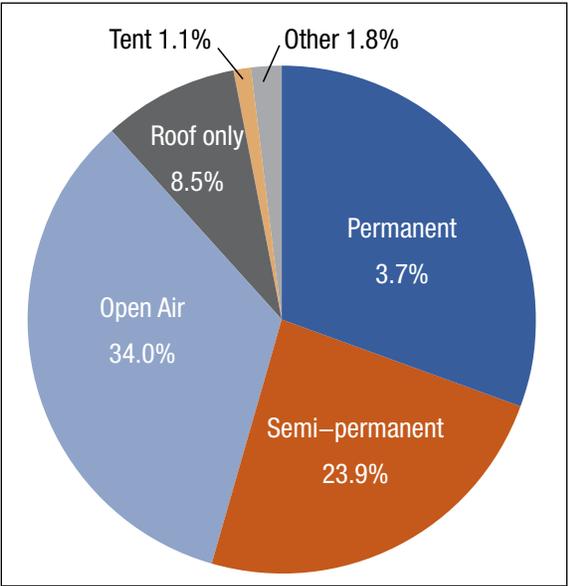
FIGURE 8. PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL-CLASSROOM RATIO (PCR) BY STATE, 2011



Source: UNESCO 2011

While decent-quality schools and classrooms do not guarantee a route to improved learning, many of South Sudan’s schools fall far short of an acceptable level. According to the most recent EMIS data, only 34 percent of primary school operate in permanent structures (figure 9). One-third of children are being taught in the open air, and another one-quarter in temporary structures. Alarming, almost two of every three schools do not have access to a safe source of drinking water or latrines (figure 10).

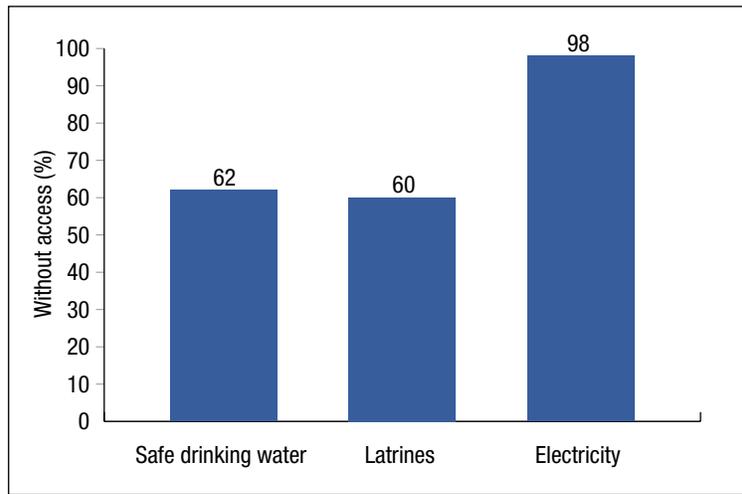
FIGURE 9. RATIO OF PRIMARY SCHOOL BY CLASSROOM TYPE, 2011



Source: EMIS 2011

On a rule-of-thumb estimate, South Sudan needs to at least double and possibly triple the number of classrooms in the country. In addition, there is a notable lack of mobile teaching options for those unable to attend formal school settings, such as the pastoralist communities mentioned above.

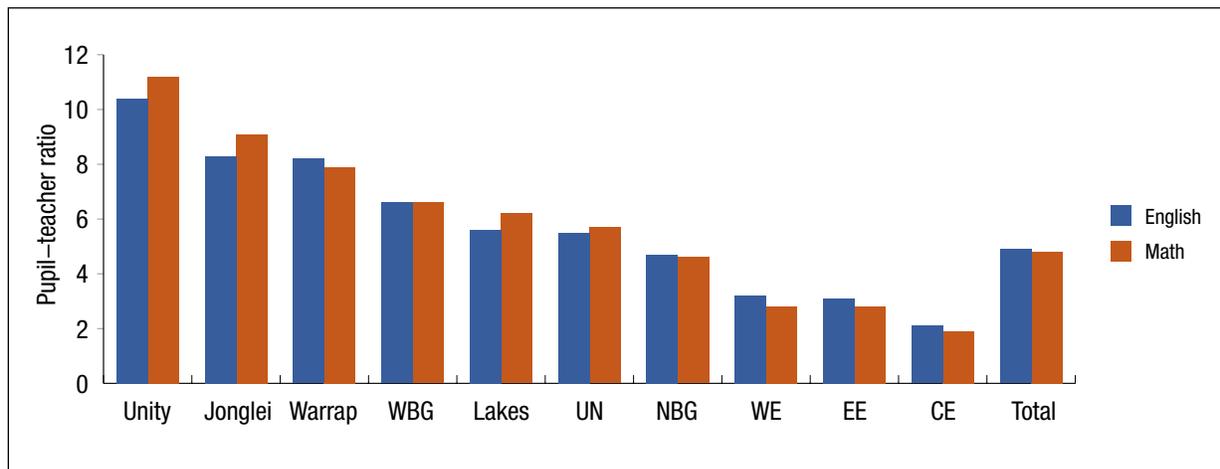
FIGURE 10. PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS WITHOUT ACCESS TO FACILITIES, 2011



Source: UNESCO 2011

Shortages of textbooks have reinforced wider problems in the learning environment. Nationally, there is just 1 textbook for every 5 learners, rising to 1 book for every 10 learners in some states (figure 11). Many remote schools have no textbooks or teaching materials. With DFID providing support for the printing and distribution of textbooks to all 10 states (9.6 million books in total), the overall picture on textbook availability may be about to improve. However, in the absence of long-term budget commitments, there is a danger that short-run improvements will give way over time to longer-term shortages.

FIGURE 11. PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL-TEXTBOOK RATIO BY STATE AND SUBJECT (ENGLISH AND MATH), 2011



Source: UNESCO 2011

Classroom overcrowding means that schools often operate multiple shifts with multigrade classes. Given the skills levels and support available to the teacher workforce, this is suboptimal. Delivering effective instruction to children of varied ages requires a high level of proficiency on the part of teachers, access

to decent-quality teaching materials, support from a teacher assistants, and—critically—pupil/teacher ratios under 40. None of these conditions are met in a typical primary school in South Sudan.

Learning Outcomes

South Sudan's children and their parents are making great efforts to secure the chance of an education. Yet these efforts are not, for the most part, being rewarded with the results that might be expected.

There is no national learning assessment currently available, but there is strong evidence that learning achievements are very low. In one survey carried out by the World Bank, fewer than 8 percent of grade 6 students scored more than 50 percent in a sample mathematics test, with the average score of 38—well below the minimum competency level (World Bank 2012).

School examination results provide another source of information on learning achievement, though there are issues of comparability across states. Research by the World Bank based on EMIS data found that the national pass rate for the grade 8 examination was 80 percent for both girls and boys. There were wide variations around the average, both by state and by gender. Pass rates were lowest in Jonglei (where girls outperformed boys) and the Equatorias (where boys outperformed girls) and were highest in Warrap and Lakes (where boys registered a significant advantage).

The transition from the preindependence system has been a difficult one, with reforms complicating efforts to improve quality. English has been adopted as the medium of instruction in South Sudan's schools, marking a break from the Arab language system imposed under the old regime. However, many of South Sudan's teachers were trained in Arabic. And while the adoption of English has a great symbolic significance, local language teaching has been relatively neglected. Many of South Sudan's children are learning in languages other than their home language, which is not conducive to effective learning, especially in the early grades (UNESCO 2010).

Curriculum development has been problematic. School curricula and exam systems have been adapted from neighboring countries—including Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya—leading to fragmentation across the national system. Finalizing the development of a new national curriculum is an urgent priority, and progress has been made toward the development of a new primary curriculum covering 14 subjects. South Sudan needs a school curriculum that enhances the quality and perceived relevance of education. But the curriculum must also address the challenge of building a sense of national identity that is respectful of national diversity and conducive to the development of a peaceful and resilient society.

1.3 Local Government: The Missing Link

South Sudan is building a national education system from scratch. At the time of the CPA, there were no functioning education institutions. Developing those institutions in an environment marked by severe budget constraints, insecurity, and a very small pool of administrators with anything more than a secondary education is a formidable task.

Nonetheless, much progress has been made. The past seven years have seen the emergence of national education management systems extending from the central government to state governments and devolved to local authorities. However, there are strains and capacity constraints across the system, notably in the devolved subnational authorities.

The Devolved Education System

South Sudan's decentralized system assigns a clear delineation of responsibilities across the different levels of government. The county education departments are responsible for the delivery of primary education, in collaboration with education inspectors at the *payam* level. State ministries of education provide leadership for education service delivery and management, disseminate policies and guidelines, plan resource allocation for the education sector at the state level, and inspect performance at the county level. At the national level, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction provides overall leadership; develops policies, guidelines, and standards; allocates resources through the annual budget process; sets the national curriculum; and supervises the overall provision of primary and secondary education services in the country.

The ability of each level of government to effectively carry out these responsibilities ultimately governs the degree and quality of primary education in South Sudan. In this regard, channeling development partner assistance in a way that supports different levels of government to better fulfill their prescribed mandates presents the most promising and sustainable solution to improving access and learning.

The GRSS has actively sought to promote this approach. Through the development of a primary education Service Delivery Framework in late 2012, the government diagnosed a number of system and capacity challenges that are preventing local governments from fulfilling their mandate to deliver primary education.

On the financing issue, it was found that under the current intergovernmental fiscal transfer system, little nonwage funding is reaching local governments for primary education service delivery. County education departments are not receiving a reliable source of operating funding from the central and state governments, which, given their limited ability generate revenues from their own resources, means that they are often left unable to carry out their key managerial and inspection functions. Moreover, transfers to states through the local government grant system are weakly related to enrollment, the cost of provision, or the level of unmet need. This in turn has hampered the development of effective oversight and support through local government.

The lack of operating funds at the school level is also having a number of negative consequences. One of them is the endemic shortage of basic inputs for education described above. Two-thirds of students surveyed in the Service Delivery Study did not even have paper to write on, and one-fifth did not have writing instruments. Such shortages inevitably limit opportunities for reinforcing what is taught (World Bank 2012, 132). Another concern is that, unable to cover their basic operating costs for school supplies or basic maintenance of infrastructure, many schools are charging fees—a financing approach that limits

access for the poorest children, reinforces gender inequality (since many parents are unwilling to pay for female education), and contributes to high dropout rates.

I.4 Financing and the Current Budget Situation

Along with other basic services, education in South Sudan has suffered from chronic under-financing. The loss of oil revenues associated with the dispute over transit fees with the Government of Sudan (Khartoum) threatens to make a bad situation far worse. Depending on the response of government and donors, the fiscal crisis has the potential not just to slow progress toward the goals set out in the national education strategy but also to reverse the progress achieved in recent years.

Even before the loss of oil revenues, there were financing gaps in the education plan. The estimated cost of the full plan is \$1.46 billion over five years, or \$255 million annually. Allocations for primary education represent about half the proposed budget, with secondary and higher education, respectively, allocated 18 percent and 19 percent. The financing gap is estimated at between \$132 million and \$72 million annually, depending on the scenario for domestic resource mobilization.

The disruption of oil revenues has left South Sudan with a fiscal crisis and created uncertainty over government financing capacity. Faced with the imposition by the Republic of Sudan of excessive transit fees and unilateral seizure of oil, the authorities in South Sudan closed down oil production during 2012. With oil accounting for 98 percent of government revenues and a slightly smaller share of export earnings, the embargo on oil exports had far-reaching economic effects. Fiscal pressures have forced the GRSS to adopt two successive austerity budgets. Meanwhile, exchange rate depreciation has increased import prices and generated inflationary pressures.

Following successful negotiations under the African Union's auspices, an agreement has now been reached on transit fees. However, the fall-out effects will continue for some time. The resumption of oil exports is unlikely to take place in the current fiscal year, and it may be some 18 months before revenue flows reach their pre-crisis level. At the time of writing, the budget for 2013–14 was still being finalized, but financing pressures are sure to continue. Even though the dispute over transit fees has now been resolved, there is still uncertainty over the timing of future oil revenue flows.

The education system has been affected by the fiscal crisis. The central government's transfers to state and local governments have fallen below planned levels, reinforcing the financial pressures operating at the lower levels of the education system. There are reports that payments to teachers have been disrupted. This may have led some teachers to leave the workforce in search of more reliable sources of income. Meanwhile, the costs of school construction have increased in tandem with exchange rate depreciation because of the high import content of the materials used.

Not all the financing constraints in the education sector can be attributed to the fiscal crisis. As in other social sectors, spending on education has been crowded out by expenditures on the armed forces. South Sudan has been allocating just 5 to 7 percent of its budget to education—one of the lowest levels in the

world. Military spending, inflated by ongoing cross-border tensions, officially accounts for 28 percent of the budget, but is widely thought to represent more than half of expenditures—one of the highest levels in the world.

The government has recognized the need to prioritize education spending. President Salva Kiir has pledged to protect spending on basic education. The new Education Bill envisages a minimum 10 percent budget allocation for education. Acting on this commitment would appear to be a critical requirement for implementing the national education strategy.

2. Donor Support and NGO Partnerships

Even before the current crisis, partnerships between the government on the one side and donors and the NGO community on the other occupied a critical role in the education strategy. These partnerships have become even more important in the light of the budget constraints facing MoGEI.

2.1 Aid: A Shallow Pool, but Coordination Is Improving

Development assistance plays a pivotal role in funding for education, as it does for other basic services. Aid commitments for 2011 were about \$121 million, but reported expenditure levels were only 73 percent of that (GRSS 2011). For the 2012–13 financial year, development assistance represents about 45 percent of the planned education budget.

Education is one of the more fragmented sectors for development assistance in South Sudan. There are some 20 active donors overseeing 46 projects with an average value of about \$2 million. Transfers are dominated by a small number of agencies. The United States and the United Kingdom are the largest bilateral donors, and the World Food Program (through its school feeding operations) and UNICEF are the major multilateral donors. The European Union is set to emerge as a significant donor.

Until 2012, part of the aid for education was delivered through two pooled funds: the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), which operated under the auspices of the World Bank; and the Basic Services Fund (BSF). The BSF was established in 2005 with the aim of supporting the GRSS in expanding primary education, primary health, and water and sanitation services to communities recovering from conflict. DFID was the lead donor, with additional funding coming from the Netherlands, Norway, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and the European Union.

The BSF was a highly effective mechanism for delivering education services. Operating under the joint management of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and donors, with fiduciary oversight and operational management provided through a private company, the facility provided a pooled fund for priority investments in education. In 2010, the BSF provided about 10 percent of (nonemergency) aid for education. Independent evaluations pointed to the delivery of a cost-effective provision of classroom construction, teacher training, and community support, with NGOs tendering for delivery on a competitive basis (Brown 2011). The remit of the BSF (and the MDTF) expired in 2012.

Partly on the basis of the BSF's strong performance, the GRSS has actively sought to promote the development of a new pooled fund in education. Apart from lowering transaction costs for individual donors, the BSF framework facilitated more effective coordination between donors within the government planning framework. With the termination of the BSF and the MDTF, a new pooled facility has been created in the health sector (the Health Pooled Fund, or HPF). This will provide support for basic services and strengthen health systems in six states. Provisional commitments have been made by DFID, SIDA, CIDA, Ausaid, and the EU, with DFID acting as the lead donor. It has a preliminary budget of £150 million for five years. However, there is no counterpart mechanism in education. The GRSS has called on donors to consider the establishment of a new pooled fund in education to fill the gap left by the BSF (GRSS 2011d).

Donor programs cover a broad array of activities linked to priorities set out in the national strategy. The U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID's) South Sudan Teacher Education Initiative (SSTEP) initiative is building capacity across the teacher training system, helping to establish a stronger in-service and school-based model, while at the same time strengthening preservice delivery. The United Kingdom, which is set to become the largest education donor in South Sudan, is building on the South Sudan Education Program, which focused on school construction and community-based support. The textbook supply program is providing 9.6 million textbooks to all primary schools and accelerated learning centers. The DFID-funded Girls Education South Sudan program will provide some \$96 million over five years for initiatives aimed at getting 300,000 girls through upper primary and secondary through a combination of community mobilization/advocacy activities backed up by a cash transfer scheme to girls' families and a capitation grant system for all full primary schools and secondary school, including an attendance monitoring system. The EU is supporting school improvement across four states. It is also providing technical assistance for capacity development at both national and state levels.

The GPE program will provide \$36 million over three years to strengthen investment in the development of the national education system in three key areas: literacy and numeracy outcomes and assessment, school supervision, and teacher training. UNICEF, which will manage the GPE program, has an extensive track record in school construction, teacher training, and a safer schools initiative operating across five states.

2.2 Nongovernmental Organizations: A Diverse Sector

One of the features of the development cooperation landscape in South Sudan is the presence of dynamic NGO sector. Donors working through the BSF pooled fund and on a bilateral basis have contracted with a wide range of NGO partners to deliver infrastructure and services. Some are established international NGOs. Others are local or regional. To cite some examples for illustrative purposes:

- The BSF contracted the Hope Agency for Relief and Development to provide integrated school construction, teacher training, parent-teacher association development, and government training under its Equitable Access to Education Project.
- Mundri Relief and Development Association has been contracted by the BSF and other donors to train teachers and construct classrooms in an area—Greater Mundri—that is hard to reach.

- Windle Trust runs one of the largest teacher training programs in the country.
- The Episcopal Church of South Sudan has been extensively involved in teacher training, and the training of government officials; and several Catholic Diocese have been extensively involved in teacher training and school construction.
- The Bangladesh Rural Action Committee has developed a low-cost model for teacher training and education delivery, with a focus on the training and recruitment of female teachers.
- International NGOs—such as Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council, World Vision, and Caritas—have programs in South Sudan that provide front-line delivery, often in partnerships with local NGOs, and support for capacity building.

These examples highlight the range of activities carried out by NGOs. Some of the agencies involved operate on a national basis. Others have a more local specialization or a specific expertise in one or two areas. Collectively, however, if coordinated effectively and provided with secure financing, NGOs have a considerable capacity to deliver results while supporting and strengthening the national system. As the UN special envoy wrote following his discussion with NGOs in June 2012: “All of the major national and international NGOs that I met were clear that, were the finance to be made available on a secure and predictable basis over the next few years, they would be in a position to expand their activities.”

2.3 Building on the Foundations

The national consultation process that informed this report identified a number of strategies for strengthening South Sudan’s aid partnership in education. Three priority strategies were identified:

The first priority strategy is improved coordination. It is clearly important that donors and partners coordinate what are in many cases overlapping programs to avoid unnecessary transaction costs and inefficiency. To do this, support for the MoGEI Development Partners Office needs to be provided to establish maintainable coordination systems at the central, state, and county levels.

The second priority strategy is strengthened reporting. There is a danger that a proliferation of projects will weaken the education planning system. In 2010, there were more than 50 separate projects reported through the government system with an average value of \$2 million. Dozens (and possibly hundreds) of additional projects were not reported through the system. Apart from the problem of fragmentation, project management places an enormous burden on South Sudan’s limited administrative and management resources in education.

The third priority strategy is capacity building. It is vital that South Sudan builds national systems for planning and budgeting, teacher recruitment and training, learning assessment, monitoring and evaluation, and other education activities. There is no inherent tension between the development of NGO provision and capacity, provided that donors and NGOs actively form partnerships with the government, operate within the framework set out in the education strategy, and include capacity building in their portfolio. There is, however, a potential risk associated with the development of a parallel system—and that risk needs to be carefully managed.

Attempting to circumvent capacity constraints by operating outside government structures is likely to prove a false economy. The national consultation recommended that “as the government gradually addressed these challenges, . . . donors should begin to channel support for basic services through government structures instead of using costly parallel systems.” While the frameworks for enabling this are likely to take some time to be fully established, donors need to closely align with government systems and integrate capacity building components into programming at all levels.

3. Delivering Results and Building Capacity: A “Value-Added” Approach

South Sudan is at a crossroads in education. Much has been achieved over the past seven years—and the GRSS deserves considerable credit for providing leadership. There is a danger over the next two years that fiscal pressures will slow the pace of progress. Looking ahead, there is an urgent need to strengthen the foundations that have been laid and develop an education system with the capacity to deliver learning opportunities for all of South Sudan’s children.

Achieving this outcome will require a strengthened national aid partnership supported by international action. Interviews conducted for this paper revealed a strong confidence among donors that the education sector strategy can deliver results if adequately and effectively supported. Improved coordination between donors and the positive working relationship between the ministries of finance and education provide a strong base for an accelerated drive toward the EFA goals.

3.1 Proposed Interventions

The EFA Ministerial Meeting in April 2013 will consider the potential for increased international support for those countries that are working toward the 2015 goals. One of the central aims of the meeting is to identify opportunities for accelerating progress through a strengthened focus on marginalized children. The time horizon for implementation is 2013 to 2016, with an emphasis on supporting national efforts to reach the EFA goals. Financing is just one element in the package of measures needed to accelerate progress. But as the GPE South Sudan program document states, “The challenges in education call for vast investments.”

A Broad Approach

The case of South Sudan, one of the countries that will be considered at the EFA Ministerial Meeting, raises a number of distinctive issues. Most obviously, the level of deprivation in education is far more severe than in most countries. Overcoming marginalization is not a matter of reaching “the last 5 to 10 percent.” It is about extending basic education opportunities to the vast majority of the country’s children who are unable to progress through even a basic education cycle, while at the same time raising overall quality.

In developing the proposals outlined below, we were guided by three simple ground-rules. First, the measures should be consistent with, and complementary to, the current planning framework and priorities, and where possible rooted in current strategies. Second, the measures should add value in terms of delivering tangible benefits. Third, the proposed financing should be seen as new and additional, rather than as

a reallocation within the existing resource envelope. The financing provisions themselves should be seen as indicative rather than definitive. Where possible, we have drawn on data from government and donor sources, but there are large variations in the cost of delivery across different parts of the country. More detailed financing estimates would be required to move toward implementation.

Priority Areas

Based on a review of current priorities and the analysis set out in section I, there are a number of areas in which early interventions could deliver significant results. The framework for action is the national education strategy—and it is vital that donors continue to build capacity for delivery across the education system. Under this broad umbrella, our concrete proposals are a response to specific bottlenecks in the following areas:

- Chronic shortages of classrooms and teachers equipped to provide instruction of a reasonable quality, especially in the early grades;
- Underfinancing and a lack of capacity among subnational levels of government;
- The high cost of attending school relative to the income available to poor households;
- The lack of provision for children affected by armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies.

The proposals outlined below are clearly not comprehensive in scope. They do, however, have the potential to deliver significant benefits for a large number of South Sudan's most disadvantaged children. Taken collectively, the proposals would require about \$180 million per annum in additional aid (table I). Potential benefits would include:

- Bringing an additional 300,000 children into the school system;
- Raising the standard of instruction for 1.5 million young learners;
- Extending education opportunities for 500,000 girls at risk of dropping out, or who are outside the basic education system;
- Strengthening local government education delivery mechanisms, with the potential to improve access, reduce dropout rates, and improve quality across the education system;
- Addressing the needs of thousands of children affected by humanitarian emergencies.

TABLE I. THREE PROPOSALS FOR STRENGTHENED ACCESS AND QUALITY: ESTIMATED ANNUAL COSTS AND TOTAL BENEFICIARIES

Component	Annual Cost (millions of dollars)	Total Beneficiaries
EFA Acceleration Fund / other mechanisms	83.9	
<i>o/w</i>		
<i>Classrooms</i>	70	300,000 children
<i>Community support</i>	6.4	
<i>Teacher training</i>	7.5	1.5 million learners
Local service support	69.5	System-wide benefits
<i>o/w Girls stipend</i>	5	500,000
Education in emergencies	27	165,506 learners
Total	180.4	2 million +

Proposal I: Financing through a new pooled fund—the EFA Acceleration Fund—and other arrangements interventions aimed at extending the reach of the education system through classroom construction, and community support and in-service training. Target: an additional 300,000 children in school by 2016, and 30,000 teachers provided with in-service training (improving learning prospects for 1.5 million children). Required financing: \$83.9 million.

As highlighted in section I, many of South Sudan’s children are out of school because of distance or cost—or both. Building on the best practices of the BSF, it would be possible for the government, donors, and NGOs to extend education provision in currently underserved areas, working through state and local government structures. Though other mechanisms are possible (and should be considered), a pooled fund has a number of benefits, including improved coordination, reduced entry costs for new donors, and competitive delivery.

There are enormous difficulties in estimating the unit cost of provision in South Sudan. School construction costs are highly sensitive to terrain and distance from major roads. Similarly, the cost of providing teacher support varies across the country. The following estimates (summarized in table 2) are based on completed BSF projects and estimates used in the GPE implementation framework. The school construction costs are based on low-cost models using local materials. Once developed in more detail, the proposals for these components would need to be streamlined with the Local Services Support (LSS) proposal, whereby increasing operating and capital transfers to schools and counties would also result in some classroom construction and equipment.

Classroom construction: Estimates point to a cost range between \$25,000 and \$31,000. Using the midrange figure of \$28,000 for a classroom and a pupil/classroom ratio of 40:1, the proposal envisages the construction of 7,500 classrooms over three years, or \$70 million annually.

Basic provisioning and management support: Data from BSF projections for 2010–11 point to average costs of management support, initial teacher training, and textbook provision at \$2,575 per classroom equivalent, or \$6.4 million annually.

In-service teacher training: Several NGOs have developed high-quality in-service teacher training programs. An approximation for average costs is \$750 per teacher for three months, enabling them to cover one level of the MoGEI curriculum. On this basis, the average annual cost for training 30,000 teachers over three years would be \$7.5 million. Assuming a pupil/teacher ratio of 50:1, this investment in training would improve learning prospects for 1.5 million children. The emphasis in the program should be placed on training female teachers at the community level. The program would also support training on a Code of Conduct, recognizing that schools can be the front line of protection for children if teachers are trained to identify needs.

TABLE 2. ESTIMATED COSTS OF CLASSROOM PROVISION AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING: 2013–16 AVERAGE ANNUAL AND TOTAL COSTS

Component	Annual Cost (millions of dollars)	Total Cost (millions of dollars)
Classroom construction (7,500 classrooms)	70	210
Basic materials	6.4	19.2
In-service teacher training	7.5	22.5
Total	83.9	251.7

In each of these areas, the new and additional financing envisaged would support the scaling up of existing initiatives in the national education strategy. The objective is to complement wider measures aimed at strengthening the overall reach and quality of the education system.

At the same time, there is a need to consolidate efforts aimed at strengthening the national system. With respect to teacher training, the development of teacher training institutes is vital. USAID’s SSTEP initiative can help MoGEI set the standards and core syllabus to ensure some consistency or training and certification. However, South Sudan urgently needs to raise the competency levels of its current teacher workforce, especially in areas such as basic literacy and numeracy—and this is an area where in-service support could make a difference.

It would make sense for a pooled fund in education to build on the plans for a local services pooled fund, which will work across a number of basic services. The governance structure used for the BSF and adapted for the Basic Health Fund offers a blueprint for good practice. Beyond the potential gains for aid effectiveness, there is an additional reason for considering the development of a pooled fund in education. South Sudan has a limited donor base, partly because the complexity of the operating environment raises the cost of entry for new donors. The proposed pooled funding mechanism could provide a delivery vehicle attractive both to donors without an established presence in the country, and to those with a potential to scale up support.

Proposal 2: Support for the education component of an LSS initiative for education, including school capitation grants and a girls' stipend (covering half a million girls). Estimated annual financing requirement: \$69.5 million.

If South Sudan is to progress in education, the country needs to combine the development of national institutions, norms, and standards with local capacity. As outlined earlier in this paper, states and local governments currently lack the financial resources needed to build an effective education system from below. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has developed innovative proposals to redress this imbalance and improve local accountability through the LSS initiative.

The LSS focuses on intergovernmental fiscal transfers, and on the financial mechanisms needed to enable local governments to effectively deliver primary services in education, health, and water. Building on a dialogue with donors, the government has developed a Joint Plan of Action (JPA) for Enhancing Local Service Delivery. This directly addresses the challenges for education identified in the national consultation, including the limited resources available to county-level departments and the inequitable pattern of transfers across states.

The proposed reforms encompass the redesign of grant transfers to states, enhanced county-level support, and a capitation grant (a per pupil transfer) to schools through local government. The grant would provide the resources needed to improve local service delivery, strengthen accountability, and reduce the pressure on schools to charge fees. We also propose the integration into the package of a stipend program for girls aimed at creating incentives for school attendances and reducing dropout rates. The program would cover grades 1 through 4.

Donors should actively support and encourage the development and implementation of the JPA, for two reasons. First, the initiative will strengthen the environment for effective aid by enhancing capacity for delivery at the local level. Second, the LSS framework provides a mechanism for delivering aid and resources where they are most urgently needed—namely, to children in communities facing some of the greatest obstacles to education. Additionally, the JPA provides donors with a mechanism through which to shield the education of some of South Sudan's most vulnerable children from the seemingly inevitable rounds of austerity that could well lead to further contractions in the national education budget.

The proposed financing package would constitute support for transfers to the county education departments (table 3). These transfers would strengthen the structures on which the effective delivery of a good-quality education ultimately depends, including inspection. The proposals include a capitation grant to individual schools to support day-to-day school expenses. This would reduce the need for school fees, thereby lowering a major barrier to school entry and mitigating a source of pressure to drop out. In the context, we also propose the introduction of a stipend program targeting young girls attending grades 1 to 4, with \$10 provided annually per girl, conditional on school attendance. Those involved in the implementation of the stipend program and capitation grants would need to work closely with DFID's Girls' Education Program, which focuses on primary grades 5 to 8 and on secondary schools and includes cash transfers and capitation grants both in terms of mechanisms for disbursement and for monitoring attendance and impact.

The LSS instrument would facilitate capital transfers to county education departments, through the introduction of a new education-specific window in the county development grant. This would finance education infrastructure (principally schools). The overall cost of the package is estimated at \$75.7 million annually. It is envisaged that the donor contribution would be scaled back from 2016 as national financing becomes available, possibly as early as 2014–15, with oil revenues now expected in the coming months.

Finally, additional donor support will be required for institutional strengthening, to ensure that counties have the systems and capacities to enable them to manage and utilize the grants in the intended manner, and fulfill the necessary reporting and accountability requirements detailed in the operational manual. Such technical assistance and capacity building need to focus on those systems that are most critical to the delivery of primary education at the local government level, and should be delivered simultaneous to the delivery of grants, to provide the right incentives to counties for good performance. Experience from other sectoral institutional strengthening programs operating in South Sudan suggest that this could cost in the region of \$1.3 million per year per state, or \$13 million per year for a nationwide program.

TABLE 3. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL EDUCATION STRUCTURES AND SCHOOL STIPENDS: ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL AND TOTAL COSTS, 2013–16

Component	Annual Financing (millions of dollars)	Total Financing (millions of dollars)
County operating grant	13.7	41.1
School capitation grant	20.6	61.8
Capital grant to counties	17.2	51.6
Institutional strengthening	13	39
Girls' stipend (\$10 x 0.5 million girls)	5	3
Total	69.5	208.5

Any increases in aid contributions from traditional donors are likely to be contingent on a demonstration of commitment to education on the part of the government, typically in the form of sustained growth in the budget share allocated to the sector. This demand is entirely realistic. However, it must be tempered by a recognition that fiscal constraints are likely to remain acute for the short term. It is also important that measures be taken to address the fiduciary concerns of donors. An agreed-on set of benchmarks would need to be established before donors would commit to using government systems to support local services in this way. The LSS Risk Management Strategy provides a framework for approaching this task.

Proposal 3: Supporting education for children affected by armed conflict and other emergencies.

To address the educational needs of students in South Sudan, supporting and protecting those in conflict-affected counties and states is critical. Analysis by the government, UN agencies, and NGOs clearly demonstrates the detrimental effect of emergencies on a system that is already overstretched. In addition to the intrinsic value of interventions that reach learners affected by emergencies, education

also assists children and communities in obtaining durable solutions and builds a bridge between relief, recovery, and development.

Several indicators point to a correlation between vulnerability to emergencies and disadvantage in education. Access constraints, insecurity, and limited funds have hindered partners from being able to assess and respond to all the education needs of children and youth affected by emergencies. The result is that children and youth, in particular girls, have inadequate access to protective, life-saving education. The Education Cluster identifies three main education in emergency priorities:

- Increasing access to protective temporary learning spaces in emergencies;
- Supplying emergency teaching and learning materials to ensure continuity of education; and
- Delivering life-saving messages and psychosocial support to emergency-affected children.

To respond to these priorities, cluster partners are working with current Common Humanitarian Fund distributions on repositioning of emergency supplies and drafting psychosocial support and life-saving teaching and learning materials. However, the planned interventions are inadequate to address the needs for 2013. The current financing gap for meeting emergency education needs identified in the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is \$27 million in 2013. Consideration should be given to closing that gap, with flexible provision made available for subsequent years. This can be done through the following components:

Emergency Access: A minimum of 800 temporary learning spaces, with segregated water and sanitation facilities will be established.

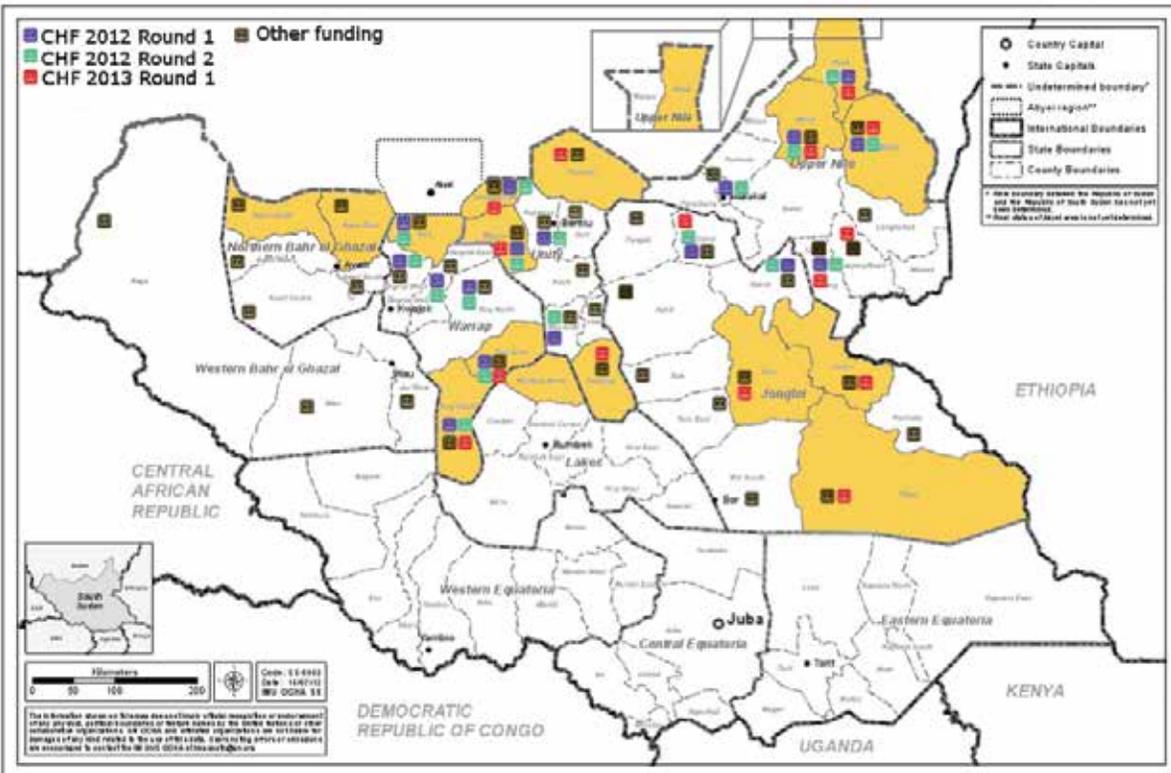
Teacher training: 2,000 teacher and PTA members would be orientated on teaching and providing life skills and psychosocial support to children affected by emergencies.

Life-saving messages: Creation and communication of life-saving crosscutting messages would benefit approximately 300,000 beneficiaries, directly and indirectly.

Education in emergency supplies: Emergency and learning supplies (School in a Box, Recreational Kits, blackboards, and teacher training tools) would be provided to affected teachers and students.

TABLE 4. SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY EDUCATION INCLUDING ACCESS, TEACHERS, AND SUPPLIES: ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST TO COVER THE CAP 2013 FINANCING GAP

Component	Total Financing
Emergency access	8,000,000
Teacher training	8,022,687
Life-saving messages	6,564,017
Supplies	4,413,296
Total	27,000,000



Source: UN

Conclusion

Ultimately, the GRSS must chart a course toward more sustainable financing and more effective delivery in education. No issue is more fundamental to nation building, human development, and shared prosperity. Yet it is increasingly evident that, in the absence of an enhanced and expanded aid effort over the next two to three years, the national education strategy will fall far short of its goals. That would be bad for the donor community. Having invested in the early phases of the construction of a national education system, there is now a danger that the fiscal crisis will compromise aid effectiveness and delivery. Above all, however, a failure to respond to this crisis would be a tragedy for the children of South Sudan. They risk losing their only chance to get an education—and the country risks wasting the potential of a whole generation.

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