Accelerated Funding Grant Completion Report Template

Status: Accepted

Country	Name of project this grant is contributing to	GPE Grant ID	Project ID
Sudan	Sudan AF	GPE0000954	SC230462

Grant Agent	Grant Type	Approval Date	Grant Effectiveness / Start Date
United Nations Children's Fund	STG	08/14/2023	08/15/2023

Actual Closing Date	Grant Amount	Date of Report Submission
02/28/2025	10,000,000 (USD)	08/27/2025

Project Implementation

Assessment of Project Implementation: Relevance

Overall relevance

Relevance 1

High

Detailed Description

Context at beginning of Grant

The conflict that erupted on 15 April 2023 triggered a rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation across Sudan. Fighting spread from Khartoum to other urban and rural areas, particularly affecting Darfur, Kordofan, and other population centres. As the violence escalated, basic services were disrupted, livelihoods collapsed, and markets became inaccessible, compounding the existing economic crisis. By mid-year, more than 3.5 million people had been internally displaced, including over one million school-aged children. Displacement placed immense pressure on host communities and further strained already limited public services, including education, water, health, and protection. Many displaced families sought shelter in schools, community centres, or informal sites, leading to overlapping needs for education and emergency shelter in the same facilities.

The education system, already fragile prior to the conflict, was further destabilized. Schools across large swathes of the country, particularly in Khartoum, South Darfur, West Darfur, and parts of Kordofan, were forced to close indefinitely. More than 1.3 million school-aged children were displaced, interrupting their academic year and jeopardizing their learning progress. Numerous school buildings were occupied by displaced populations or armed actors, and damage to infrastructure further limited available learning spaces. Teachers faced delayed or halted salary payments, and many were themselves displaced or unable to safely reach schools. The crisis exacerbated pre-existing barriers to education, especially for girls, children with disabilities, and those in rural or underserved areas. The disruption posed a serious risk of increased dropout rates, learning loss, and long-term exclusion from education for the most vulnerable children.

Initial Programme Design

The Accelerated Funding (AF) programme was designed to ensure crisis-affected girls and boys aged 5-18 in Sudan could access continuous, safe, inclusive, and quality education amidst one of the most severe humanitarian crises in the country's history. Informed by the revised 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan and Education Cluster priorities, the programme focused on three core components:

• Access, ensuring immediate provision of safe learning environments, supplies, and psychosocial support;

• Quality, enhancing teaching standards and learner outcomes through capacity-building and school improvement plans;

• Systems Strengthening – improving preparedness and response capabilities of education stakeholders.
• The intervention targeted both formal and non-formal education settings, including Safe Learning Spaces (SLS), Alternative Learning Program (ALP) centres, and e-learning hubs, complemented by training, incentives, and community engagement initiatives.

The programme's design was highly relevant to the evolving context at the time of its launch. It recognized the volatility of the operating environment and embedded flexibility to adapt to shifting needs on the ground. A key feature was the dual use of SLSs and existing school infrastructure: during school recess or closures, SLSs would provide safe, child-friendly environments for psychosocial support and informal learning, while later serving as a transitional platform to resume formal education as schools reopened. This adaptability would allow the programme to respond to continued displacement, accommodate the academic calendar, and prepare children for reintegration into the formal system. By planning for smooth transitions between non-formal and formal modalities, the programme could ensure continuity of learning and maximized reach and relevance for crisis-affected children across target states.

Evolution of the Crisis

By the end of February 2025, the humanitarian situation in Sudan had further deteriorated. Over 30 million people (more than half the population) were in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, with approximately 11 million displaced internally and across borders since the outbreak of conflict in April 2023. The crisis severely disrupted family and community structures, cutting off access to basic services and exposing children to heightened risks, including violence, exploitation, and recruitment. Malnutrition levels among children reached catastrophic thresholds, with 13 million facing acute food insecurity. Famine conditions were confirmed in Zamzam camp in North Darfur in August 2024, and by year-end had expanded to Al Salam and Abu Shouk camps and parts of the Western Nuba Mountains. Seventeen localities were assessed to be at risk of famine. Health and protection systems remained under attack, with more than 150 schools and hospitals targeted. Widespread destruction of infrastructure, including health centres, water points, and markets, compounded the suffering. Grave violations against children reached their highest levels in over a decade.

The education system mirrored the crisis of other essential services. Over 17 million children were out of school by the end of 2024. According to the Education Cluster , more than 3,200 schools were being used as shelters for displaced families, and only an estimated 5,500 schools, just 25 to 30 percent of the national total, were reported to have reopened, and only partially, in seven of Sudan's 18 states: Northern, River Nile, Red Sea, Gedaref, Kassala, Blue Nile, and White Nile. Isolated school re-openings occurred in parts of Darfur and Kordofan, while efforts to resume learning in Khartoum and Sennar could not take place due to renewed violence. Even where schools reopened, conditions remained dire: classrooms were overcrowded, materials were scarce, and most teachers had either fled or were working without pay. Damage to latrines and water systems further reduced school functionality and disproportionately impacted girls' ability to return to learning. These overlapping challenges left many children without access to safe or sustained education by the end of February 2025.

By mid-2025, the education system in Sudan is showing signs of gradual recovery, despite the continued impact of conflict and displacement. Several states that had previously experienced widespread closures, including Aj Jazirah and Khartoum, saw the reopening of schools and the return of students to learning spaces. Over 10,000 schools are still closed, and more than 2,100 continue to function as shelters for IDPs. Persistent insecurity, teacher displacement, and damaged infrastructure continued to disrupt learning in many parts of the country, especially in Darfur and Kordofan.

Continued Relevance

The initial design of the Accelerated Funding programme proved to be highly relevant throughout its life cycle, even as the operational context deteriorated far beyond initial projections. The programme's focus on access, quality, and systems strengthening aligned well with emerging needs, especially as the education sector shifted from temporary disruption to protracted crisis. The inclusion of both formal and non-formal education pathways, such as support to Safe Learning Spaces (SLSs), Alternative Learning Programmes, and flexible school-based interventions, enabled the programme to remain responsive in areas where traditional schooling was no longer feasible. The prioritization of protective, inclusive environments for learning, combined with psychosocial support and basic services, reflected the compounding risks children faced in displacement, and helped safeguard their right to education.

The programme also embedded a degree of operational flexibility that proved critical in the face of escalating conflict and shifting displacement patterns. The capacity to adapt delivery modalities, moving between support to schools and community-based SLSs depending on access and population movements, ensured that services could be maintained in a highly volatile environment. Implementing partners adjusted plans to account for closures, new displacement, and access restrictions, without compromising the programme's core objectives. This adaptive approach allowed the grant to remain both relevant and functional amid uncertainty, while maintaining its focus on reaching the most vulnerable children in the target states. The ability to pivot operationally without redesigning the programme structure was a key strength that enabled sustained impact under crisis conditions.

The grants component of the programme remained especially relevant throughout implementation due to its flexibility and the strong sense of local ownership it promoted in both schools and Safe Learning Spaces (SLSs). Grants were linked to the development of School Improvement Plans (SIPs), allowing Parent-Teacher Associations (PTASs), school management committees, and communities to identify priority needs and apply funding accordingly. This localized planning enabled each learning site to respond to its specific context, whether it involved repairing damaged structures, procuring essential materials,

or improving hygiene and water facilities. In many locations, SLSs were the only functioning education spaces, and the ability to apply grants flexibly helped ensure continuity of learning in displacement settings.

E-learning was a relevant and practical strategy throughout the programme, especially for children who could not access schools due to conflict and displacement. Community-based e-learning centres provided structured lessons in literacy and numeracy using offline, gamified platforms. These centres were supported by local facilitators and were set up in areas where schools were closed or inaccessible. The flexibility of the approach made it suitable for hard-to-reach communities and allowed learning to continue even when movement was restricted or infrastructure damaged. In the context, e-learning offered a consistent way to ensure the continuity of education for children.

Beneficiaries' views on relevance

Detailed Description

Beneficiary feedback consistently indicated that the program activities were essential, timely, and responsive to their needs during the ongoing conflict. Monitoring and feedback were gathered through multiple mechanisms managed by the UNICEF's Cash Implementation Unit (CIU), education and PME team, to ensure comprehensive supervision. These mechanisms included third-party monitoring visits, on-site interviews with beneficiaries, continuous field monitoring by implementing partners, call-back verification through UNICEF's call center through existing mechanisms and feedback collection via the established Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). School grant implementation was also closely tracked through these systems to guarantee transparency and correct utilization of funds.

Parents and caregivers emphasized that the provision of Safe Learning Spaces (SLS), Alternative Learning Programs (ALP), and school grants were critical to restoring a sense of normalcy and enabling children to continue learning. They reported that these interventions reduced financial stress on families and provided safe, protective environments for education, which they considered their highest priority during displacement and uncertainty. The distribution of learning materials and psychosocial support further motivated children to remain engaged in learning.

Teachers and facilitators expressed strong satisfaction with timely incentives and comprehensive training. The training equipped them with practical skills for managing classrooms in schools and SLSs under emergency conditions and addressing children's psychosocial needs. These measures enabled them to maintain structured learning and improve classroom practices despite challenges . The incentives ensured the regular presence of teachers and facilitators in classrooms and SLSs and, importantly, they recognized the vital role of these educators in sustaining learning during the emergency, filling a critical gap left by the suspension of regular salary payments in some states, particularly for teachers who had previously been in schools which were not yet re-opened.

Beneficiaries also recognized digital learning opportunities through e-learning centers as highly valuable. Parents and children described these centers as an essential solution for maintaining education continuity when traditional schooling was disrupted, offering access to innovative, technology-driven learning methods.

Verification through call-backs and the GRM ensured accountability, with beneficiaries confirming that payments and resources were delivered accurately and on time. Issues raised were promptly addressed, reinforcing trust in the program. Overall, beneficiaries agreed that the activities were relevant, addressed urgent educational and psychosocial needs, and reflected community priorities during a prolonged crisis.

Assessment of Project Implementation: Efficacy

Overall efficacy

Efficacy 2

High

Detailed Description

The GPE Accelerated Funding programme's flexible model of supporting schools and Safe Learning Spaces, allowed for learning continuity in an adaptable manner that could meet the needs of children throughout the evolving context of the crisis. The programme achieved strong results despite operating in one of the most complex humanitarian crises globally. By the end of the implementation period, the programme had reached 219,124 crisis-affected children (52 per cent girls), exceeding the target of 150,000 . The overachievement was primarily due to improvements in the security situation, operating

environment in White Nile, Kassala, Gedaref, and later Sennar for supply and e-learning interventions, and the reopening of schools in River Nile, which allowed the programme to reach more children per site supported. This included children reached through formal schools, totaling 96,882 children, concentrated in River Nile State, where the context allowed for implementation within 181 schools.
Through Safe Learning Spaces,122,242 children were reached - of which, 8,280 were children enrolled in E-learning centres in the five stat es: River Nile, Kassala, Gedaref, Sennar and White Nile. The programme maintained a strong focus on gender inclusion, exceeding the 50 per cent target for girls' participation across the multiple intervention modalities, girls represented 52 per cent of total beneficiaries, demonstrating equitable access even in hard-to-reach areas.
Access to education was complemented by support to improving the learning environments of both schools and SLSs. The programme supported 672 learning sites (181 schools and 491 SLSs) with grants tied to participatory School Improvement Plans. These grants enabled local committees and PTSAs in each school and SLSs (672) to improve safety, the school environments, hygiene facilities, and teaching conditions. The school grant modality allowed for a sense of ownership and sustainability at the community level for inputs made in schools and SLSs, by closely involving the PTSA in the identification of priorities and the use of funds to complete projects.
159,654 children (52 per cent girls) received individual learning materials and recreation kits, helping to ensure that children could participate meaningfully in learning and extra-curricular activities in schools and SLSs.
To reinforce continuity of learning and prevent learning loss, the programme invested heavily in the training and support of teachers and facilitators. A total of 1,395 teachers and facilitators received monthly incentives (of 123 USD) to continue working in challenging conditions, while 1,531 education personnel were trained in psychosocial support, wellbeing, and child safeguarding. A further 799 facilitators were trained on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN), accelerated learning, and catch-up methodologies. Trained facilitators were critical to ensuring the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in non-formal and temporary settings. Meanwhile, structured psychosocial support activities were delivered to all 219,124 children (52 per cent girls) reached, with the aim of creating safe and emotionally supportive learning environments.
The programme's flexible model of supporting schools and Safe Learning Spaces, allowed for learning continuity in an adaptable manner that could meet the needs of children throughout the evolving context of the crisis.
The programme also contributed to strengthening preparedness and resilience. Education contingency plans were developed or updated in five target states of White Nile, Kassala, Gedaref, Sennar and River Nile , helping to institutionalize risk-responsive planning. Coordination mechanisms were reinforced through regular technical meetings, data reporting, and joint monitoring between implementing partners and government counterparts. The programme worked in close collaboration with the education authorities in the target states and aligned with states' contingency plans. The selection of target schools and SLS was based on technical consultations with state and locality-level technical counterparts. The implementing partners conducted joint monitoring field visits with education staff in the target states, and programme activities were presented at Education Cluster meetings to ensure harmonization and complementarity.
Overall, the programme reached more children than planned, maintained high participation rates for girls, and delivered flexible education services. It also mitigated the risk of dropout by anchoring education in communities through grants, trained facilitators, and psychosocial support.

Other effects

Detailed Description

In addition to the intended results, the GPE Accelerated Funding programme generated several positive unintended effects that are directly attributable to its interventions.
Firstly, the grants linked to participatory School Improvement Plans unexpectedly strengthened the capacity and motivation of Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTASs) and community committees. Many communities reported taking greater initiative in maintaining school infrastructure, mobilizing local resources, and supporting teachers and facilitators beyond the project's direct funding. This enhanced local ownership has increased the likelihood of sustaining improvements after project closure.
Secondly, the project's close alignment with state contingency plans and its regular joint monitoring visits resulted in stronger collaboration between education authorities, localities, and implementing partners. In some states, this collaboration extended beyond the project's scope and laid the groundwork for better coordinated responses to other emergencies, such as sudden displacements or floods.
Thirdly, through training in psychosocial support and safeguarding, teachers and facilitators developed skills that have spillover benefits beyond education delivery, including early identification of protection concerns and psychosocial risks among children affected by crisis and displacement. This has created stronger links between schools, communities, and child protection stakeholders.
Fourthly, the GPE AF has facilitated coordination between various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and UN agencies, to ensure a unified and effective response. This coordination helps in

addressing the educational needs of children in emergencies more efficiently.

Conditions which affected the project

Detailed Description

At the start of the GPE Accelerated Funding programme, Sudan's education system was under severe strain due to the outbreak of conflict in April 2023. Fighting quickly spread across the country, forcing the indefinite closure of schools in many areas, particularly in Khartoum, Darfur, and Kordofan. By mid-2023, millions of children had been displaced and over a million school-aged learners were out of school. Many school buildings were occupied by displaced families or affected by conflict-related damage, while teachers faced salary disruptions or displacement. Access to education dropped sharply, especially for vulnerable groups, and by the end of 2024, only around 25–30% of schools were open mainly in the northern and eastern states - 17 million children were out of school by the end of 2024.

By mid-2025, the situation had shifted in some areas. While over 10,000 schools remained closed nationwide and 2,100 continued to serve as shelters , progress was visible. States like Aj Jazirah and parts of Khartoum saw schools reopening and students returning to class. Access remained uneven and heavily dependent on local security conditions, but the reopening of schools in previously inaccessible areas marked a positive step. Learning spaces, including Safe Learning Spaces and Alternative Learning Programmes, also helped to reach children who remained out of school. While challenges persisted, especially in Darfur and Kordofan, there was a modest but important expansion in education access during the life of the grant.

The evolving security situation had a clear impact on the delivery of the cash component. When the GPE AF programme was initially planned in July/August 2023, the aim was to implement school grants in five states: River Nile, Kassala, White Nile, Sennar, and Gezira. At that time, it was assumed that schools in Sennar and Gezira would reopen, allowing the cash component to proceed as designed. However, as insecurity continued, schools in many of these states remained closed, and implementation was ultimately limited to River Nile state. This was an external factor beyond the control of the implementing teams, despite preparation and funding already being in place.

By the start of 2025, the situation in Sennar state improved. Implementing partners regained access and communicated the capacity to resume activities under the GPE AF project. Schools in Sennar began planning to reopen in mid-January 2025, creating an opportunity to respond to emerging needs. Funds were reallocated to support supply interventions in Sennar, with approval from GPE, with flexibility to expand to Gezira if conditions allowed. This reallocation reflected the flexibility of the programme.

One of the key implementation challenges was adapting learning environments to accommodate both existing students and displaced children. For example in Kassala state, which became a major host state for internally displaced persons, nearly 90% of schools were occupied by displaced families. This severely limited classroom availability and contributed to overcrowding in both schools and Safe Learning Spaces. Across many locations, over 30% of enrolled students were displaced, which placed strain on space, facilitators, and learning materials. While these conditions were anticipated as part of the programme's core purpose, their scale required active adjustments on the ground. Reorganizing and restoring functional learning environments under these conditions was essential and required close coordination with local authorities and partners. While these pressures affected delivery timelines in some cases, they were managed without derailing overall implementation.

Standout practices, lessons, and recommendations, and products

Detailed Description

The GPE Accelerated Funding programme made effective use of non-formal education modalities to reach children affected by displacement and school closures. Alternative Learning Programmes (ALP), already in use prior to the grant, were scaled and adapted to respond to the increased number of out-of-school children. These programmes offered structured, age-appropriate learning aligned to the national curriculum, with the aim of supporting students' eventual transition back to formal education. ALP centres played an important role in providing continuity, particularly in areas where formal schools remained closed or were being used as shelters. Digital learning approaches also contributed to maintaining access to education during periods of disruption. The establishment of e-learning centres, the use of offline content, and support from trained facilitators enabled displaced and otherwise excluded learners to continue their education in a flexible format. While digital learning was not new to Sudan, the crisis accelerated its use in new settings and among vulnerable learners. The digital learning infrastructure and experience built during the grant period have the potential to support more children in other programmes and in the future.

The programme also reinforced the value of school and Safe Learning Space grants as a practical mechanism to sustain learning during crisis. These approaches proved effective and should be considered key components in future education system recovery support.

Human interest story:
• Back to school, back to hope Aya’s pursuit of learning during displacement
Social media:
• 27 SEP 2023: Thank you @GPforEducation for $10M accelerated funding to @UNICEFSudan in support of the education & learning of 250,000 children in #Sudan. The funding comes especially timely as 19 million children in Sudan are at risk of not going back to school (Twitter)
• 10 November 2024: Some 3,500 children at @unicef supported Safe Learning Space in #Kassala state have received essential learning & recreational supplies. This vital support enhances access to education & fosters children’s mental health & well-being. ?? to @GPforEducation for the support! (Twitter)
• 12 November 2024: "The things I like most in the bag are the books, pens, and erasers," says Mohamed, displaced from Khartoum & attending a @UNICEF-supported safe learning space in #Kassala state. With @GPforEducation's continued support, more children in #Sudan are accessing education. (Twitter)
• 28 November 2024: Since the start of 2024, @UNICEF supported over 2.6 million children & caregivers with psychosocial counseling, learning opportunities, and protection services. @EU_echo, @EU_partnerships, @GPforEducation, @EduCannotWait, @sida, @NorwayMFA & @GAC_Corporate for the support. (Twitter)
• 9 Feb 2025: Amidst the education crisis facing children in #Sudan, we’re working to ensure that learning continues through formal and non-formal education. Our heartfelt thanks to: @EU_Sudan @EU_echo @EU_partnerships @GPforEducation @EduCannotWait @GAC_Corporate @BMZ_BUND @KfW_FZ_int (https://x.com/UNICEFSudan/status/1888498066451255561)
• 18 Mar 2025: After fleeing conflict in Khartoum, 13-year-old Aya is back in the classroom, chasing her dream of learning English and becoming a doctor. Thanks to @GPforEducation support, @UNICEF is helping displaced children like Aya continue their education.(https://x.com/UNICEFSudan/status/1901934154012614704)
• 8 Apr 2025: @UNICEF and its partners continue to provide children with learning materials and safe spaces to learn, heal, and thrive. Thanks to @EU_Sudan, @EU_partnerships, @GPforEducation, @GAC_Corporate, @BMZ_BUND @KfW_FZ_int ongoing support. (https://x.com/UNICEFSudan/status/1909519125254136101)

Assessment of Project Implementation: Efficiency

Overall efficiency

Efficiency 3
High

Timeliness

At project start
At project start:
At the start of the GPE program, implementation across Kassala, Gadaref, Aj Jazriah (Wad Medani), River Nile, White Nile, and Sennar states faced significant obstacles due to Sudan’s ongoing crisis and escalating conflict. In Aj Jazriah, the December 2024 attacks caused delays, requiring relocation of activities to Gadaref upon donor approval. In River Nile, government bureaucracy and the immediate shock of conflict slowed cooperation with education authorities, while IDP families were hesitant to send children to SLS/ALP centers. In White Nile and Sennar, the program was accepted and supported by government counterparts, although attacks in Sennar and later security concerns delayed implementation in specific areas.

During implementation
During implementation, additional challenges emerged across all states. The influx of IDPs and refugees, combined with schools being used as shelters, put pressure on SLS/ALP centers and disrupted service delivery. Supply provision and teacher availability were constrained due to security, access issues, and mobility of displaced populations. Partner negotiations and operational delays further affected the program roll-out in El Gadaref, while in River Nile and White Nile the scale of needs exceeded planned interventions. Overall, insecurity, displacement, and humanitarian access constraints created persistent

obstacles to providing consistent education services and meeting the needs of vulnerable children.

Grant costs

Detailed Description

The overall cost analysis highlights three distinct groupings of unit expenditures aligned with the programme's major areas of intervention. First, the establishment of safe learning spaces (SLSs) and schools, alongside a series of complementary activities, results in a consolidated unit cost of 4,935 USD per SLS supported. This figure incorporates the direct establishment of SLSs, the set-up of Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) centres, back-to-school campaigns, school improvement grants, and the creation of adolescent-led child clubs. Taken together, these interventions represent the comprehensive package that was required to ensure continuity of and learning for crisis-affected children within each supported school or SLS environment.

Second, the package of inputs directed at children in the form of teaching, learning, and recreational materials yields a unit cost of 15 USD per child. This includes the procurement and distribution of student kits, uniforms, hygiene and dignity materials, recreational kits, early childhood development (ECD) kits, and classroom teaching materials. The relatively low per-child cost reflects economies of scale achieved by distributing high-volume items that directly contribute to school participation, dignity, and well-being. This cost also underscores the programme's prioritisation of ensuring that every child has the basic materials necessary to learn effectively.

Finally, investments in human resources, specifically the facilitators and teachers who deliver education services, average 651 USD per teacher. This figure combines incentives, comprehensive training packages covering child protection, psychosocial support, gender-based violence, and education in emergencies, as well as capacity building on catch-up programmes, foundational literacy and numeracy, and formative assessments.

The overall cost per child comes to approximately 46 USD. This cost captures not only the provision of safe learning spaces, teaching and recreational materials, and psychosocial support, but also the essential incentives and training provided to teachers and facilitators. Importantly, it reflects the additional investments needed to deliver education in an emergency setting, where maintaining access, quality, and protection requires significantly more resources than in stable contexts.

The influx of IDPs and refugees in states such as Kassala, River Nile, and White Nile put pressure on program-supported education services, with enrollment exceeding planned GPE targets. While Sudan also experienced high inflation during the implementation period, this was accompanied by a sharp devaluation of the local currency. As a result, the relative cost of some programme inputs decreased, allowing the programme to reach more children at a lower per-child cost than originally budgeted. This economic shift helped offset the increased demand for services, making it possible to reach more students without requiring additional resources. The reopening of schools in River Nile State further expanded support, as resources reached schools rather than SLS, which serve fewer children.

Coordination and partnerships

Detailed Description

The grant was implemented with close coordination across multiple stakeholders through existing education sector mechanisms. The Local Education Group (LEG) met regularly to review progress, provide strategic guidance, and align interventions with the crisis response priorities. UNICEF worked in collaboration with Save the Children International to align on the delivery modalities and the division of programme target areas during the programme design and maintained close coordination throughout. Through the LEG monthly meeting mechanism, progress on the respective GPE AF implementation was presented jointly by each organization.

Over the programme period, one of the key outcomes of coordination was the harmonisation of incentive structures for both school teachers and Safe Learning Space facilitators. Initially, variations in incentive levels and payment modalities across partners and delivery models risked causing disparities and low morale among this key human resource. Through coordination with the Education Cluster, State Ministries of Education, and key implementing partners, a standardised monthly incentive payment of 123 USD was agreed upon and operationalised.

Coordination with State Ministries of Education was central to the programme, ensuring that interventions were aligned with priorities and embedded within existing structures to promote sustainability and accountability. Through close collaboration, State MoEs facilitated school improvement planning processes linked to the distribution of school grants. They also played a key role in sub-national contingency planning and resilience-building, contributing to preparedness strategies to mitigate future shocks to the education system. Teacher and facilitator capacity development, including training on psychosocial support, child protection, EiE, and foundational learning, was conducted in partnership with the State MoEs. Collectively, coordination ensured that immediate service delivery was connected to system-level

strengthening, reinforcing both the quality and resilience of education for crisis-affected children.

Use of data and evidence for improvement

Detailed Description

Throughout the project life cycle, UNICEF applied its Results-Based Management (RBM) framework as the backbone for programme monitoring and adaptive management. This was complemented by a robust internal monitoring structure that included real-time data collection from implementing partners, area-level monitoring by field colleagues, and third-party monitoring (TPM). Internal oversight was further reinforced through the CIU and PME teams, which consolidated quantitative and qualitative data to drive evidence-based decision-making. Feedback loops were supported by the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and periodic call-back verifications to maintain accountability.

The grant relied on a combination of monitoring methods to guide implementation. High-frequency partner reporting through the InForm online portal captured monthly activity and results data, enabling early identification of bottlenecks. Regular updates from State Ministries of Education and real-time information from the CIU provided additional assurance on activity progress, particularly for cash transfers and school grant implementation. As part of the CIU monitoring processes, qualitative feedback was systematically gathered from schools and Safe Learning Spaces (SLSs), which was then used to make adjustments. This feedback loop ensured that programmatic gaps were identified and addressed promptly.

How data improved implementation:

• Dynamic reprogramming: RBM-based tracking and InForm data flagged delays in insecure areas, allowing rapid reallocation of school grants and educational supplies to more accessible states.

• Target refinement: Data from partner progress reports and feedback from implementing partners and SMoE focal points guided decisions on site selection and resource allocation, ensuring that high-displacement areas and underserved communities were prioritized.

• Quality enhancement: TPM and CIU qualitative feedback revealed gaps in classroom management and well-being support. This prompted additional capacity-building sessions for facilitators and enhanced training modules.

• Cash transfer assurance: Verification through call-backs and GRM reports confirmed timely and accurate delivery of key interventions, reducing complaints and building trust.

Joint problem-solving mechanisms: Regular collaborative reviews took place through Education Cluster meetings and GPE Local Education Group (LEG) sessions. These forums were used to analyze progress data and resolve operational challenges. For example, progress reports from partners and state-level field monitoring reports informed the decision to include additional e-learning centers to meet rising demand for digital education solutions in conflict-affected states. Stakeholders found these mechanisms highly effective in ensuring adaptive programming.

Overall, the integration of RBM systems with InForm reporting, CIU and PME oversight, qualitative feedback loops, and TPM findings created a strong evidence-driven framework. This enabled continuous learning, rapid course correction, and successful delivery of results in an extremely challenging operational context.

Use of GPE processes

Detailed Description

The GPE Accelerated Funding (AF) mechanism enabled a rapid and coordinated design process in Sudan. The process began when the Local Education Group (LEG) met to discuss priorities and formally notified the GPE Secretariat of its interest in applying for AF. Through a structured timeline that included design workshops, co-creation sessions, and several rounds of proposal review, the process remained inclusive and aligned with Education Cluster and LEG priorities.

Beyond the proposal stage, the involvement of the LEG and Education Cluster during implementation provided an important structure for coordination and oversight. Regular LEG engagement supported alignment between the two grant agents, helped address operational bottlenecks, and ensured that the programme remained responsive to changes on the ground. This setup contributed to consistency across interventions and helped maintain the overall coherence of the grant as implementation progressed.

Resilience and Grant Management

Resilience and Build Back Better

Detailed Description

The GPE Accelerated Funding programme integrated several approaches that not only addressed immediate education needs, but also laid the groundwork for longer-term recovery and system resilience. One of the key pathways for transition embedded within the programme was the use of Alternative Learning Programmes (ALP). These provided accelerated, age-appropriate learning opportunities for out-of-school children, with a clear objective of supporting their re-entry into the formal education system. ALP centres followed structured curricula and were facilitated by trained education personnel, enabling children who had missed years of schooling due to conflict or displacement to catch up and transition back to grade-level learning. This approach was especially important in areas where schools remained closed or formal enrolment systems had broken down, and continues to offer a scalable bridge between emergency education and long-term reintegration into the national system.

The school and SLS grants mechanism also provided a practical and adaptable model for sustaining learning during crisis and rebuilding education services in its aftermath. The grants were linked to School Improvement Plans (SIPs), which fostered community planning and community participation. This model has since been replicated and expanded in other programmes due to its demonstrated operational benefits. In the absence of reliable public financing flows (transfers from state ministries to schools) and in a context where household contributions to schools have declined due to the economic crisis, grants have offered a crucial alternative for sustaining schools and contributing to their recovery. They enabled school and community-level actors to make timely decisions, manage funds locally, and address infrastructure, safety, and WASH needs in a coordinated manner. As a result, school grants are now widely seen as a key recovery mechanism and a transitional tool for restoring decentralized, accountable education financing to support recovery – and the use of school grants has been expanded by UNICEF in Sudan.

Digital learning, introduced during the grant period as an adaptive response to displacement and disrupted schooling, has also demonstrated potential as a longer-term resilience strategy. The deployment of e-learning centres, offline content, and community-based facilitation contributed to expanding the digital learning infrastructure and capacity for delivering in Sudan. This has provided immediate learning continuity for children, and also contributed to modernising learning delivery in a way that may outlast the emergency phase. The tools, platforms, and skills introduced under the digital learning component are increasingly being considered in national education planning discussions. With proper investment and integration into the broader education system, digital learning has the potential to enhance flexibility, and expand reach.

Grant Management and Use of Funds

Unspent funds

Amount of funds that were not spent by grant closing

Detailed Description

Management performance

Level of Management Performance

Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description

The grant was implemented without major internal management challenges. Financial and procurement processes proceeded as planned, with no significant delays or compliance issues reported. The programme maintained clear implementation arrangements, drawing on existing UNICEF systems and coordination structures, in particular the coordination between the Cash Intervention Unit (CIU) and the Education Section. Monitoring and reporting obligations were met on schedule, with regular partner updates, field monitoring, and triangulated data informing action points that are tracked and responded too

through the established programme monitoring systems. These internal systems allowed the programme to remain operationally flexible and responsive to external challenges, particularly in navigating access constraints and state-level variation in school re-openings and access.

Document Attachments

#	File Name	Document Type	Description
1	Back to school, back to hope _ UNICEF Sudan.html	Knowledge Product	Human Interest Story
2	SC230462_Annex_1_Final_Results_Framework.docx	Results Framework	Results Matrix
2	Annex 2_ Efficacy by Project Component.docx	Results Framework	Annex 2: Efficacy by Project Component/Objective

The documents listed were submitted with the progress report. If you'd like access to them, please contact the grant operations officer for your country.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AF	Accelerated Funding
ALP	Alternative Learning Programme
CIU	Cash Implementation Unit
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LEG	Local Education Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PME	Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation

PTSA	Parent-Teacher-Student Association
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLS	Safe Learning Space
TPM	Third-Party Monitoring
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	United States Dollar
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
RBM	Results-Based Management

Annex 2: Global Numbers Reporting Template

Provide the data related to GPE's three global numbers for this reporting period below:

- Textbooks purchased and distributed
- Teachers trained
- Classrooms built or rehabilitated

Note: For cofinanced grants, please provide the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant. For example, if the grant's financial contribution accounts for 50 percent of a teacher training activity, the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant for the number of teachers trained through that activity would be 50%. If the unit of analysis in the indicator is the number of schools and not classrooms, please enter an estimated number of classrooms and provide an explanation in the comments box.

GPE Indicators

Textbooks purchased and distributed

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (for entire project period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	# of girls and boys enrolled in Alternative Basic Education (HRP 1.11) (including catch-up learning)	14,560	100	No indicator for textbooks was included in the results framework. Closest indicator provided. Actually textbook figure is calculated by the distribution of ALP textbooks in ALP centres.

GPE Indicators

Teachers trained

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (for entire project period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	# of teachers/facilitators with increased knowledge on psychosocial skills (HRP 2.3)	1,658	100	
2	# of teachers/facilitators with increased knowledge on catch-up/ALP/FLN (custom indicator)	799		

GPE Indicators

Classrooms built or rehabilitated

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (for entire project period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1		0	0	

Annex 3: Cumulative beneficiary children / other students reporting template

Provide the cumulative number of children of pre-primary, primary and secondary school age (both in school and out of school) and other students (adolescents beyond secondary school age and adult learners participating in basic education programs) who **directly participated in project activities, received project-supported incentives or services, or benefited from project interventions,** over the entire duration of the grant. Also provide relevant disaggregated values by subgroups (at a minimum by sex, and by any other groups as feasible). Reporting beneficiary data cumulatively means counting all beneficiaries as a running total, adding up all beneficiaries since the start of the grant and up to the end. Data on beneficiaries are to be collected using the methods and tools proper to each project. It is understood that some disaggregated data will only be collected if a project expressly targets specific subgroups through their interventions and deploy their own approaches for counting beneficiary children/other students.

Note: For cofinanced grants, please provide the numbers for the entire program and indicate the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant. For example, if the grant's financial contribution accounts for 40 percent of the program that is cofinanced by GPE and other donors, enter 40% in the "% attributed to this grant.

	Pre-primary (optional)	Primary (optional)	Secondary (optional)	Other (Optional)	Total	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)
Number of children/other students who directly		219,124			219,124	100

benefited from the project over the entire duration of the project						
Of which, female		113,944			113,944	100
Of which, children/other students with a disability (optional)						
Of which, refugee children/other students (optional)						
Of which, internally displaced children/other students (optional)						
Of which, out-of-school children (optional)						
Of which, children/other students from marginalized ethno-cultural/ linguistic minorities: specify which ones (optional)						

Provide any comments on beneficiary children/students, if needed. This could include, for example, the definition employed by the project for a particular subgroup (including a more granular description of these subgroups), the approach/tool used to calculate the number of beneficiaries overall or by subgroup, any limitation of the approach/tool employed for this calculation and reasons why data on beneficiary children/students are unavailable. Please provide the number or proportion of girls for varied subgroups in the comment section below, if available.

1 High-There were no shortcomings or at most minor shortcomings in the continued alignment between project activities and the needs of the beneficiaries, considering the evolution of the emergency. The project provided clear evidence of such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant. Substantial-There were moderate shortcomings in the continued alignment between project interventions and the needs of the beneficiaries, considering the evolution of the emergency. The project provided generally sufficient information on such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant. Modest-There were significant shortcomings in the continued alignment between project interventions and the needs of the beneficiaries, considering the evolution of the emergency. The project provided limited information on such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were not changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant. Negligible -There were severe shortcomings in the continued alignment between project interventions and the needs of the beneficiaries, considering the evolution of the emergency. The project differed from those current needs or did not provide information to assess such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were not changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant.

2 High-The project exceeded or fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes) or is likely to do so. Substantial-The project almost fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes) or is likely to do so. Modest-The project partly achieved (or is expected to partly achieve) its objectives (intended outcomes). Negligible -The project barely achieved or did not achieve (minimal achievement, if any) its objectives (intended outcomes).

3 High-Efficiency exceeded expectations. Substantial-Efficiency was what would be expected. Modest-Efficiency was below expectations. Negligible -Efficiency was very low.