



BOD/2018/10 DOC 03
Board of Directors
Decision via Affirmative Vote
October 24, 2018

SOUTH SUDAN EDUCATION SECTOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GRANT ALLOCATION: REPORT FROM THE GRANTS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

For Decision

Please note: Board papers are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them. It is understood that constituencies will circulate Board documents among their members prior to Board consideration for consultation purposes.

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to request the Board to approve an allocation for an education sector program implementation grant (ESPIG) to South Sudan, as recommended by the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) following its discussion of the grant application during its October 10-12, 2018 meeting.

2. RECOMMENDED DECISION

2.1 The Grants and Performance Committee recommends the Board approve the following decision:

BOD/2018/11-XX–Approval of Allocation for an Education Sector Program Implementation Grant to South Sudan: The Board of Directors with respect to the application submitted in the third funding round of 2018:

1. Notes compliance with the requirements for accessing the maximum country allocation, as described in the application and summarized and assessed in Annex 2 to BOD/2018/10 DOC 03.
2. Approves an allocation from GPE trust funds for an education sector program implementation grant (ESPIG), as described in the application and summarized in Table 1 in BOD/2018/11-XX 2 (c), subject to:
 - a. Availability of funds.
 - b. Board decision BOD/2012/11-04 on commitment of trust funds for ESPIGs in annual installments.
 - c. GPC recommendations for funding include (all amounts in US\$):

Table 1 Application Summary and GPC Allocation Recommendations for an ESPIG in US\$:

South Sudan		
a.	Maximum Country Allocation	35,700,000
b.	Allocation Requested (100%)	35,700,000 ¹
c.	Fixed Part Requested	35,700,000
d.	Variable Part Requested	n/a
e.	Allocation Recommended by GPC	35,700,000
f.	Grant Agent	UNICEF
g.	Agency Fee % - Amount	7% - 2,499,000
h.	Period	4 years
i.	Expected Start Date	January 1, 2019
j.	Variable Part Disbursement Modality	Ex-Ante
k.	Funding Source	GPE Fund

3. Requests the Trustee to withhold the transfer of funds for construction in the program, specifically US\$6,244,700 under component 1.1.2, until the condition set out in Annex 1 to BOD/2018/10 DOC 03 has been met.
4. Requests the Secretariat to:
 - a. Include in its notification of grant approval to South Sudan the conditions, requests for report-back, and observations on the program as recommended by the GPC and set out in Annex 1 to BOD/2018/10 DOC 03.
 - b. Include an update on the issues listed as “conditions” and “report back” in the annual Portfolio Review in accordance with the specified timeline.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Committee assessed the grant application from South Sudan and discussed whether it met the funding model requirements to access the maximum country allocation (MCA). In accordance with its delegated authority to approve ex-ante approaches for prospective applicants upon request,² the Grants and Performance Committee via non-objection decision in August 2018 approved an ex-ante approach for South Sudan.³

¹ Includes US\$5,232,470 for the cost of the grant agent to perform its roles and responsibilities (formerly supervision fees). Per decision BOD/2015/10-02 supervision fees are funded from the maximum country allocation effective from the second funding round of 2016.

² Board decision BOD/2014/05-02 – Operational Framework for Requirements and Incentives

³ In accordance with the GPE Funding Model, countries applying for an ex-ante approach must demonstrate the following: 1: Strategies on equity, efficiency and learning outcomes; 2: Justification for why the release of the full tranche is required; 3: Plan for improving national systems to facilitate more aligned education support in the medium-term

3.2 South Sudan applied for an ex-ante approach based on its (i) fragility; (ii) critical educational needs; and (iii) limited fiscal space within the national budget for upfront investment.

3.3 South Sudan is one of the most fragile and conflict affected states in the world today. The levels of poverty, compounded with the impact of civil war, economic crisis, and natural hazards have displaced one third of the country's population. South Sudan's nascent education system is hard hit by the country's fragility. Displacement has increased out-of-school children by 200 percent in the last two years, teacher salaries have become almost without value because of the inflation, and basic school supplies are not available because of low government spending and donors shifting resources to humanitarian aid. Protecting the education system from total collapse will require constant and targeted funding.

3.4 The scope for leveraging sector-wide reform with a results-based financing approach is limited because of the lack of resources for upfront investment and unavailability of credible data for sector-wide results verification. The ex-ante approach will mitigate these risks and allow South Sudanese children to access education through project financing.

3.5 Because of the ex-ante approach, South Sudan's MCA does not include a variable part and the assessment by the GPC was based on whether the country met the fixed part requirements and the quality standards of the proposed program.

3.6 Prior to the discussion, the following conflict of interest was disclosed:

- Atif Rafique, UNICEF, as representative of the grant agent for the proposed program.

3.7 The GPC had a substantive discussion regarding the application and found that South Sudan met the requirements with some disaggregated data and other details to be provided by the grant agent prior to the transfer of grant funds.

3.8 The primary discussion points are summarized in Annex 1. The evidence for meeting the requirements and quality standards is set out in Annex 2.

4. PLEASE CONTACT Margarita Focas Licht (mlicht@globalpartnership.org) for further information.

5. ANNEXES

5.1 This paper includes the following annexes:

- Annex 1 – GPC Observations, Report-Backs, and Conditions
- Annex 2 – Secretariat Quality Assurance Review Phase 3 (Final Readiness Review)

5.2 The following is available on the [Committee eTeam site](#):

- South Sudan ESPIG Application Package (GPC/2018/10 DOC 04)

ANNEX 1 – GPC OBSERVATIONS, REPORT-BACKS, AND CONDITIONS

South Sudan	
Observations	<p>The Committee appreciated the proposal from South Sudan, noting that it was developed through dialogue among local education group (LEG) stakeholders.</p> <p>The Committee appreciated the attention to the professional development of teachers in the program. In order to ensure quality training and tangible changes in the classroom, the Committee recommends that the grant agent closely monitor the teacher training activities and develop a qualitative assessment mechanism for these activities.</p> <p>In the context of building country capacity and while recognizing the challenging circumstances, the Committee encourages the LEG to chart a pathway to more aligned aid modalities in the education sector, and to facilitate building the Ministry of Education's implementation capacity, including in core areas such as financial management, procurement, and monitoring and evaluation. The Committee noted in particular that the EMIS is housed outside the ministry and that efforts should be made to integrate EMIS within the Ministry.</p> <p>The Committee noted that South Sudan includes pastoralist communities, including nomadic ones, and recommends due attention to these communities going forward.</p> <p>The Committee further observed that the timeline proposed for the project is very ambitious, based on the implementation record of the previous project, and given that the implementation context and modality have not changed. The Committee therefore recommends the Board approve a four-year implementation period.</p>
Report-Backs	<p><i>For the coordinating agency:</i></p> <p>With regard to the domestic financing requirement of the funding model, the Committee appreciated the government's decision to increase its allocation to education in the national budget from four percent in 2017 to 10 percent in the current fiscal year and deemed the financing trajectory sufficient to meet the domestic financing requirement of an upward trend towards 20 percent, considering the fragile context. However, the Committee requests the coordinating agency on behalf of the LEG and via the Joint Sector Review Report to report back annually on the education budget and expenditure.</p> <p><i>For the grant agent:</i></p> <p>The Committee observed that not all indicators in the results framework are disaggregated by gender and disability, the two key elements of inequity in South Sudan. The Committee requests the grant agent to include this disaggregation in its regular progress reports in order to track progress in this area, as well as to clarify the total number of out-of-school children reached exclusively by GPE-financed project activities.</p>

Conditions	<p>The Committee appreciated the needs-based approach adopted for increasing the availability of learning spaces in South Sudan. However, more clarity is needed in the results framework with regard to how many of the 2000 learning spaces planned will be new and how many will be rehabilitated. Clarity is also needed on how many of these will accommodate primary education versus early childhood education which would affect the design and possibly the cost. The Committee understands that a needs assessment is underway in order to determine the numbers of each, and requests that the transfer of funds for construction (US\$ 6,244,700 under component 1.1.2) be withheld until that assessment has been completed and details are made available to the Secretariat on the number, types and estimated unit costs of constructions.</p> <p>The Committee therefore requests the grant agent to report back with the results of the needs assessment along with a revised results framework that provides clarity in this regard by January 2019. The Secretariat will subsequently determine whether the information provided is sufficient in order to release the transfer.</p>
------------	--

ANNEX 2 – SECRETARIAT QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PHASE 3 (FINAL READINESS REVIEW)

Quality Assurance Review – Phase 3

MCA: US\$41.7 million

Accelerated funding: US\$6.0 million¹

Total Program Cost / GPE Grant Amount: US\$35.7 million², of which

Grant Agent Implementation Support Costs: US\$5.2 million

Implementation period: 3 years

Projected implementation start date: January 1, 2019

Grant Agent: UNICEF

1. BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION SECTOR OVERVIEW

1.1. COUNTRY BACKGROUND

South Sudan's capacity to deliver basic services to its citizens is crippled by multiple and often simultaneous natural and manmade hazards. From 2016 onwards, the country has witnessed the resumption of civil war, along with a severe drought, low oil prices in global markets, and a shift of development financing towards humanitarian support. For a country in which the economy is dependent on oil revenue and subsistence farming, and in which the provision of basic services is largely reliant on development finance, the effect of these multiple events has been dire. One third of the population has been displaced due to the conflict, making it harder, even for humanitarian actors, to plan and deliver lifesaving services.

Conflict is affecting the Greater Upper Nile (GUPN) states the most, where the displacement of people, disruption of services, and destruction of property and lives are the heaviest. As a result, the GUPN states have basic development indicators far below the other South Sudanese states.

Government capacity is supplemented by humanitarian and development partners across sectors. According to UNOCHA, about 7.1 million people are food insecure and rely on humanitarian assistance. The Health Pooled Fund supports basic health care including the cost of maintaining the core pipeline of medicines and other supplies. The UN peace keeping mission, UNMISS, runs the only hospital in the country with a functional operating theatre. Emergency cluster partners and the UNDP supported Community Development Fund support community level basic infrastructure, like the development and maintenance of water points.

A peace deal signed in August 2018 renewed the hope of security and a return to increased political stability and government service delivery. Development and humanitarian actors have taken a cautious approach towards engaging with the emerging situation. A review of Sector Working Groups devised three options for the international community to consider. One of the

¹The Grants and Performance Committee approved South Sudan's Application for Accelerated Funding in July 2018.

²The program is fully funded by GPE and has no ex post Variable Part. The GPC approved South Sudan's application for an ex ante approach to the Variable Part in July 2018.

options is based on an improved security situation and the full engagement with government on long term development planning. The other two options are to maintain the status quo, or, if needed, shift toward a full focus on providing humanitarian support to populations in need.

South Sudan	
Population	13,026,139 (2017, World Bank)
Human Development Index Ranking	181 out of 188 countries (2016, UNDP HDI Report)
GDP	US\$ 2.94 billion (2016, World Bank)
GDP per capita	US\$ 758.7 (2016, World Bank)
World Bank Income Classification Level	Low Income (2016, World Bank Country Classification)
Fragility Status	Fragile

1.2. EDUCATION SECTOR OVERVIEW

South Sudan's education system is characterized as a low investment, low capacity, but high demand system. The state building and peace building efforts of the national plans put high demand on the education system to expand fast, reduce inequity, and to provide appropriate teaching. But public expenditure is one of the world's lowest for education. At the same time, the basics of the sector administration and management are rudimentary, which started to develop, along with the rest of the civil service in the country, only after the 2005 Peace Agreement. But capacity building efforts of the government have been interrupted by conflict.

The General Education Sector Plan (GESP), 2017-2022, titled Planning for Safety, Resilience and Social Cohesion, is an effort to contain this stress on the system, and to give the sector a direction towards stability based on data, evidence and financing outlays. The first two years of the GESP are framed as a transitional plan that is expected to rapidly increase enrolment along with building new infrastructure, supplying basic teaching and learning materials, regularizing teacher salary and training teachers to cope with the increased enrolment. The following three years of the GESP are focused on institutionalizing teacher training, school supervision, and expansion of secondary and technical education.

The education system in the country consists of 8,000 primary schools (grades 1-8), 120 secondary schools (grades 9-12) and one university. There is only one functional teacher training college in the country to meet the demand for training teachers.

Out of 3.7 million primary and secondary school-aged children, around 2.2 million are not in school, according to a recent study³. The Education Cluster estimated that since the outbreak of the 2016 conflict, at least 1.7 million of children and adolescents need emergency education. The following sections give a brief outline of the three priority areas of education in the country.

1.2.1. Learning Outcomes

According to several recent learning assessments, learning outcomes are weak for both literacy and numeracy and regional disparities in learning are wide. EGRA and EGMA assessment conducted in 2016 with funding from GPE I confirmed the inequities that exist in the country but also identified inconsistencies in teaching in classrooms. One example is that students performed reasonably well (85%) in number identification and addition (67%) but very poorly in subtractions (41%). In average girls scored 8 percentage-points less than the boys for the number identification, quantity discrimination and missing numbers subtasks respectively than boys. The average girl scored 16 and 12 percentage-points less than the average boy in the addition and subtraction level 2 tests.

Poor learning outcomes have been mapped to unqualified teachers, insufficient time on task and unavailability of learning materials in mother tongue. In 2015, only 41% of teachers had teaching qualifications. Unqualified teachers are often deployed in early grades, which hampers the opportunity for early learning. The medium of instruction is often not the local language. GPE I developed textbooks and test materials in 9 local languages, which will be printed and distributed under the proposed program.

1.2.2 Equity

Universal Primary Education remains a major challenge in South Sudan. Between 2013 and 2016, conflicts eroded earlier gains made in access. Gross enrollment at primary level contracted 21 percentage-points, from 71.6% to 56.5%, in the six years following 2009. The transition rate from primary to secondary has also deteriorated. In 2009, 87% of primary leavers continued to secondary, compared to only 69% in 2015. In 2015 only 10% of secondary-aged children entered secondary schools and 3% reached the end of the cycle, up from 7% entering secondary school in 2009 with 1% completing. Completion rates stood at 14% for primary and 31% for secondary in 2015 compared to 5% and 10% respectively in 2009. Enrolment in pre-primary grew by 16.1% between 2009 and 2015, reaching 9%.

The gender parity index in South Sudan is the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa at 0.69, though it marks an increase from 0.59 in 2009. The increase however, masks regional disparity in girls' enrollment. At primary level, 34% students are female in the Lakes state in comparison to 48% in Central Equatoria. For secondary, the increase is from 0.41 to 0.48 since 2009. Warrap and Upper

³Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children: South Sudan Country Study. UNESCO 2018.

Nile, which are the states most affected by conflict, reported the lowest share of girls in secondary school at only 16% and 19%.

The 2018 Out of School Children study found a range of demand and supply side issues for the high number of children not in school. One of the main demand side issues was that only 27% of schools offer the full 8 grades of primary schooling in the country, leading to a high dropout at grades 5 and 6. The other key issues identified were:

- *Child labor*: In 2016, over 86% of children attending school were also involved in child labor, putting them at risk of being unable to keep up their school participation due to work responsibilities. Children reported household chores and farming as the main form of labor that keep them away from school.
- *Children displaced by conflict*: Children make up around 60% of South Sudan's 1.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and at least 16,715 children are estimated to be missing, separated from families, and unaccompanied since December 2013.
- *Children with disabilities*: Data generated by MoGEI in 2015, covering seven former states, reported that 18,000 primary school students displayed a range of impairments. Additionally, more than 2,300 children are estimated to have been killed or hurt in the conflict, and 900,000 children suffer from psychological distress. These numbers are estimated to substantially lower than actual numbers.
- *Children in pastoralist communities*: At least 60% of the South Sudanese are engaged in pastoralism. In pastoralist communities, work in the cattle camps and being a young bride tends to be valued above formal education.

1.2.3 Efficiency

School life expectancy of South Sudanese children is among the lowest in the world. On average, a South Sudanese child can expect to receive a total of five years of schooling under current schooling patterns, compared with 7.7 years on average for a sample of African countries. In non-GUPN states, the average school life expectancy has reached 6.2 years against 2.2 years in GUPN states, indicating that conflict is heavily jeopardizing the development of human capital in affected areas.

Early dropout generates major efficiency loss in South Sudan. In 2015, the internal efficiency coefficient is only 25% for primary education. However, the situation has improved since 2009, when the global internal efficiency coefficient stood at 11% in primary.

Teachers and textbooks are not distributed according to the needs in South Sudan. Only 39% of schools have adequate numbers of teachers. This means that in 61% of cases, schools of a comparable size do not benefit from the same number of teachers. The degree of coherence of teacher deployment varies across levels. It is relatively stronger in secondary (61%) but weaker in pre-primary (27%).

Textbooks are short in supply. On average there are three pupils per textbook for both English and mathematics—far from the policy of 1:1. The number of pupils per textbook ranges from 2.3 to 5.5 with upper grades facing a more acute lack of textbooks than lower grades. This ratio is high across the country, but higher in rural areas, further increasing inequities in the system.

2.1.1. Monitoring of Sector Performance

General Education Annual Review (GEAR) is the main tool of sector monitoring for South Sudan. The GEAR takes place in November every year and is attended by state education ministers and officials, along with development partners and CSOs. The GEAR is planned to continue and remain the main forum for sector monitoring. GEAR allows the ministry to present EMIS reports and reports from the technical committees on progress against ESP indicators. Education cluster and donor funded projects also present their progress report at GEAR, making it a comprehensive event for discussing sector performance.

A Joint Steering Committee (JSC) headed by the Principal Secretary (PS) meets quarterly and discusses implementation, harmonization and other issues. Technical committees operating under the Joint Steering Committee prepare reports for the Steering Committee on key ESP priority areas. All development partners sit on the JSC and abide by the decisions made at the JSC meetings.

The UK, the US, the EU⁴, and Norway are the key development partners active in education. They meet on a regular basis as Education Donor Group (EDoG). There is another forum, mainly constituted of CSOs, and NGOs, called the Partners in Education Group (PEG). Education Cluster is also active in South Sudan and is represented in the PEG and the EDoG.

2.1.4 Education in Emergency Activities

The Back to Learning (BTL) initiative, started in 2015, is the umbrella program that supports the key educational needs of conflict-affected children and adolescents. This program has so far enrolled over 500,000 children, trained 8,000 teachers and established 300 temporary learning spaces. The program is supported generously by the US government and implemented by UNICEF. Apart from this program, the 34 partners of the Education Cluster provide support to over 900 schools and temporary learning centers in the country.

The GPE's USD 6 million grant recently approved as Accelerated Funding for a 9-month program, has become operational as of August 2018. The program is expected to fill the critical gaps in the sector by printing and distributing textbooks, continuing teacher training and completing a mapping of school infrastructure to inform the targeting strategy of the proposed program. The Accelerated Funding program will mostly benefit children in the conflict-affected areas.

⁴ EU supports the financing of teacher salaries.

3. FIXED PART REQUIREMENTS

The education sector planning process moved ahead during a period of instability and insecurity. Despite this context, and the loss of government capacity during this period, the Ministry of Education and key stakeholders remained committed to the development of the sector plan. The assessment of GPE's funding model requirements was finalized in October 2017.

3.1. Requirement 1: A credible, endorsed Education Sector Plan (ESP)

South Sudan's General Education Sector Plan (2017-2022) was developed based on a thorough education sector analysis conducted in 2016. The ESA was supported by a GPE grant and technical assistance was provided by UNESCO-IIEP. A vulnerability analysis was conducted as part of the ESA to assess the impact of conflict on the education system. Though sector plan development was impeded by the security breakdown in the country, the ESP was completed in December 2017. Recommendations from the vulnerability analysis were incorporated into the ESP. The Ministry opted for developing a full ESP instead of a transitional plan in the hope that peace and stability would return to the country, and that government education expenditures would increase.

An independent appraisal was conducted in April 2017. The independent appraisal found the ESP ready for endorsement by the Local Education Group with some recommendations. The main recommendation was to develop a transitional action plan for the first two years of the ESP. The ESP was revised to address the appraisal recommendations. Following LEG endorsement, the ESP was submitted to the Secretariat in February 2018.

The Secretariat assessed the submitted ESP to be guided by an overall vision, rooted in the national development plan and aligned to the South Sudan Basic Education Act 2012. The ESP draws on recent data and analysis (e.g., on out-of-school children, girls education) to discuss issues of disparity and inequality and provides clear strategies for improving equity, efficiency and learning outcomes. The ESP was assessed as having 'room for improvement' in the area of achievability – as the proposed targets were considered ambitious compared to available financing and the risk context (i.e., political, security, macro-economic). The Ministry explained that the first two years of the ESP are seen as a transitional plan that is fully funded from public and external sources. Based on this assessment and clarification, the ESP is considered to have met all applicable quality standards.

The Secretariat considers Requirement 1 as met.

3.2. Requirement 2: Evidence of commitment to ESP or TEP and its financing.

The Government of South Sudan has increased its budget allocation to education to 10% in 2018, up from an allocation of 4% in 2017. This increase is above the projected increase in the ESP and the domestic financing matrix provided to the GPE Secretariat as part of requirement matrix.

At 4% of national budget allocation to education, South Sudan had among the lowest public expenditure in education in the world at the time of the assessment of the domestic financing requirement. During the ESP development, the Ministry of Finance committed to raise the allocation to 7% during 2017-2021 period. The recent increase to 10% in the allocation is evidence of the government's commitment to support the sector in the best way possible. The primary education share of the education budget is 49%, in line with the global standard of 50% and above the national commitment of 45%.

The Secretariat considers Requirement 2 to be met based on South Sudan's commitment to increase the domestic financing of education.

3.3. Requirement 3: Availability of Data.

South Sudan conducted a comprehensive education sector analysis in 2016. The exercise included a vulnerability analysis that researched the dynamics of conflict in education sector. Key ESP strategies are rooted in the findings of the vulnerability analysis.

South Sudan EMIS surveys collect data on all 12 key indicators. EMIS reports are published annually except in 2017 as surveys were disrupted in 2016 due to insecurity. The EMIS is housed outside the ministry and is funded by development partners. A scoping study under the recently closed GPE project explored several options for institutionalizing EMIS within the ministry structures. The major obstacle for sustainably institutionalizing EMIS with the ministry is the ministry's capacity and difficulties recruiting qualified staff for highly specialized functions. For the time being, EMIS will remain supported by development partners, but development partners remain committed to identifying a more sustainable integration of EMIS into government systems in the medium-term future.

Learning assessment data are also available in South Sudan from EGRA and EGMA surveys conducted by the GPE project. In 2018, these assessments have been implemented with support from USAID; in 2019/2020, the proposed GPE project will support learning assessment implementation. South Sudan also conducts national exams, which will be supported and strengthened through the project. Currently, learning assessments in South Sudan are dependent on external financing, but South Sudan is committed to continue the efforts to establish a national learning assessment system in the long run as outlined in the ESP

The Secretariat considers Requirement 3 as met.

4. ESPIG

4.1. PAST ESPIG PERFORMANCE, IF APPLICABLE

The GPE I Program "Delivering Quality Basic Education in Challenging Circumstances" for South Sudan was a USD 66 million co-funded program with USAID. In support of the General

Education Strategic Plan (GESP) 2012-2017, the GPE I aimed to contribute to improvements in the education sector through three main objectives: (1) Strengthen national systems that are fundamental to providing equitable access to quality education; (2) Improve school performance, and generate model approaches for school strengthening; and (3) Attract additional support to the education sector in South Sudan by demonstrating sustainable successes.

The program was implemented from December 2013 to November 2017 and extended at no-cost until May 2018. While the program was conceptualized when South Sudan was relatively peaceful, it was implemented in an extremely challenging operating context characterized by (i) the outbreak of violence in December 2013 followed by a protracted conflict; (ii) an economic crisis and hyperinflation of the SSP against the USD since mid-2015; iii) Presidential decrees increasing the number of states from 10 to 28, and subsequently 32 states; and iv) the new outbreak of violence in July 2016 followed by an intensifying conflict in previously more stable areas. The program was restructured to adapt to the changed operating environment in 2016.

The program achieved results as per the revised results framework. The key results as per the program components are:

	Component and Cost	Targets Achieved	Performance Rating
1	National systems strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developed South Sudan National Curriculum; ➤ Developed textbooks as per the new National Curriculum; ➤ Developed the National Learning Assessment Strategy, methodology and tools; ➤ Developed Girls' Education Strategy; and ➤ Completed an Out of School Children Study. 	Satisfactory
2	Community and school-based service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Constructed 25 schools; ➤ Trained 9,983 teachers; ➤ Trained 4,000 head teachers, and 300 school inspectors; ➤ Printed and delivered training materials to Community education centers for continuous training. 	Moderately satisfactory
3	Learning and Sharing Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported 2014-2017 Joint Annual Sector Review events; ➤ Evaluated results of GPE Project ➤ Supported developing ministry website 	Moderately satisfactory

An external evaluation of GPE I assessed the performance of the project. The key lessons from the evaluation are given below. All these have been incorporated in the proposed program.

School construction: A significant part of the GPE evaluation focused on school construction – a sub-component of Component B. A combination of an underdeveloped local construction industry; lack of local building materials production; limited local technical capacity; and increasing cost of construction in the context of conflict and high inflation led to a sharp reduction in the scope from 40 to 25 schools. The evaluation report states that school construction lost relevance due to conflict and displacement and strongly recommended a more equitable approach to improving access in the next phase of GPE support.

Planning and delays: While applying the conflict-sensitive principles to project design and consensus building in project implementation is important, it takes significant time. This was unforeseen in project planning of GPE I and therefore led to delays in implementation. It was recognized by all that the timeline for implementation had been too short to achieve lasting change. More time was needed to provide follow-up support on certain activities. Action Research and behavioral change related to girls' education and gender issues also required more time. Allowing for more time to ensure a lasting impact will be crucial for the planning of subsequent education projects.

Programme implementation: Evidence collected suggests that teachers lack remedial training and basic language skills. This means that longer trainings for teachers, school management committees (SMCs), and PTAs would be more effective to build new skills and practices.

Funding the education sector: GPE alone cannot support and sustain the desired effects of the education sector plan. The Ministry and the development partners recognized that increased national spending coupled with greater harmonization of donor funded programs can ensure that sector plan results are achieved and sustained in the country.

The program funded through Accelerated Funding is operational from August 2018. An initial progress report will be available by the time of the presentation of this FRR at the Grants and Performance Committee presentation in October.

3.2 ESPIG DESCRIPTION

GPE II is designed to ensure that by the end of 2021, the number of boys and girls who are out of school in target areas decreases by 15 per cent; while ensuring an increased equitable access to quality education through working closely with other development partner-funded programs.

The proposed program is structured into three outcome areas aligned to GPE priority areas of equity, quality, and efficiency. Brief descriptions of the program areas are below.

Equitable Access: This outcome intends to support schools and communities to bring out of school children back to school. Mapping of out of school children, construction and rehabilitation of 2000 learning spaces, community mobilization, and advocacy for enrolling girls are the key activities under this outcome area. The mapping will be complemented by a school infrastructure audit conducted under the Accelerated Funding program and will give a complete picture of where more learning spaces are required to increase enrolment. A set of criteria has been framed to select school construction sites.

Quality Education: This outcome is intended to improve the quality of education by creating and supporting an ecosystem of new textbooks, trained teachers, classroom inspection, teacher performance feedback, and learning assessment. Teacher and head-teacher training, built upon the successful intervention of the previous ESPIG, will be aligned to the new curriculum and textbooks. A group of master-trainers will be developed to train teachers and head teachers. Classroom observation tools will be refined, and inspectors will be trained for classroom observation and performance feedback.

Systems Efficiency: This outcome will strengthen education data management, resource planning, expenditure tracking, and coordination among stakeholders. A new methodology for education data management has been created for South Sudan that considers data from the EMIS, Education Cluster Assessments, South Sudan Student Attendance Monitoring System, and Education Human Resource Management System. Annual reports will be published for discussion at the General Education Annual Review. Public Expenditure Tracking and Review studies are planned under this outcome with an expectation to assess gaps in government spending patterns and processes. Findings from these studies will form the basis of more targeted government spending to improve equity and quality of basic education in the country. These studies will also inform financial management strengthening plans of the ministry.

Component, Cost, Results	Sub-component and Activities
Equitable Access US\$8,629,700 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 330,000 out of school children enrolled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 classrooms constructed/rehabilitated • 3 annual enrolment campaigns conducted 	1.1 Increased access in most marginalized areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conduct out of school children mapping 1.2 Increasing learning spaces with community support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Construct and rehabilitate/renovate classrooms for ECD, primary, upper primary, AES and CECs. 1.3 Community mobilization and awareness/advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conduct enrolment campaign at the targeted out of school children identified area. b) Orient teachers, facilitators and PTAs on enrolment drive and mobilize out of schoolchildren to schools. c) Raise awareness and conduct advocacy campaigns on the importance of education.
Quality Education US\$15,641,380 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24,000 teachers and 7,840 headteachers trained 	2.1 Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Orientation of teachers on the new curriculum and textbooks. b) Training of examiners on the new curriculum. c) Develop and training of in-service and pre-service teacher training materials.

Component, Cost, Results	Sub-component and Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 775,000 textbooks printed and distributed • School inspectors trained • School inspection and classroom observation tools refined 	<p>d) Training of tutors and staff of community education centers. e) Train teachers to provide quality classroom instruction and prepare for certified in-service professional development.</p> <p>Development of Textbooks and material for new curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop new teaching learning material, translation, teacher guides, ECD story books. b) Procure, print and distribute new textbooks. c) Develop new tests for examination. <p>2.3 School management, supervision and inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop new ECD inspection framework. b) Print and distribute tools for inspection and supervision. c) Training of supervisors and inspectors on new tools.
Efficiency US\$6,196,450 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 GEAR Conferences held • EMIS Reports published • Public Expenditure Review published • Sector coordination manual developed, published • Ministry officials trained in sector coordination 	<p>3.1 EMIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Produce Annual Education Census. b) Capacity building of state officials in data collection and analysis. c) Establish database. d) Improve MoGEI infrastructure. <p>3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conduct General Education Annual Review. b) Pilot website and increase capacity for use of tech in MoGEI. c) Engage with civil society and conduct a study. d) Align all MoGEI M&E tools to new curriculum and conduct trainings. <p>3.3 Sector Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review current coordination framework to strengthen it. b) Training and capacity building on sector coordination also at subnational level. c) Develop public budget tracking mechanisms. d) Conduct baseline for GPE to monitor progress and prepare annual reports. e) Develop the MoGEI institutional development framework and conduct training.

The funding modality for the proposed ESPIG-supported program has been decided based on an assessment of government financial management and fiduciary risks. A 2016 IMF study concluded that the procurement and financial management in South Sudan lacks basic controls and accountability mechanisms. The proposed modality is similar to that of the previous ESPIG.

The program support will remain off budget and no resources will be channeled through government of South Sudan accounts. Audit arrangements are covered under UNICEF standard audit arrangements.

Table A: ESPIG Components and Costs

	GPE Financing US\$	% of total GPE
Program Component		
A Component 1: EQUITABLE ACCESS		
Sub-component 1.1: Increased access in most marginalized areas	\$8,629,700	24.2%
B Component 2: QUALITY EDUCATION	\$15,641,380	43.8%
Sub-component 2.1: Training	\$11,056,375	31.0%
Subcomponent 2.2: Textbooks & Materials Development for new curriculum	\$3,309,470	9.3%
Sub-component 2.3: Provide standard operating procedures for school management/supervision	\$1,275,535	3.6%
C Component 3: SYSTEMS EFFICIENCY	\$6,196,450	17.4%
Sub-component 3.1: EMIS	\$2,770,520	7.8%
Sub-component 3.2: Monitoring & Evaluation	\$1,603,085	4.5%
Sub-component 3.2: Sector Coordination	\$1,822,845	5.1%
Sub-total of Components	\$30,467,530	85.3%
Grant Agent's Implementation Support Costs*	\$5,232,470	14.7%
GRAND TOTAL (with Grant Agent's Implementation Support Costs)	\$35,700,000	100%
Agency Fees**	\$2,499,000	7%

* Include Grant Agent's direct costs, such as Program Management, Administrative and other direct implementation costs.

** Agency Fee is not included in the MCA and is calculated as percentage rate (agreed with each GA) from the Total Fixed Part and Total Variable Part.

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM DOCUMENT

Quality assurance of the program document was conducted through a Fit for Purpose pilot with UNICEF HQ and Regional Offices. The QA pilot, which was initiated at QAR 2, involved the GPE Secretariat providing summary comments to the country on the draft program document and the UNICEF HQ/Regional Offices providing the UNICEF country office a peer review of the program document vis-à-vis GPE program standards. The Accelerated Funding proposal was quality assured at the GPE Secretariat using the same quality standards methodology.

The main recommendations of the QAR II assessment on program design, theory of change, intervention targeting, implementation arrangements, and budget have been addressed in the submitted program document.

The following sections provide a summary assessment of the program document as per GPE Program Quality Standards.

- Program Design

The program prioritizes increasing basic education access and equity. Interventions target displaced and highly vulnerable children, improving school quality through the professional development of teachers and the provision of relevant, local language learning materials, and strengthening education management, M&E, EMIS, and sector coordination. GPE II builds on the lessons learned from the evaluation of GPE I, builds on existing successful interventions, and invests in evidence-building activities to inform course corrections in the program.

Component 1 proposes increasing access to education through the provision of 2,000 learning spaces. Along with construction and rehabilitation of learning spaces, the activities of this component will mobilize communities for enrolling children to schools. Component 2 and 3 interventions, which support education quality and system strengthening, follow a clear and logical design, with targeting where appropriate, and are grounded in a recognition of the complex and fragile context in which the proposed interventions will take place. A Theory of Change (ToC) has been drawn to demonstrate the evidence base of the proposed activities. The ToC identified some gaps in evidence, which have been addressed in program activities. Lessons from the last ESPIG implementation were incorporated in design of the program.

The program contributes to GPE strategic goals related to access and equity, quality improvement and effective and efficient systems within the context of sector analysis and planning, financing sector plan implementation and supporting partnership and mutual accountability.

However, the program document does not go into details on the quality assurance mechanism of the range of training proposed under the program. Given that training is the largest spending item in the program, the Final Readiness Review suggests that a robust monitoring mechanism is built into the program to track effectiveness of training.

- Program Budget

Unit costs for major activities are comparable to that of GPE I and the current Accelerated Funding program, and are considered reasonable. Grant Agent ‘other supervision costs’ of 14% are divided between staff, logistical and monitoring costs, and reflect the role of the GA in direct implementation of activities, oversight of implementing partners and high logistical and security costs for monitoring of program activities which span the country. Other development partners work through UNICEF to leverage the GA’s network of locally-based implementing partners and extensive field presence in South Sudan.

A significant amount of funding is intended for training. In general, training workshops run the risk of absorbing funds through DSA and transport refunds without evidence of the associated value-for-money when measured against results delivered. The GPE I evaluation found the program successfully trained nearly 10,000 head teachers on school leadership and the final evaluation noted its positive outcomes: government staff and school inspectors both observed better school management, clearer roles and responsibilities, engagement with PTA, and improving lesson planning and delivery in classrooms. But the effectiveness of cascaded training in a general sense

is often difficult to link directly to results. Within this context, the monitoring element becomes even more critical and this would do well to be brought out more clearly in the TOC.

- M&E

The results framework reflects GESP priority areas in access and quality. In several instances, project indicators and targets differ from the GESP, which may, in part, reflect the more detailed focus of the program providing direct services to beneficiaries and training teachers in the current context. Outcome indicator #1, which tracks a reduction in the share of OOSC, is not gender disaggregated. Outcome indicator #2, “percentage improvement in Grade 8 exam pass rate”, does not align well with the proposed interventions (focusing on teacher professional development) and program timeframe. The GA could instead consider an indicator more closely associated with the teacher training, such as the impact on teachers' skills and/or classroom practices.

- Fiduciary, Implementation Arrangements, and Readiness

The Joint Program Steering committee will oversee GPE II implementation and provide guidance to a GPE Technical Working Group (TWG) led by the Director of Planning and Budgeting, MoGEI. Given the fragile context, the modality of the program will be direct implementation of activities by the GA, and through implementing partners overseen by the GA.

Procurement and FM arrangements build on GPE I. Large procurements (i.e., textbooks) will be done through GA systems. All funds are managed directly by the Grant Agent (including through contracted financial administrators) with no funds going through MoGEI accounts. All disbursements to service providers are governed by UNICEF's global Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) guidelines and procedures, similar to GPE I.

The program document however, does not refer to the selection criteria for implementing partners. It will be very important that the GA ensures a robust selection and monitoring process during implementation.

- Risk Identification and Mitigation Measures

The program is grounded in the observation of the high-level of instability related to the macro-economic context (i.e., GDP contraction/ hyperinflation), conflict and insecurity, and limited government resources and capacities (PD, p. 49-52). The program is designed to reduce risk where possible (e.g., hold meetings / training in secure areas, not invest in construction of permanent spaces) and leverage the flexibility and capacity of the GA system to support program implementation and manage operations. Implementation arrangements – procurement, flow of funds, audit, spot checks – are designed to mitigate risks related to fiduciary oversight/ corruption.

- Sustainability

Skills transfer investment include: teacher professional development, capacity and skills of state and national staff, support to CECs, and development of curriculum and assessment

and associated materials. In response to the GPE I evaluation, GPE II invests in strengthening collaboration and communication between government actors at national, state, and school levels. The program document identifies GoRSS and development partner financial and in-kind contributions associated with program investments, by component, including over nine million USD to support school construction and teacher remuneration from the government. The government is also committed to make the Community Education Centers functional, which provides valuable in-service training to teachers.

Further strengthening of national systems will necessitate strong focus on public financial management strengthening. The program document details how procurement and fiduciary accountability will be managed by the Grant Agent. As the Government of South Sudan works to build capacity in these important areas, it will be important for the Grant Agent to work with government and other partners to provide deliberate capacity building opportunities around these key functions of systems strengthening as outlined in the document. The sector plan indicates a specific government management focus on financial management and accountability training over the first two years of the plan's implementation. The program document discusses capacity building specifically through the HACT and procurement processes.

- Aid Effectiveness

The program aligns with the ESP, confirms LEG consultation, shows coordination of project activities with major DP interventions, and is designed in a modality that reflects the capacities, challenges and fragilities of the context. Implementation arrangements are sufficiently well described to determine the extent to which country systems are used. The GoRSS and the GA will jointly plan major interventions, and associated procurements and fund disbursements. Grant Agent systems are used with respect to budget, procurement, accounting and audit. The program supports capacity building related to alignment, including efforts to strengthen MoGEI financial management and administrative capacity so that it may take a more direct role in managing GPE funds in future programs.

5. VARIABLE PART

The GPE Grants and Performance Committee approved the ex-ante approach for the Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG) for South Sudan on 25 July 2018. The GPC considered that the scope for leveraging sector-wide reform with a results-based financing approach is limited in South Sudan because of the lack of resources for upfront investment and unavailability of credible data for sector-wide results verification.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS⁴

The Secretariat recommends that the Grants and Performance Committee consider the South Sudan ESPIG application for approval based on the assessment that the GPE funding requirements are met, and the program document meets GPE quality standards.

The Secretariat further recommends that the Grants and Performance Committee ask the Grant Agent to consider:

- **Close monitoring of the teacher training activities to ensure that these are of high quality and bring about tangible changes in classroom practices.**
- **Disaggregating project M&E by gender and EMIS data by disability to track progress on these two key elements of inequity in the country.**

The Secretariat further recommends that the Grants and Performance Committee ask the South Sudan Local Education Group to consider:

- **Annual reporting on the education budget and expenditure, which will allow the Secretariat on behalf of GPE to track government spending on education.**
- **Chart a pathway to more aligned aid modalities in the education sector, and to facilitate this, continue to build MoGEI implementation capacity, including in core areas like financial management, procurement, and monitoring and evaluation.**

⁴ These recommendations were adjusted by the GPC. The final recommendations are found in Board Document BOD/2018/10 DOC 03 Annex 1.

Annex 1: Major Interventions of Development Partners

Development Partner	Focus area/ Key Activities	Estimated Funding	Time frame
USAID (through UNICEF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Essential Emergency Education Services (IEEES) Project: Provides continued services - e.g. provision of learning spaces, teaching learning materials and textbooks to 600,000 children (including 228,000 girls). This includes 5,000 children (1,900 girls) in secondary schools in protection of civilians sites (PoCs) and other IDP locations. Support Education in Emergency interventions and activities of Education Cluster. 	US\$ 60 million	Sept 2017 – Sept 2020.
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IMPACT: Provides teachers with cash incentives to the value of US\$ 40 per month to 30,000 primary school teachers. The Human Resource Information System provides data base system that covers all ECDE, Primary and Secondary teachers. 	US\$ 26 million	2017- 2018
European Union (through UNICEF and WFP)	The Emergency Programme is to improve stability and resilience in the four former South Sudanese states of NBeG, WBeG, Warrap and Eastern Equatoria, through improved child protection, better nutrition and equitable access to 75,000 children/ adolescents contributing to improved access to quality learning and school feeding.	EUR 24.4 million	24 months from the start date (yet to start).
DFID (UK Aid)	Girls Education South Sudan II: Will provide cash incentives to girls, capitation grants to schools and support inclusion perse including support for children with disabilities.	GB£ 70 million	TBD
Norwegian Embassy (through UNICEF)	Support Back to Learning initiatives in South Sudan: aim to reach more than 90,000 children/ adolescents in schools and out of school adolescents through Adolescents/Youth Centres, children formerly associated with armed groups,	NOK 60 million	Jan 1, 2018 – Dec. 31, 2020.