



2022/2023

# OPENING GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS IN SOUTH SUDAN

**GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF SOUTH SUDAN**

**Ministry of General Education and  
Instruction**

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## List of Abbreviations

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ALP: Accelerated Learning Programme

ASEP: Accelerated Secondary Education Programme

BoG: Board of Governors

CED: County Education Department

CGS: Community Girls' Schools

ECD: Early Childhood Development

EU: European Union

GESS: Girls' Education South Sudan

IMPACT: EU Teacher Incentive Programme

MoGE&I: Ministry of General Education and Instruction

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

PES: Payam Education Supervisor

PTA: Parents Teachers Association

SMC: School Management Committee

SMOE: State Ministry of Education

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

## Acknowledgements

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Reopening Guidelines for Schools in South Sudan were prepared by the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGE&I) and partners working in education sector. They intend to guide schools on how to reopen in a safe manner at the start of the Academic Year 2022/2023.

The process of development of these guidelines was participative and supported by many members of MoGE&I's team, donors and implementing partners. These guidelines were printed with the support of the UNICEF and distributed to the States, Counties and schools by the Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) Programme and other partners.

## Foreword

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The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the South Sudan 2020 and 2021 Academic Calendar and led to a delay in reopening of schools. This has an effect on the start date of the Academic Year 2022. After consultations with the COVID-19 National Taskforce, it was agreed that the Academic Year 2022/23 (AY 2022/23) and classes should commence on **02<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**.

This booklet is primarily prepared to inform the State Ministries of Education, County and Payam Education Offices, Head Teachers and teachers on the implementation of the Academic Year 2022/2023.

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGE&I) would like to thank the School Reopening Technical Working Group (SRTWG) for the valuable work it has been undertaking throughout the period of COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry would also like to thank its partners for their active participation in discussions and support for the Technical Working Group.

Copies of this booklet: The Opening Guidelines for Schools in South Sudan will be distributed to the State Ministries of Education (SMoE), County Education Departments (CED) and Payam Education Offices (PEO) and schools as part of orientation on School Registration and Safe Opening of Schools. I urge all stakeholders and partners to support the implementation of these Guidelines and contribute to combating the spread of COVID-19. By doing so we can together keep our children and school communities safe, and support teachers to start classes in the Academic Year 2022/23.

We look forward to your cooperation,

Hon. Awut Deng Acuil



The Minister,  
Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGE&I)  
07 April 2022

## Executive Summary

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The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the South Sudan Academic Calendar and led to school closure during the 2020 Academic Year and a delay in school re-opening during 2021 Academic Year. These disturbances affect the start day of the Academic Year 2022/2023. After consultations with the COVID-19 National Taskforce and the Secretariat of Exams, it was recommended that the Academic Year 2022/2023 (AY 2022/2023) and classes should commence on **02<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**.

These guidelines are meant to guide the State Ministries of Education, County and Payam Education Offices, as well as Head Teachers and teachers, on the implementation of the Academic Year 2022/2023.

## Arrangement of learning

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In the Academic Year 2022/2023, learners will be promoted to the next class based on their performance.

## Management of class overcrowding

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Recommended class size remains 50 learners in primary schools and 45 learners in secondary schools. This is in line with the recommendations made in previous academic years and in line with the IMPACT practice in which teacher-learners ratio of 1/50 was achieved.

Classes larger than 50/45 must be divided into streams of up to 50/45 learners to maintain quality of learning and physical distancing as advised by the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 guidelines.

It is forbidden to elevate engagement of non-payroll teachers if streams of 50/45 learners were already achieved through the EU IMPACT programme.

Free from harm outdoor spaces can be utilised for learning.

## Registration of pregnant and nursing learners

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Pregnant and nursing learners have the right and shall all be permitted to register in school, attend lessons, and continue their education without any discrimination. No pregnant or nursing



learner shall be refused access to education or final examination and all pregnant and nursing learners shall be proactively encouraged to continue their education. This is in line with the 2008 Child Act and the General Education Act, 2012.

Head Teachers, School Management Committees (SMC) or Board of Governors (BoG), teachers, school mothers/mentors and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members shall actively follow-up on the registration of pregnant and nursing learners.

## Registration of learners with disabilities and functional difficulties

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Learners with disabilities and functional difficulties have the right and shall be permitted to register in a school of their choice. This will typically be a school closest to their residence. All schools which will register learners with disabilities and functional difficulties, and which require support to arrange learning process for these learners, shall work closely with their SMC/BoG, PES and Disability Champions to rapidly achieve that. All learners with disabilities and functional difficulties shall start attending lessons on **02<sup>nd</sup> May 2022** just like all other learners.

## Implementation of the New South Sudan Curriculum

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Upon school opening P1 to P8 and S1 to S4 classes will follow the New South Sudan Curriculum.

The medium of instruction in pre-primary and from P1 to P3 classes is a national language selected by the school. The medium of instruction from P4 to S4 is English. National languages will continue to be taught as subjects from P4 to P8.

## Safeguarding, psychosocial support and wellbeing

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School staff, SMC/BoG, PTA members, school mothers, mentors and teachers shall pay additional attention to psychological needs of learners who are returning to school distressed, especially those returning to school after recovering from COVID-19 infection and after the quarantine period. Learners who lost their relatives due to COVID-19 infection, or due to other causes shall be supported and provided with access to a mentor or a school mother.

Schools shall introduce a zero-tolerance policy and child-friendly strategies for reporting and tackling bullying, corporal punishment, gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination. All school-based violence shall be condemned.

Learners should be mentored through difficult situations they are experiencing and provided with support to stop bullying behaviours. There is zero-tolerance for bullying behaviours in schools.

Teachers are forbidden from using corporal punishment and any form of violence and intimidation.

# Managing COVID-19 preventive measures in Schools

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## **Health and hygiene**

- 1) All learners and school communities shall be informed about COVID-19 preventive measures, and the importance of reducing the risk of COVID-19 infections.
- 2) All school staff and learners must be trained on handwashing protocols. Clean water and soap for washing hands must be provided in all schools.
- 3) Staff and learners shall wash or sanitise their hands prior to entering the school compound, before and after each lesson, before and after having food and after using toilets.
- 4) School staff, learners and any visitors should have their temperature checked prior to entering school compound and should wear a facemask.
- 5) School staff and learners shall be informed that reusable facemasks shall be washed daily and regularly changed to maintain their functionality and safety.
- 6) All school visitors, inclusive of parents, must be authorised by the Head Teacher. Unauthorised or unannounced visitors shall not be permitted at the school compound.

- 7) Record and contact details of all visitors entering the school compound must be kept in a visitor's book.

### **School compound and school environment**

- 8) School compound and all school infrastructure, inclusive of buildings and furniture, must be sufficiently aired and cleaned prior to school opening, and daily after the school opens.

### **Timetable**

- 9) School assemblies and parades are temporarily suspended. This is to reduce gatherings of large number of persons in one physical space. All school announcements shall be made through a class teacher to individual streams/classes.
- 10) Breaks between the lessons and lunchtime shall be arranged in such a way that learners from different streams/classes do not mix and that physical distancing is enabled.
- 11) Sport and extra-curricular activities are permitted, however COVID-19 preventive measures such as monitoring participants' temperature, handwashing and mask wearing must be observed during these activities.

## **Food and drinking water**

- 12) Schools with a school-feeding programme shall follow the safety measures set by the Ministry of Health and communicated separately by WFP or other partner supporting the school feeding.
- 13) To avoid the spread of the virus and other communicable diseases, food, drinks, utensils, cups, bottles, and other personal items shall not be shared.
- 14) Potable water must be provided for learners and teachers. Cups used for drinking of water must not be shared. All learners and teachers must carry their own cup or a bottle.

## **Inspection of COVID-19 protocols at school**

- 15) SMC/BoG should form a sub-committee on health and hygiene. This sub-committee shall perform daily and periodic inspections of COVID-19 preventive measures and protocols.
- 16) Any suspected or diagnosed COVID-19 cases at the school must be immediately isolated in a safe room arranged in the school.
- 17) All suspected and diagnosed COVID-19 cases shall be reported to the **Payam Education Supervisor** and to **an Inspector of the County Education Office**.

18) The responsible State Ministry of Education shall be immediately notified about the suspected/diagnosed COVID-19 case. In case of difficulties in reaching PES, CEI, SMoE, the national **6666 phone line** can be contacted to facilitate further communication.

### **Non-compliance with COVID-19 protocols**

19) Non-compliance with the safety and COVID-19 protocols is an offence and may lead to a disciplinary action.

## Guidance on 2022/2023 Academic Calendar

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According to Chapter IV of The General Education Act, 2012, Standards and Quality of Education, Paragraph 10, the beginning date of each Academic Year is set in February and the end date is in December. However, due to interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemics, the Academic Year 2021/2022 did not start as planned and therefore it concluded later than in years pre-pandemic. The late conclusion of the Academic Year 2021/2022 affects the start date of the Academic Year 2022/2023. **The 2022/2023 Academic Year will commence on 02<sup>nd</sup> May 2022.**

To enable accomplishment of the syllabi of the New South Sudan Curriculum within the directives of the General Education Act, 2012 and despite deferred school opening, the school week in the Academic Year 2022/2023 will remain five days a week and will run from Monday to Friday. The Academic Year and the School Holidays will be shorter than ordinarily. Public Holidays will be observed.

The MoGE&I set the start date of the 2022/2023 Academic Year on **02<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**. The end of the 2022/2023 Academic Year is **23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**. There will be **206** instruction days in the Academic Year 2022/2023. There will be at least three days reserved for school-based in-service teacher training.

- **Term one will begin on 02<sup>nd</sup> May 2022** and will end on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022 with **65 instruction days** and 1 in-service training day. There will be one-week term break between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

- **Term two will begin on 22<sup>th</sup> August 2022** and end on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022 with **69 instruction days** and 1 in-service training day. There will be one-week term break between 26<sup>th</sup> November and 04<sup>th</sup> December 2022.
- **Term three will begin on 05<sup>th</sup> December 2022** and end on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 with **72 instruction days** and 1 in-service training day. There will be a break after the Academic Year 2022/2023. The dates of the holiday will be announced in 2023, together with the announcement of the exams calendar.

According to the new Assessment Framework, formative assessment will take place throughout the academic year.

Candidates of P8 and S4 classes will undertake their **exams in February 2023 (P8) and March 2023 (S4)** respectively. Exams' calendar for candidate classes will be published separately.

The start of the AY 2023 will be announced in 2023.

## **Public Holidays**

In line with the list published by the Ministry of Labour, the observed Public Holidays will be:

- Eid el Fitr, 02-04 May 2022 (Monday-Wednesday), 3 working days
- SPLA Day, 16 May 2022 (Monday), 1 working day
- Independence Day, 09 July 2022 (Saturday), 1 working day observed on the day announced by the Ministry of Labour
- Eid el Adha, 09-13 July 2022 (Saturday-Wednesday), 3 working days



- Martyr’s Day, 30 July 2022 (Saturday), 1 working day observed on the day announced by the Ministry of Labour
- Christmas Holiday, 24-26 December 2022 (Saturday-Monday), 1 working day
- New Year Day, 01 January 2023 (Sunday), 1 working day observed on 02 January 2023.

### **Other important days celebrated by schools**

During each Academic Year there are important dates that schools celebrate and participate in. These days are not Public Holidays, but lessons on these days and celebrations are thematically focused to raise awareness of the learners to the topics these days are dedicated to. These special days include:

- International Women’s Day (08 March)
- World Heritage Day (18 April)
- World Book Day (23 April)
- International Museum Day (18 May)
- Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May)
- World Environment Day (5 June)
- International Day of the African Child (16 June)
- National Girls’ Education Day (07 July)
- International Literacy Day (08 September)
- World Teacher’s Day (5 October)
- International Day of the Girl Child (11 October)
- Global Handwashing Day (15 October)
- World Toilet Day (19 November)
- 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (25 November)
- World AIDS Day (1 December)
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December)

## 2022/2023 Academic Year Calendar

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<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>Public Holidays</b>	<b>School Holidays</b>	<b>No. of instruction days</b>
<b>Term 1</b>	<b>02 May 22</b>	<b>12 August 22</b>			<b>65 instruction days</b>
Eid el Fitr Holiday	02 May 22	04 May 22	Monday-Tuesday	<b>3 working days</b>	
SPLA Day	16 May 22	16 May 22	Monday	<b>1 working days</b>	
Independence Day	09 July 22	09 July 22	Saturday	<b>1 working day (in lieu)</b>	
Eid el Adha	09 July 22	13 July 22	Saturday-Wednesday	<b>3 working days</b>	
Martyr's Day	30 July 22	30 July 22	Saturday	<b>1 working day (in lieu)</b>	
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day	TBC	TBC	TBC	<b>1 working day</b>	
End of term Holidays	13 August 22	21 August 22	Saturday – Sunday	<b>5 working days</b>	

<b>Term</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>Public Holidays</b>	<b>School Holidays</b>	<b>No. of instruction days</b>
<b>Term 2</b>	<b>22 August 22</b>	<b>25 November 22</b>			<b>69 instruction days</b>
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day	TBC	TBC	TBC	<b>1 working day</b>	
End of Term 2 Holiday	26 November 22	04 December 22	Saturday – Sunday	<b>5 working days</b>	

<b>Term 3</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>Public Holidays</b>	<b>School Holidays</b>	<b>No. of instruction days</b>
<b>Term 3</b>	<b>05 December 22</b>	<b>23 March 23</b>			<b>72 instruction days</b>
Christmas Break and New Year Holiday	23 Dec 22	02 Jan 22	Saturday – Monday	<b>5 working days</b>	
In-service, school-based Teacher Training Day	TBC	TBC	TBC	<b>1 working day</b>	
<b>Total</b>					<b>206 instruction days</b>