

Ministry of General Education and Instruction

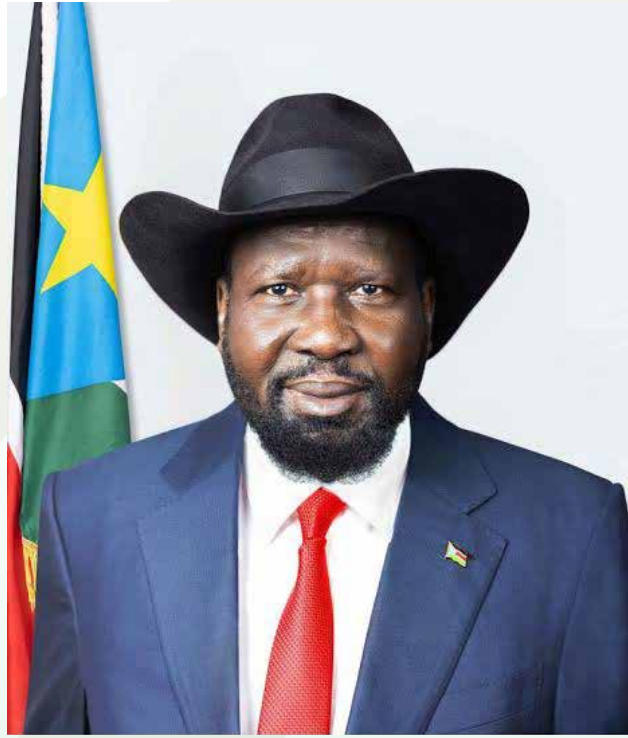


Voices of Hope

South Sudan
Education Magazine

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H.E. SALVA KIIR MAYARDIT
President of the Republic of South Sudan

Map of South Sudan



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The leadership of the Honourable Minister, Dr. Kuyok Abol Kuyok, and the Undersecretary, Hon. Omot Olok Okony, has been pivotal in ensuring that the tireless efforts of the Ministry and its partners are compiled and shared in a manner that authentically reflects the voices and lived experiences of those whose lives have been impacted.

This magazine stands as a collective achievement, reflecting the shared commitment of the Government of South Sudan and its education partners to improving access to quality, inclusive, and sustainable education.

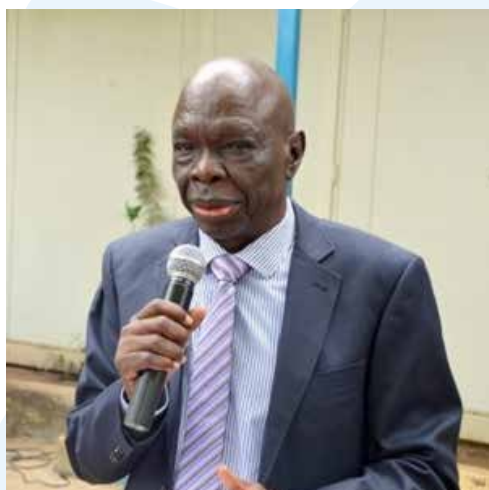
Ministry of General Education and Instruction Hierarchy



Hon. Dr. Kuyok Abol Kuyok

Hon. Dr. Kuyok Abol Kuyok is the Minister of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI). He was appointed to the position in March 2025, following five years of service as the Ministry's Undersecretary.

In addition to his ministerial role, Dr. Kuyok is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Juba, where he has been a regular contributor to courses at the School of Education since 2010.



Hon. Martin Tako Moyi

Hon. Martin Tako Moyi is the Deputy Minister for General Education and Instruction, a position he has held since his appointment in 2020. He previously served as the Speaker of the Western Equatoria State Legislative Assembly and later as Chairperson for Members' Affairs at the Transitional National Legislative Assembly. Hon. Tako has also served as Deputy Minister of Environment. He holds a Master's degree in Business Management.



Hon. Omot Okony Olok Guon

Hon. Omot Okony Olok Guon is a distinguished education leader and reformer with over three decades of experience in teaching, curriculum development, teacher education, and quality assurance. He currently serves as the Undersecretary of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI). Previously, Hon. Omot held key leadership roles including Director General of the National Curriculum Development Centre and Director General for Quality Assurance and Standards.

Celebration of the International Literacy Day



Former minister of general education, during Celebration of the International Literacy Day

On September 9th, 2024, the former Minister of General Education and Instruction, Awut Deng Achuil underlined the importance of education for all the children of South Sudan, particularly in disadvantaged areas like Terekeka. She urged the local authorities and communities' leaders to campaign for education. Hon Awut Deng Achuil commemorated the international Literacy Day (ILD) in Terekeka under the theme: *"Promoting multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace"*.

In a statement issued on international literacy day, the U.S Embassy in Juba highlighted the critical state of literacy in South Sudan, describing it as one of the worst in the world.

The statement emphasized the fundamental importance of education and literacy as human rights that unlock economic opportunities, breaking the cycle of poverty and foster personal and social development.

According to the recent United Nation data, South Sudan faces a daunting literacy challenge. About 70% of the adults are illiterate, approximately 84% of girls over 15 years old cannot read and write and around 2.5 million children are out of school.

Mitigating Climate Change:

Restoring School Infrastructure to Sustain Access to Education



Machour Primary School in Yirol East County, new rehabilitated, on 8 April 2024, @ MYRP Images

For the last four years, South Sudan has faced unprecedented flash floods affecting several infrastructures including schools and other educational facilities. Machour primary school in Pagarau Payam, Yirol East County is one of the over 800 schools affected country wide. Five classrooms and one office block were severely destroyed by floods and strong storms. With roofs completely blown off, the school was forced to operate outside under tree shades since 2022. Shortage of instructional materials such as blackboards, chalks, textbooks, charts and insufficient teachers, and classroom facilities, like furniture further made it a daunting task to facilitate learning. As a result, learners lost interest to continue with studies while other learners dropped out of school. A few others joined other schools and the remaining few struggled with their learning under trees.

The second phase of ECW's MYRP program that commenced in 2023 presented a ray of hope. HelpEducation South Sudan (HESS), an implementing partner under FCA Consortium renovated Machuor's classroom blocks and provided school benches to resuscitate normal school operations.

The program support also included training School Management Committees and PTAs on disaster management, school planning and oversight to sustain learning in the event of future shocks. They also trained Parents Teacher Association on their roles in the school. The programme also provided Tailored Educational Support to Young Mothers.

As part of Continuous Professional Development, HESS trained eight teachers to improve their facilitation skills in delivering teaching and learning, the teachers were also trained on MHPSS, GBV as well as Disaster Risk Management.

By the second quarter of 2024, Machuor primary school had registered additional enrolment at 841 students, from 700. The rehabilitated structures not only attracted new learners but additional teachers who have since joined the school and improved the teacher learner ratio (1:38).

In the second term of 2024, Machuor primary school had registered 22 teachers.

The refurbishment of classrooms and office's structure, provision of school desks, strategies teachers adopted from the training on lesson planning.

Hardship allowances to female teachers, class management, MHPSS and Child protection, establishment of child help desks, Menstrual Hygiene Management.

Through training and provision of dignity kits to adolescent's girls, students' motivation with Bursary support, provision of teaching and learning materials and engagement significantly influenced quality of learning in the school.



Construction Of Classes At Machuor Primary School



Machuor Primary School Before Renovation

Ministry of General Education and Instruction embarked on interschool Debate in all the ten States and Three Administrative Areas



One of the best schools of interschool debate celebrating their victory

The Ministry of General Education & Instruction, Education Partners, and Civil Society Organizations conducted the interschools debate competition Activities in the schools.

The Debate has rapidly emerged as one of the most powerful tools for improving academic performance, communication skills, leadership, and citizenship among young people in South Sudan.

The recent Central Equatoria State Interschool Debate Tournament, held in Juba City, provided a strong demonstration of how structured public discourse can positively impact students, schools, families, and the community at large.

The just-concluded tournament in Juba City has attracted students from over 17 schools, both primary and secondary schools, teachers, community members, and local authorities.



Awarding the best speakers and the best school of the interschool debate competition

In the recent debate competition, Students displayed significant improvement in reasoning, argumentation, and confident expression. Teachers testified that debate activities reinforced classroom learning and improved exam performance.

Many participants who previously struggled to speak confidently were transformed into articulate, bold communicators. This inspired their peers and encouraged more students, especially girls, to participate in academic extracurricular activities.

Parents and community leaders applauded the initiative, noting that debate helped young people move away from idleness and harmful practices. It created unity among schools and portrayed education as a tool for peace.

Through debate themes on peace, gender equality, environment, and governance, students gained knowledge and appreciation for peaceful dialogue—an essential skill in a post-conflict society.

These results clearly show that scaling the initiative to all ten states and the three administrative areas will produce national-level transformation, especially in peacebuilding, education quality, and youth empowerment.





Implementing this project across all ten states and three administrative areas will strengthen education, promote peace, and build a new generation prepared to lead South Sudan toward a brighter, more cooperative future

In this regard, unlike the traditional classroom-based learning settings, debates are not designed to confer targeted information; instead, they are designed to allow students to learn how to think freely and responsibly as well.

Participants in debate are typically allowed to engage with their imagination, cultural background, and present their arguments based on the lens of their worldviews.

This way, they can expose their ideology to scrutiny – allowing them to question their opinions, which is important in their development of critical thinking skills, tolerance, and problem-solving skills as well.

Therefore, debates provide a platform for the development of research skills, learning language, communication skills, and developing the patience to listen, empathy, and tolerance to accept divergent views in a constructive way.

These values are crucial for individuals transitioning into adulthood and into the job market at any level.

Keeping Hope for Young Mothers through Tailoring Skills



Students during training session @ AVSI

Patricia Saima, 20, is a mother of one and a senior three student at Tim Galvin Secondary School, living in Lorengpuu Boma, Kapoeta North County. She was a brilliant student in the county. Despite progressing well with her education, Saima's academic journey ended abruptly when she became pregnant.

This brought immense hardship upon her, aggravated by her parents' fury over the pregnancy. Life became difficult for her to pursue her studies because she could not manage her responsibilities alone; even obtaining necessities from her parents became a struggle

“ *Life was hard for me after I became pregnant,” says Saima. “My parents failed to support me financially due to the pregnancy, and it was difficult for me to do any business to support myself.* ”

Sign of hope

Although things were tough, Saima didn't give up on her dream of a better future.

Hope arrived when AVSI, supported by Education Cannot Wait through the Multi-Year Resilient Program (MYRP), visited her community. Their aim was to provide tailoring skills to young mothers.

The 6-month tailoring course (April-September 2025) is a key part of MYRP in South Sudan, empowering young mothers to earn income, enabling them to either continue their studies or start a business to support their families.

Every week, *instructors* teach valuable, income-generating skills. After the six months, Saima, 20, believes these skills will enable her to earn money and live independently, as she has been trained in *self-reliance*, including strategies to save her earnings from tailoring.

“

I have also learned how to use a sewing machine and am able to make nice clothes for both adults and children,” the 20-year-old explains. “I am now able to attach the spools to the bobbin and feed the thread to the needle.

”

This intensive skill-building has been crucial, as Saima now works as a tailor in her own small business. She shares, “I now know how to design and make clothes, how to repair and alter clothing, and also how to maintain and repair my equipment.”

Apart from the tailoring course, AVSI provides safe and inclusive education to crisis-affected learners in Kapoeta North through the Multi-Year Resilience Programmed. This includes distributing scholastic materials, teacher training, and providing psychosocial support, especially for vulnerable children and families.

Brighter future

This holistic approach is especially important for young mothers like Saima. It enables them to work hard to support their families and generate income to make a living.

“I see a bright future because I have started my own business that enables me to earn income to help my family.”

As Saima’s confidence grows, so does her ability to train others, invest in their communities, and break the cycle of poverty for good.

“I will help and encourage all the other young mothers to join the free tailoring training to help themselves and their families,” she says.

The 20-year-old further requests AVSI to procure some materials for them, stating, *“to help us start our own businesses.”*

Through this initiative, AVSI has enrolled 36 young mothers in the tailoring course (13 of whom are in primary school and 23 in secondary school) to enable them make a living, continue to access quality education, and thrive within their communities.

Maridi National Teachers Training Institute graduates over 200 Teachers



Students matching during their graduation ceremony at Maridi national training institutes @MOGEI

Over 200 new teachers graduated during its second graduation ceremony at Maridi National Training Institutes, held in July 2025, the graduating group includes 94 students who completed a new three-year diploma program and 113 who completed the two-year certificate in primary education. The graduates are qualified through a program certified by the University of Juba and have been trained in various educational approaches, including inclusive education and child-centre pedagogy, literacy, numeracy. The training focus on braille and sign languages to support the learners with disabilities. The curriculum blended theoretical knowledge with practical teaching experience.

Speaking during the graduation ceremony, the Principal of Maridi NTTI praised the graduates' resilience and commitment to their professional development. *"You have chosen a noble path,"* he said, *"by dedicating yourselves to the task of shaping young minds and empowering future generations through literacy. Your role is pivotal in transforming the learning outcomes of our children, especially in underserved and rural areas."*

The program, spearheaded by the National Ministry of General Education and Instruction with support from Finn Church Aid, aims to equip teachers with the practical tools necessary to address the critical challenges of literacy education in South Sudan's primary schools.

In his keynote address, Hon. Martin Tako Mayi, Deputy Minister of General Education and Instruction, emphasized the importance of continuous professional development for teachers, urging the graduates to serve as ambassadors of change in their respective schools. *"You are not only teachers but also agents of community transformation,"* he said. *"Through your dedication, we can build a literate society where every child, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to succeed."*

As these graduates embark on their teaching careers, they carry with them the hopes of their communities and the responsibility of nurturing South Sudan's next generation of leaders, thinkers, and innovators. Their journey is a testament to the power of education in rebuilding and strengthening a nation.



MNTTI @ MOGEI

Maridi National Teachers Training Institute is situated in Western Equatoria State, South Sudan, the institute was established in 1954, it is the oldest teachers training institute in South Sudan. And is considered a national hub for excellence and a critical component of South Sudan's education system.

The institutes have introduced new programs to support inclusive education, such as training teachers in braille and sign language to support students with disabilities. It has also launched a new e-library and computer laboratory to enhance digital literacy and research capabilities.

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction has planned to expand the teacher's training institutes to all the ten states and the three administrative areas: Rumbur TTI, in Central Equatoria State; Rumbek TTI, in Lake State; Mappier TTI, in Western Bahr El Ghazal State; Maridi TTI, in Western Equatoria State; MBILI TTI, Bentiu TTI, in Unity State; Eastern Equatoria TTI in Kapoeta; Upper Nile TTI in Renk; Jonglei TTI in Bor; and Tonj TTI in Warrap State.

The principals of all these institutes have been appointed.

The main objective of the training institutes is to train teachers both male and female in pre-servicing and in-servicing teachers training. These teachers training institutes are the centres for academic and professional development, while the mission is to increase the number of professional well-qualified teachers to expand access to primary education in the Republic of South Sudan.

Currently there are only two functioning teachers training institutes Rombur and Maridi, the enrolment to all the teachers training institutes are all the leavers or the students who hold Secondary school Certificates in either section of science or arts.

Upon completion two or three years of study at the teachers training institutes, the students' teachers will be awarded certificates or diplomas by the University of Juba, school of education and thereafter, deployed as teachers in primary schools.

The Director General of teacher's development said according to the graduation data for this year there is Greater need to mobilise female students after secondary school to enrol to any of the ten teachers training institutes in the country, to increase the female teachers, who will also be role model to female learners in the schools across the country.

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction is looking forward to provide enrolment scholarship to female to join the teacher's training programs in any of the ten Teachers Training Institutes across the Country.

The National Education Coalition



Dr. Ador Riak Nyiel, National Coordinator

The National Education Coalition in South Sudan (NEC) is a collaborative and membership based network of over 180 national and international organizations focused on advocating for right to Inclusive, equitable and quality education for all with specific focus on educational reforms and improvements within the country. It includes various stakeholders, such as NGOs, community-based organizations, teachers' associations, and other civil society groups committed to improving education in South Sudan.

As a strategic member in the coordination sector which includes LEG and its steering committee on GPE, ECW, World Bank, TVET, Budget working group, etc., NEC engages in but not limited to.

Policy Engagement: The coalition engages with government officials and policymakers to promote reforms that enhance the quality and accessibility of education.

Capacity Building: It often conducts training and workshops for educators and community leaders to strengthen their ability to advocate for educational improvements.

Research and Data Collection: The coalition undertakes research to gather data on the state of education in South Sudan, which informs its advocacy efforts and helps raise awareness about educational challenges.

As a result of the above processes, NEC plays a vital role in raising awareness about the importance of education and advocating for increased investment in the sector and by fostering collaboration among various stakeholders. The coalition aims to create a more cohesive approach to addressing educational challenges in the country through strategic engagement with its key ally, the government of South Sudan represented by the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, Education Donor Group in South Sudan, Private sector, humanitarian organizations and other stakeholders. The National Education Coalition is essential for promoting dialogue and action around education in South Sudan, working towards a future where all children have access to quality education.

The Transformation of Gai Tut Primary School

In Nyirol County, Jonglei State, South Sudan—where conflict, displacement, and natural disasters threaten daily life—education has often been relegated to a secondary role, overshadowed by the struggle for survival. Plagued by flooding and insecurity, the region has seen hundreds of internally displaced persons (IDPs) fleeing violence in Chuil Payam, seeking refuge along the Sobat River in Ulang and Nasir. Frequent cattle raids and tribal conflicts make stability elusive, trapping families in a cycle of fear and uncertainty.



The recently renovated Gai Tut primary school, under the ongoing 'Education Cannot Wait' (ECW) program in the area. Photo credit: Khor Wal,.

Amid these challenges, Gai Tut Primary School's four classrooms stood on the brink of collapse. Once filled with eager learners, they had become uninhabitable: broken windows let in harsh winds and dust, cracked walls undermined the building's stability, and missing doors and deteriorating floors made learning nearly impossible. Teachers and students struggled in these dire conditions, battling overcrowding, crumbling infrastructure, and the constant shadow of conflict.

But amid the despair, a glimmer of hope emerged. Thanks to the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) program, implemented by Nile Hope, Gai Tut Primary School underwent a remarkable transformation. Four classrooms were fully renovated, restoring safe and dignified learning spaces for children who have endured unimaginable hardships. New windows keep out the elements, solid doors provide security, and repaired floors and walls now offer a stable, welcoming environment for learning.

County education director Ter Mun Jok praised the renovations, saying, "These classrooms were in ruins—home to goats, cows, and dogs, making learning impossible. Now, Gai Tut Primary School is a safe space where children can thrive. We are committed to ensuring every school in Nyirol County receives this critical support."

Jeremiah Reeth Gai, the school's headmaster, shared his relief: "Before, learners sat in dusty rooms, struggling to concentrate. Today, they are excited to learn. This renovation isn't just about fixing buildings—it's about restoring hope."

In a region where conflict and displacement threaten education, Gai Tut Primary School stands as a symbol of resilience—proof that even in the toughest circumstances, children deserve a future, and hope can be rebuilt, brick by brick.



Pictures of the renovated Gai Tut Primary School. Photo credit: Khor Wal,

A Journey of Resilience and Hope

In Nyirol County, where the rainy season transforms the land into an unforgiving expanse of mud and floodwaters, access to education becomes one of the greatest challenges.

Schools turn into isolated islands, forcing learners to battle treacherous terrain just to attend class. But for Nyagoa Dak Lual, a Senior 3 student at Bariak Secondary School, these obstacles were just another challenge to conquer.

Nyagoa, a child living with a disability, faced more than harsh landscapes. The whispers and jeers of her peers—who called her ngol, a Nuer term for someone with a leg disability—could have broken her spirit. Yet she stood tall, refusing to let cruelty define her.



Nyagoa Dak Lual (holding the phone) with her caregiver and her uncle at the Light for the World office in Juba. Picture taken in May by Kon Joseph

Recognizing her potential, Nile Hope intervened after assessing 50 learners, transporting Nyagoa and her caretaker to Juba. There, she received a Tri Circle mobility device and training from Light for the World, a MYRP consortium partner supporting children with disabilities. Armed with confidence and tools, she returned home ready to keep learning—and thriving

Nyagoa's brilliance defied expectations: she ranked among her class's top performers, proving ability transcends physical limits. Inspired by her resilience, Nile Hope trained local teachers in inclusive education, slowly dismantling harmful stereotypes.

Now, Nyagoa dreams of becoming a pharmacist. *"I refused to let my disability define me,"* she said. *"Education is my strength, and I'll prove I can succeed like anyone else."* Her community, once skeptical, now sees her as a beacon of change. *"Nile Hope helped them realize we deserve the same opportunities,"* she added. *"One day, I'll give back to my people."*

Nyagoa's journey proves that determination, coupled with community support, can rewrite futures—and that societal change begins with one unyielding voice. We look forward to the day she walks into a pharmacy not as a customer, but as a healer, guiding her community toward a healthier tomorrow.



A relentless pursuit for Success:

A young mother's journey of resilience in South Sudan



Achai Deng and colleagues display some of their work to the visiting team from Ministry of General Education and Instruction in June 2024 - Abyei Administrative Area

In the contested Abyei region of South Sudan, where political uncertainty looms large, 20-year-old Achai Deng is writing her own story of resilience and hope. Two years ago, Achai's life took an unexpected turn when she became pregnant at 18, while still in primary school. She was in her final year.

Luckily, she was allowed to seat for primary certificate final examinations while pregnant. Like many teenage mothers in South Sudan, where nearly 50% of girls are married before age 18, Achai faced the daunting prospect of abandoning her education.

"I thought my dreams were shattered," Achai recalls, her eyes reflecting a mix of past pain and newfound determination. "In our culture, a pregnant girl is often seen as a disgrace. I felt alone and scared."

But Achai's story didn't end there. Thanks to an innovative program by Save the Children, implemented through the Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) in the Abyei Administrative Area, young mothers like Achai are getting a second chance at education – and at life. Save the Children provides educational support to schools in Abyei Administrative Area, and an additional skills training to young mothers. The program attracts out-of-school children and young adults additionally providing psychosocial support to sustain their learning in respective schools.

"The day I walked into Comboni Secondary School to start senior one, I felt like I could breathe again," Achai says, smiling. "But it wasn't easy. I'd sit in class, my mind split between algebra and worrying about my baby's next meal."

Save the Children's holistic approach ensures that girls who return to school receive social support, mental health counselling, and practical skills training. For Achai, learning to design and sell bedsheets has been a game-changer.

"Now, I can make some money for my child's needs," she explains proudly. "Milk, soap, clothes – small things that make a big difference. But more than that, the counseling has helped me believe in myself again. I'm not just a statistic; I'm a student with a future."

The impact of such programs cannot be overstated in a country where early marriage and pregnancy are leading causes of school dropouts among girls. In a society grappling with poverty, where a daughter's marriage often means a dowry and one less mouth to feed, changing mindsets is crucial.

"We're not just educating individuals; we're transforming communities," says Nyinwie Mayule, Save the Children's Education child protection case worker in Abyei. "When a young mother stays in school, she becomes a powerful example to others."

Achai's day is a delicate balancing act – rushing home between classes to breastfeed, studying late into the night, and working on her bedsheets whenever she can steal a moment. But her eyes shine with determination when she speaks of the future.

"I want to become a teacher," she declares. "To show other girls that pregnancy doesn't have to be the end of their dreams. Education is our most powerful tool."

As the sun sets over Abyei, casting long shadows across the schoolyard, Achai gathers her books, ready for another evening of study. Her journey is far from over, but with each step, she's not just changing her own life – she's paving the way for countless others.

"To every girl out there facing challenges," Achai says, her voice strong, "

remember this: Your story isn't finished. It's just beginning.

"The day I walked into Comboni Secondary School to start senior one, I felt like I could breathe again,"

Struggling school gets new life



Students during class session at Pagarau Primary School @ MYRP Images 2024 - Yirol East County

Pagarau Primary School is located at the centre of Pagarau Payam, Yirol East County, Lakes State. It is supported by Plan International, an implementing partner organisation in the ECW MYRP program for South Sudan. For years, limited resources like teaching and learning materials, low teacher morale due to poor remuneration and delayed salaries led to decline in school performance. Student enrolment had decreased by about 40% at the start of 2023.

Through MYRP/ECW intervention, Pagarau received sufficient materials to facilitate teaching and learning. The MYRP program provided blackboards, cartons of chalk, chairs, and tables for the teachers. Other support included teachers' training on pedagogy to enhance their knowledge and teaching skills. Majority of teachers are volunteers without professional teacher training background. This initiative provided opportunity to hone their skills and improve their practical experience in facilitating learning in and out of classrooms. Though the challenge of poor remuneration persists, capacity building sustained their motivation to teach.

To sustain school improvement initiatives, the program also provided training to Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) membership. This initiative boosted parents' and community's involvement in enrolment and oversight in school activities. However, with more than half of the county's population food insecure at IPC 3 and above, schools cannot cope with learning unless school meal provisions exist for learners. Complementary food assistance in hot meals provided by other agencies to learners in Pagarau primary school has improved learner's participation and continued stay in school.



Pupils from Pagarau Primary School

All these initiatives in Pagarau primary school have paid off. The school currently boasts of 986 (334 girls) enrolled students. This is an increase by 38% from 609 students registered in 2023. Though the proportion of female teachers is still low, the total of 21 trained teachers (2 female) have improved learning experience in the school. School attendance is consistent. Students have exhibited increased interest in learning with remarkable improvement in their school performance.

Plan International through WFP provided school meals funding in 13 schools in Yirol East including Pagarau primary school and support 54 adolescent girls with dignity kit, this improved their attendance as they no longer skip school during menstruation, provided in-kind support and hardship allowance to female teachers to retain them in their work.

MYRP's Teacher Training:

A Catalyst for Educational Change in South Sudan



Volunteer teacher at Louis Nyok primary school.

Teacher training plays a crucial role in enhancing educational outcomes. This article explores how professional development for educators influences teaching methods and, consequently, students' academic performance.

In South Sudan, many schools face a shortage of qualified teachers. Those available are often underpaid, leading to low morale and high turnover rates. Many educators, like Koul Aujack, are untrained volunteers. Aujack, a recent secondary school graduate, has been teaching mathematics and English to primary 6 and 8 classes for two years. "The training we received has significantly improved our teaching skills," Aujack explains. *"We learned about student management, subject specialization, and effective teaching methods. Understanding and analyzing each student is crucial for tailoring our approach."*

Teacher training is an essential component of all educational activities, including creating conducive learning environments, curriculum development, implementation, and assessment. Trained and skilled teachers are better equipped to educate students effectively. Jimson Akuien, headteacher, said.

Jimson Akuien, headteacher of Louis Nyok Primary School, notes, "The teaching techniques our teachers learn help them develop a variety of interesting and practical strategies. By considering the needs of different students, they make classes more stimulating, helping students understand and remember information better."

"Due to community needs and the rate of illiteracy in my community, this is why I sacrificed myself with the knowledge I have to pass it on to my younger sisters and brothers, because most of the qualified teachers have deserted their teaching career due to the salary matter. When I see they young one going to school, this motivate me to volunteer and give what knowledge I have to them .; Aujack explain Professional development opportunities allow teachers to learn new methods, strategies, and tools. This continuous growth not only enhances their skills but also boosts their confidence and motivation. As Aujack testifies, "When I first started teaching, I was very shy. Now, after the training, I've gained confidence. I can plan my lessons and manage classes well. I can even counsel children on gender-based violence."

In Louis Nyok primary school where Aujack has been teaching as a volunteer teacher for the last two years, there are 20 volunteer's teachers and only 3 qualified teachers in the school.

The Multi-Year Resilience Program-Education Cannot Wait (MYRP-ECW) and its education partners, under the leadership of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, have collaborated across South Sudan's ten states and two administrative areas. Their goal is to empower teachers to identify and address students' needs, foster supportive classroom environments, and create valuable tools and resources for educators and students.

This comprehensive approach to teacher training is proving instrumental in equipping educators with the essential skills needed to boost academic achievement throughout the country.

As South Sudan continues to invest in its teachers, the future looks brighter for its students and the nation's educational landscape.

Pastoralists' Struggles to Access Education



Community girls' school during class session @ MYRP - Kapoeta East County

South Sudan's pastoralists live a complicated life in a harsh environment, dealing with water scarcity and climatic challenges in remote, inaccessible areas prone to conflict, vulnerability, and critical food insecurity. Despite the climate crisis, these communities adapt and maintain their way of life.

The Multi-Year Resilience Program (MYRP) in South Sudan, initiated in May 2023, is spearheaded by Save the Children International (SCI) and executed through a consortium including the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Finn Church Aid (FCA), and works with technical partners such as Plan International, World Vision International (WVI), Light for the World, and UNESCO.

The program aims to benefit 135,000 vulnerable children across fourteen prioritized counties. By combining the unique strengths of each partner, the consortium delivers a comprehensive program addressing five key areas: ensuring safe and equitable access to education, enhancing teaching and learning quality, promoting inclusivity, and building a more resilient education system.

Through AVSI Foundation South Sudan, the MYRP has established a community girls' school in Kapoeta North to promote inclusive and equitable access to education. The program focuses on literacy, numeracy, and life skills to foster community learning and personal growth. The project has provided over one hundred community girls with equipped classrooms, learning materials such as pens, pencils, and exercise books, along with support materials like soaps and dignity kits.

Lokayi Louis, one of the teachers at the community girls' school, says, "This community school has helped reduce the rate of early child marriages, and forced marriage in the community because girls are no longer exposed to traditional social practices; they are more focused on education."

He adds that some parents have realized the importance of education for girls, noting that the students have benefited significantly and can now write and speak in English.

Pastoralist children, particularly in semi-arid environments, face numerous obstacles in accessing inclusive, equitable, and quality education. Their migratory lifestyle poses substantial challenges as it conflicts with traditional school structures, making regular attendance difficult. Their location in geographically isolated places, combined with limited infrastructure and minimal government investment, contributes to their marginalization within the formal education system.

Marino one of the PTA of CGS, explain *'the general community of Lokwamor are extremely happy about the CGS and comes next year 2025 I will bring my two daughters to this school.'* He added that *"The school must continue for the learners to acquire more knowledge and PTA of CGS should sit down and agree for girls to be taught during morning time rather than in the afternoon."*

He also urged AVSI in collaboration with County Education Department to recruit committed teachers and paid incentives on time. On the other hand, Lokaale a female PTA member, *"said she feels good about the establishment of the school, this will bring good future for our young girls and to the entire community as well."*

She added that *'for better learning, there is need to provide food and water in the school to encourage the learners to come to school every day and motivate those who have performed well to boarding school.'*

Elia one of the parents said *'there is need for a chain link fence to be constructed in the school to protect girls to study in a safe and conducive environment .and to renovate the CGS class because the termites have destroyed the timbers of which it might fall any time and is dangerous for learners.'*

Lucia a 14 year old girl at CGS, said *"I feels happy about the CGS program, I have acquired knowledge on literacy and numeracy being taught by our teachers, I want to continue with my studies and become a nurse in future."*

It is good to come to school because it is building us for a better future, I want to become a pilot when I finished my studies.” Said Adele one of the learners at CGS.

She added thanks to AVSI for supporting us with dignity kits, exercise books, pen, pencils and soaps.”

Socio-economic inequalities and poor educational infrastructure prevalent in pastoralist societies often result in children, particularly girls, being forced into early marriage or engaging in labour-intensive activities instead of attending school. This perpetuates the cycle of poverty and denies them access to quality education.

88 -year-old man enrolled in primary education



*Students attending class under the tree at Nhomlaau primary school
8th April, 2024, @MYRP IMAGES - Yiro East County*

It is a dream come true for Peter Mading Akech, 88, as he attends grade 3 class at Nhomlaau Primary school, in Yiro East County, Lakes State. Growing up, he never got a chance to attend a class and learn but now, he leads by example despite the age difference with his classmates proving that education has no limits.

“I joined the school because I like learning, and I know the importance of education. When my age mates mocked me asking how it is going to change my life, I let them be because I understand the value of going to school and learning.

There are also those who also respect my decision and have encouraged me to go. Education will help keep me busy and help me think positively towards life,” he says.

He also encourages children to join school and focus on education saying it is best for their future and the country, while asking the youth to refrain from conflict.

The availability of teaching materials and learning materials has encouraged many to attend schools.

Last year, the Government of South Sudan announced the implementation of free primary education in public schools across the country, guarantying all the children free and compulsory primary education and free illiteracy eradication programs.

The move has led to increase in enrolments in most government schools.

Life-Changing Story of a Volunteer Teacher in South Sudan



Nyankiir Koul as a Volunteer Teacher in Comboni Primary School - Abyei Administrative Area

Nyankiir Koul is a senior four graduate who completed her secondary leaving certificate in 2023. As she waited for her results, Koul decided to volunteer as a teacher in Comboni Primary School in Abyei Administrative Area. For nearly a year, she has continued to offer her time as a teacher at the school.

When interviewed, Koul stated that she would continue her studies in education if she received a scholarship to support her advancement to a higher level. As she awaits such an opportunity, she will continue to offer teaching services.

Like many colleagues who have entered the teaching workforce without any professional training, Koul faced numerous challenges, including low self-confidence, poor classroom management, and inconsistent pedagogy in facilitating teaching and learning.

Comboni primary school comprises of 41 teachers, including 24 male and 16 female teachers. Half of the teachers do not have professional teaching qualification. Only three female teachers are qualified. This is close to the national average proportion of qualified teachers. According to the South Sudan annual education census report of 2023, only 59% of primary school teachers are qualified while 41% do not have any teaching qualification.

To improve the quality of teaching and learning, teacher training is crucial both for qualified teachers and non-qualified teachers. A student-centred approach has not been widely adopted and practiced, a point of emphasis in the 2023 national learning outcomes assessment. Continuous professional development is central in improving teaching practices.

"I developed teaching skills after attending training offered by Save the Children, a Multi-Year Resilience Program (MYRP) partner in the Abyei Administrative Area," said Koul. She has been trained in basic teaching skills and is now confident in imparting knowledge.

"Before I got the training, I used to be scared. I couldn't speak well and was afraid to stand in front of the students. Some students would laugh at me, but with the training I have received, I have overcome my fears. I'm now confident and feel more knowledgeable to teach the students," Koul explained. She added that the training program has helped her better manage the students. The teacher training program has impacted not only teachers but also students. Teachers play a significant role in nation-building, as students are the future leaders. Koul appealed for sanitary materials and incentives for teachers to improve their quality of living and teaching, which would indirectly impact thousands of students.

The Struggle for Inclusive Education: Challenges Faced by Children with Disabilities in South Sudan

In South Sudan, children with disabilities face numerous obstacles in accessing inclusive education. Children with disabilities in South Sudan often struggle with long, difficult journeys between home and school. Many lack essential mobility aids such as wheelchairs or crutches, significantly hindering their access to education. Deborah YIER, Headteacher of Machour Primary School in Yirol East County, Lakes State, provides insight into this issue: *"Most children with disabilities stay at home and don't attend classes due to lack of transportation and discrimination by the community. There are negative attitudes expressed by people towards those with disabilities."* The challenges extend beyond transportation. A critical shortage of teachers trained in special needs education presents another significant hurdle. Many schools are neither physically accessible to children with disabilities nor equipped with the necessary resources to provide adequate support.

Koul AUJACK, a teacher from Louis Nyok Primary School, explains, "Most teachers are not trained on how to conduct lessons with children with disabilities. The blind and the deaf face many difficulties because their teachers are not well-trained to address their specific needs."

School infrastructure often fails to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities. The headteacher from Mulmul Primary School notes, *"There is a need to improve school infrastructure to enable children with disabilities to access facilities such as pit latrines and classrooms. Many buildings lack ramps, and there are issues with seating arrangements."* This sentiment is echoed by the headteacher of Madding Achueng Primary School, who adds, *"There's a lack of appropriate furniture for learners with disabilities, such as chairs, desks, and benches that would allow them to sit comfortably in the classroom. We appeal to the government and its education partners to prioritize inclusive education to help children with disabilities."*

Despite these challenges, efforts are being made to foster inclusive education. The Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) is supporting 105 children with disabilities in 21 schools in Yirol East County, Lakes State, and 125 children with disabilities in 18 schools in the Abyei Administrative Area. The program has been distributing learning materials and support



through the parents to ease the burden on families. On the governmental level, South Sudan took a historic step forward for disability inclusion on February 24, 2023, by signing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This commitment means the government now has a legal duty to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of people with disabilities in South Sudan. While progress is being made, significant barriers to education for children with disabilities persist in South Sudan. These include school location and accessibility, negative societal attitudes, and lack of teacher experience in inclusive education practices.

The MYRP, in collaboration with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, continues to work tirelessly to provide inclusive education to children with disabilities in South Sudan. However, more comprehensive efforts are needed to ensure that all children, regardless of their abilities, have access to quality education.

As South Sudan moves forward, it is crucial that the government, educational institutions, and society at large work together to create a more inclusive educational environment. This will not only benefit children with disabilities but will also enrich the entire educational system and society with diverse perspectives and experiences.

Empowering Girls' Education Through Dignity Kits



Adolescent's girls receiving dignity kits /@ MYRP - Gogrial West County

Financial difficulties and extreme poverty in many communities have created additional challenges for schoolgirls, particularly regarding menstruation. Menstrual products are essential for self-esteem, self-respect, and social wellbeing. The lack of these products leads to girls' absenteeism in school, as they feel embarrassed attending classes during their periods.

Dignity kits play a vital role in girls' daily lives by providing protection, wellbeing, mobility, and hygiene for menstruating girls. The provision of these much-needed supplies empowers girls by boosting their self-esteem and confidence, which in turn helps them concentrate on their studies.

Mary Awien, a student from Kuajok Boy Primary School, said, "I'm so relieved with these supplies. I feel so confident now and I'm not scared to go to school. Before, I used to sit at home hiding during my period days." The initiative by ECW through PCO addresses girls' unmet non-food items needs through the distribution of dignity kits. These kits, which include underwear, sanitary pads, soap, and towels, are intended to help retain girls in school and encourage better class attendance. Without these sanitary supplies, girls may become increasingly isolated due to limited mobility.

"Now I don't have to worry about purchasing disposable sanitary towels," said Alueth Atem from Kuajok Boy Primary School. Many schoolgirls across Gogrial West County who have received the PCO-funded dignity kits no longer worry about coming to school. Each girl has received a dignity kit containing two packets of ultra-absorbent reusable sanitary towels that can last for over 60 washes.

Rebecca Akuol from Gogrial Secondary School expressed her gratitude: *"My classmates and I really appreciate the work of ECW through Peace Corps Organization and the Ministry of General Education for this wonderful intervention. Thank you for supporting us with dignity kits and mentorship on menstrual hygiene. Thank you for restoring our dignity. We can now go to school without worrying and with full confidence. Please continue supporting us."*

Peace Corps is working with local communities to provide sanitary towels and equip adolescent girls with knowledge about menstrual hygiene, building confidence, and addressing sexual and gender-based violence. These seemingly small interventions, such as dignity kits, are making a significant difference in ensuring that no girl child is left behind.

South Sudan Launches First Edition of ASEP Condensed Textbooks to Strengthen Education System



On December 9, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI), in partnership with Windle Trust International unveiled the first edition of Accelerated Secondary Education Program (ASEP) condensed textbooks, marking a significant milestone in efforts to close critical gaps in South Sudan's education sector.

The launch introduced 20 new ASEP textbooks, designed to improve teaching quality and expand learning opportunities nationwide. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to scale up ASEP and the Intensive English Language Course (IEC) across all 10 states and three administrative areas of South Sudan.

The project targets two key groups:

- 4,000 untrained volunteer teachers without secondary qualifications will be supported to complete their secondary education and earn the South Sudan Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). This will formalize their credentials and enhance classroom effectiveness.
- 1,000 refugee teachers will benefit from an Intensive English Language Course, improving teaching quality in refugee communities and fostering integration into the national education system.

Speaking at the launch, Hon. Dr. Kuyok Abol Kuyok, Minister of General Education and Instruction, emphasized the theme:

“Strengthening Alternative Education Pathways for National Human Capital Development.”

He highlighted that 3,433 learners, including 1,193 women, are currently enrolled in 58 ASEP centers nationwide, with enrolment continuing until the 4,000-teacher target is met.

“This program is a cornerstone for building skills and strengthening human capital development in South Sudan,” Dr. Kuyok said. “By expanding access to quality education for teachers and communities, we are laying the foundation for a stronger, more inclusive education system.”

The initiative, Building Skills for Human Capital Development, is implemented by MoGEI in partnership with Windle Trust International, with support from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the World Bank.



Girls' Education South Sudan Program

The Girls' Education South Sudan Program (GESS) Cash Transfers (CTs) are funds disbursed to eligible girls and learners with disabilities to encourage their enrolment, attendance, and retention in the schools.

The program is created to offset some of the direct and indirect cost barriers to education, reducing the financial burden on the family - and to encourage school enrolment and attendance for girls and learners with disabilities.

GESS2 implementation has reached over 1.3 million learners with cash transfers, against a target of 1.24 million. Through the cash assistance, girls have increased choice to meet their educational needs. The initiative has resulted in improved attendance and lower attrition rates for girls and children with disabilities.

The large number of girls reached, alongside other programs has further contributed to the notable improvement in the Gender Parity Index with sections of the country already having bridged the gender gap.

Additionally, GESS provides capacity in Public Financial Management (PFM) to MoGEI, State Ministries of General Education and Instruction (SMoGEI), and County Education Departments (CEDs). This support includes:

- Supporting the National Education Transfers Monitoring committee (ETMC)
- Facilitating setting up the State Education Transfers Monitoring Committees (SETMCs) in all the ten (10) States and three (3) Administrative Areas
- Facilitating setting up the County Education Transfers Monitoring Committees (CET-MCs)
- Development of tools and guidelines

GESS works with ministry staff to follow-up commitments and engage in advocacy at various levels. This, among others, included advocacy for the release of capitation grants and its disbursements.



A learner with visual impairment reading notes through braille.

Inclusive Education system encourages learners with and without disabilities to study in the same classes



Cash Transfers ensures both girls and boys with disabilities continue with their studies. With continued inclusive social behaviour change and communication activities carried out by GESS, the number of learners with disabilities increases every year, in 2025, over 20 thousand learners with disabilities were enrolled 20,813 (10,837 girls and 9,976 boys) comprising of preschool, primary and secondary schools.

Transforming Lives Through the GESS Referral Pathway- Mariam's Story



Mariam is in front of her classroom

The Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) programme has been instrumental in breaking barriers to education, particularly for learners with disabilities (LWD) across the country. One key element of the GESS disability inclusion component is the referral pathways.

The referral pathway is where GESS collaborates with organisations which support disability inclusion, leveraging her nationwide presence and established contacts with schools to link learners to available services, for example, referring them to an organisation that offers assistive devices like wheelchairs for those with physical disabilities, ensuring they receive tailored assistance to thrive in school.

In Yambio County, Western Equatoria State, this initiative has already transformed the lives of 16 learners with disabilities, including Anieue Mariam, a determined learner at Gemenze Nursery and Primary School. Mariam is a learner who faces significant challenges due to her physical disability, often struggling to move.

The lack of mobility aid made it difficult for her to attend school regularly, affecting her education and confidence. Her father, Mr. Wilson, observed that transportation was their biggest struggle. Through the GESS referral pathway, Mariam was connected to the International Committee of the

Red Cross (ICRC), which provided her with a wheelchair via the South Sudan Red Cross Yambio Branch. This life-changing support has enabled her to commute to school independently, boosted her confidence and participation in and out of class, and inspired other children with disabilities to return to school.

Mariam expressed her excitement, "I am proud to be part of the GESS programme. It has empowered children like me across Yambio and Western Equatoria State."

The impact of this intervention extends beyond Mariam and her school; her family and communities have all seen the impact of such support to learners with disabilities. Mr Kinaki Emmanuel, Head Teacher of Gemenze Primary School, stated, "We are grateful for GESS' support in recognising the rights of children with disabilities. The referral pathway has made a real difference in our learners' lives."

Mariam's father, Mr. Wilson, shared his relief and gratitude and pointed out that, "Before, mobility was our biggest challenge. Now, Mariam can go to school with ease!"

On her part, Mariam vows to continue her education and be a role model for other children with disabilities in her community.

The GESS referral pathway continues to bridge gaps by linking learners with disabilities to essential services. Mariam's journey highlights how community engagement and partnerships can create lasting change in our society.

GESS continues to work collaboratively with institutions supporting disability inclusion across South Sudan. With such established partnerships, we believe that learners with disabilities can be supported even beyond the life of the Programme.

The GESS programme is funded through UK aid from the UK Government, the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada, the European Union (EU), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

How Education Support Transformed Rose's Dreams



Rose sits comfortably in class

Before support came to her school, life was tough for Rose. As a young girl in South Sudan, she struggled to stay in school because she could not afford to pay school fees and simple but important things like soap and sanitary pads. During her monthly period, Rose often stayed home, missing lessons and falling behind. Many days, she worried about being sent home because of unpaid fees. Life at school was difficult, and she felt left out when other students had what she needed but she did not have.

Things started to improve when support was introduced at her school through the education cannot wait education programs. The program helped cover her school fees, easing the burden on her family. With this support, Rose could stay in school without worrying about being sent home. She was also able to use some of the money saved to buy school materials like books and pens. *“After paying my fees, I was able to buy books and pens for myself,”* Rose added. Rose was also among the students who received dignity kits, which included sanitary pads and soap.

This small but important help meant she no longer had to miss school during her period making her learn Today, Rose is happy and confident in school. She no longer misses lessons and is working hard toward her dream of becoming a doctor.

She wants to care for patients with kindness and respect because she believes some people do not get proper treatment when they are sick.



Rose sends a message to other parents in her community, urging them to send their children to school, saying it will benefit the whole family in the future. "Please send your children to school. One day, they will help you, and you will be proud of them" Rose is also grateful for the support she has received and hopes the education programs continue helping other girls like her so they too can have the chance to build a better life. "Education has changed my life," Rose says with a smile.

Supporting girls' education is important because it transforms not just individual lives, but entire communities. Educated girls like Rose are more likely to lead healthier lives, make informed choices, and contribute positively to their families and society. When girls stay in school, it reduces child marriages, improves health outcomes, and builds stronger, more resilient communities for generations to come.

Student Teacher Embraces Sign Language Training



*A Student teacher in a class for sign language training at Maridi Ntti and (left) Juliana Zudue posing in front of the office after her lessons
photo: Light for the World*



Zudue Juliana, a 26-year-old student teacher currently in her second year, is completing her practice teaching at Maridi National Training Institute. She stated that the sign language training provided by the Disability Inclusion facilitators at Light for the World was an eye-opener for her as a student teacher, adding that it would be beneficial if integrated into her institution's curriculum.

Before joining the Maridi Teachers Training Institute, Juliana explained that she taught in Anzara County in Western Equatoria at St. Daniel Comboni School, where many students had hearing impairments. Unfortunately, little attention was given to these students, which negatively affected their academic performance. She acknowledged that inclusive education was lacking at that time.

"Now that I have been trained in sign language, I am going to make sure that I integrate this knowledge into the school where I will be assigned.

Across the country we have many children with hearing impairments, and I am sure that all of us who have been trained will fully support these learners in schools," Juliana said.

Juliana further explained that the knowledge is particularly valuable because she has a colleague who is a student teacher with hearing impairment in the same classroom, making it much easier to communicate with her effectively.

With the knowledge gained from the training, Juliana expressed her commitment to promoting inclusivity in schools and communities when interacting with people, including learners with disabilities.

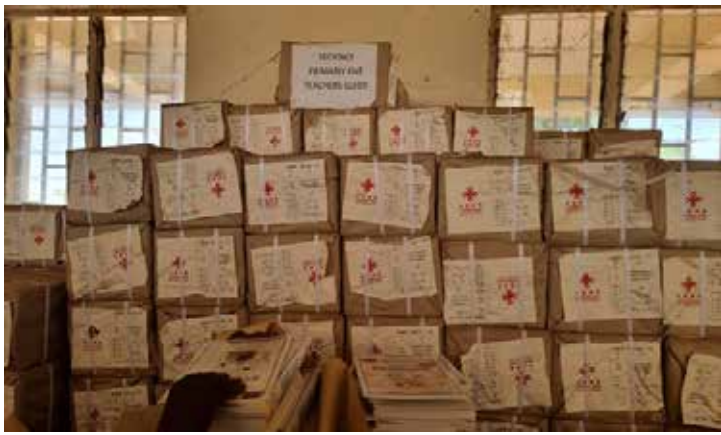
She appealed to Light for the World to continue providing such training and to integrate it into teacher training curricula as a compulsory component.

Juliana admitted that she was previously unaware of the specific needs of learners with hearing impairments, but now that she has received this training,

she is committed to implementing inclusive practices in schools and communities. She praised Light for the World for their initiative, stating that it has been an enlightening experience for all student teachers involved. As a technical partner under Education Cannot Wait, supported by the Multi-Year Resilience

Programmed, Light for the World will continue providing technical support to teachers through specialized training programs, even in hard-to-reach areas. This ongoing support will equip teachers with the essential skills needed to effectively support learners with disabilities in schools across the country.

79 Counties to Benefit from Over Five Million Primary Textbooks Printed.

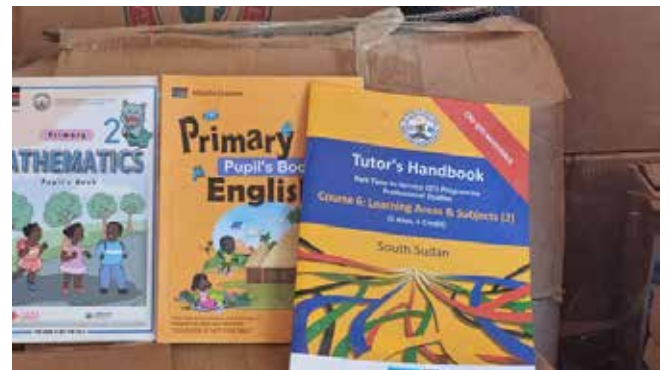


The Ministry of General Education and Instructions has printed 5.6 million textbooks for primary schools, 4.5 for grade one and two in five subject, English, mathematics, social studies, science and Christian religious education. and 1.1 million textbooks for primary schools, is the new revise textbook, from grade 2 to grade 8 primary in three subjects, English, mathematics and sciences.

The ministry has assured its commitment distributed the primary textbooks across the country in 79 counties in the ten state and the three Administrative Areas. The acting Director General of Curriculum at the Ministry of General Education and instruction, said the distribution of the books is plan to kick-off in December 2025 up to January 2026, all the government schools across the country will receive the textbooks, the books will be distributed according to the population of the schools in the counties.

The 1.1 million textbooks printed with the support from China aid funding to the Ministry of General Education and Instruction. While the 4.5 million textbooks were printed with the support from the government.

The books will play a vital role in the teaching and learning process that gives every child the best possible opportunities for education in South Sudan. These textbooks are crucial in the teaching and learning process, ensuring more children in South Sudan - regardless of their background - can have the best possible opportunities for education.



The textbook situation in South Sudan is improving but still critical, with ongoing efforts by international partners like the EU, UNICEF, and Save the Children to distribute new and curriculum-aligned textbooks, especially for primary schools. Despite these large-scale distributions, a significant shortage remains, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas, leading to a high pupil-to-textbook ratio that poses a major barrier to quality education for millions of children.

Current challenges

Significant shortages:

Many schools lack sufficient textbooks, and existing ones are often old, damaged, or not aligned with the national curriculum.

High pupil-to-textbook ratio:

A major problem is that there are far too many students per book, limiting opportunities for learning and practice.

Unequal access:

Children in conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas are disproportionately affected, as are children with disabilities who lack adequate support materials.

Lack of resources:

The lack of adequate teaching materials contributes to significant barriers to accessing quality education.

Organizations like **Save the Children** have distributed millions of textbooks since 2021 to reduce the pupil-to-textbook ratio.

Curriculum-aligned textbooks:

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction launched new, national textbooks in 2019 to ensure consistency in teaching across the country, with support from donors like the EU.

International support:

UNICEF and other partners are supporting the development, printing, and distribution of textbooks.

Targeted programs:

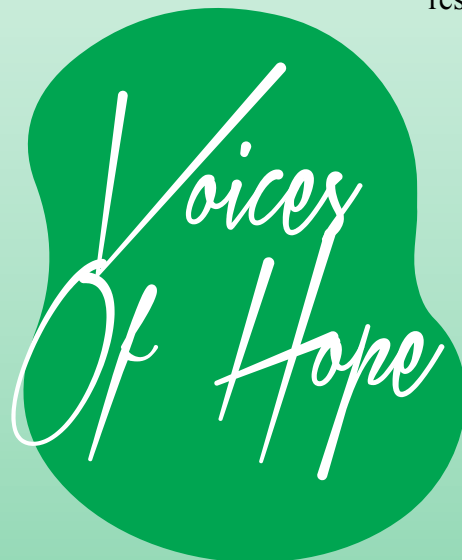
Initiatives are focusing on vulnerable groups, including out-of-school children, displaced populations, and girls, with support from organizations like Education Cannot Wait.

The situation is improving thanks to targeted distribution efforts and international aid, but the sheer scale of need means that a lot more work is required.

Ensuring that new textbooks reach all children, especially those in rural and conflict-affected areas, remains a major challenge.

Continued funding and coordinated distribution are crucial to providing equitable and quality education for all children in South Sudan.

The program, led by Save the Children in partnership with Norwegian Refugee Council, Finn Church Aid, and the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MOGEI), and funded by the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) initiative, is one of the most wide-reaching education resourcing initiatives in South Sudan.



Redefining Dreams: Awuor's Path from Motherhood to Education



Awuor ALP student in level 4 enter a classroom at her school in Warrap state

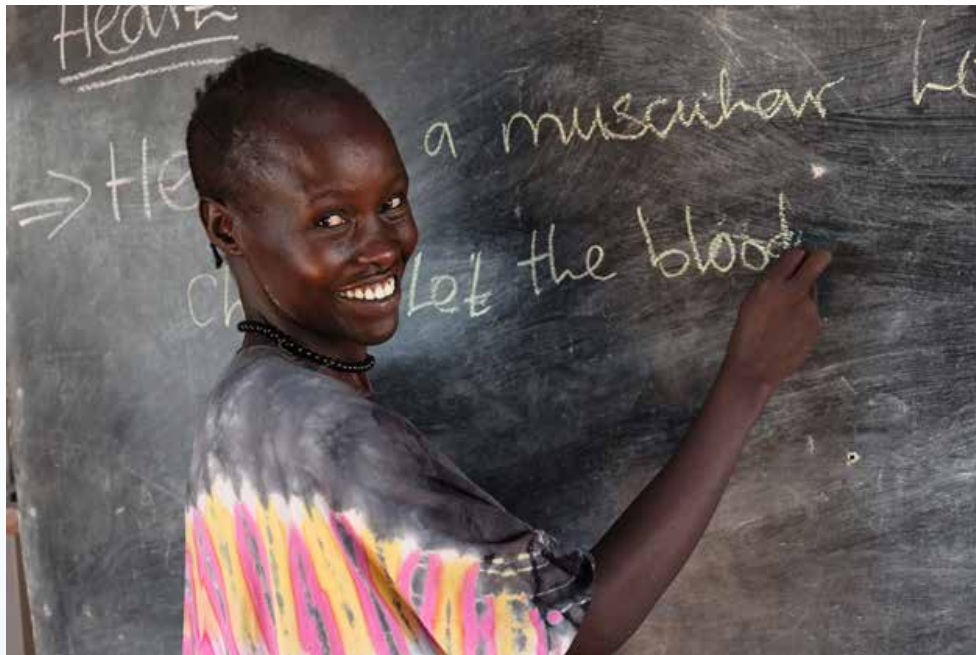
At just 20 years old, Awuor is a proud mother to a beautiful two-year-old girl. She lives with her parents in Warrap State, South Sudan. Life became difficult when she had to drop out of school in Primary 4 after becoming pregnant.

The father of her child refused to take responsibility, leaving Awuor to care for her baby on her own. For two years, she stayed away from school, missing the joy of learning and dreaming about her future. But deep down, Awuor knew she wasn't finished; she believed her life could still change.

In 2024, Awuor's hope returned when she attended a training session organized by the Peace Corps Organization (PCO) under the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) program at a local primary school. A facilitator's words touched her heart: "Your future is not over. You still have the power to change your story." That message gave her strength.

**“
Your future is
not over.
You still have
the power to
change your
story
”**

Together with five other young mothers, Awuor made the brave decision to return to school. With her parents' support—even though money was scarce—she joined the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP). The program also provided dignity kits for girls, making school life easier for her, especially during menstruation. “I couldn't ask my parents to buy me sanitary towels,” she says. “They would ask, ‘Should we give you money, or buy food for your child?’ And as a mother, I always put my child first.”



Today, Awuor balances school and motherhood with courage. “My life used to be simple. As a girl, I would go to school, come home, do my homework amid multiple household chores, and sleep late, waiting for the next day.

Now everything has changed,” Awuor reflects. She wakes up early, cares for her child, helps with housework, and then goes to school in the afternoon. She loves learning, making new friends, and seeing new opportunities open up for her.



Her dream is to become a doctor and help other young mothers in her community who have faced the same challenges.

Awuor believes education is the key to a better future. She encourages young girls to stay in school, work hard, and never give up on their dreams.

Supporting young mothers like Awuor to return to school is important because education gives them a second chance to build a brighter future for themselves and their children. When young mothers are educated, they gain the skills and confidence to care for their families, contribute to their communities, and break the cycle of poverty.

Programs that help them continue their education offer hope and show that motherhood should never be the end of a girl's dreams, but a reason to fight even harder for a better life.

“ I couldn't ask my parents to buy me sanitary towels ”

Opening the Path to Education:

Emily's Story



In the remote village of Napetait Boma, Kapoeta North County, 16-year-old Emily Lopir's story reflects the struggles of many other girls. Life in her village is exceptionally hard, and children growing up there, especially girls, are often deprived of their basic rights.

Emily faced numerous challenges accessing education, as her parents, like many others in the community, did not value girls' education. Despite this, Emily dreamt of a different life. She yearned to study, but the lack of support severely discouraged her from pursuing an education or a career.

"I dropped out of school because my parents were unable to pay my school fees," she recalls. "School requirements like uniforms and scholastic materials prevented me from attending classes like others."

Glimpse of Light

Many girls and other children in Kapoeta North County, Eastern Equatoria State, face immense challenges accessing quality education. Cultural norms and economic hardship have left many without the resources to pursue formal schooling.

Through the Multi-Year Resilient Program (MYRP), and with support from Education Cannot Wait, AVSI took a crucial step toward addressing these issues by sponsoring vulnerable children, particularly girls, at St. Mary's Magdalene Primary and Tim Galvin Secondary Schools. This initiative reflects AVSI's ongoing commitment to improving access to quality education for children in South Sudan.

In 2024, Emily was identified and offered sponsorship to complete her studies through this initiative at St. Mary's Magdalene Primary School. The sponsorship covers her school fees and scholastic materials, ensuring she can stay in school and focus on her studies.

"The support from AVSI has changed my life. I was able to finish my Grade 8 because it reduced the burden of my struggling parents paying my school fees," the 16-year-old, who completed Grade 8 last year, explains. "Before this sponsorship, paying school fees was a constant struggle, but now I am able to see a brighter future."

Looking Ahead

After receiving her Grade 8 results, Emily plans to put in an intensive effort and study hard to achieve her dream of attaining a degree. “Indeed, I have learned that my education does not end here. I hope to finish my schooling to help my communities. Thanks to AVSI, I had the chance to see the light,” she excitedly concludes.

Context

In South Sudan, ensuring that every child has access to quality education remains a significant challenge, particularly due to a lack of financial support. Critical factors contributing to this issue are the country’s struggling economy and a negative perception of girls’ education. Many learners struggle to learn effectively amid these conditions, which leads to lower attendance rates and high dropout rates.

Why Support Matters

While child support isn’t an instant solution, it’s the most effective way to ensure girls have access to essentials like food, clean water, shelter, education, and healthcare – enabling them and their families to plan for a better future.

Data

Through the Multi-Year Resilient Program, 74 students (31 in secondary school and 43 in primary school) were supported, with 6 girls transitioning from primary to secondary. Through this comprehensive support, AVSI is ensuring that girls can focus on their education without the burden of financial constraints. When you sponsor a girl, you’re not only giving her access to these opportunities to lift herself and her family out of poverty – you’re also helping to protect her from the dangers of early marriage and violence.

From Under the Tree to a Brighter Future: Monica’s Journey



Monica, standing in front of her learning space under a tree

Monica is 14 years old and goes to school in South Sudan. Monica’s school does not have enough classrooms, so she and her friends studied under a big tree. This was very difficult for them. Sometimes weather conditions like strong winds affect and interrupt their lessons “*When the wind blows, dust comes into our eyes and books,*” Monica said.

This year, the tree shed off its leaves so the students were heavily impacted by rain and the hot sun which is not a safe environment for children’s learning.

“Sometimes the rain starts, and we have to run home and when the sun is too hot, we sit in the heat.”

Recently, a new classroom was built at Monica’s school through support from Education Cannot Wait (ECW) programs. This support came to help girls and boys like Monica learn in a safe and better place.

“I am very happy for the new classroom,” Monica smiled. “Now when it rains, we will not run away. When there is too much wind, we will be safe inside.”

Now Monica is excited to go to school every day. She feels safe, protected, and ready to learn. “I want to be a president when I finish school,” Monica said proudly. “When I become a president, I will help the people of South Sudan and build hospitals and more schools.”

Monica encourages parents to take their children to school. When girls like Monica get the chance to learn, they can dream big and help their families and country in the future. Educated girls avoid early marriage, stay healthy, and later care for their families.



A picture of the classroom construction, on the finishing stages, about to be handed over to the school community.

Empowering Inclusive Education Ajuzuz’s Journey at Pibor Girls Primary School



A photo of Ajuzuz, seated beside her friends in class in Pibor Administrative on 10th/06/2025 Photo:LFTW.

Ajuzuz Akaran, a 15-year-old pupil with a disability in Primary 3 at Pibor Girls Primary School, is thriving in her studies thanks to the inclusive environment created by the school.

She acquired her disability at such a young age that she does not remember how it happened. At the age of five, her mother left her with her grandparents, and for almost 10 years now, Ajuzuz has lived with them.

Recently, teachers at the school received training from Light for the World and Window Trust on Continuous Professional Development.

This training focused on gender-based violence, disability inclusion awareness, and inclusive communication using appropriate terminology. As a result, Ajuzuz and other pupils with disabilities have seen a significant improvement in their learning experiences. Ajuzuz expressed her gratitude towards the teachers for ensuring that all pupils, including those with disabilities, have access to information and support in the classroom. She mentioned that in the past, *“pupils with disabilities faced challenges due to floods, making the journey to school difficult. I am happy that the teachers took proactive steps to accommodate us with disabilities near the school, making it easier for us to attend classes.”*

This inclusive approach has made a significant difference in Ajuzuz's education, as she no longer needs to spend long hours navigating flooded roads to reach school.

Ajuzuz is proud of the progress made in creating an inclusive environment at Pibor Girls Primary School and credits the teachers' training for this positive change. She is grateful for the support and accommodation provided to students with disabilities, making their educational journey more accessible and enjoyable.

As a technical partner, Light for the World—under Education Cannot Wait and the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, supported by the Multi-Year Resilience Program and led by Save the Children South Sudan, NRC, and FCA South Sudan—will continue extending its support to learners with disabilities even in hard-to-reach areas. The aim is to ensure they are enrolled in school and that classrooms are accessible, helping to eliminate negative attitudes towards people with disabilities in communities.

Construction of a Latrine Block in Abyei Boys' Primary School



Constructed latrine @ Save The Children in Abyei Administrative Area.

The Abyei Special Administrative Area is one of the most crisis-affected regions in South Sudan, grappling with insecurity, flooding, inadequate learning spaces, disease outbreaks (such as cholera), and an influx of refugees and returnees. These challenges have created significant gaps in the education sector.

Abyei has 46 primary and secondary schools, but only 27 remain operational (22 primary and 5 secondary), while 19 primary schools have closed due to insecurity and displacement. Among these, Abyei Boys' Primary School—one of the oldest in the region, founded in 1943—stands as a critical institution.

Located in Abyei Municipality's Gungbial residential area, the school had an enrollment of over 1,300 learners before the project began. Today, it serves more than 1,600 students, including those in its new Accelerated Learning Programmed (ALP) center.

However, the school faces immense challenges: overcrowded classrooms, a lack of WASH facilities, insufficient furniture, shortages of teaching materials, understaffing, and high dropout rates. Most critically, the absence of latrines forced students to resort to open defecation in nearby bushes, posing health and sanitation risks.

In 2023, hope arrived through the Multi-Year Resilience Programmed for Education in Emergencies. Implemented by Save the Children, this initiative began transforming the school's fortunes.

A gleaming new latrine block now stands on campus—comprising four clean stances plus a specially designed facility for students with disabilities. But the changes run deeper than

bricks and mortar. Five teachers received training in mental health support and child protection, while four others learned specialized techniques for inclusive education. Precious textbooks and learning materials finally reached eager hands. Young mothers in the ALP program received dignity kits and mother's kits, while female teachers gained crucial hardship allowances. Perhaps most importantly, a robust professional development program has begun empowering educators to rebuild Abyei's educational foundation. During the handover ceremony, Mou Chom, a 17-year-old Primary 8 pupil, shared his gratitude:

“Our long suffering has ended—no more going to the nearby stream or bush! Now, we have a quality, standard latrine in our school. We thank Save the Children for solving one of our biggest challenges. Our old latrine was full, dirty, and almost unusable. Many of us had to go home or to the bush, wasting precious learning time. With this new latrine, we have privacy, cleanliness, and handwashing water—making our school safer and healthier.”

The new latrine block will also help combat cholera outbreaks by eliminating open defecation near water sources. Proper sanitation facilities are essential for promoting hygiene and preventing disease, ensuring students can focus on their education without health risks.

This project has not only restored dignity but also strengthened the foundation for learning in Abyei—proving that, even in crisis, education can thrive with the right support.



Constructed latrine @ Save The Children in Abyei Administrative Area.

Renovation of Teachers' Quarters



Condition of teachers' quarters in Kapoeta North County (Lomayen primary school) before the renovation



The Renovated Teachers Quarter in Lomayen Primary School Kapoeta North County



Students And One of Their Teacher During GBV counselling session in the school @ MRYP

Impact of GBV Protection in School

The decades of conflict in South Sudan have supported a culture of violence that still pervades society. From the commencement of its program, Education Cannot Wait (ECW) has put gender equality and protection at the heart of all its investments through a whole-of-child approach, bringing together gender-responsive programming, disability inclusion, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), nutrition, and child protection.

For the last three years, the ECW program has placed more initiative on GBV protection in supported schools, ensuring implementation and conducting awareness campaigns in the community. With this initiative, Peace Corps organization, funded by ECW, has been implementing GBV protection in 32 schools in Warrap State by creating community awareness about gender-based violence and encouraging a culture of seeking help for victims to eradicate associated stigma.

Bol Miyen, a Teacher at Injas Primary School, explained, "The training offered to teachers by Peace Corps has really helped us. We are now able to avoid segregating boys and girls into separate lines, sports activities, and seating. We ensure educational materials show genders equally, mix boys and girls for project work, and explore gender concepts and roles from different communities."

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) affects millions of children and adolescents worldwide, representing one of the worst manifestations of gender discrimination and violating multiple children's rights.

Achol James, a teacher at Kuajok ALP Primary, said, "Education is critical in empowering and transforming young people's lives, especially girls.

Yet widespread gender-based violence in and around schools seriously undermines the achievement of high-quality, inclusive, and equitable education for all children." She added that multiple types of violence against children within and outside South Sudan's schools continue to be a major concern requiring collective responsibility.

Jacson Kamis, PCO Project Assistant, noted that experiences of sexual violence tend to block social skill development, undermine self-esteem, and may lead to eating disorders, depression, and insomnia. He highlighted that training conducted with teachers, parents, and teachers' associations, along with awareness campaigns through radio talk shows, has significantly changed community and learner perceptions about GBV protection.

Yar Madut from Injas Primary School emphasized that feelings of guilt and anxiety can expose students to violence, potentially causing girls to demonstrate poor performance, reduce school engagement, or drop out entirely due to low self-esteem and reduced concentration. As a trained teacher on GBV protection, she confirmed they now use better approaches to handle such cases and ensure proper victim counselling, which has created increased confidence among learners.



Community members session on GBV - Kapoeta North County

Aney Ngor, PTA Chairman of Akoi Primary School, said the PCO training transformed their understanding of GBV protection. Community members now acknowledge the risks girls face in schools and are creating awareness to eradicate sexual harassment, discrimination, gender stereotyping in learning materials, and negative socio-cultural practices that have undermined girls' educational access.

Despite existing frameworks by the South Sudan Government and national education system, the prevalence of bullying and sexual violence in schools reveals that legislative and policy measures are not being effectively enforced.

In December 2019, UNICEF reported stark statistics: 65% of women and girls in South Sudan have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, with 51% suffering intimate partner violence. Additionally, 33% of women have experienced sexual violence from non-partners, primarily during attacks or raids.

“ 65%
of women and girls in
South Sudan have experienced
physical and/or sexual violence
in their lifetime. ”

Parent Teachers Association in Schools



*PTA conducting a meeting with students and community on GBV Protection in Schools @ MYRP
Project location: Kapoeta North County*

The Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) is an organization comprising teachers and parents, formed for the welfare of school children. The PTA encourages and facilitates parental involvement in school activities and decision-making processes by creating a positive and supportive environment for students to excel academically.

In South Sudan, these associations can be found in different counties and states. When well-equipped and organized, they play crucial roles in supporting students' success, school development, and increasing enrollment, especially for girls and children with disabilities.

Achel Aguer, a PTA member at Injas Primary School, shared, "The training from education partners has helped us greatly. We are now able to organize fund-raising initiatives from parents and communities. These resources are used to support various educational programs, including extracurricular activities and supplementing the school budget to enrich the educational experience."

The PTA is a voluntary welfare organization that brings together the primary stakeholders in education: parents, guardians, and teachers of pupils in a particular school.

Ajok Madhel, another PTA member at Injas Primary School, explained, "*Before this training, we did not understand our roles in the school and community. We could not effectively mobilize the community. Now, with this training, we have learned our roles and help with fund-raising, maintaining discipline, ensuring the school's welfare, and creating bonds between the school, home, community, teachers, and parents.*"

Many parents recognize the importance of quality education and are committed to ensuring their children receive the best possible learning opportunities. This underscores the need for parents and teachers to collaborate and bring about positive changes in the school system.

Pin Chol, PTA chairman of Gogrial Primary School, stated, *"The training has equipped us with knowledge and skills to develop effective awareness campaigns. We now work hand in hand with community members and leaders to provide schools with building materials such as bricks, firewood, and timber. We also assist in constructing local fences, school kitchens, stores, and classrooms."*

Aney Ngor, PTA chairman of Akoi Primary School, added, *"We organize talk shows and seminars to create awareness about the importance of education, especially for girls. We bring communities together to encourage both boys and girls to attend school and assist in improving school enrollment."*

A PTA member from Kuajok Boys ALP expressed appreciation for the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and Global Partnership for Education (GPE) grants, managed through Save the Children, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Finn Church Aid (FCA), and UNICEF. These grants have significantly benefited children and communities in Gogrial West County.

Education Cannot Wait and GPE grants, managed through these organizations, have helped South Sudan improve access to quality education through interventions such as classroom construction, PTA member training, and teacher training to address high illiteracy rates in the country.

How Learning Materials Impact Students' Success



Students during the distribution of learning materials / @ MYRP - Gogrial West County,

For many decades, South Sudan has been struggling to improve the quality of education across the country. The nation aims to increase school enrolment, improve literacy rates, increase the number of qualified teachers, and provide adequate learning materials.

With support from education partners such as Education Cannot Wait and the GPE Program, in collaboration with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, efforts are being made to provide learning and teaching materials to schools across the ten states and two administrative areas.

Over the past three years, the Education Cannot Wait program has been working alongside the Ministry of Education to support many schools in various states, including Warrap state. There, Peace Corps Organization implements project activities in four counties: Gogrial West, Tonj East, Tonj North, and Twic County. Through this collaboration, over thirty schools have received supplies of school materials, including textbooks, chalk, exercise books, pencils, pens, colouring pencils, and educational toys and games.

The supply of learning materials has contributed positively to students' academic performance and learning experiences.

Peter Mangong, headteacher of Injas Primary School, explains, "The distribution of exercise books and other school supplies is essential for supporting student learning and development. When learners receive these tools, they understand and remember information more effectively, compared to simply listening in class without writing materials. These exercise books allow students to organize their ideas and track their progress, which is vital during exam season."



Students during art class

Ajok Deng, a student at Injas Primary School, shares her experience with the distributed learning materials: *"The exercise books and writing materials given to us have helped me tremendously. Before the distribution, I came to school empty-handed because my parents couldn't afford writing materials. This made exam preparation difficult as I had nothing to refer to. Now I'm more focused and concentrate better in class. I enjoy coming to school every day because I have everything I need for my studies. I can easily review my notes when I need to understand something or prepare for exams."*

He adds, *"The provision of learning materials in schools paves the way toward academic success. By providing learners with necessary tools from the first day of school, students become more motivated, develop higher self-esteem, and enjoy a better learning experience."*

Peace Corps Organization has provided packs filled with school learning materials, ranging from crayons and calculators to pens, pencils, and exercise books.

Rebecca Achol, a teacher from Akoi Primary School, emphasizes the importance of these supplies: *"School supplies play a crucial role in education and student development. Having all necessary materials while at school prepares students and gives them a sense of security."* She adds, *"Something as simple as writing utensils and paper can determine students' progress and achievements."*

She continues, *"Thanks to the Education Cannot Wait Program and our Ministry of Education for this important support. I urge the Ministry of Education to continue supporting us in schools and to increase the number of qualified teachers, as this is another significant challenge we face - we don't have enough teachers."*

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction continues to work with its education partners to ensure long-term quality education services and equitable access to learning, aiming to prevent dropout and other disruptions in children's education.

Sign Language and Braille Training Launched in Juba Rombur NTTI



Staff and students joined by Light of the World during the launch at RNTTI in Juba

Light for the World International, in collaboration with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction launched a training program for over 45 teachers in sign language and braille in Juba, September 2024.

The training, held at Rombur National Teachers Training Institute (RNTTI), aims to support persons with hearing impairment, increase the number of interpreters, and promote inclusive education in the country.

"This is an important initiative because children with disabilities have a right to education," said Sophia Mohammed, Country Director of Light for the World International - South Sudan. "There is need for qualified teachers in inclusive education and classroom management to accommodate children who are deaf, have hearing impairments, are blind, have visual impairments, physical impairments, or intellectual disabilities."

The training will span nine months for each braille and sign language course, including inclusive education pedagogy. It targets over 1,400 teachers in the next two years.

Mohammed added, "The training will be conducted in three National Teachers Training Institutes: Rambur, Maridi, and Maper. These institutes will receive teachers from all states and three administrative areas." Sign language is a means of communication for deaf children, and teachers need these skills to communicate and support children in schools. Similarly, braille is a learning tool for the blind. The training will be provided by Light for the World, with support from MYRP through Save the Children.

Rombur National Teachers Training Institute, located in Kapuri, Luri Payam, Juba County, was founded in 2009 by the then Autonomous Government of Southern Sudan. Constructed with funding from the Government of Japan, RNTTI was first established as a centre for training science and mathematics teachers under the project: ***Strengthening Mathematics and Sciences in Education***. It was officially handed over to the Ministry of General Education and Instruction in 2011 as a centre of excellence and is affiliated to the University of Juba.

Since its establishment, the institute has produced 191 qualified teachers who are currently active in the field of education.

Easing Hunger Through Quality Education



Students at St. Mary primary at the school garden @ MYR- Kapoeta North County

South Sudan possesses vast agricultural potential, yet farming remains largely traditional, relying heavily on subsistence methods and rainfall patterns. This dependence on basic farming techniques has resulted in low agricultural production across the country, limiting farming to subsistence-level activity that barely meets family consumption needs, with little to no surplus for market sale.

The lack of agricultural education among communities has contributed to widespread food insecurity and vulnerability to hunger throughout the country.

AVSI Foundation continues its efforts to create sustainable solutions to food security in schools by establishing school gardens.

These gardens enable schools to produce their own food, serving multiple purposes:

- Helping retain students through regular meal provision
- Improving access to nutritious food
- Reducing dependency on food aid

Annet, a student at St. Mary Primary School, shares: "The school garden is very important to us because it provides our food. Learners need to eat to gain the physical strength to carry them through the day. It also helps us with nutrition because we can vary our diet."

Praxides, a teacher at St. Mary Primary School, explains:

"The school garden has improved the students' diet by providing vitamins from vegetables. We teachers have also benefited, as we get our food from there too. Previously, students depended mainly on sorghum, but since the garden started, it has improved the learners' health through diverse food options."

Schools in South Sudan are uniquely positioned to initiate community change. School gardens serve as powerful tools to teach students about nutrition and environmental stewardship while providing healthy meals. In food-insecure regions, these benefits extend beyond the school, contributing to broader food security.

AVSI Foundation incorporates school gardens into its school meals and resilience program. The initiative aims to teach children basic agricultural skills and nutrition knowledge, representing a vital investment in students' futures.

Through this project, AVSI Foundation has provided comprehensive support to seven schools in Kapoeta North County, including the distribution of seeds, tools, and seedlings to enhance school garden initiatives.

As an international NGO, AVSI Foundation plays a pivotal role as a member of the South Sudan Education Cluster and co-leads the Education Cluster in Eastern Equatoria State, implementing comprehensive educational projects to promote inclusive and quality education across the country.

AVSI Foundation Transforms Girls' Lives Through Education in Eastern Equatoria



One of the beneficiaries participating during class session @MYRP - Kapoeta North County

Many children in Kapoeta North County, Eastern Equatoria State, face immense challenges accessing quality education. Conflicts, displacement, and economic hardship have left many without resources to pursue formal schooling.

The Education Cannot Wait MYRP project, implemented through AVSI Foundation, aims to change this narrative by providing comprehensive educational support to vulnerable girls while allowing them to remain with their families.

Lilian, one of the supported beneficiaries, says the program has opened her eyes to various career options. "I hope to become a five-star nurse after finishing my studies," she shares. She explains that the scholarship covers school fees, uniforms,

stationery such as pens, exercise books, pencils, and dignity kits, ensuring she can stay in school and focus on her studies.

Lilian, 16, is among the 39 learners who face numerous challenges to go to school. Her parents were unable to support her education financially due to the perceptions that young girls are meant to take care of the children and do domestic works that coach them ready for marriage, a move that prevents many girls from accessing learning opportunities and making it difficult to continue their education in South Sudan.

IN 2023, she got a MYRP support for girls from vulnerable family. After receiving the materials and through career guidance and mentorship in school by AVSI, the 16 years old continue to progress and became one of the best performing learners in primary 7, at St. Mary primary school.

Cultural norms and practices have traditionally expected young girls to take on childcare responsibilities and household chores, preventing them from accessing learning opportunities and making it difficult to continue their education.

Annet, another MYRP program beneficiary, shares her experience: *"The support has helped me tremendously. Before AVSI's support, coming to school was challenging due to lack of money for fees, learning materials, and transportation. This often forced me to stay home, but now with this support, I can regularly attend school."*

with her parents unable to support her education financially, the support has been instrumental in helping her continue her studies at St. Mary Primary School.

The program seeks to break the cycle of poverty and vulnerability through education, recognizing it as a fundamental tool for community development.

Through comprehensive support that includes tuition fees, uniforms, learning materials, and mentoring programs, AVSI Foundation is ensuring that girls can focus on their education without the burden of financial constraints.



Young mothers during their soft skills training in the school (Tim Calvin secondary school)



Save the Children through AVSI foundation offer Support to younger mothers both in primary and secondary schools and offer soft skills training to the young mothers to assist them financial and support their children back at home.

A Story of Hope and New Beginnings in Mariik Primary School

In Mariik Pulluk Payam, Awerial County, there was once a school without walls.

Beneath the sprawling canopy of a tamarind tree, children sat cross-legged on bare earth, tracing letters in the dust and reciting lessons aloud. With no desks, no chalkboards, and no shelter, their education depended on three things: their voices, their hope, and the unwavering dedication of their teachers. This was not a forgotten place—it was a place where learning refused to die.

James Agany Nyok, head teacher of Mariik Primary School, remembers those days all too well. *“We had no classrooms,” he recalls. “The younger children studied under the trees. The older ones—if they were lucky—crowded beneath rusty iron sheets.”*



*The Before and After Photo of Classroom at
Mariik Primary School PHOTO BY HESS*

These makeshift structures, known as Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS), offered scant relief. Sweltering by day, deafening when rain hammered the metal roofs, they were a fragile shield against the elements. Yet for teachers and students alike, they represented something precious: a sliver of dignity.

Then, everything changed.

With support from ECW-MYRP through HelpEducation South Sudan (HESS) under the FCA consortium, a sturdy new block of two climate-resilient classrooms rose from the dust.

“We were overjoyed,” says James, his face lighting up. “Now, our upper-grade students—who once baked in those iron-sheet ovens—learn in proper classrooms, seated at real desks. You can see the difference in their eyes.”

The transformation runs deeper than bricks and mortar. There’s new energy here. Students sit taller, their pride restored. Teachers speak with renewed passion, their voices carrying farther in classrooms where dreams can take root.

Enrollment has surged from 697 to 831 learners and climbs steadily—but the most profound change isn’t just in numbers. It’s in who walks through the school gates: girls who once left due to early pregnancy are returning, babies strapped to their backs, determination in their steps. Through HESS and ECW-MYRP, they receive cash stipends for essentials like milk, soap, and school supplies, alongside life-skills training to launch small businesses.

“They’ve changed,” James observes, admiration in his voice. “They’re confident. Focused. Some are now our top performers.”

To Help Education South Sudan, the Finn Church Aid, and ECW, the community’s gratitude is boundless. Your support has turned iron sheets into sanctuaries, shame into strength, and despair into dreams. In Mariik, education no longer fights to survive—it thrives.

Revitalising country-wide School Inspection and Supervision



Inspection document Distributed in the states



Headteachers after training-Malakal

Headteachers received training in school inspection & supervision with support from GPE funding through UNICEF. The training equipped headteachers with valuable experiences that they can in turn use to provide an enabling environment for inspectors to enter and inspect schools, and headteachers to effectively supervise teachers in lesson delivery and other related school responsibilities. During the training, headteachers complained of lack of inspection in their respective schools thus: “School inspection and supervision has never happened before in our schools.

Now that we understand school inspection and supervision, we shall always be prepared to receive inspectors to inspect our schools” (One headteacher from Melut County). Similarly, another headteachers expressed: “This training is unique compared to other forms of trainings conducted in the county here.

MoGEI developed several inspection documents and tools including ECD inspection Framework & Guidance, Primary & Secondary school Inspection Framework & Guidance, South Sudan’s Policy of School Inspection & Supervision, Inspectors Training Manual with the associated training slides, Headteachers’ Inspection orientation Course material, Headteachers’ Inspection Orientation training, Inspection orientation training notes, and the Headteachers’ Inspection Orientation Presentation notes. The inspection frameworks were piloted (in Juba, Wau and Bor), validated, printed 58,741 copies of these documents, and distributed to the States, Administrative Areas, Counties, Payams, and schools across the country.



Group of Inspectors after training

The facilitators are well experienced and knowledgeable about school inspection and supervision. The knowledge we gained is enough for us to prepare for inspection and supervise teachers in our schools” (William Akuei Dau).

MoGEI Quality Assurance Officers were trained by Curriculum Foundation UK, and in turn trained inspectors and headteachers in school inspection & supervision in the States, Administrative Areas and Counties. 885 school inspectors across States, Administrative Areas, and Counties received training in school inspection with funding from GPE through UNICEF. Every inspector trained appreciated the content, the knowledge and the skills delivered by the trainers. One inspector in Malakal said, “This training is the first of its kind we received and has educated us on how to prepare for termly school inspections, and how to enter schools and conduct school inspection based on the seven-school inspection focus areas.



One of the overcrowded lower primary classes with huge number of refugees & returnees from sudan – Abyei

Upper primary class-less crowded - Abyei



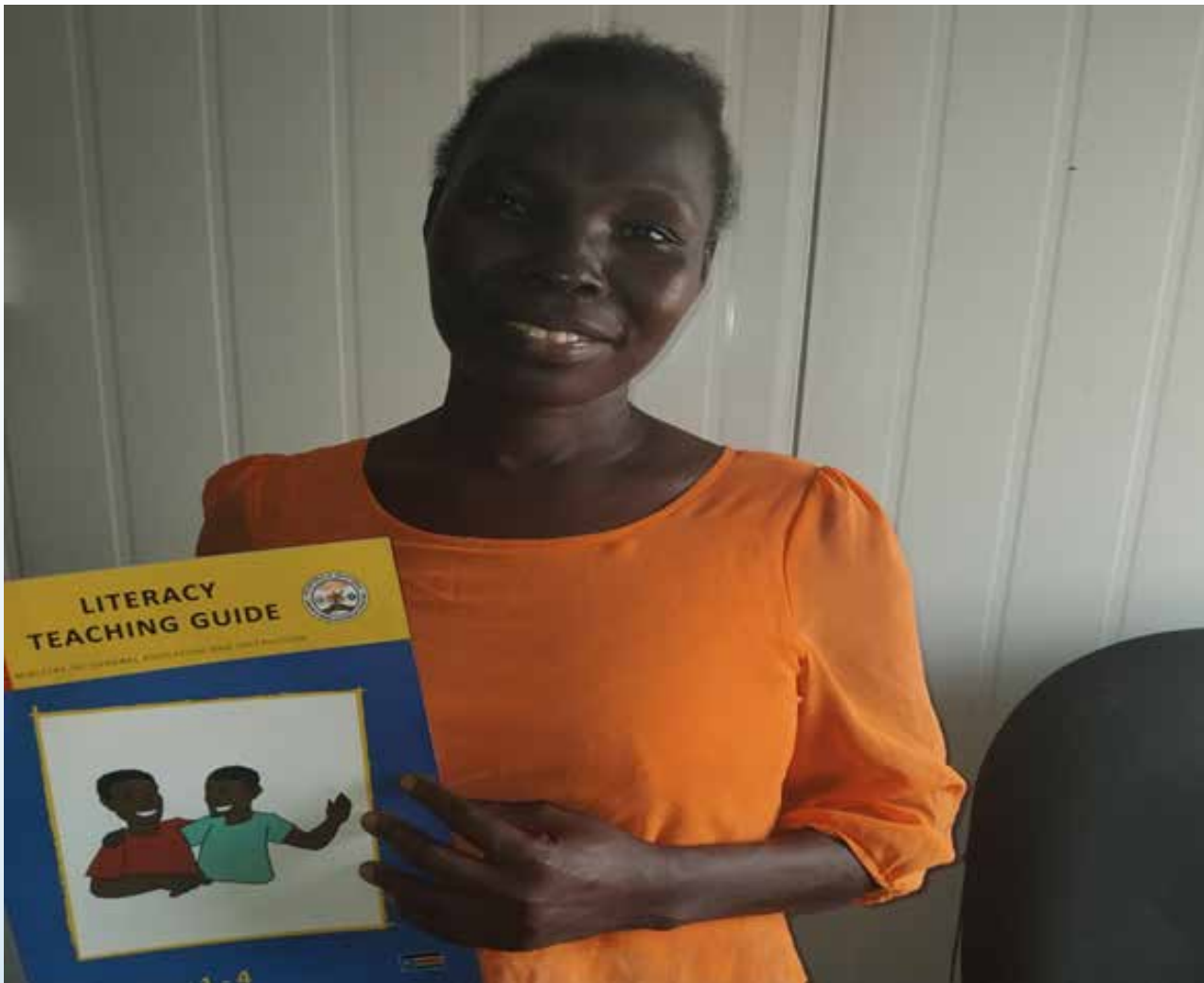
MoGEI Quality Assurance Officers together with the Inspectors of the State Ministry of Education Abyei conducted a Joint school inspection targeted schools that benefit from Norwegian funding through UNICEF. This joint school inspection is the best experience of on-the-job capacity building for inspectors in the State and Counties, as they work alongside experienced MoGEI Quality Assurance Officers, to continuously improve their school inspection performances.

Several factors contributed to the diminishing enrolment as children transit to upper primary levels. These factors included early marriages, domestic chores for especially girls, and cattle camp engagements for especially boys, and parents' low attitude to education particularly of the girl-child.

The Conducted monitoring & supportive supervision of the quality of school inspections attached to UNICEF school project in Yambio, Twic and Mundri East funded by Norway. The inspection monitoring revealed that many of the inspectors have low capacities to effectively plan and command school inspection.

The grade judgments for the seven inspection focus areas were irrational, and deeply unable to generate a comprehensive inspection report. Most of the trained competent inspectors left for other better paying jobs. It was also noted that the SMOGEI and the Counties did not have an annual term-by-term school inspection plan.

How Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Training Impacts Teachers



Mrs. Paska Nakwang, a teacher at Torit West Primary School in Eastern Equatoria State

Through the Strengthening Community Resilience in South Sudan's Urban Settings (KFW) project, Windle Trust International has been building the professional capacity of primary school teachers in Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Northern Bahr al Ghazal and Western Equatoria states through trainings on foundational literacy and numeracy. This project has been funded by the Federal Government of Germany through UNICEF and implemented in close partnership with the national and state ministries of general education and instruction. Mrs Paska Nakwang, 36, was one of the teachers who benefitted from the training on foundational literacy and numeracy at Torit West Primary School in Torit County, Eastern Equatoria State.

A mother of 7 children and an English language teacher at her school, Mrs Nakwang shares her experience of the training she attained from Windle Trust International in January 2025. Through this training, she says she now enjoys teaching.

“I am a trained teacher from Arapi Teachers’ Training Institute (ATTI) in 2012 and later pursued my Diploma in Primary Education at Unyama University in Gulu, Uganda, which I did not complete due to shortage of finance and other support. Leaving Unyama as a dropout, I did not give up the struggle to get a Diploma in Primary Education. By my own determination, I made a way to Yei and joined Yei Teachers’ Training College in 2015.

I wanted to keep my academic journey alive. However, due to fragile security situation in the country, it was another stumbling block to this dream when war broke out in 2016. Obviously, the college closed, there was panic and I found my way to the refugee camp in Uganda for safety and keep the dream alive. In the refugee camp, the dream of pursuing my studies, especially in education, looked as if it was fading out. I always asked myself why my journeys were forced to end pre-maturely,” she said. “I came back to South Sudan as a returnee and joined teaching,” she continued.

One of the objectives of the KFW’s project was to provide training on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy to the mainly (volunteer) teachers teaching in lower primary classes (P1- P4). The aim is so that such teachers contribute to laying a firm foundation to teaching and learning, with schools expected to post better learning outcomes.

Mrs. Nakwang, decently clad in her orange dress, expressed that in the most recent one-month training implemented by Windle Trust International, she had learnt new skills that were not provided during her three-year college education.

“There are things I learnt from the most recent training by Windle Trust. In my past experiences, I have been dominating the talking in the class while teaching. I thought I was a good teacher by doing this. However, I have come to learn that more talking and time should be given to the learners to practice what they are learning. The work of a teacher is only to guide the learning process,” she admitted.

“I have been trained or taught by many tutors/teachers in my education life, but I was to applaud two tutors whom I look at as my role models. I was about to leave teaching given the fact that the salary is low and not promptly coming. As someone who also went to a Health Science Institute and qualified as a Clinical Officer, my conscience was telling me to leave teaching. However, in this recent training provided by Windle Trust International, Mr. Amato Kanis and Adaha Milton have made me like teaching, and I may remain a teacher forever because of the the way they handled us in the training. If I had the same tutors during my time in the college, by now I would be a principal at a certain institute somewhere.

I liked the kind of support, enthusiasm and guidance they gave us as we were doing things in groups and coming up with our own pieces of work and versions of our own creativity and innovativeness,” she narrated.

Specifying how she benefitted from Literacy in the training, she said she had not known the importance of rhymes and songs in teaching until during this training. “I was just using rhymes, tongue twisters and songs not knowing that they can be used to help pupils learn a concept or help them learn how to say or pronounce certain words in English. Besides, I was not taking children out do some activities during the learning process, especially to observe and match the objects with their nouns (names), when learning new vocabularies like tree, green, grass, soil, to mention but a few, which wouldn’t be found in the class. Before this training I was just explaining to the learners and little did, I know that it was always good to take children outside for a learning purpose and it also refreshes them,” she explained.

Asked if she teaches Mathematics in any of the lower classes and if she really benefitted from the literacy and numeracy training, Ms. Nakwang said she now teaches this subject in Primary Four Class after realising that it is the easiest to teach. “In my secondary school, Mathematics was the worst performed subject on my transcript, and I had put in my mind that Mathematics is very difficult. I had mathematical phobia. However, this training has paved way for me to teach the subject, and I have already started teaching it in P.4. of late after the training. I finished my secondary education without even some simple Mathematical concepts such as how to find the perimeter of a given figure. But I can now do all these, even how to find the area of a square, rectangle, cutting shapes of different polygons, and measurements.”

She admitted that she is already an asset in her school as she is going to persuade her head teacher to engage teachers in interschool seminars, especially on Saturdays, so that they can share experiences and skills with other colleagues.

She said that what limits learning or knowledge to circulate is that *“some teachers think they know and they instead miss to learn because learning is a process.”*

In conclusion, Mrs. Paska Nakwang said she is privileged to be one of the teachers selected for this training which could be a turning point in her teaching career. She is also appealing to Windle Trust International to increase the number of teachers to benefit from this kind of training. She is particularly more concerned with the female teachers whose number is very low in the whole state.

“ *I have come to learn that more talking and time should be given to the learners to practice what they are learning. The work of a teacher is only to guide the learning process* **”**

Launch of South Sudan’s National Youth and Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning Policy



AES students at John Garang primary school displaying the framework policy during the launch at the celebration of international literacy day in Juba.

The Ministry of General Educational and Instruction has launched the national Youth and Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning Policy framework, For 2025-2030.

The policy is part of the government of South Sudan, and its partners plans to transform education and promote literacy has the core of national development agenda for improving education country wide.

The program was launched by the Vice President for Services Cluster during the celebration of world international literacy day 2025. Under the theme: ***“promoting literacy in digital era”***

The Vice President for Services Cluster, Joséphine Lagu,” said during the launch that, the President of South Sudan and Its Government have declared war to eradicate illiteracy in the country, adding that the second struggles are for development and education country wide.

South Sudan has one of the lowest adult literacy rates globally, with estimates of 30-35%, where women's literacy is lower than that of men's, due to widespread of conflict and lack of adequate funding for education, leading to high out of school children and shortage of qualified educators. In spite of these challenges, efforts are being made to improve literacy by the governments and its partners led program, with initiative on vocational training and digital literacy.

The ministry of general educational and instruction together with its education partners are implementing adult literacy programs, providing funding for technical support to enhance literacy, training teachers to improve foundational literacy skills and incorporating digital literacy in the modern era.

Annual Review Workshops



Participants during the annual review workshop in Juba

Year 1 Annual Review Workshops, that brought together Implementing partners and the top leadership of the Ministry Education to review the progress, achievements of the MYRP program, and to Identify key areas for improvement in program implementation and develop a comprehensive action plan for MYRP Year



To our partners

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to you for the unwavering commitment to supporting education in South Sudan. Your contributions are shaping futures and transforming lives. Thank you for your partnership and dedication in improving learning outcomes in South Sudan. Many stories have been shaped by the invaluable work we have done collectively and in partnership. This magazine highlights some of the impactful work done. Partners listed below only represent a fraction whose work was shared with us at the time of developing this magazine.



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About MYRP

The second phase of Multi-Year Resilience Program in South Sudan, initiated in May 2023, has been actively implemented for 2 years. MYRP aims to reach 135,000 vulnerable children across fourteen prioritized counties through a consortium of Save the Children International (SCI), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and Finn Church Aid (FCA).

By combining the unique strengths of each partner, the consortium aims to deliver a comprehensive program addressing five key areas: ensuring safe and equitable access to education, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, promoting inclusivity, and building a more resilient education system.

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