



# RESEARCH BRIEF

No. 14 - 2018

## HOUSEHOLD SURVEY: ENDLINE



### Knowledge, Evidence and Research

The **Knowledge, Evidence and Research (KER)** component of the **Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS)** programme aims to generate increased knowledge and evidence for policymakers of what works to promote girls' education in South Sudan, about programmatic causality and impact, and to provide lessons learned to inform future programmes and other contexts. The KER develops an evidence base for the project interventions, linking inputs to outcomes and impacts, and gathers broader information about what works in girls' education. The Programme gathers data continuously through the South Sudan School's Attendance Monitoring System (SSAMS), twice yearly through Longitudinal Qualitative Survey, yearly through School Sample Survey, and then has set piece Baseline (2014), Midline (2016), and Endline (2018) survey waves.



### Methodology

The Household Survey used both quantitative and qualitative methods. Twelve households per State were selected purposively, and all 10 (former) States had the same sample size, to ensure adequate representation. Within each selected household, quantitative surveys were conducted with guardians and in-depth interviews were conducted with 1 parent or guardian, 1 older child (13-18), and 1 younger child (6-12), as well as a further child who did not attend school (any age). Focus group participants were selected based on a purposive sample of community members with children of school age. A total of 43 quantitative surveys, 157 in-depth interviews and 15 focus group discussions were conducted in all ten former States.



### Household Survey Objectives

The objective of the Household Survey is to get an in-depth picture of the sensitive and complex nature of household decisions about money, gender relationships and power structures that affect education, as well as the experiences of learners. In particular, the Household Survey captured data in the following areas:

- Financial management by households and girls;
- Educational choices by households and girls; and
- Barriers to attending school.

### Executive summary:

- Since the 2014 Baseline, the wider context in which the South Sudanese education system operates has deteriorated, with 1.84 million IDPs and 2.47 million South Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries, rising food insecurity and increasing financial pressure on households and schools.<sup>1</sup>
- Insecurity and economic collapse have compounded the pre-existing barriers to education for girls and boys, of family poverty and unequal access to education.
- In spite of these barriers to education, not only has school enrolment risen from 928,000 in 2014 to over 1.7m in 2018 ([www.sssams.org](http://www.sssams.org)), but the School Survey provides evidence that schools have seen visible improvements in terms of infrastructure, number of teaching staff, attitudes towards girls' education, enrolment and the quality of education.
- The Household Survey provides evidence that guardians and children are aware of GESS initiatives, and recognise that positive impacts have come as a result.

<sup>1</sup> South Sudan Humanitarian Bulletin Issue 6, 16 July 2018, UNOCHA



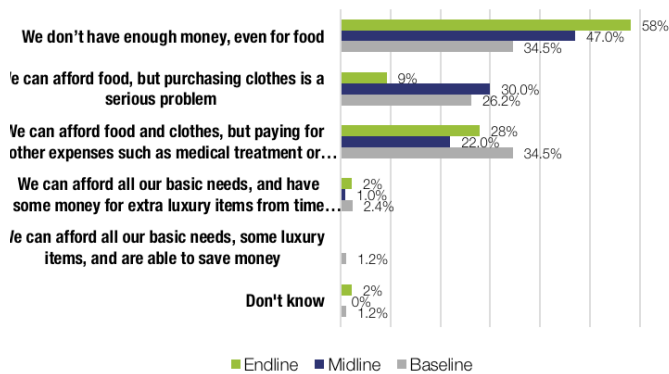
**Key findings**

Average reported costs in South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) for schooling in 2018 are 8 times higher than at the Midline. Converting to USD using the April 2016 and April 2018 market exchange rates shows there has been a 2.2 times rise in costs of schooling to guardians in effective value terms. However, despite increasingly fragile household finances, spending on education remains a priority for the majority of households.

The majority of guardians reported that the overall cost of sending their child to school has noticeably increased since 2016 as costs levied by schools, such as tuition, registration, and examination fees, as well as the cost of supplies in the market, such as school uniforms, stationery and exercise books, has risen significantly. 60% of all surveyed schools were government schools, and, despite clear Ministry of General Education & Instruction (MoGEI) directives that government schools should not charge school fees, 94.4% of guardians report paying Primary school fees, and 66.7% report paying Secondary school fees. This may in part reflect the reduced effective value of Capitation Grants, giving schools little choice but to leverage funding from parents.

Despite the real rise in costs for households, education remains the second highest priority for household spending after food, despite the average household's financial situation having become more fragile since the Baseline.

**Comparison of household financial situation between Baseline, Midline and Endline, as reported by guardians**

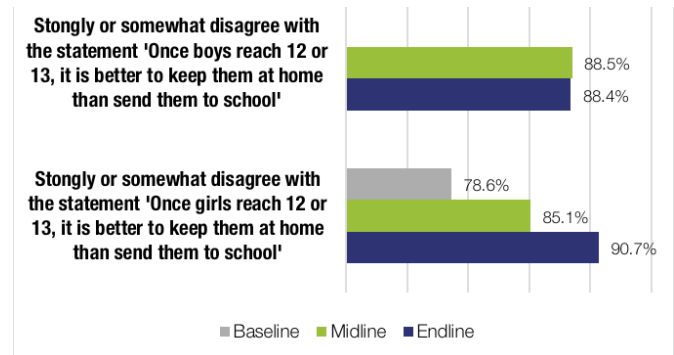


Guardians expressed positive attitudes towards school and recognise the value of education; the majority of guardians want all their children to attend school, regardless of gender; more guardians express gender preference at Secondary level than Primary.

In constrained financial circumstances, guardians say they are more likely to prioritise the oldest or most intelligent child, rather than making a choice based on gender. In addition, 90.7% of guardians strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement that girls aged 12-13 should stay at home, comparable to the 88.4% who had the same opinion for boys.

The percentage of guardians disagreeing with this statement has grown cycle-on-cycle, compared to the percentage of boys, which has remained consistent.<sup>2</sup>

**Percentage of Guardians who strongly disagree or somewhat disagree with statements by research cycle**



Parents were more likely to express a preference for boys over girls at Secondary school level, with 30.8% of guardians stating they would prioritise a boy's Secondary education over a girl's, compared to 7% of guardians stating this at Primary level. Qualitative interviews revealed these guardians would not prioritise the education of a girl at Secondary level due to the likelihood of early marriage; "because girls are likely to get married earlier than boys" or because "girls have limited time for education based on the age".

Children mostly enjoy school, and link attending to their future aspirations; physical punishment, hunger, and absent/low capacity teachers are the main reasons children report disliking school

'Learning' and 'playing with other children' were identified by younger children as things they like about school, whilst older children frequently explained education would allow to get a good job, and live better lives than their parents. Children not attending school talked about being 'jealous' of their school-going peers; 78% of out-of-school children said they would like to attend in the future. Physical punishment and hunger in school were the most common reported dissatisfactions with school, by a margin. Learners reported violence at school, teacher absence and poor quality of teaching as the worst things about school.

Girls noted education would give them control over marriage and children. The average age girls wanted to get married and have children was 26, the same as reported by boys.

Guardians are aware of the positive impact of GESS initiatives on household finances, learning environments and encouraging children in terms of their education, however there was a lot of anxiety amongst guardians and children about the end of the GESS programme, especially relating to Cash Transfers.

<sup>2</sup> Data for the Baseline on boys is missing

39% of guardians had heard of Capitation Grants, compared to 86% who had heard of Cash Transfers, not surprising given the visibility of Cash Transfer payments to the community compared to Capitation Grants, which are paid to the school. Qualitative interviews reveal guardians believe Cash Transfers have had a positive, tangible impact at the household level, with households who received Cash Transfers reporting that they have notably reduced pressure on guardian spending on both education-related and non-related items, such as food and medicine. Qualitative interviews also revealed that guardians who have heard of Capitation Grants were able to list a variety of improvements to their child's school as a result, including improvements to the learning environment, such as construction of pit latrines, fences, and classrooms, as well as less tangible benefits such as children enjoying school more and concentrating harder. The majority of guardians who had not heard of Capitation Grants still reported noticing improvements to their child's school since 2014. Given tenfold reduction in Capitation Grant values since the Baseline, this finding suggests that the social impact of Capitation Grants 'punch above their weight' in absolute financial amounts; similarly, since only 35% of guardians reported visiting their child's school, this suggests discussions surrounding schools and education taking place in communities, and between parents and children.

*"[If the Cash Transfer stopped] I will try my best to do something to make sure that my elder son can go university and my daughter have to get married"*  
(Female guardian, former Jonglei State)

In qualitative interviews, guardians and children reported that they had heard the GESS programme was ending; girls especially expressed anxiety about the end of the Cash Transfer programme.

Whilst the majority of children surveyed reported that they did not have access to a radio at home, of the children that reported listening to the radio (n=29), 55% said they had listened to the Our School radio programme. Children who had listened to Our School reported enjoying the programmes, with children particularly highlighting how the programme had encouraged them to attend school and work hard.

## Recommendations

- Cash Transfers have a major impact on household choices about schooling: ensure Cash Transfers are funded and delivered in the transition to GESS2, specifically in the context of reported increasing fragility of household finances compared to Midline and Baseline, and in their key role in household finances, look to increase value amounts and sustainability of Cash Transfers to girls, and explore the option of providing similar Cash Transfers for more year groups.
- School fees persist in government schools despite MoGEI

directives, indicative of the few sources of funding available to these schools in the context of depreciating Capitation Grant value amounts: consider increasing school Capitation Grant value amount levels to help to reduce the high cost barriers to education.

- Despite overall improvements in reported attitudes to girls' education from households (corroborated in the School Survey by teachers), positive attitudes are still weighted towards Primary level; in the same vein, higher reported costs of education were reported by older children than younger ones. Consider providing more support for Secondary school girls, who have higher monetary needs and face more pressure to drop out.
- Personal and family sickness was the main reason reported for absence, which has been consistent since the Baseline, and matches findings from the School Survey. A logical recommendation would be to link up local healthcare initiatives with schools to provide basic services for learners and teachers: colocation of health services at schools – whether at the basic level of 'School Mothers'/Matrons, Community Health Workers/Boma Health Initiative, or full-scale colocation of Primary Health Care Units, and join-up of education and health administration at County level, is a recommended practical step.
- Up from the Midline, hunger was one of the most commonly reported reasons for disliking attending school; given the fragile economic situation of most households, consider linking educational programmes more closely with nutrition programmes and school feeding.
- More training with school management structures and County and Payam education officials on the importance of following up absences, alongside practical guidance on the process for doing so, and operational resources to actually do so; in qualitative interviews from round 3 and 4 Longitudinal Qualitative Surveys, teachers and School Management Committee members report that follow-up from teachers/School Management Committee members on absent children is effective at limiting drop-out rates.
- Commonly reported reasons for disliking school was poor quality of education and absence of teachers. To reduce teacher absence and staff turnover in schools, provide specific training for volunteer teachers, and pathways into longer term service, as well as increasing the frequency and depth of teacher professional development to ensure what is being taught is of high quality.
- Households that can, confirm that they listen to, and value Our School: Continue broadcasting of behavioural change communications and increase coverage of Our School programme, in more languages, and by looking into provision of low-cost radios for schools to increase opportunities for children to join in with Our School programming that do not have access to a radio at home.

**Full reports will soon be available on our website:**  
[www.girlseducationsouthsudan.org](http://www.girlseducationsouthsudan.org)

# INSPIRE

# EDUCATE

# TRANSFORM



## AIM

Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) is a programme that will transform the lives of a generation of children in South Sudan – especially girls – through education. South Sudan, the newest country in the world, has some of the lowest educational indicators, with education of girls being among the lowest. Very few girls who begin Primary education continue to Secondary school; in 2017, 138,578 girls started Primary school, but only 3,816 completed Secondary school. GESS is determined to change this, so that all girls can go to school, stay in school and achieve in school.

## MANAGEMENT

Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) is an initiative of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI), Government of the Republic of South Sudan, funded by UK aid from the UK government, and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan. In order to realise its strategic objectives of eliminating barriers to girls' education and promoting gender equality throughout the education system, MoGEI is supported by a consortium, led by Cambridge Education, and including BBC Media Action, Charlie Goldsmith Associates and Winrock International.

The Programme began in April 2013, and will last until September 2018.



[www.girlseducationsouthsudan.org](http://www.girlseducationsouthsudan.org)

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