Girls' Education South Sudan: County and Payam Education Managers Midline Survey

Sept 2016

DRAFT REPORT

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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 BMB Mott MacDonald/Cambridge Education, and including BBC Media Action, Charlie Goldsmith Associates and Winrock International.

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List of abbreviations

BoG	Board of Governors
CAD	County Administration Department
CED	County Education Department
CEO	County Education Office
CES	(former) Central Equatoria State
CLO	County Liaison Officer
CG	Capitation Grant
CGA	Charlie Goldsmith Associates
CT	Cash Transfer
EES	(former) Eastern Equatoria State

ETMC	Education Transfers Monitoring Committee
GESS	Girls' Education South Sudan
GRSS	Government of the Republic of South Sudan
JGL	(former) Jonglei State
KER	Knowledge, Evidence and Research
LKS	(former) Lakes State
MoGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
NBG	(former) Northern Bahr el Ghazal State
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PEO	Payam Education Office
PES	Payam Education Supervisor
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SA	State Anchor
SCE	Secondary Certificate of Education
SDP	School Development Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SMoGEI	State Ministry of General Education and Instruction
SSSAMS	South Sudan Schools' Attendance Monitoring System
UNS	(former) Upper Nile State
UTY	(former) Unity State
WBG	(former) Western Bahr el Ghazal State
WES	(former) Western Equatoria State
WRP	(former) Warrap State

Executive summary

The Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) programme is a six-year programme aiming to transform the lives of a generation of South Sudanese children – especially girls – through education. GESS is an initiative of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) of South Sudan, and is funded by the UK Government.

One of the strategic objectives of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) is to eliminate barriers to girls' education and promote gender equality throughout the education system. The purpose of the County and Payam survey is to gather information regarding the management structure and capacities of County Education Departments and Payam Education Offices, and to build a picture of their relationship with schools under their supervision and their interactions with the GESS programme. This information will be used to facilitate the work of GESS and MoGEI. As much of the overall programme is concerned with building

Government capacity at these levels, understanding more about the links and procedures between County and Payam offices and schools will be essential to verifying assumptions in the programme design and tracing causal processes from the Government to schools.

Research for the overall programme will take place in three phases: Baseline (2014), mid-term (2015-16), and end-term (2017-18). This report summarises the findings from the Midline County and Payam surveys. For the sake of comparability, the structure of the comparable Midline survey remains very similar to that of the Baseline, incorporating recommendations and additions developed through discussions with MoGEI.

Structure

This Midline report presents the combined findings of two survey types, conducted with officials within County Education Departments and Payam Education Offices.

The report presents findings through the following sections:

- Section 3.1 outlines the characteristics and background of officials surveyed including an overview of their qualifications, skills, and training as well as their education sector experience;

- Section 3.2 provides detail on the Administrative and Financial systems recorded to be in place for County and Payam offices, including information on personnel, office equipment and financial organisation;

- Section 3.3 assesses the procedures in place for the inspection and supervision of schools and provides insight to the levels of access officials have to schools under their supervisions as well as the duties involved in undertaking school visits;

- Section 3.4 discusses the types of policies and plans that are in place and available to officials;

- Section 3.5 gives an overview of the levels of communication between County and Payam offices;

- Section 3.6 analyses the challenges and enabling factors surrounding the delivery of quality education and addresses the means available to improve teacher quality, the protective environment for children at school, and means of support available to school management;

- Section 3.7 details the types of financial support available to schools.

Methodology

Fieldwork was conducted by Charlie Goldsmith Associates staff who began data collection on 27th June 2016 and concluded on 20th September 2016. In total, n=31 County Education Officials from 21 Counties and n=50 Payam Education Officials from 46 Payams were surveyed. Originally researchers aimed to interview at least one education official from each County and Payam that we visited for the School Survey. However, the violence that broke out in Juba in July 2016 and quickly spread to other parts of the country placed severe limitations on travel within South Sudan, restricting access to local authority officials and reducing time available for data collection.

[Reported to ETMC 30/9/16]

Key findings

Local Education Officials report schools have improved since 2014

- The majority of both County and Payam officials believe schools in their areas have improved since 2014, and report an increase in enrolment.

- These changes are commonly attributed to the impact of GESS interventions, in particular Capitation Grants and Cash Transfers.

Characteristics and background of County and Payam officials

- As at the Baseline, the overwhelming majority of County and Payam staff are male.

- The majority of County and Payam officials speak English, and their confidence in their ability is high. The proportion of respondents who can use a computer has increased, and their confidence in their ability is higher than at the Baseline

- County and Payam officials are less highly qualified than in 2014, with lower proportions holding degrees, teaching certificates or diplomas. Teaching Diplomas remain the most commonly held top qualification amongst County staff, although the proportion has dropped.

- Amongst Payam staff, a secondary school certificate is the most commonly held highest qualification.

- Participation in professional training has also dropped, although the proportion of County officials accredited as school inspectors has remained fairly constant

- As at the Baseline, almost all officials surveyed had a background in teaching; County officials tended to have taught at higher levels and for longer

Personnel and resources at County and Payam offices

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- On average, there are more members of staff in County than Payam offices, and the size of Payam offices has reduced since the Baseline

- Access to appropriate technology in County and Payam offices has increased over the last three years, although availability of computers and internet facilities remains low overall. Computers were reported to be more prevalent at Payam than County level, and the proportion of County staff who said they had access to computers has dropped slightly since the Baseline.

- There has been a marked increase in the proportion of County Education Offices with a bank account, which is likely to be linked to the introduction of County Operating Transfers. CED bank accounts are chiefly used to transfer GRSS Operating funds.

- A similar proportion of County Education Departments (just over one third) also use County Administration Accounts. The most common use for these accounts was processing salaries.

<h2>Interactions with schools and practices during school visits</h2>

- There has been a reported drop in the frequency of school visits made by County and Payam officials since the Baseline. In 2014, County officials reported visiting an average of 26.9 schools the previous year, compared to an average of 18.4 schools visited in 2015.

- The average number of schools for which each Payam official is responsible has increased since the Baseline.

- County and Payam officials do not regularly check Pupil Admission Registers, Daily Attendance Registers and other school documents during inspection visits. The most common activities during school visits are talking to the Head Teacher and teachers and observing lessons.

- Payam officials appear more likely to inspect school facilities and check examination results than County staff.

- In the majority of cases, County officials inform their Payam-level counterparts in advance of an inspection visit to one of their schools.

- Written feedback has become a more prevalent method of reporting on school visits since 2014.

- Payam officials are closely involved in the production of School Development Plans and the majority say they help schools prepare for inspection visits from County or State officials.

- The proportion of County staff who organise and run trainings for teachers, school governing bodies or administrative staff has dropped. The majority of the trainings given by County officials in 2015 were directed at school governing bodies, including SMCs, PTAs and Boards of Governors.

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- There has been a drop in focus on and retention of written records. Payam officials are less stringent about requiring schools to send attendance records than at the Baseline.

- School Development Plans are kept at a lower proportion of Payam offices than at the Baseline, and only a third were able to provide copies when requested.

Retention of policy documents at County and Payam Education Offices

- There has been a general decline in the retention of documents held at County Education Offices, linked to the impact of conflict and changes to the subnational administrative structure.

- The most commonly held policy documents at County Education Offices, as reported by County staff, are School Inspection Guidelines and Frameworks, Teacher Codes of Conduct and Job Descriptions.

- Documents relating to school inspection are more frequently kept at County Education Offices than Payam level. This is accompanied by a decrease in the frequency of school visits by Payam officials.

- The proportion of County Education Offices that keep national policy documents has dropped since the Baseline.

- Over a third of County Education Departments and Payam Education Offices purport to keep GESS documents on record, most notably the Cash Transfer and Capitation Grant manuals.

- The documents most commonly held at Payam Education Offices were Teacher Codes of Conduct and Schools Development Planning processes.

- Under half of the County and Payam officials interviewed could produce the copies on request.

- There are a number of mitigating factors. Several County Education Directors interviewed had moved offices since 2014 due to the impact of the crisis, and others reported that their offices (and all the documents stored there) had been completely destroyed during conflict.

- Changes to the subnational administrative structure brought about by the introduction of 28 States, in place of the former ten, in December 2015 may also have had an impact on the retention and awareness of documents.

Support structures available to teachers

- Lesson observations by Payam Supervisors are the most common means of support available to teachers, followed by approvals of schemes of work, according to Payam officials. Appraisal processes are less common.

- The overwhelming majority of Payam officials reported that schools would inform the Payam Education Office if a teacher was absent for a long period.

- In these cases, the most likely response would be to hold a meeting between the teacher and the Head Teacher or SMC. Payam officials reported that more punitive measures like terminating the teacher's contract or moving them to another school were extremely rare.

Attitudes and responses to teacher-learner relationships

- Inappropriate relationships between teachers and pupils are rare, according to Payam officials. Just under 80% said they were not aware of any cases in their schools in the previous year.

- All the respondents said that some form of action would be taken if a teacher had an inappropriate relationship with a learner at their school.

- Cases are most likely to be dealt with at school level, and very unlikely to be referred to the police or local Community Chief, according to Payam staff.

- There was a lack of consensus among Payam officials regarding the hypothetical consequences for pupils and teachers. Proportionally, those who predicted that the teacher would be issued with a warning only slightly outnumbered those who thought the teacher would be banned from teaching at any school.

- The majority of respondents claimed that cases would be dealt with in the same way regardless of the teacher's gender. Of those that thought the outcome would be different, the most common difference cited was that female teachers would be treated more leniently than their male counterparts.

- Payam officials were divided over what would happen to the pupil involved in a relationship with a teacher. The most common response was that they would continue at the school with extra support, with the second highest proportion predicting the school would ask the learner to leave.

- The majority of Payam officials did not think the outcome would be different if the pupil was a boy or a girl, although some respondents thought the girl might face pressure to marry or end up pregnant.

School management structures

- Parent Teacher Associations are the most prevalent form of school governance structure, followed by School Management Committees. Boards of Governors are less common.

- Most school governing bodies are male-dominated, according to Payam officials.

- The chief role of these bodies is to plan for the development of the school, according to Payam staff. They are also frequently responsible for overseeing the use of school funds and transmitting information about the community to the school.

- The extent to which Payam officials considered school governing bodies to be responsible for monitoring pupil and teacher attendance has dropped since the Baseline. Less than half considered this to be a role of the SMC, PTA or BoG.

Financial support to schools

- The findings suggest there has been a small increase in the degree to which Payam Education Offices are involved in supporting financial management, but a decrease in evidence of their knowledge of their statutory duties in this area.

- The proportion of Payam officials who reportedly approved school budgets has almost doubled since the Baseline. More Payam officials also reported checking receipt books and payment vouchers than in 2014.

- Only half of the respondents said they approved Daily Attendance Registers. More work is needed to underscore to Payam officials the importance of ensuring that schools are recording pupil attendance on a daily basis.

- Although more Payam officials reported approving school budgets than at the Baseline, their awareness of the obligation on them to do so has decreaseded, and the proportion who knew they were required to approve school accounts has almost halved.

Recommendations

- Viable pay, and funding for operations, in particular costs of visiting schools, and communications costs, are key to County and Payam officials being able to do their job effectively.

- Given the increase in availability and usage of mobile phones, the potential of smartphone technology to support the work of County and Payam Education offices should be explored. In particular, officials could be trained to use smartphones to upload and send accountability documents to www.sssams.org and to record their observations on school visits.

- Low levels of respondents reported keeping national policies relating to the education sector in their offices, suggesting inadequate awareness of the broader policy framework within which they are operating. Steps should be taken to ensure relevant policy documents are kept on file at all County and Payam offices, including MoGEI Mandates and Structures.

- Further training on good practice in record-keeping is required to ensure County and Payam staff are aware of their statutory obligations towards schools under their supervision and familiar with policy documents to guide their work, as well as to improve levels of accountability.

- County and Payam staff would benefit from support to guide their activities during school visits, with a particular emphasis on monitoring pupil and teacher attendance and more rigorous scrutiny of school documents.

- There are very few women working in County and Payam education official roles: getting more women promoted to school leadership and beyond will create role models for female teachers, women contemplating teaching, and school girls. Efforts should be made to address the gender imbalance in local education authorities, which could include reviewing current recruitment practices County and Payam officials are willing to engage about child protection issues, and want to do the right thing when they do: they need clear guidelines and processes to help them.

- Community mobilisation activities could place greater emphasis on ensuring women are involved in school governance.

- Considerations of gender-sensitive practices could also be incorporated into all future training, and County and Payam staff encouraged to participate in trainings specifically focused on mainstreaming gender in their work.

1.   Background

1.1   An update on the South Sudanese context since the Baseline Report

The wider context in which GESS operates has deteriorated since 2014, as the dynamics of the conflict which broke out in December 2013 have shifted and the economy has collapsed. Fighting was initially concentrated in the Greater Upper Nile region, but GRSS has since spread the conflict to previously relatively stable areas, in particular, from 2015, the Equatorias and Western Bahr el Ghazal, resulting in mass displacement both within South Sudan and into bordering countries and making it increasingly difficult for schools to function. The implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCISS), signed by both parties to the conflict in August 2015, has faced numerous obstacles, the most significant being the fighting that erupted in Juba in July 2016 which led to the expulsion of the SPLA-IO from the capital and the intensification of the conflict elsewhere. As at September 2016, the number of South Sudanese seeking refuge in neighbouring countries has surpassed 1 million - including more than 195,000 who have fled the country since the outbreak of violence in July - 1.6 million are internally displaced and more than 4.8 million people face food insecurity.i

The deterioration in the security and humanitarian situation has taken place against a backdrop of economic collapse. The fall in oil production and decline in global oil prices has severely eroded the Government of South Sudan's chief source of revenue; meanwhile inflation has accelerated, with the effective USD:SSP exchange rate increasing from 4.61 in September 2014 to 76 in September 2016. This has had a serious negative impact on education delivery as a whole, eroding the value of teachers' salaries, who, unlike health workers, have mostly been on the Government payroll since 2005, and negatively affecting the ability of schools to execute their budgets as planned.

While the education sector has continued to operate, its ability to do has been hampered by the difficult security and economic context. As at September 2016, there were 3,551 schools open in South Sudan, with 1,318,415 pupils enrolled, taught by around 30,000 full-time teachers, according to data on www.sssams.org (the real-time management information system developed as part of GESS). Given the current estimated population of >10m, the cohort of school-age children is of the order of 4million, meaning that South Sudan has one of the highest rates of

i UN OCHA Humanitarian bulletin, 22 September 2016:
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS_160922_OCHA_SouthSudan_humanitarian_bulletin14.pdf

school-age children out of school in the world. An introduction to the GESS programme

1.2 The Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) programme

The Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) programme seeks to transform the lives of a generation of children in South Sudan – especially girls – through education. GESS is an initiative of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction of South Sudan and funded by the UK Government. The Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) leads the GESS programme, supported by implementing partners who provide technical advice. At State and County level the State Ministries of General Education and Instruction (SMoGEI) take the lead in programme implementation, supported by partner NGOs, or 'GESS State Anchors'. Implementing partners include BMB Mott MacDonald (lead), BBC Media Action, Charlie Goldsmith Associates and Winrock International.

Girls' Education South Sudan is a practical programme that implements activities that tackle financial, cultural and quality barriers to education for the girl child, while boys will also benefit from an improved learning environment.

The activities are structured along three main outputs:

1. Enhanced household and community awareness and empowerment for supporting girls' education through radio programmes and community outreach.

2. Effective partnerships between GRSS and local organisations to deliver a community-based school improvement programme which will include:

    a. Cash Transfers to girls and their families;

    b. Capitation Grants to schools;

    c. provision of practical support to schools, teachers and education managers to improve the quality of education.

3. Increased knowledge and evidence of what works to promote girls' education in South Sudan.

2. Purpose of Survey & Methodology

2.1 Overall GESS Research Objectives

The Knowledge, Evidence and Research (KER) sub-output of the GESS programme seeks to generate knowledge and evidence about education in South Sudan, and what works to get girls in school, staying in school, and learning in school. The research is focused on:

- Whether the programme is achieving expected outcomes
- How outcomes are being achieved
- Wider areas of interest about what's happening in schools

The overall GESS research is based on the following two overarching questions, which have been developed from the outcome of the programme:

- Has there been a change in enrolment and retention for girls and boys P5-P8 and S1-S4, and which aspects of the programme contributed towards this?
- Has there been a change in quality of education, as demonstrated by improved learning for P5-P8 and S1-S4? What changes in the learning and teaching environment have contributed to this?

The overall objectives of the GESS project surveys are:

- To monitor changes currently occurring in schools, particularly changes related to the GESS project;
- To identify aspects of the GESS programme contributing towards changes in the enrolment rate among girls and boys P5-P8 and S1-S4;
- To identify aspects of the GESS programme that will contribute toward the future measurement of girls' and boys' retention rates between P5-P8 and S1-S4.

The overall KER component of GESS seeks to:

- Develop National and State capacity for research and use of evidence;
- Develop knowledge about the impact of project interventions;
- Develop broader information about what works in girls' education;
- Incorporate process monitoring into learning about successes and failures in design and implementation, protect against doing harm and monitor value for money;
- Inform policymaking: budget priorities and targeted support.
- The programme outcomes are directly concerned with improvements in enrolment, retention, and learning. Alongside the school survey, three other areas of research were developed to enquire in more depth about relationships, activities, and processes linking programme interventions to the outcomes were

proposed. These are school and classroom practice, educational choices by households and girls, and management capacity and structures.

- Complementary to the County and Payam survey:

o A detailed School Survey incorporating interviews with learners, Head Teachers, teachers and representatives of school governing bodies in addition to lesson observations, building assessments was carried out in June-September 2016. The purpose of the survey was to build a picture of the state of schools in South Sudan and understand the educational experiences of pupils – in particular girls – teachers, and managers. The survey, which incorporated questions from the pilot School Sample Survey, also looked at the impact and effectiveness of Capitation Grants and Cash Transfers, as well us the use of daily attendance registers (DARs)

o In-depth Household Surveys were conducted in June - September 2016, using a subset of schools selected for the School Survey to obtain a detailed picture of the sensitive and complex nature of household decisions on money, gender relationships and power structures, as well the experience of pupils and their households in and out of school. The Household Report provides contextual background that will help inform future changes in education patterns by providing details of household level decisions that affect enrolment and retention of girls in schools.

o A Learning Assessment, designed to enquire in more depth about relationships, activities and processes linking programme interventions to the outcomes, was conducted in the same time frame. The assessment is a series of mathematics and English tests given to male and female pupils in P5, P8, and S2. The results of these tests, and how they compare to the original Baseline results, are presented in a separate report.

3.   Methodology

3.1   Sampling strategy

For consistency, and to allow like-for-like comparison with the Baseline findings, the Midline methodology continued to use the (former) ten state system for the purposes of sampling, to achieve practical national coverage.

Originally researchers aimed to interview at least one education official from each County and Payam that we visited for the School Survey. However, the violence that broke out in Juba in July 2016 and quickly spread to other parts of the country placed severe limitations on travel within South Sudan, restricting access to local authority officials and reducing time available for data collection. In total, n=31 County Education Officials from 21 Counties and n=50 Payam Education Officials from 46 Payams were surveyed.

FIGURE 1 NUMBER AND LOCATION OF COUNTY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED
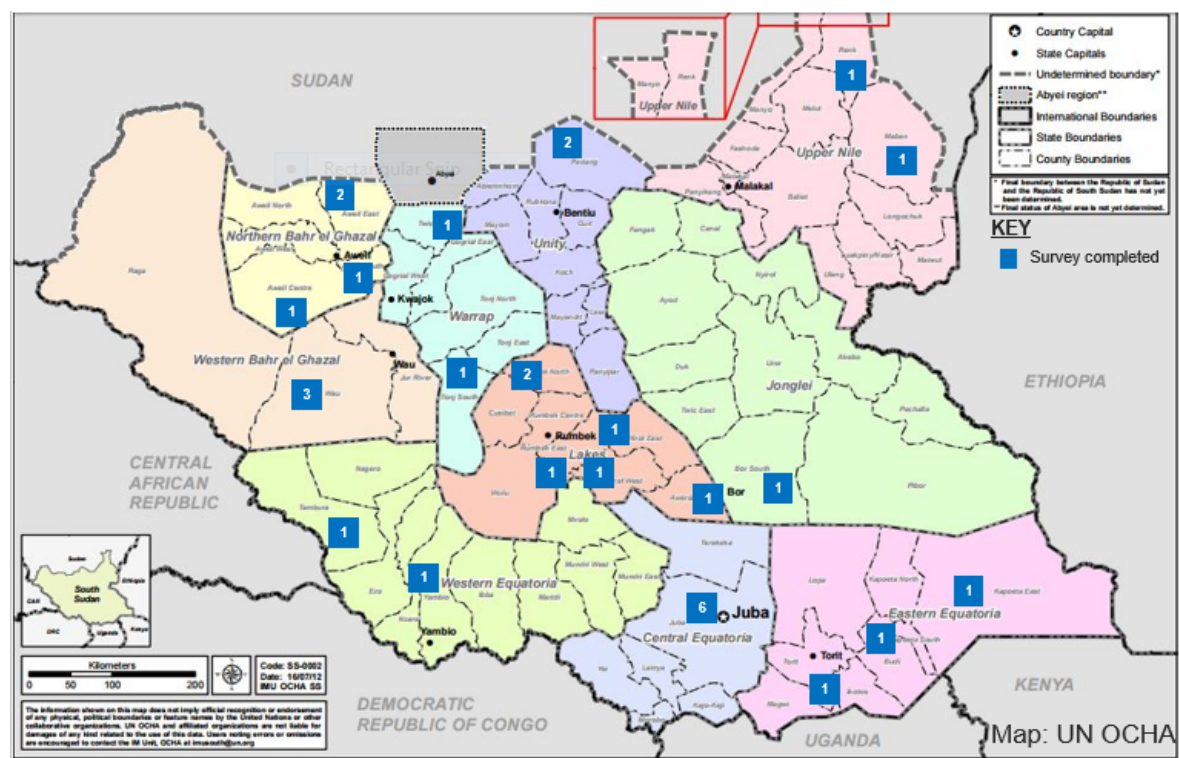
TABLE 1 TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICIALS, DISAGGREGATED BY STATE

State	County	Number of surveys
CES	Juba	6
EES	Budi	1

	Ikotos	1
	Kapoeta East	1
JGL	Bor	1
LKS	Yirol West	1
	Yirol East	1
	Rumbek North	2
	Rumbek East	1
	Awerial	1
NBG	Aweil Centre	1
	Aweil Town	1
	Aweil East	2
UNS	Maban	1
	Renk	1
WBG	Wau	3
WES	Yambio	1
	Tambura	1
WRP	Twic	1
	Tonj	1
UTY	Ruweng	2
TOTAL	**21**	**31**

FIGURE 2 NUMBER AND LOCATION OF PAYAM EDUCATION OFFICE INTVERVIEWS CONDUCTED
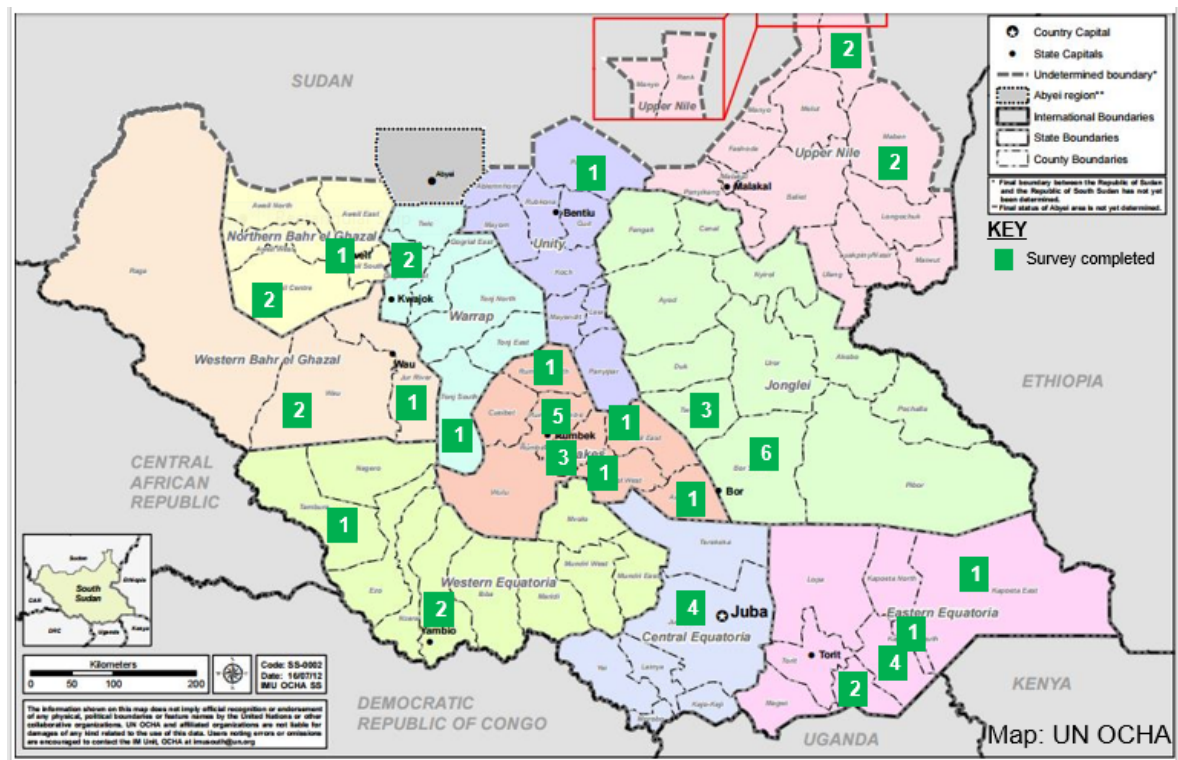
TABLE 2 TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH PAYAM EDUCATION OFFICIALS, DISAGGREGATED BY STATE AND COUNTY

State	County	Payam	Number of surveys
CES	Juba	Munuki	2
		Juba	2
EES	Ikotos	Ikotos	1
		Imotong	1
	Budi	Loukei	1
		Lauro	1
		Nahichot	1
		Loudo	1
	Kapoeta East	Narus	1
	Kapoeta South	Kapoeta	1
JGL	Twic East	Kangor	2
		Nyuak	1
	Bor	Jalle	1
		Makuack	1
		Baidit	1
		Kolnyang	1
		Anyidi	1
		Bor Town	1
LKS	Rumbek Centre	Matangai	1
		Jiir	1
		Malek	1
		Amongping	1
		Rumbek Town	1
	Rumbek East	Pacong	1
		Aduel	1
		Maleng Agok	1
	Rumbek North	Madol	1
	Yirol East	Nyang	1
	Yirol West	Yirol Town	1
	Awerial	Puluk	1
NBG	Aweil Centre	Nyalath	1
		Mariem East	1
	Aweil Town	Malou Awear	1
UNS	Maban	Jinmagda	1
		Boung	1
	Renk	Chamade	1
		Paloch	1
WBG	Jur River	Wau Bai	1

	Wau	Wau North	1
		Baggari	1
WES	Yambio	Yambio	1
		Gangura	1
	Tambura	Tambura	1
WRP	Gogrial West	Kuac North	2
	Tonj South	Jak	1
UTY	Ruweng	Panyang	1
TOTAL		**46**	**50**

3.2 Quantitative data collection

Data was collected in all ten former states with fieldwork conducted by Charlie Goldsmith Associates staff, who began data collection on 27th June 2016 and concluded on 28th September 2016. Enumerators used Huawei smartphones to record survey data in order minimise time and data entry errors, as well as Open Data Kit (ODK) open source software. Smartphones were provided by Charlie Goldsmith Associates with funding from GESS. Once collected, data was uploaded to the online platform Formhub.

The County survey aimed to collect information on the following areas:

Roles and responsibilities of County Education Departments;

Administrative and financial systems, including data on schools and personnel;

Communication channels between County and Payams, County Education Departments and State Ministries of Education;

How County officials understand National and State policies, plans, strategies and process, and how these relate to their job;

Procedures in place and used for inspection and supervision of schools;

Perceptions of the enablers and challenges for children (especially for girls) and schools in access to and delivery of quality education.

The Payam survey aimed to capture information on the following areas:

Education roles and responsibilities at the County and Payam offices;

Education administrative and financial aspects at the County and Payam offices, including data on schools and personnel;

Communication channels between Payams and schools, and Payam and County Education Offices;

Ways in which Payam officials responsible for education understand the National and State policies, plans, strategies, and process, and how this relates to the job;

Procedures used for inspection and supervision of schools;

Perceptions of enablers and challenges for children (especially girls) and schools in access to and delivery of quality education.

3.3   Limitations

The outbreak of conflict in Juba in early July 2016 had significant ramifications for the degree of enumerator access to County and Payam offices. Following the July violence the decision was made to base data collection out of the (former) state capitals, and several other key locations such as Maban and Renk (as teams were unable to reach Malakal, the state capital of Upper Nile). As a result the number of accessible County and Payam education offices was limited. Although enumerators did try to address this by arranging for County and Payam officials from other locations to travel to a central point for interviews, the overall possible number of interviews was reduced. Of the total of 50 Payam officials interviewed, n=2 (from Juba Payam, Juba County and Baggari Payam, Wau County) did not complete the surveys.

Additionally, although no data was collected on the impact of the 28 states decree specifically, it became clear during data collection that some parts of the country - most notably in Central Equatoria, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Unity - have begun to migrate local education authority structures at State, County and Payam levels to the new system. Anecdotal evidence suggests that County officials tend to be promoted to State level, and Payam officials to County level. This had implications for data collection in two ways: firstly because the education officials in the affected locations tended to be new to their roles and therefore lacked some of the institutional knowledge required to answer some questions in the survey; and secondly because the upwards promotion of education officials meant that local government authorities in some locations had not yet appointed Payam Education Supervisors or Inspectors to replace those who had been promoted to County level. For example, in the new Ruweng State [formerly a County in Unity State], the government had not yet appointed any PES or School Inspectors since the State administration was established in February 2016.

Finally, a general note of caution should be provided when interpreting responses from County and Payam officials. As questions were asked relating to the effectiveness and efficiency of officials' work and relating to knowledge of and adherence to their duties, it is possible that some respondents were inclined to give responses that showed themselves and their offices in the best light, at the expense of accuracy. This has been accounted for in analysis but is an important consideration to bear in mind.

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4. Findings

4.1 Characteristics and background of County and Payam Officials

County and Payam officials remain overwhelmingly male; most officials on full-time contracts. County staff report significantly higher levels of remuneration than those at Payam level.

As at the Baseline in 2014, women were almost completely unrepresented in the cohort of County and Payam staff surveyed. All of the County officials interviewed for the study were male (n=31), along with 96% of the respondents at Payam level (n=48). The two females represented in the Payam survey were both from Munuki Payam in Juba.

A large majority of the respondents at both levels were on permanent full-time contracts: 97% (n=30) of County officials and 96% (n=48) of Payam officials. Part-time contracts were less prevalent than reported at the Baseline, when they were reportedly held by 9% of Payam staff. In 2016, n=1 Payam official (2%) reported being on a permanent part-time contract while all the County staff surveyed said they worked full time.

90% of the County officials (n=28) surveyed were either County Education Directors or Deputy Education Directors, and 90% of the Payam staff interviewed (n=45) were either Payam Education Supervisors or Assistant Payam Education Supervisors. Senior Inspectors of Planning, Budgeting and Administration, Senior Inspectors of Schools and Senior Inspectors of Gender, Equity and Inclusive Education were also represented.

The majority of Payam staff reported being on either grade 7 or 8 of the salary scale, with grade 2 being the highest at an average monthly salary of SSP1,913 and grade 17 the lowest (average monthly salary of SSP208), according to data collected in 2016 through the pilot of the EU-funded Human Resources Information System (www.hrisss.org).

36% (n=18) of the Payam staff surveyed reported being on grade 7, which would give them an average monthly salary of SSP1,288, and 20% (n=10) said they were on grade 8 of the salary scale, giving them an average monthly salary of SSP1,138. The approximate black market exchange rate in July 2016, when most of the research was carried out, was 1USD:50SSP, meaning that those on grade 7 would be paid USD25.8 dollars per month and officials on grade 8 a monthly salary equivalent to USD22.8. A significant minority (14%, n=7) said they were on grade 10, with an average monthly salary of SSP888 (equivalent to USD17.7), and 12% (n=6) reported being on grade 14, which would give them a monthly salary of just 320 SSP, equivalent to USD6.4.

County staff reported higher levels of remuneration, with only one respondent stating they were lower than grade 10 on the salary scale. The majority (61%, n=19) reported falling between grades 3 and 5, with the highest proportion (29%, n=9) on grade 3, which would give them an average monthly salary of SSP1,813.

4.1.1 Qualifications, Skills and Training

English and Juba Arabic are the most commonly spoken languages; qualification levels amongst County and Payam staff have dropped since the Baseline. Levels of participation in professional training have also fallen since 2014.

The majority of the County and Payam officials surveyed speak English and Arabic, although a higher proportion of County staff reported speaking Classical Arabic whilst Juba Arabic was more commonly spoken amongst Payam officials. At Payam level, 98% (n=49) of respondents spoke English, 74% (n=37) spoke Juba Arabic and 30% (n=15) spoke Classical Arabic. Of the County officials surveyed, 48% (n=15) reported speaking Classical Arabic (compared to 30% (n=15) of Payam staff) and 65% (n=20) spoke Juba Arabic, against 74% of Payam level officials.

Of those who spoke English, their confidence in their ability was high: 79% of County officials who spoke English (n=23) and 82% of Payam officials (n=40) said their reading and writing skills were either good or very good. County officials' assessment of their abilities was unchanged since the Baseline, when 79% also considered their English skills to be either good or very good, but at the Payam level confidence appears to have increased, as 69% gave this appraisal in 2014.

Officials from across South Sudan were interviewed and this diversity was reflected in the range of mother tongue languages spoken, including Azande, Balanda, Bari, Didinga, Dinka, Japadolah, Jieng, Logir, Lopit, Lotuko, Luo, Maban, Atuot, Dongotono, Maban, Dogo and Thuong Jang.

Dinka was the most prevalent mother tongue language amongst those surveyed, named by 19% (n=6) of County staff and 26% (n=13) of Payam officials, but no officials at either level identified Nuer as their mother tongue, despite its status as one of the largest ethnic groups in South Sudan. This is accounted for by the small sample sizes in Unity and Upper Nile, where research was restricted due to the intensification of conflict, and the fact that no opposition areas were visited in Greater Upper Nile due to security constraints post-July.

Qualification levels of County and Payam officials have dropped considerably since the Baseline

FIGURE 3 HIGHEST QUALIFICATION HELD BY COUNTY OFFICIALS
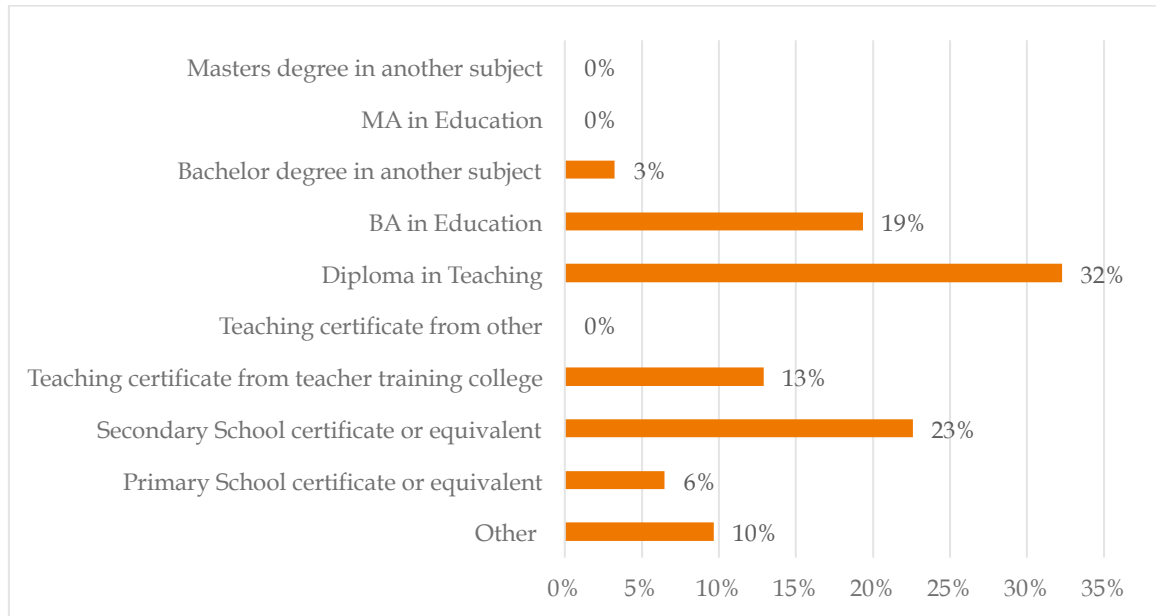
Almost all the officials surveyed had a background in teaching, but County staff tended to have taught at higher levels and for longer. Qualification levels amongst County and Payam staff have dropped since the Baseline, with only 32% of County officials (n=10) holding a Teaching Diploma compared to 56% in 2014.

FIGURE 4 HIGHEST QUALIFICATION HELD BY COUNTY OFFICIALS, COMPARISON BETWEEN 2014 AND 2016
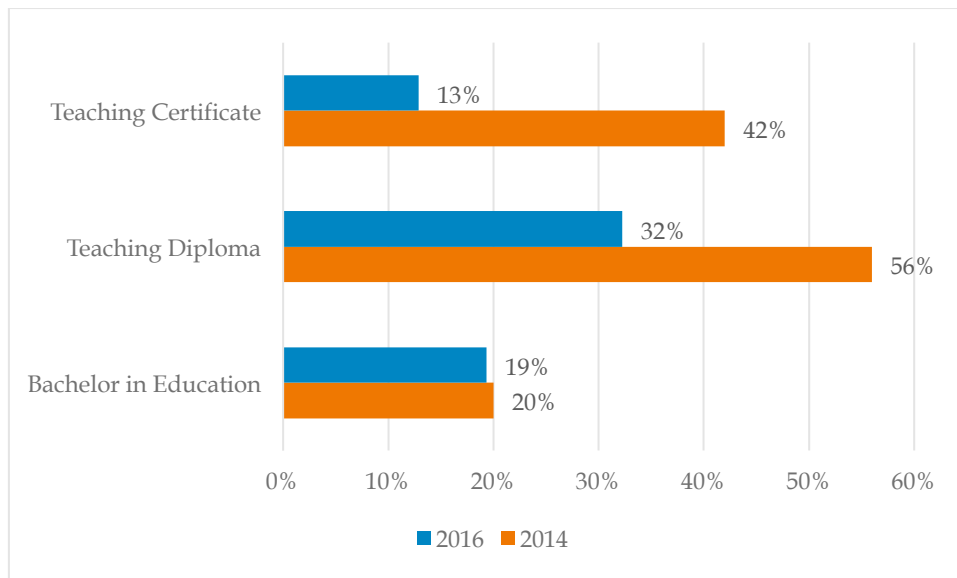
Amongst Payam staff, a secondary school certificate was most commonly cited as the highest qualification held, listed by 42% of respondents (n=21), in contrast to the Baseline, when 65% held a teaching certificate. This was held by just 20% (n=10) of Payam officials surveyed in 2016. The Baseline survey did not include the options of primary and secondary school certificates in response to this question; these were added into the Midline research in response to anecdotal evidence that school-level

qualifications were the highest held by a proportion of Payam and County officials. None of the respondents, at either administrative level, had a Master's degree in education or any other field, and the proportion with a Bachelor's was marginally lower than at the Baseline.

FIGURE 5 HIGHEST QUALIFICATION HELD BY PAYAM OFFICIALS

Qualification	Percentage
Masters degree in another subject	0%
MA in Education	0%
Bachelor degree in another subject	4%
BA in Education	2%
Diploma in Teaching	20%
Teaching certificate from other	2%
Teaching certificate from teacher training college	18%
Secondary School certificate or equivalent	46%
Primary School certificate or equivalent	2%
Other	8%
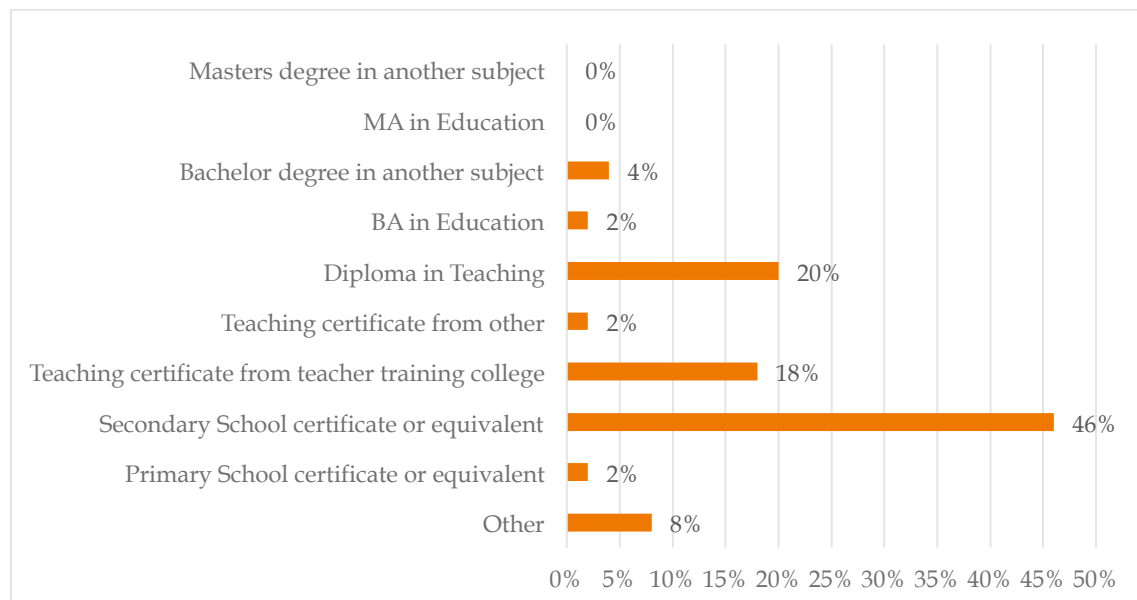
This is likely linked to the economic crisis which has led some, higher qualified public sector staff to increasingly move away from public sector jobs in favour of better remunerated NGO roles. In addition, the creation of 28 states has also led to a more porous administrative hierarchy in which formerly Payam level staff, who are likely to hold lower qualifications than civil servants at higher levels, have moved up to fill roles in County offices.

The suggestion that more qualified staff would be more likely to have moved on is corroborated by the average length of time County staff reported having worked at the County office: 8 years, compared to 6.6 in 2014, suggesting that less qualified staff have remained in the sector, some taking on more senior roles, since 2014.

Generally lower uptake of training among County and Payam staff than in the Baseline particularly gender-focused training

Payam staff reported participating in an average of 6.7 training days in 2015, a drop from the 8.8 days of training attended in 2013, as reported in the Baseline. Given that more training initiatives have been developed as part of GESS over the course of the programme, this is a moderately surprising finding and suggests that greater efforts should be made to encourage higher uptake of the training on offer.

School Development Plans and Budgets were the most common topics of trainings attended by Payam staff: 58% said they had participated in training on how to provide feedback to schools on these documents, and 56% reported having had

training on how to ensure the quality of the documents produced by schools. The third most common topic was how to train school governance bodies, including School Management Committees, Parent-Teacher Associations and Boards of Governors.

A relatively high proportion of Payam officials also reported having had training in how to support Capitation Grant and Cash Transfer processes, at 50% (n=25) and 48% (n=24) respectively, suggesting strong engagement with the GESS programme. Half of the Payam staff surveyed had also received training in lesson observation during the previous year.

Conversely, gender-focused trainings were amongst the least commonly attended by Payam staff. Only 18% (n=9) had participated in training on gender-responsive teaching methods, and 28% (n=14) had received training in how to mainstream gender into their work. The other least common training topic was Education in Emergencies, which 22% (n=11) of respondents reported having received.

These findings indicate a need to increase the frequency of gender-focused training and emphasise its importance to Payam staff, to help inform their visits to schools and enable them to recognise and address negative, discriminatory or abusive practices.

FIGURE 6 MOST AND LEAST COMMON TOPICS OF TRAINING ATTENDED BY PAYAM OFFICIALS
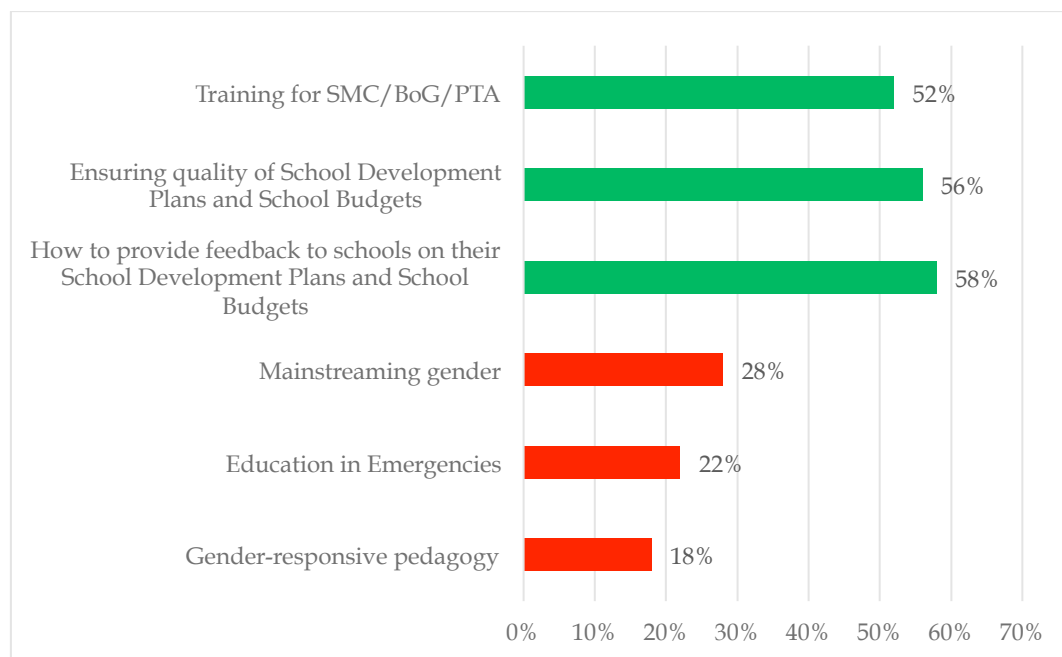
County staff also reported that they had participated in fewer days of professional training in 2015 than in 2013. At the Baseline, County officials said they had taken part in an average of 5.5 days of professional training in the previous year, whereas the average response to the same question at the Midline was 2.6. This included n=19 respondents who said they had not participated in a single day of professional training in 2015.

The most common topic of professional training attended by County officials during 2015 was on how to train SMCs, PTAs and Boards of Governors, but, in a reflection of the generally low participation levels, this was cited by just 19% (n=6) of respondents. No County staff said they had received training on how to support the Cash Transfer process, and low levels reported participating in training on gender-responsive pedagogy (6%, n=2) or gender mainstreaming (3%, n=1), again suggesting either a lack of provision or uptake in this area, or both.

71% of the County officials surveyed (n=22) had been formally accredited as school inspectors, a slight drop from 75% at the Baseline.

Increased confidence in computer skills reported by Payam and County staff

Payam officials have become more confident in their computer skills since the Baseline, reflecting the increasing availability of computers at Payam offices. Just under half of the Payam officials surveyed – 48% (n=24) – said they were unable to use a computer, compared to 64% at the Baseline. Of those who reported having some computer skills, 51% (n=16) considered themselves to be either good or very good, compared to just 11% in 2014.

The improvement at County level was less marked; 42% (n=13) revealed that they could not use a computer, and of those that could, 50% (n=9) considered themselves to be good or very good, up from 33% at the Baseline.

FIGURE 7 SELF-REPORTED ABILITY IN COMPUTER USAGE
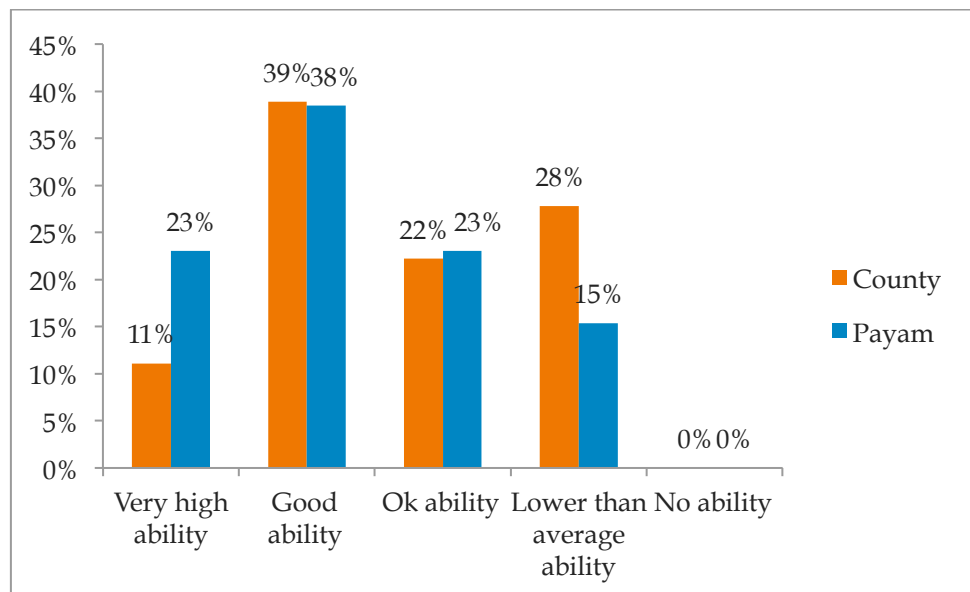
As at the Baseline, mobile phone skills were significantly higher, with 100% of both the County and Payam level officials surveyed reporting being able to use a mobile phone. 76% of Payam staff (n=38) rated their mobile phone skills as good or very good, the same proportion as at the Baseline, an opinion shared by 90% (n=28) of County staff, up from 85% in 2014.

FIGURE 8 SELF-REPORTED ABILITY IN MOBILE PHONE USAGE
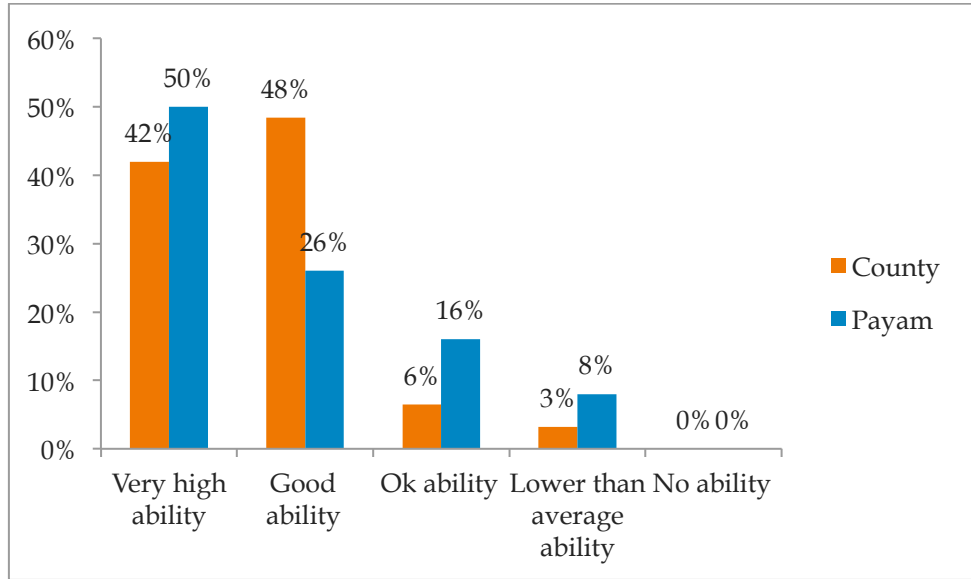

4.1.2 Education sector experience

As at the Baseline, almost all officials surveyed had a background in teaching; County officials tended to have taught at higher levels

All of the County officials (n=31) and 98% (n=49) of the Payam officials had teaching experience, and, of these, a higher proportion of County officials reported having worked as a Head Teacher - 94% (n=29) compared to 86% of Payam staff (n=42). County officials also reported holding Head Teacher posts for slightly longer than Payam staff, at an average of 8.2 years compared to 6.6, indicating that individuals who had reached more senior positions in the civil service had longer experience at higher levels of teaching.

In terms of overall teaching experience, County staff also reported having had slightly longer careers than Payam staff, at 19.2 years compared to 17.2, including one County official who reported having taught for 43 years.

The overwhelming majority of Payam staff who had previously worked as a teacher had taught in primary schools, at 96% (n=47), while none had taught at tertiary level. A higher proportion of County officials reported having taught at higher levels, with 35% (n=11) having worked in secondary schools and a small minority (6%, n=2) having taught tertiary education.

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FIGURE 9 LEVELS OF EDUCATION AT WHICH COUNTY AND PAYAM OFFICIALS REPORTED HAVING TAUGHT
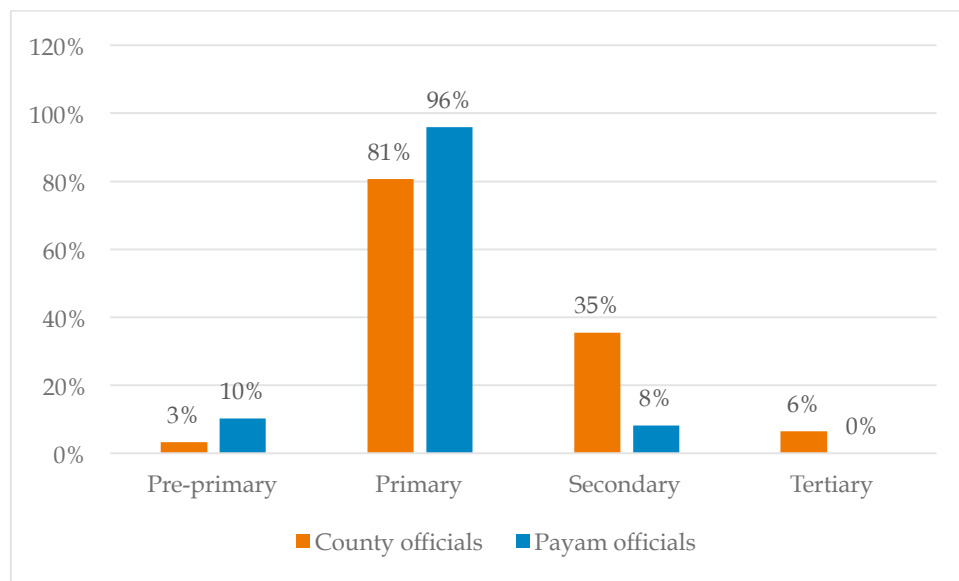
A significantly higher proportion of the County officials interviewed in 2016 reported having worked as a Payam Education Supervisor, Assistant Payam Education Supervisor or Deputy Assistant Payam Education Supervisor than at the Baseline – 45% (n=13) as opposed to 16% in 2014. They reported having held these posts for an average of 4.5 years, suggesting that this finding is unrelated to the introduction of the 28 states in December 2015 and the resulting fluidity within the administrative structure. However, the impact of changes to the subnational organisation of the country on human resources within the education system could be a worthwhile focus of the Endline study.

4.2   Administrative and financial systems

4.2.1 Personnel

As at the Baseline, County Education Departments have more staff than Payam Education Offices; a high proportion of staff members at both levels are reported to be School Inspectors, very few of whom are female

According to County officials, there were an average of 15 members of staff in County Education Departments, compared to an average of 5.3 staff members per Payam Education Office, as reported by Payam staff. However, the relatively high County figure includes some unlikely observations including from one County official in Maban, Upper Nile, who claimed there were 86 staff members in his office, and another from Rumbek North in Lakes, which was reportedly occupied by 75 members of staff. Excluding these findings, the average number of staff in County Education Departments falls to 10, still higher than the figure reported by Payam staff.

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The average size of Payam offices has dropped since the Baseline, when officials reported an average of 9 members of staff per office. This may be an indication that vacant positions left by Payam staff as they move upwards into County roles have not been filled.

Female representation as reported by County and Payam staff was slightly higher than the evidence presented by the genders of the respondents themselves, but nevertheless low. According to County staff, there was an average of 4 women per CED, although this included one respondent who claimed his office had 42 female staff. Excluding this response the average drops to 2, while at Payam level the reported average is 1.7 female staff members.

According to the County officials surveyed, there were an average of 6 school inspectors in each office (out of a total complement of 10), 1 of whom was female. In Payam offices, where there are an average of 5 staff in total, the average reported number of inspectors was 3.9, and the majority of Payam officials (64%, n=32) said none of the inspectors in their offices were female, giving an average of 0.54.

Given that, prior to the creation of 28 states, South Sudan was divided into 80 counties which were further split into 580 Payams[ii], these findings would suggest a total cohort of approximately 3,700 County and Payam education officials overseeing the work of approximately 45,000 teachers,[iii] a ratio of 1:12.2. Relative to the number of teachers, South Sudan has a strikingly large cohort of education civil servants.

4.2.2 Office Equipment

Access to appropriate technology in County and Payam offices has increased over the last three years, although availability of computers and internet facilities remains low. Payam offices appear to be better resourced than County Education Departments.

There has been an increase in resources available to County and Payam Education offices since the Baseline, particularly telephones, which were accessible to 81% (n=25) of County officials surveyed and 84% (n=42) of Payam staff, compared to 20% and 21% respectively in 2014. The survey did not distinguish between different types of phones (smart/feature/dumb), which would be a useful detail to incorporate into future research.

Surprisingly, computers were reported to be more prevalent at Payam than County level, and the proportion of County staff who said they had access to computers has actually dropped since the Baseline. In 2016, 28% of Payam officials surveyed reported having access to a computer (n=14), up from 9% at the Baseline.

[ii] Republic of South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics, 2014
[iii] Total number of teachers assigned to schools on www.sssams.org

Conversely, the proportion of County staff who reported having access to computers has dropped from 30% in 2014 to 19% (n=6) in 2016.

FIGURE 10 RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICES AS REPORTED BY COUNTY OFFICIALS, COMPARING 2014 AND 2016
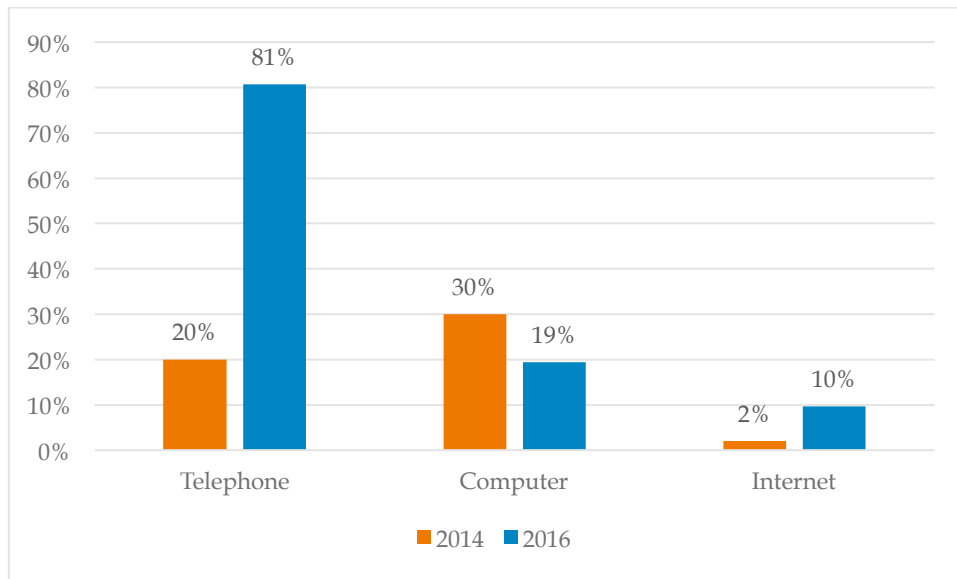
Internet connectivity remains low, although it has improved from the negligible levels reported at the Baseline. The Midline research found that 10% of County staff (n=3) reported having access to the internet in their offices, up from 2% in 2014, and the proportion of Payam staff with access has risen from 1% in at the Baseline to 12% (n=6).

FIGURE 11 RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT PAYAM EDUCATION OFFICES AS REPORTED BY PAYAM OFFICIALS, COMPARING 2014 AND 2016
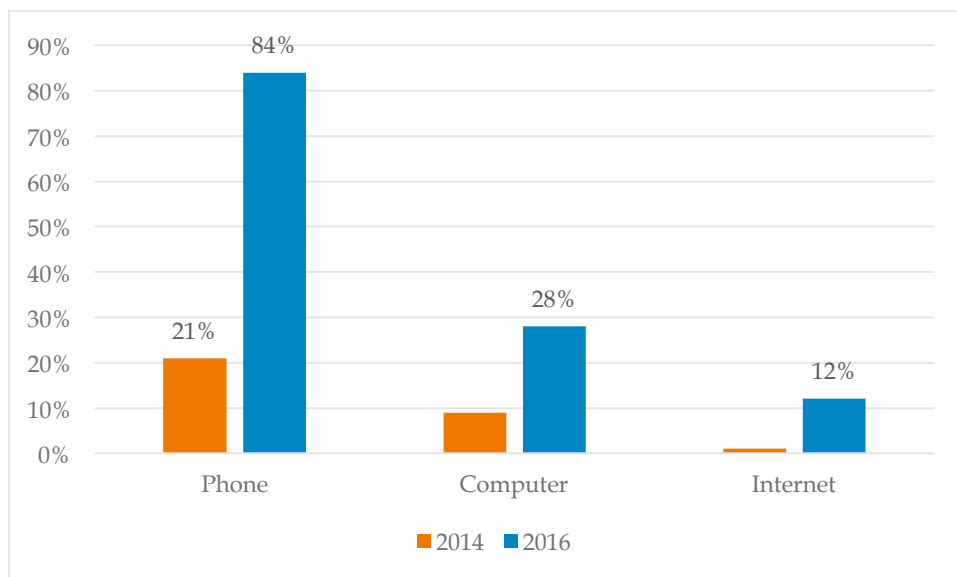
A full 23% of County officials (n=7) said they had access to none of the three facilities listed, (a higher proportion than the 10% of Payam staff, n=5, who gave

this response), underscoring the low levels of resources available to subnational education administrations.

4.2.3 Financial organisation

Significant increase in the proportion of County Education Offices with bank accounts since the Baseline, likely linked to the payment of County Operating Transfers; prevalence of bank accounts at Payam level remains low

According to respondents at County level, there has been a marked increase in the use of bank accounts since 2014. More than a third of County officials (35%, n=11) reported that their office had a bank account, as opposed to 16% in 2014.

This increase is likely linked to the introduction ofGRSS County Operating Transfers. This is substantiated by the finding that the type of funds most commonly transferred through CED bank accounts are County operating funds.

The increase is much less marked at Payam level, where 10% of Officials report having access to a Bank Account (n=5), compared to 9% in 2014.

Of the County Education Departments with bank accounts, the funds most commonly transferred through them are GRSS County operating funds, as reported by 64% (n=7). They are also frequently used to process salaries, cited by 36% (n=4) of County officials whose offices had access to bank accounts.

FIGURE 12 TYPE OF FUNDS TRANSFERRED THROUGH CED BANK ACCOUNTS, AS REPORTED BY COUNTY OFFICIALS
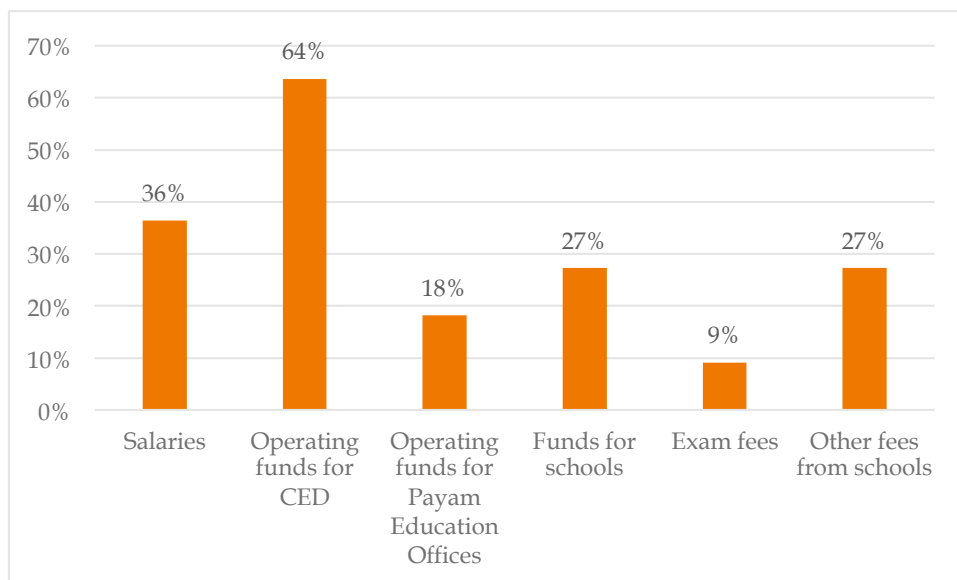

Responding to a recommendation in the Baseline study, the research also investigated whether County Education Departments banked using the County Administration Department accounts, intended to function as 'single treasuries' for

counties. Of the County officials surveyed, 34% (n=10) reported that the County Administration had a bank account, a marginally lower proportion than those who said the CED had access to an account. In the majority of cases, the CEDs that banked with the County Administration Department also had their own bank account (80%, n=8).

The uses of these accounts are notably different; it emerged that County Administration Accounts are more commonly used to process salaries, while County Operating Transfers tend to go through CED accounts where they exist.

FIGURE 13 A COMPARISON BETWEEN TYPE OF FUNDS TRANSFERRED THROUGH COUNTY EDUCATION BANK ACCOUNTS AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BANK ACCOUNTS, AS REPORTED BY COUNTY OFFICIALS
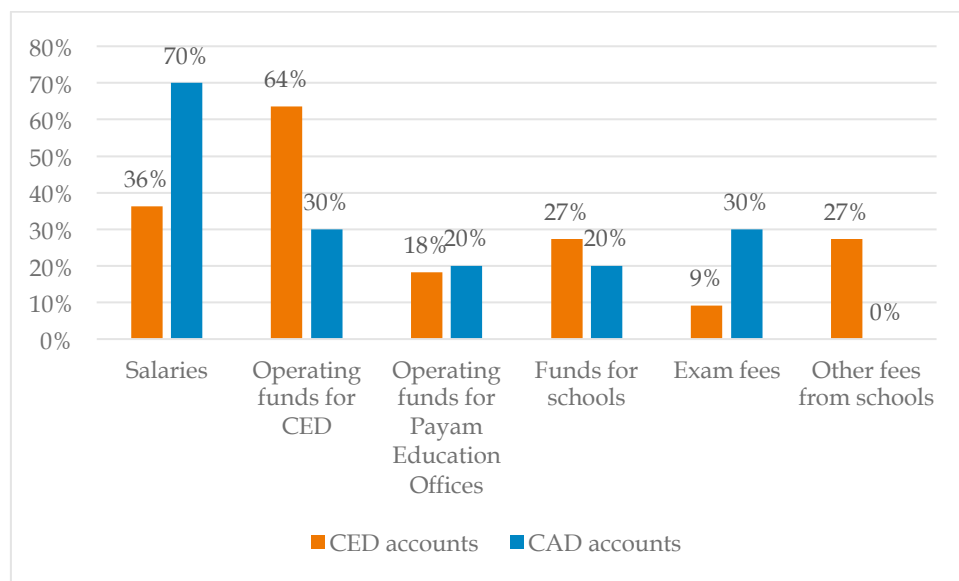
4.3 Procedures in place for the inspection and supervision of schools

4.3.1 Types of schools

Government schools remain the most prevalent type of school; responses of County officials suggest limited knowledge of the types of schools in their County.

According to both County and Payam officials, government schools are in the majority. County-level respondents reported an average of 24.6 government primary schools in their County, compared to 6.2 community schools, 3.2 faith-based schools and 2.3 schools that were privately owned. Only n=3 County respondents were aware of any other types of schools, which they listed as an Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) nursery school, a refugee school and an Alternative Education System (AES) school.

County officials reported an average of just 1.1 government secondary schools in their counties, a drop from the average 3.7 reported in 2014. While anecdotal evidence also suggests that there are fewer secondary schools operating now than in 2014, particularly in areas badly hit by the conflict, these findings cast doubt on the ability of County officials to provide accurate information on the number of schools in their County. Respondents who reported that there were no government-run secondary schools in their County included those from Juba County, Wau Town, Aweil East, Twic and Terekeka. However, www.sssams.org data from each of these counties shows that government-run secondary schools submitted budgets to GESS in 2016, indicating that they exist and were operating in 2016.

Government-run schools were nevertheless the most prevalent type of secondary schools, according to County officials. On average, respondents reported an average of fewer than 1 community-run schools (0.1), faith-based schools (0.6) and privately-owned schools (0.6) per County surveyed.
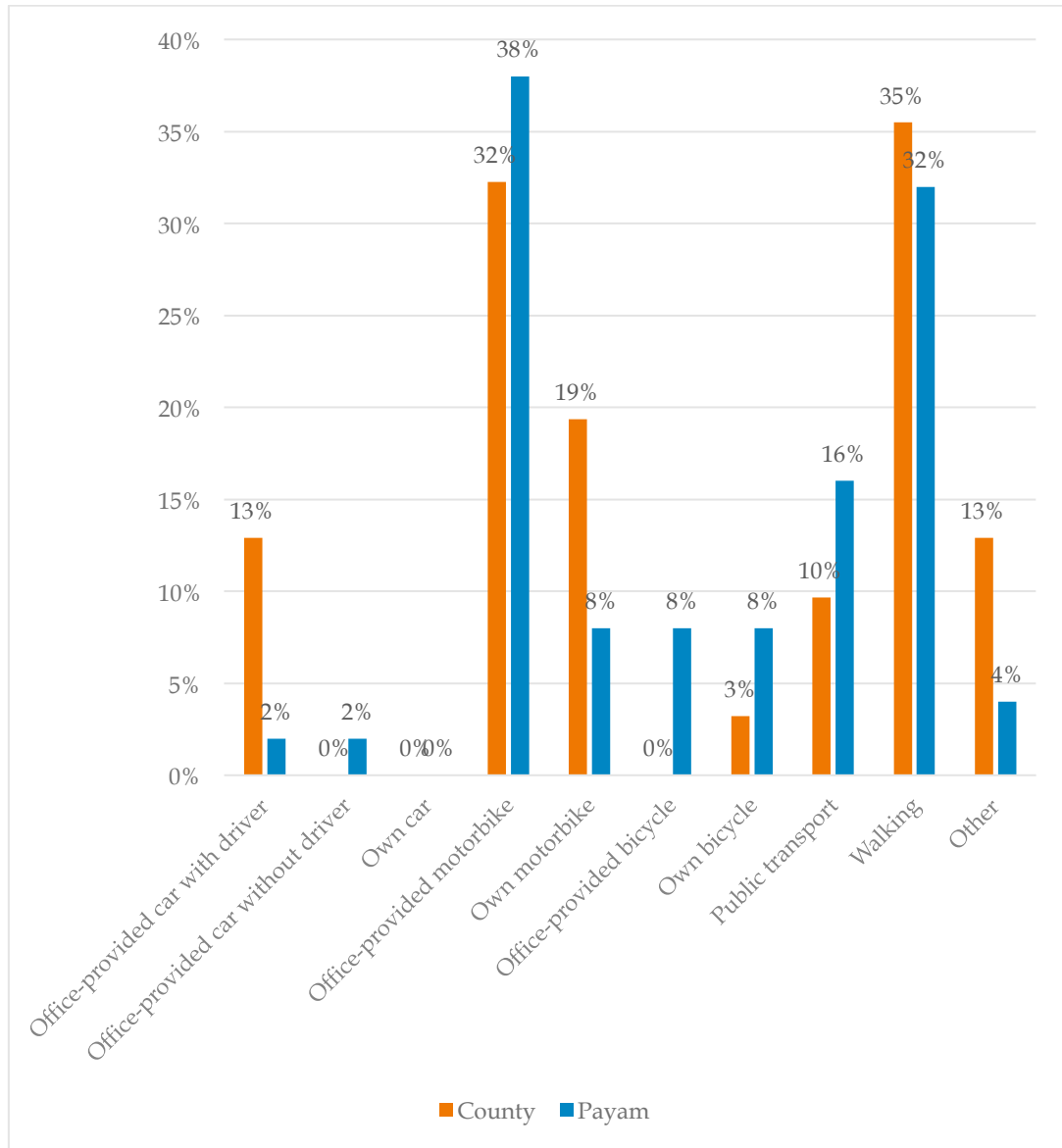
4.3.2 Accessing schools

On average, the number of schools supervised by each Payam official has increased since 2014. Respondents reported being responsible for an average of 10.8 primary schools in 2016, compared to 9.3 at the Baseline. They also reported being responsible for an average of 0.4 secondary schools.

County officials have longer distances to cover than Payam staff to visit schools, with the furthest school an average of 62km from the County Education Department, whereas Payam officials reported having to travel an average of 28km to the most distant school from the Payam Education Office. Both County and Payam staff said the closest school they were required to visit was an average of 6.5km from their office.

The most common modes of transport used by Payam officials to visit schools were office-provided motorbikes, cited by 38% of respondents (n=19), and walking, the method used by 32% of staff interviewed (n=16). No respondents reported using their own car and only n=2 said they were able to use an office-provided car, either with or without a driver.

Although County officials reported slightly better access to transport facilities than Payam staff, with 45%(n=14) using either an office-provided car with driver or an office-provided motorbike (compared to 40%, n=21 at Payam level), a higher proportion of County staff said they visited schools on foot, at 35% (n=11). No respondents at either County or Payam level reported using their own car.

FIGURE 14 MODES OF TRANSPORT USED BY COUNTY AND PAYAM OFFICIALS TO VISIT SCHOOLS

Access to official County vehicles has dropped slightly since 2014, when 50% of County staff reported using office-provided transport, compared to 45% (n=14) in 2016.

4.3.3 Duties during school visits

Levels of activity during school visits as reported by both Payam and County staff have dropped since the Baseline; general lack of attention afforded to written records

Payam officials reportedly visited each of their schools an average of 7 times in 2015, while County staff visited an average of 18.4 schools for an official inspection in 2015, down from a reported 26.9 in 2013.

Over a fifth of the Payam officials surveyed (21%, n=10) reported visiting each school an average of 12 or more times in 2015; two respondents claimed to have done so 24 times, one 35 times and two 36 times, which, while not impossible, suggests a propensity towards over-reporting.

The activity most commonly performed by County officials during school inspections was talking to the teachers, cited by 77% of respondents (n=24), followed by talking to the Head Teacher, which 74% (n=23) reported doing. Checking written records was less common: under half of the County officials surveyed said that they checked Daily Attendance Registers on school inspection visits (48%, n=15), suggesting that further work is needed to impress upon education officials the importance of ensuring attendance is monitored and managed on a daily basis. Only 45% (n=14) reported checking Pupil Admission Registers, exam results or Capitation Grant documentation, and under a third (32%, n=10) said they checked PTA minutes or other governance documents.

Taken as a whole, these findings suggest that the GESS programme needs to invest more time in stressing the importance of written evidence as a tool to support school management in its interactions with County level officials.

FIGURE 15 ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY COUNTY AND PAYAM OFFICIALS ON SCHOOL VISITS
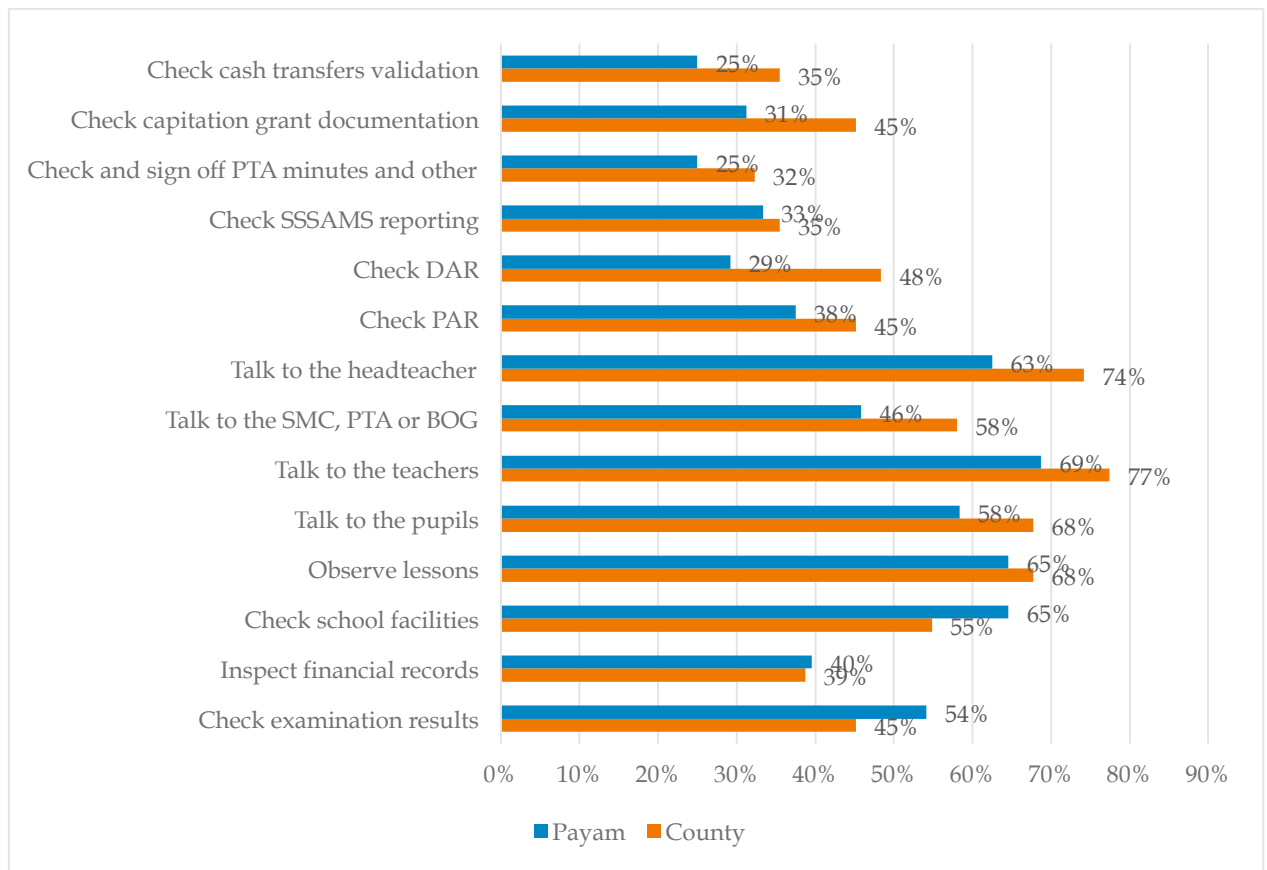
This tendency not to check written records was also evident in the responses given by Payam staff. The activity most commonly carried out, as with County officials, was talking to teachers (cited by 69%, n=33), followed by lesson observations

(conducted by 65% of Payam staff – n=31) and checking school facilities, also cited by 65%.

As at the Baseline, proportionally fewer Payam staff reported undertaking inspection duties than County officials, and they were even less likely to check school records, including Daily Attendance Registers and Pupil Admission Registers than their counterparts at County level, again emphasising the importance of embedding these practices through GESS trainings and other interactions between the programme and subnational education officials.

The findings indicate that both County and Payam staff are less proactive in carrying out inspection duties during school visits than at the Baseline, or alternatively that they are more honest when reporting which activities they perform, as lower responses were registered across the board. For example, in 2014, the most commonly performed duty by County officials – talking to teachers – was cited by 95% of respondents compared to 77% in 2016, while 98% of Payam staff said they talked to the Head Teacher during visits, as opposed to 63% in 2016.

Increasing use of written feedback after school visits relative to 2014, although verbal feedback still common; almost all officials report providing some kind of feedback after visits

Almost all of the respondents 96% (n=76) indicated that they provided feedback after their inspection visits to schools. The remaining 4% (n=3) reported using none of the options provided, which was interpreted to mean that they did not provide any form of feedback following school visits.

At the Baseline, verbal feedback was the most common method, with 81% of County staff and 77% of Payam officials communicating with schools in this way. While verbal feedback remains popular, according to the Midline research the single most popular mode of feedback amongst both County and Payam officials is now a written report, cited by 77% (n=24) and 63% respectively (n=30). This suggests that some progress has been made in formalising reporting methods after school inspections, increasing the likelihood that the findings of the visits will result in some form action taken by the school.
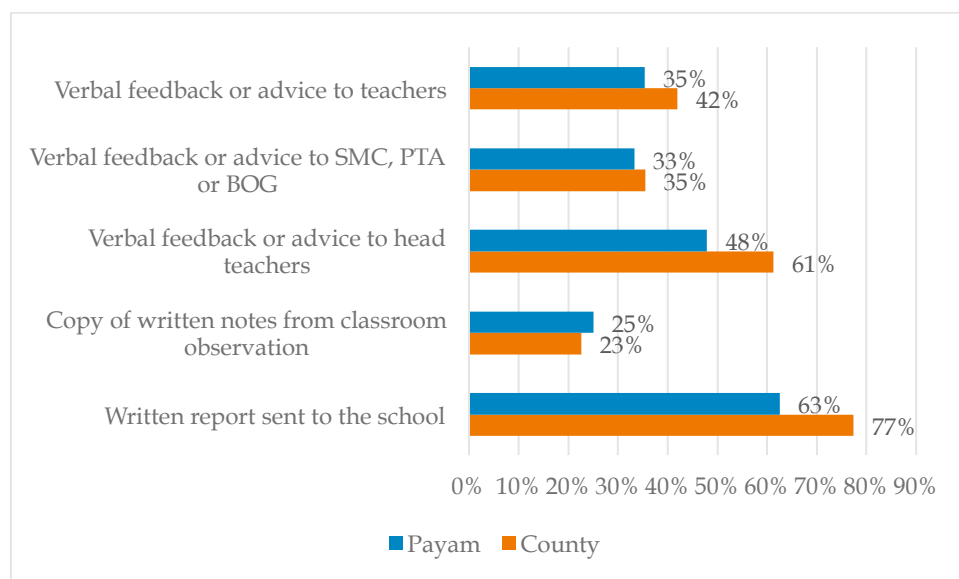
4.3.4 Involvement with schools

Majority of County and Payam staff are positive about changes to schools since 2014 and report that enrolment has increased. This is commonly attributed to GESS interventions

The majority of both County and Payam staff believe that the schools they are involved with have improved since 2014. 84% of the Payam officials surveyed (n=42) said they thought schools have got better since 2014, a view shared by 71% (n=22) of County staff.

GESS interventions were the most common explanation given by County staff for this improvement in schools, cited by 64% (n=14) of those who believed schools under their remit had changed for the better since 2014. Capitation Grants and Cash Transfers were specifically mentioned by 18% (n=4) and 14% (n=3) respectively of the County staff who thought schools had improved.

Two thirds of the Payam officials who thought their schools had improved also attributed it to the impact of GESS interventions, at 66% (n=28), with a number of respondents mentioning the impact of Capitation Grants on the school environment and the encouragement to girls provided by Cash Transfers.
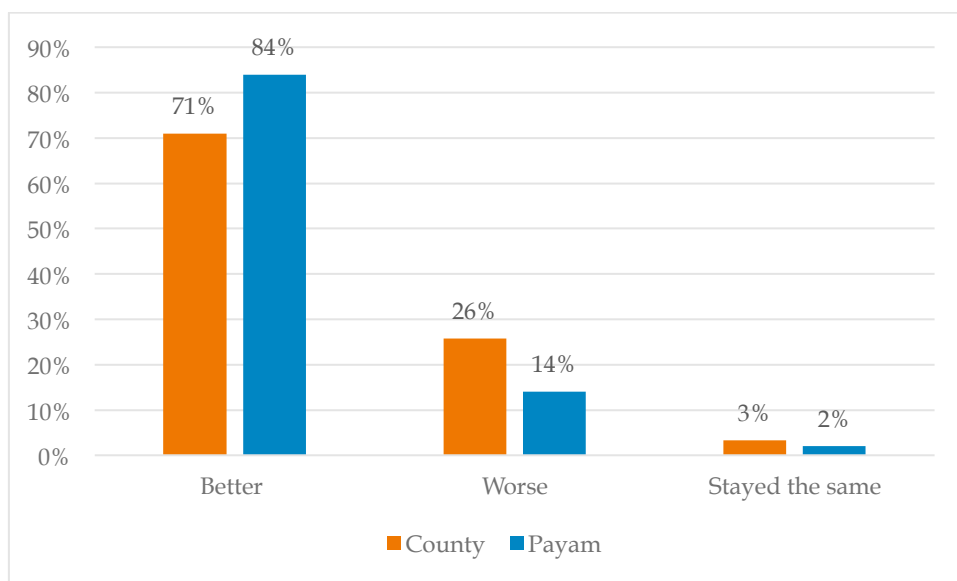
County and Payam staff share the view that enrolment has gone up since 2014. Over 60% of County officials said they thought enrolment had increased (61%, n=19), while the remaining 39% thought it had dropped. Payam staff were more positive; 78% (n=39) reported that enrolment had increased since 2014, 16% (n=8) thought it had dropped and 6% (n=3) said it had stayed the same.

Over half of the Payam officials who thought enrolment had improved attributed the increase directly to GESS, at 56% (n=28). While a proportion of these referred to the programme in general, some were more specific about which intervention they believed had contributed to the improvement.

Of those who linked the growth in enrolment to GESS, n=8 mentioned the impact of Capitation Grants and the same number attributed it to Cash Transfers for girls. The other most common reason cited was an improvement in security leading to the return of people who had been displaced.

Amongst County officials, GESS interventions were also the most common reason given for the increase in enrolment since 2014. 42% (n=13) attributed the improvement to the programme, including 10% (n=3) who specifically mentioned the impact of Cash Transfers and 6% (n=2) who referred directly to Capitation Grants. Responses included that there were more teaching materials and better facilities through capitation grants, and that Cash Transfers have increased the retention of girls.

Although GESS itself was not explicitly mentioned, 10% (n=3) respondents also referred to an increase in community awareness of the importance of sending children (especially girls) to school, which may be linked to the Community Mobilisation and Behaviour Change Communication components of GESS including the 'Our School' radio programme under Output 1.

Respondents at both County and Payam level were also asked to articulate the biggest changes they had encountered in their work since 2014.

Changes cited by County staff included the increase in enrolment, greater retention of girls due to Cash Transfers and school construction and improvement funded by Capitation Grants. County officials also mentioned the introduction of operating grants, which had improved their working environment, and their own professional development in part thanks to training in planning, budgeting and School Development Plans. Some also mentioned that teachers in their Counties had been trained, resulting in higher standards.

Not all the changes were positive. County officials also referred to the impact of the economic crisis and the loss of teachers from the profession due to low remuneration.
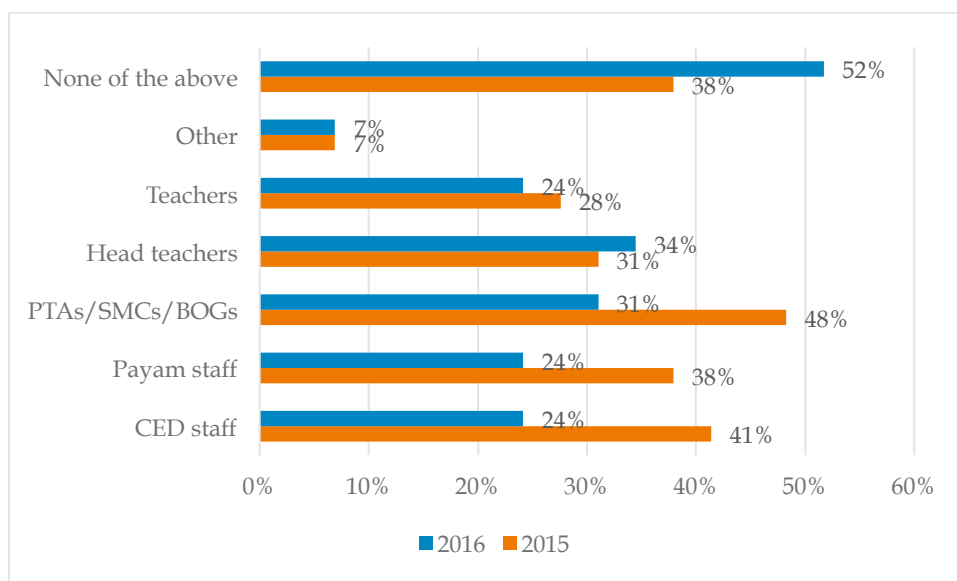
Payam officials mentioned the increase in enrolment, improvements to school facilities and retention of girls as a result of the payment of Cash Transfers. Some officials alluded to teachers being better trained, and one mentioned that the relationship between the Payam office and Head Teachers had improved.

Proportionally, fewer County staff organise and run trainings than at the Baseline; communication between County and Payam staff appears to be relatively good

Compared to 2014, a lower proportion of County officials reported having been involved in organising or conducting trainings for school and local government staff. Nearly 40% of respondents said they had not provided any training whatsoever the previous year (38%, n=11), and over half said they had not carried out any training so far in 2016 (between January and July in most cases). The Baseline research found that only 22% of County staff had not been involved in taking any trainings, suggesting a higher level of interaction between County level staff and their colleagues within the education sector in 2014 than two years later. The chief potential reason for this is likely to be the decline in funding and resources available to Counties, limiting their ability to organise and run trainings.

Of the County-level officials who reported having been involved in giving trainings at some point since 2015, the most common recipients were school PTAs, SMCs and Boards of Governors; almost half of the County staff surveyed (48%, n=14) said they had organised or run trainings for school governance bodies in 2015, followed by training for CED staff (cited by 41%, n=12). In the first seven months of 2016, Head Teachers were the most common beneficiaries of trainings provided by County officials (cited by 34%, n=10).

Level of demand at Payam Education offices for school attendance records has dropped slightly since the Baseline; monthly school reports are now most in-demand document at Payam level. Majority of Payam officials are involved in helping schools with Development Plans and preparing them for inspections.

The most in-demand school administrative documents requested by Payam officials were reportedly monthly reports, which 85% (n=41) of the Payam-level respondents said they required schools to send. Payam staff reported being relatively strict about requiring School Development Plans, cited by 83% of respondents (n=40) and exam records, listed by 77% (n=37) of the Payam officials surveyed.

Since the Baseline, the focus on attendance records has dropped slightly, a trend that is cause for some concern. In 2014 84% of the Payam-level respondents said they required schools to send records of enrolment and dropout, compared to 69% (n=33) in 2016. The same proportion of Baseline respondents (84%) also reported requiring pupil attendance registers, falling to 67% (n=32) in 2016, and in 2014 teacher attendance registers were demanded by 88% of respondents, compared to 63% at the Midline. While these figures are not alarmingly low, the decline in demand for these records at Payam level should be noted and addressed in interactions between GESS State Anchors and Payam Education Offices.

FIGURE 19 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS REQUIRED BY PAYAM OFFICES, AS REPORTED BY PAYAM OFFICIALS, COMPARING 2014 AND 2016 WHERE APPLICABLE
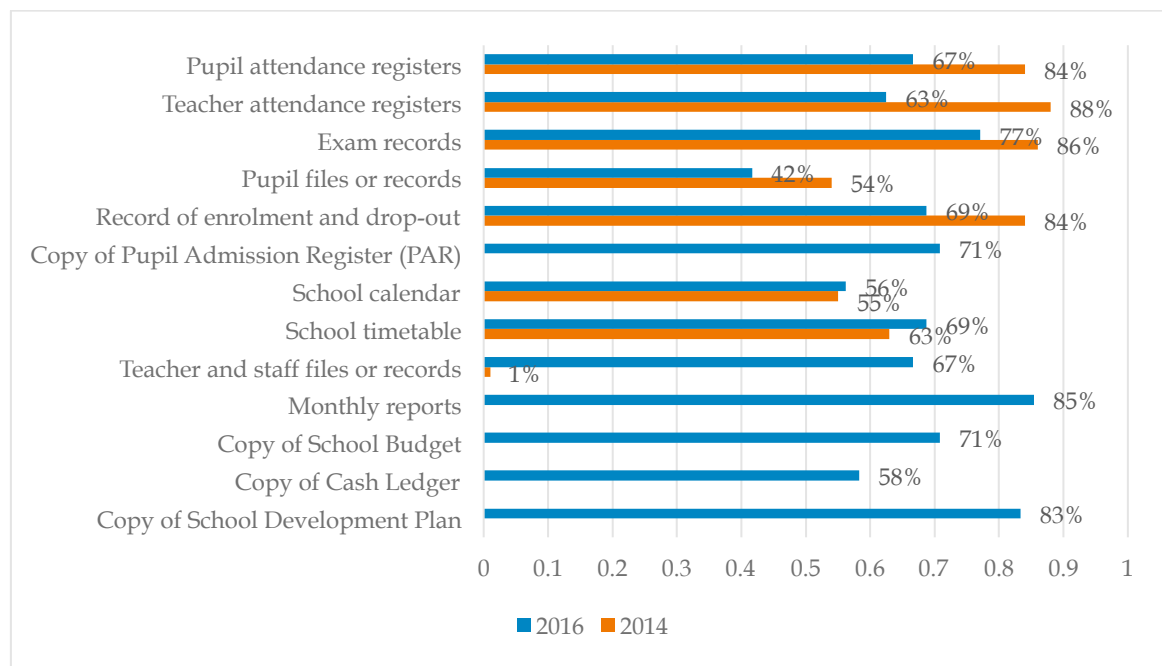
As at the Baseline, Payam officials remain closely involved in the production of school development plans, with 75% (n=36) reporting that they had contributed to these documents in collaboration with schools (the same proportion as in 2014).

Of the Payam level respondents whose schools had received a County or State inspection in 2015 or 2016 (n=41), 78% (n=32) said they had been involved in preparing schools for the inspections, indicating a relatively close relationship between Payam officials and the schools under their remit.

Just over half the Payam officials surveyed (56%, n=27) reported that copies of the School Development Plans were kept at the Payam office, dropping from 62.7% in 2014. Of the Payam officials who claimed they kept copies at their offices, only a third (33.3%, n=9) could produce them when asked to do so, compared to over half at the Baseline - an indication of the general downward trend in administrative record-keeping.

4.4   National and state policies, plans and strategies in place

4.4.1 Policy documents

General decline in retention of documents held at County Education Offices; evidence that this is related to impact of conflict and introduction of 28 states; relative increase in prevalence of documents relating to school inspection

The policy documents that were most prevalent at County Education Offices were Job Descriptions, reportedly held at 58% (n=18), School Inspection Frameworks,

held by the same proportion of County Education officials, Teacher Codes of Conduct (reportedly held by 58% of County Education officials interviewed, n=18), and School Inspection Guidelines, reportedly held by 55% of those interviewed (n=17).

In general, lower proportions of policy documents were reported to be held at County Education Offices than at the Baseline, when 77% of County Education Directors stated that Job Descriptions were kept at their offices, in addition to 72% who said they held a Teacher Code of Conduct. There appears to have been a decline in the prevalence of central government policy documents, relative to the Baseline findings: in 2014, 70% also reported keeping a copy of the General Education Act 2012, compared to just 32% (n=10) who did so in 2016, while 16% (n=5) said that a copy of the General Education Strategic Plan was held at their offices and just 10% (n=3) said they had a copy of the GRSS budget. Under a fifth of the County officials surveyed (19%, n=6) reported keeping a copy of MoGEI Mandates and Structures 2015 on file, suggesting a lack of familiarity with their statutory roles and responsibilities.

FIGURE 20 MOST AND LEAST COMMONLY HELD POLICY DOCUMENTS AT CED OFFICES, AS REPORTED BY COUNTY OFFICIALS
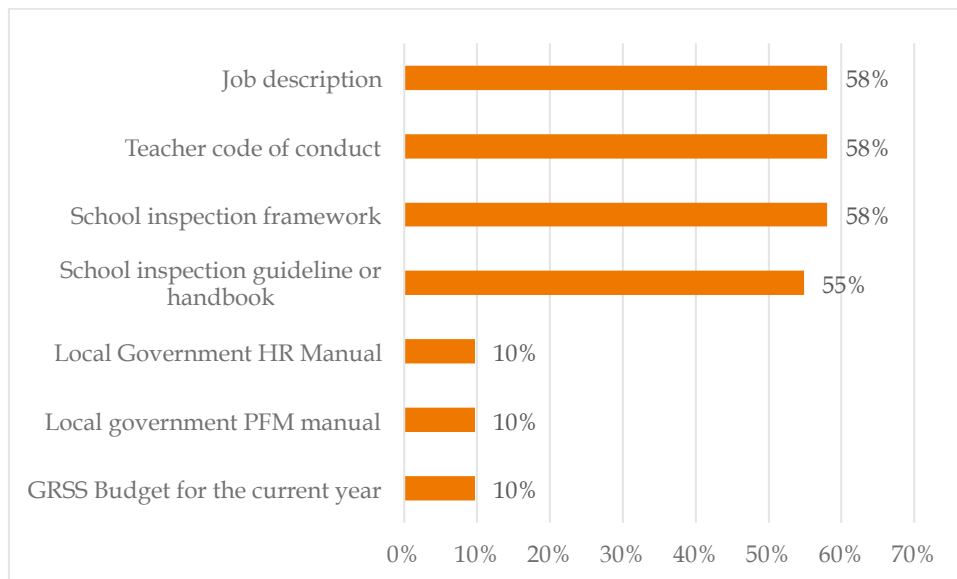
There has been a relative improvement in the prevalence of documents relating to school inspection, which were amongst the least commonly held documents at the Baseline, as reported by County officials. In 2016, School Inspection Frameworks were one of the two most frequently kept documents (reportedly held by 58% of those interviewed), followed by School Inspection Guidelines, which 55% of County Education officials purported to keep. In the Baseline, School Inspection Frameworks were one of the three least commonly held documents at 47%, and School Inspection Guidelines were mid-table, reportedly kept by 63% of County Education Offices.

Although at the Midline School Inspection Guidelines were amongst the top three most commonly held documents, as reported by County Education officials, the

actual proportion claiming to keep a copy (55%) was lower than at the Baseline. This points to a general decline in the standard of record-keeping, as well as suggesting a relative increase in the emphasis placed on school inspection, despite the drop in the average number of schools inspected in 2015 and 2016 compared to the Baseline. In 2014, County officials reported visiting an average of 26.9 schools in 2013, whereas at the Midline respondents said they had visited an average of 18.4 schools in 2015 and 11.1 in the first half of 2016. The drop in number of schools visited per year does not necessarily translate into a drop in quality, it should be noted.

Within the general context of low record-keeping, the retention of GESS documents was relatively good, with 32% (n=10) reporting that they kept a copy of the Capitation Grant manual and 35% (n=11) stating that a copy of the Cash Transfers manual was held at their office.

Record-keeping remains an area in which improvement is required, although there are a number of mitigating factors which go some way to explaining the decline since 2014. Several County Education Directors interviewed had moved offices since 2014 due to effects of the crisis, including insecurity and economic collapse. Others reported that their offices (and all the documents stored there) had been completely destroyed during conflict.

The Presidential decree introducing 28 states in place of the former ten in December 2015 may also have had an impact on both the retention and awareness of documents, as in some cases County Education Departments had moved into entirely new offices, and in others former Payam staff had become County staff who were not necessarily familiar with the documents kept at their new offices, resulting in a lack of institutional memory.

The theory of general decline in record-keeping is corroborated by the ability of County Education officials to provide proof of these documents. In total, 42% of CED staff (n=13) were able to provide proof that they had copies of the documents on file, down from 47% in the Baseline Study.

School inspection documents less prevalent in Payam Education Offices than at the Baseline; drop in frequency of school visits by Payam Education officials; improvement in reported record-keeping relative to County level

The levels of policy guidance available at Payam education offices, as reported by Payam Education officials, was low. Only two documents were reportedly available at 50% or more of the Payam Education offices surveyed: Schools Development Planning processes and Teacher Codes of Conduct, which both relate directly to Payam Education officials' role supporting schools within their purview.

Unlike in the Baseline, some policy documents were more prevalent at Payam level than County level. A higher proportion of Payam officials reported keeping documents on Schools Development Planning processes (52%, n=25) than County

officials (42%, n=13), and Teacher Codes of Conduct were reportedly held at 69% of Payam offices (n=33), compared to 58% of County Offices (n=18).

FIGURE 21 MOST AND LEAST COMMONLY HELD DOCUMENTS AS REPORTED BY PAYAM EDUCATION OFFICIALS, AND COMPARISON WITH COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICES
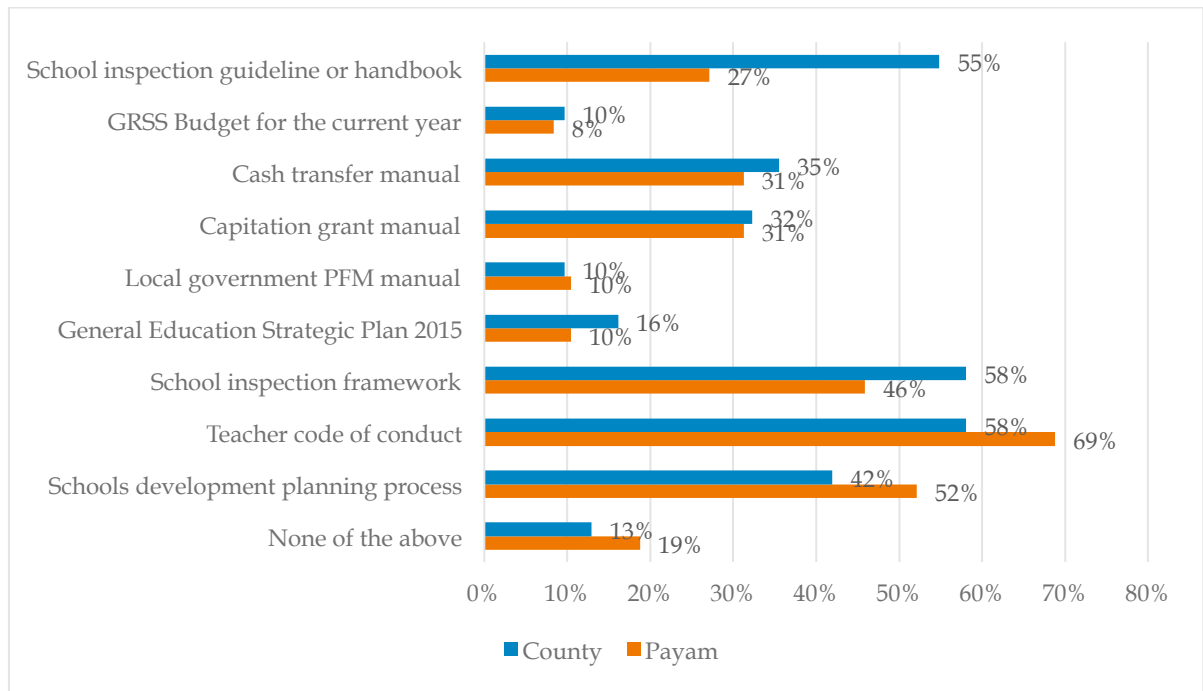
Despite the fact that inspection and supervision of schools is a central function of the Payam Education office, documents relating to school inspection were in short supply. As reported by Payam Education officials, only 27% of offices (n=13) kept a copy of School Inspection Guidelines, compared to 42% at the Baseline.

School Inspection Frameworks were also kept in less than half of the Payam Education Offices visited, according to the respondents, at 46% (n=22), and despite being the third most commonly held document. This finding is accompanied by a slight drop in the average frequency of school visits, as reported by Payam Education officials.

Compared to the Baseline, the frequency of self-reported school visits by Payam Education officials has decreased; a higher proportion, 15% (n=7), said they had on average visited each school for which they are responsible between 0 and 1 times in 2015, compared to 6% who gave this response in the Baseline. In 2014, 54% of Payam Education officials reported visiting each school on average 2-3 times in the previous year, compared to 46% (n=22) who said they had done so in 2015, and at the Baseline 18% said they had visited each school between 4 and 7 times in 2013, compared to 15% (n=7) who reported doing so in 2015.

The most commonly reported number of school visits made to each school in 2015 was 3, as reported by 35% of respondents (n=17). A higher proportion of Payam officials said they had visited each school 12 or more times than in the Baseline: 21%

(n=10) of respondents said they had done so in 2015, compared to 15% who gave this response at the Baseline. This raised the average number of school visits made in 2015, as reported by Payam staff, to 7, but this number is skewed by the fact that two respondents said they had visited each school 24 times in 2015 and two gave a figure of 36.

FIGURE 22 AVERAGE REPORTED NUMBER OF VISITS MADE TO EACH SCHOOL IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR, AS REPORTED BY PAYAM EDUCATION OFFICIALS, COMPARING 2014 AND 2016
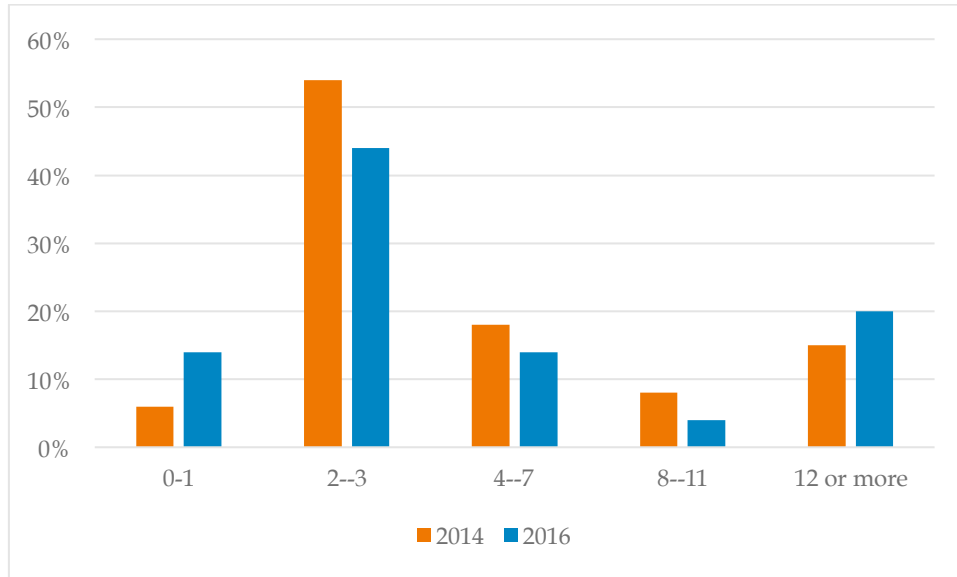
The number of visits per year, as reported by Payam Education officials, broadly correlates with the information provided by Head Teachers. In the School Survey, the majority of Head Teachers (30%, n=25) said that their school had been visited between 2 and 3 times in 2015, followed by 20% (n=17) who said they had received between 4 and 7 visits in 2015. Triangulating findings of the Payam Survey and the Head Teacher survey indicates that some officials may be over-reporting the frequency of their visits; 21% (n=10) of Payam Education officials said they had visited each school on average 12 times or more in 2015, but 13% of Head Teachers (n=11) reported receiving this number of visits.

In conjunction with a decline in the retention of documents to guide inspection and supervision, this indicates that further support is required to ensure that school visits by Payam education officials are targeted and effective.

When asked to provide copies of the respective documents, under half of the Payam officials surveyed (42%, n=20) were able to do so, again suggesting that, in addition to the mitigating factors outlined in the discussion of County Education Offices, a culture of record-keeping is not yet entrenched in subnational public administration.

4.5   Communication between County and Payam offices

Frequency of school inspections by County or State inspection teams has increased since 2014; frequency of communication between County and Payam offices, while still relatively high, is lower than at the Baseline. Majority of Payam staff are involved in preparing schools for inspection visits.

The relationship between County and Payam offices appeared to be broadly positive although areas were identified for improvement. Ahead of school inspections, the majority of County officials reported notifying the relevant Payam Education Offices, at 66% (n=19), although this still leaves a significant minority who reported not contacting their Payam counterparts in advance.

Payam staff gave a more positive assessment of the likelihood of County officials to notify them in advance of school visits; the proportion of Payam officials who said County staff informed them ahead of school visits (71%, n=29) was actually higher than the proportion of County staff who reported doing so.

According to their own assessment, the frequency with which County officials notify Payam staff in advance of school inspections has dropped since the Baseline, when 89% reported doing so. The proportion of Payam staff who reported being notified in 2014 was also slightly higher, at 75%.

Almost three quarters of County level staff reported that Payam Education Offices sent them information on schools ahead of school inspections, at 72% (n=21), although this was lower than the proportion of Payam staff who claimed they did so; of the respondents who reported having received an inspection visit in either 2015 or 2016, 80% (n=33) said they sent information to Counties in advance.

County officials suggested that Payams could be more proactive in reporting the findings of school monitoring visits upwards. When asked how often Payam Education Offices sent reports on schools monitoring visits, the highest proportion of County officials (31%, n=9) said sometimes, compared to 28% (n=8) who stated that they received reports very often and 21% (n=7) who said Payam Offices sent reports after every school visit.

FIGURE 23 FREQUENCY WITH WHICH PAYAM EDUCATION OFFICES SEND REPORTS ON SCHOOL MONITORING VISITS
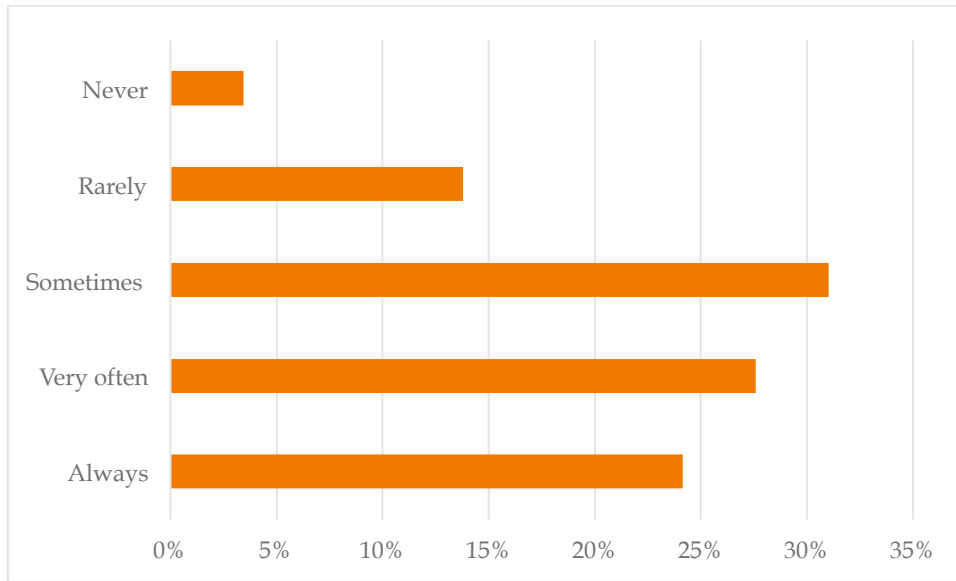
This contrasted slightly with the assessment of Payam staff, the majority of whom (60%, n=29) said they sent school progress reports on a monthly basis.

FIGURE 24 FREQUENCY WITH WHICH PAYAM OFFICIALS REPORT SENDING SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORTS TO THE COUNTY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
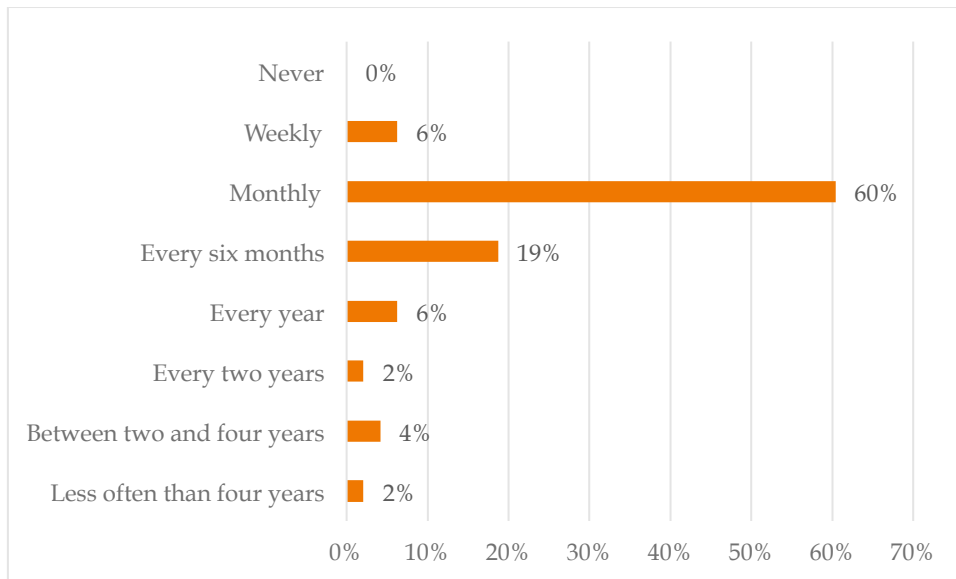
4.6 Challenges and enabling factors for the delivery of and access to quality education

4.6.1 Means to improve quality teaching

Lesson observations reported to be a common means of support to teachers, while appraisal processes are less common

Lesson observations by Payam supervisors are the most common means of support available to teachers, according to Payam officials themselves (73%, n=35). This is consistent with the relatively high levels of involvement Payam staff report having with the schools under their supervision. Payam officials also reported that it was common for teachers to have their schemes of work approved by Payam staff, with 65% (n=31) citing this option, and for teachers to have their lessons observed by Head Teachers (60%, n=29).

Appraisal processes were reportedly less common, although they were more likely to take place on an annual basis than each term. 21% (n=10) of Payam respondents said that teachers were offered termly appraisals, while 31% cited annual appraisals as a support mechanism available to teachers.

FIGURE 25 MEANS OF SUPPORT OFFERED TO TEACHERS TO HELP THEM IMPROVE THEIR TEACHING WITHIN THE SCHOOL, ACCORDING TO PAYAM OFFICIALS
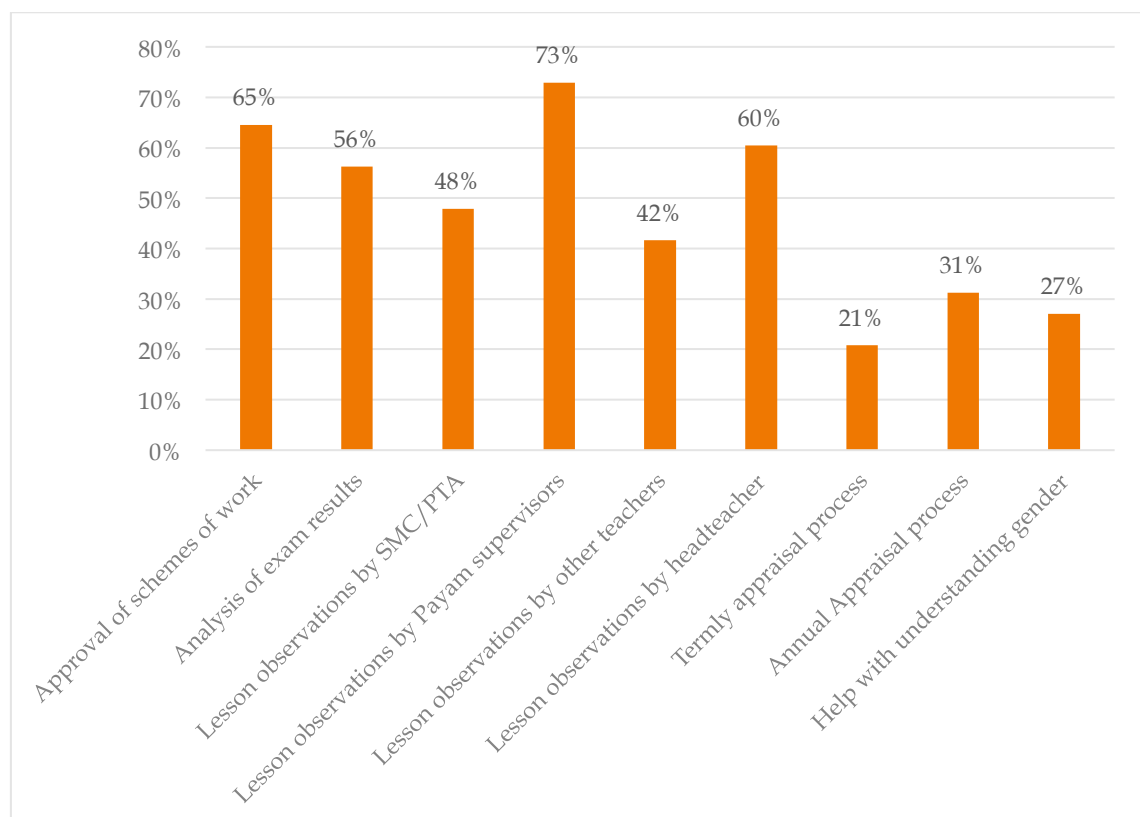
Payam staff were also asked to specify what support they themselves provided to help teachers improve.
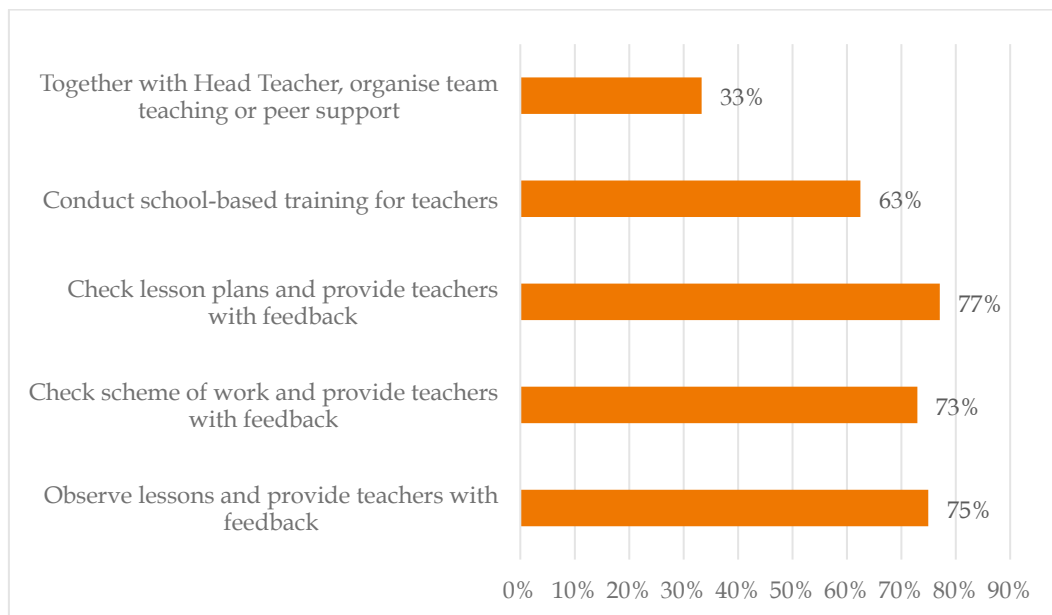
Similar proportions of Payam officials reported checking lesson plans and providing feedback (77%, n=37), conducting lesson observations (75%, n=36) and checking teachers' schemes of work (73%, n=35). A third of Payam level respondents reported organising peer support in partnership with Head Teachers (n=16).

The overwhelming majority of Payam officials reported that schools would inform the Payam Education Office if a teacher was absent for a long period (more than 2 weeks), at 96% (n=46). The remaining 4% (n=2) who said Payam Education Offices would not be informed were from Rumbek in Lakes and Juba in Central Equatoria.

Prolonged absences by teachers are most commonly addressed by holding a meeting with the teacher in question and the Head Teacher or SMC, according to Payam staff. 44% (n=21) said this would be the first action taken, while more punitive measures such as terminating the teacher's contract or stopping their salary were reported to be exceedingly rare.
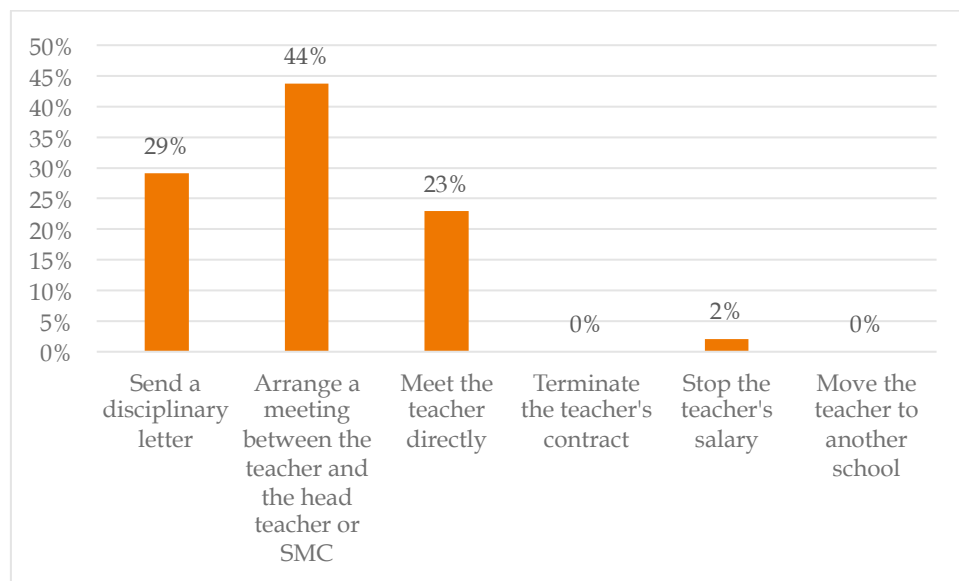
4.6.2 Protective structures for children

Inappropriate relationships between teachers and pupils are most likely to be dealt with at school level; lack of consensus among Payam officials on the consequences for pupils and teachers; according to Payam officials these cases are relatively rare

100% of the Payam officials who responded to the question (n=48) said that some form of action would be taken if a teacher had an inappropriate relationship with a learner at their school.

The most common response was that the issue would be dealt with by school management (58%, n=28). Just under a third of respondents said the case would be referred to the Payam or County Education Office (31%, n=15), while involving community or state authority structures was much less likely. Only 4% (n=2) said community leaders would be involved, and 6% (n=3) stated that the case would be reported to the police.

FIGURE 28 MOST LIKELY ACTION TAKEN IF A TEACHER HAD AN INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIP WITH A PUPIL, AS REPORTED BY PAYAM OFFICIALS

- The case would be dealt with by school management
- The case would be referred to the police
- The case would be referred to the Chief or other community leader
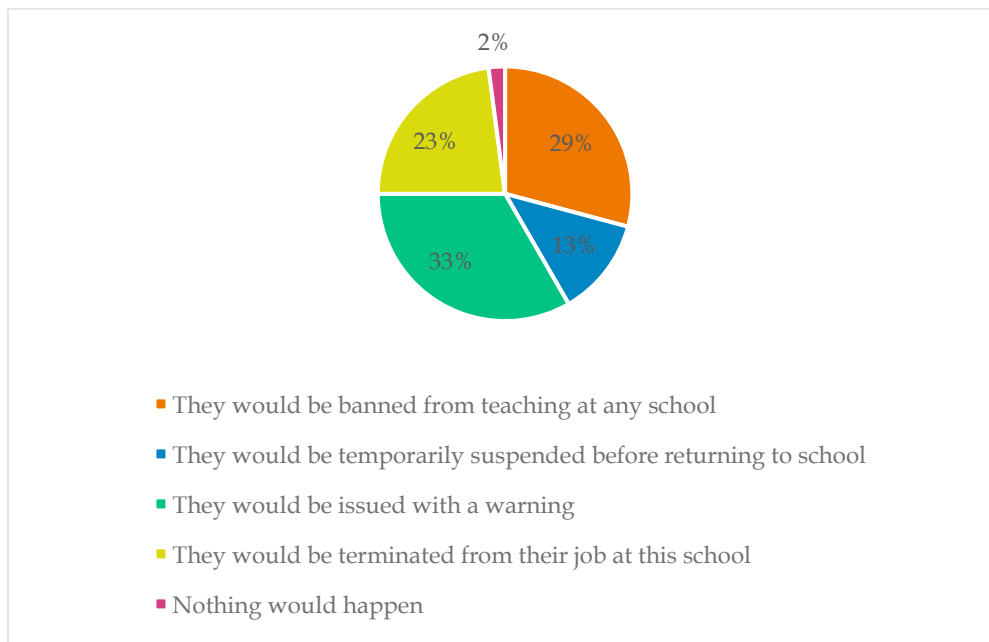- The case would be referred to the Payam or County Education Office
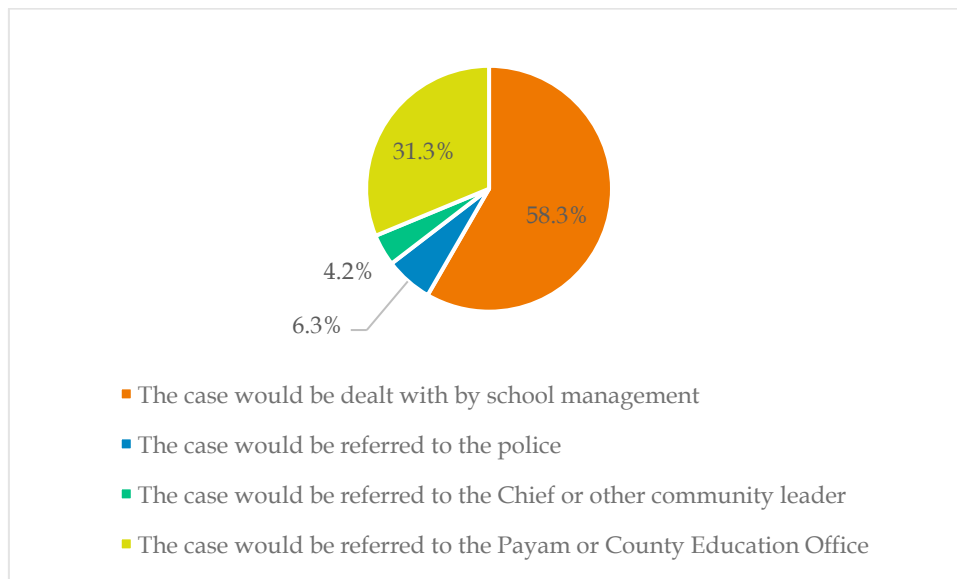
1 of the 2 respondents who said the case would be reported to the community chief or leadership was from Bor County, Jonglei, and the other from Kapoeta East in the former Eastern Equatoria. 2 of the 3 respondents who said the case would be referred to the police were in Budi County, Eastern Equatoria, with the other response coming from Juba.

When asked what would happen to the teacher in the end, respondents were divided over the severity of the punishment, with similar proportions of Payam officials predicting that the teacher would be issued with a warning (33%, n=16) and that the teacher would receive an outright ban from the profession (29%, n=14). 1 respondent from Ikotos in Eastern Equatoria stated that nothing would happen to a teacher who had an inappropriate relationship with a student.

This wide variation in responses suggests that developing a set of standardised sector-wide protocols could be a worthwhile area of focus in the future.

FIGURE 29 ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCE FOR A TEACHER INVOLVED IN AN INAPPROPRIATE
RELATIONSHIP WITH A PUPIL, AS REPORTED BY PAYAM OFFICIALS

- They would be banned from teaching at any school
- They would be temporarily suspended before returning to school
- They would be issued with a warning
- They would be terminated from their job at this school
- Nothing would happen

The majority of respondents claimed that cases would be dealt with in the same way regardless of the teacher's gender, at 85% (n=41). Of those that thought the outcome would be different, the most common reason given was that female teachers would be treated more leniently than their male counterparts.

Almost 80% of the Payam officials surveyed denied that any teachers in their schools had been accused of engaging in such a relationship in the past year, with only 19% (n=9) stating that they were aware of any cases.

Payam officials were divided over what would happen to the pupil involved in a relationship with a teacher. The highest proportion (40%, n=19), said they would continue at the school with extra support, but this was followed by 27% (n=13) who predicted that the school would ask them to leave. 1 respondent from Juba in former Central Equatoria said that the student would have to marry the teacher.

FIGURE 30 ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCE FOR A PUPIL INVOLVED IN AN INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIP WITH A TEACHER
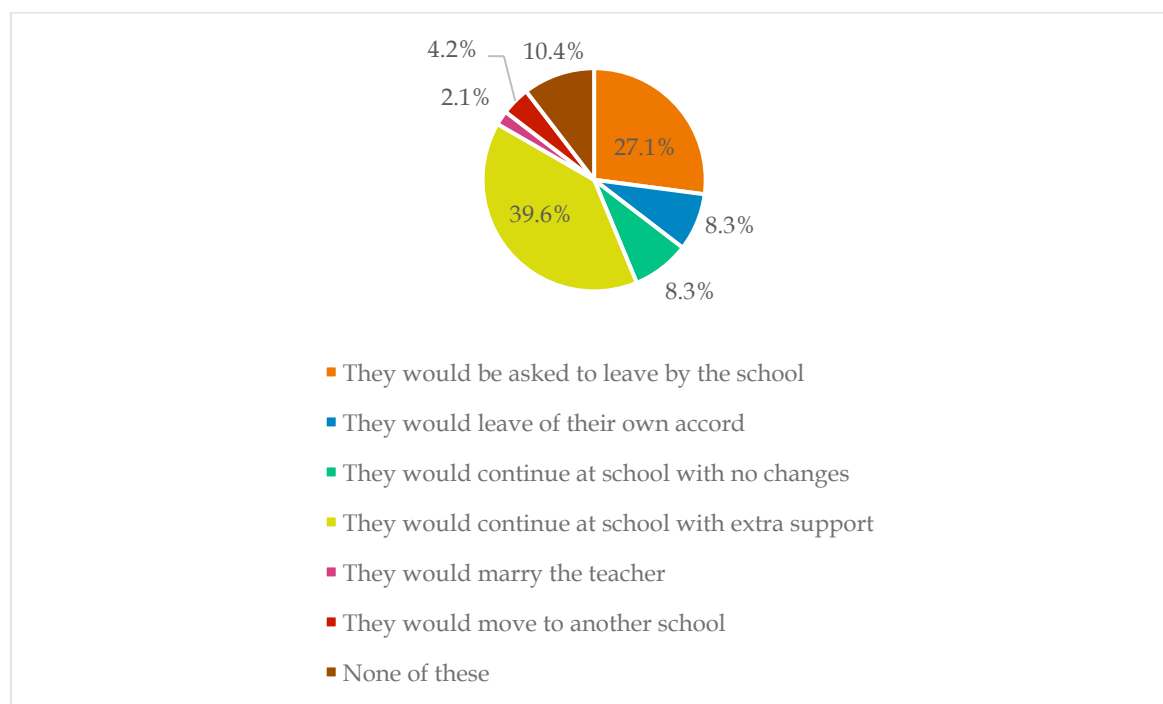
Again, the majority of Payam respondents (90%, n=43) did not think the outcome would be different if the pupil was a boy or a girl. Amongst those that did, there was an emphasis on the different consequences and expectations for girls, who would face more pressure from their families than boys (presumably to marry the teacher, although that was not explicit) or could become pregnant.
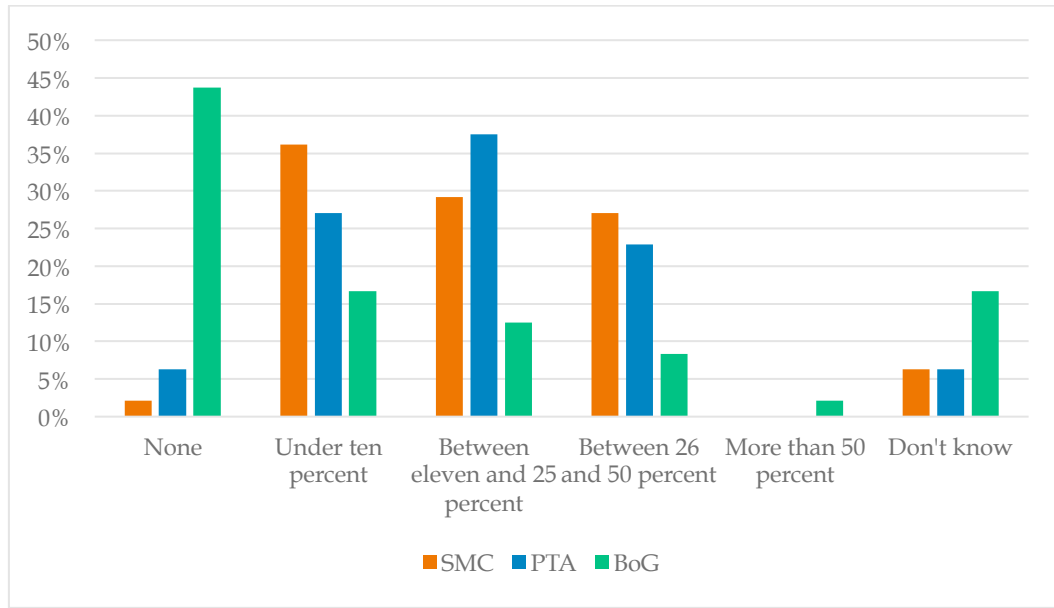
4.6.3 Support for school management

School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations are the most common governance structures, and tend to be male-dominated

As at the Baseline, the research established that School Management Committees (90%, n=45) and Parent Teacher Associations (92%, n=46) are much more prevalent than Boards of Governors. According to Payam staff, an average of 10.4 schools in their Payam had an SMC and 11.8 a PTA, while on average only 2.3 schools in each Payam were reported to have a Board of Governors. 42% (n=20) of the Payam officials surveyed said none of the schools in their Payam had a Board of Governors.

According to Payam staff, women were barely ever in the majority on school governing bodies. They estimated that women most commonly made up under ten percent of SMCs, PTAs or Boards of Governors, and no Payam officials reported that women made up over half of the SMCs or PTAs in their schools. One respondent from Jak Payam, Tonj South in Warrap estimated that women were in the majority on Boards of Governors in the payam.

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A third of Payam officials (n=16) reported being personally involved with the managing bodies of any of the schools under their supervision.

Payam staff saw the chief responsibility of the various types of school management bodies as planning for the development of the school, identified by 88% of respondents (n=42). The second most cited responsibility was overseeing the use of school funds (77%, n=37), although this did not translate into financial management, which was selected by 48% (n=23).

Compared to the Baseline, a considerably lower proportion of Payam officials view the role of school managing bodies as monitoring attendance. In 2014, 80% of the respondents cited monitoring pupil attendance, enrolment and drop-out as one of the responsibilities of SMCs, PTAs and BoGs, dropping to under half in 2016 (46%, n=22).
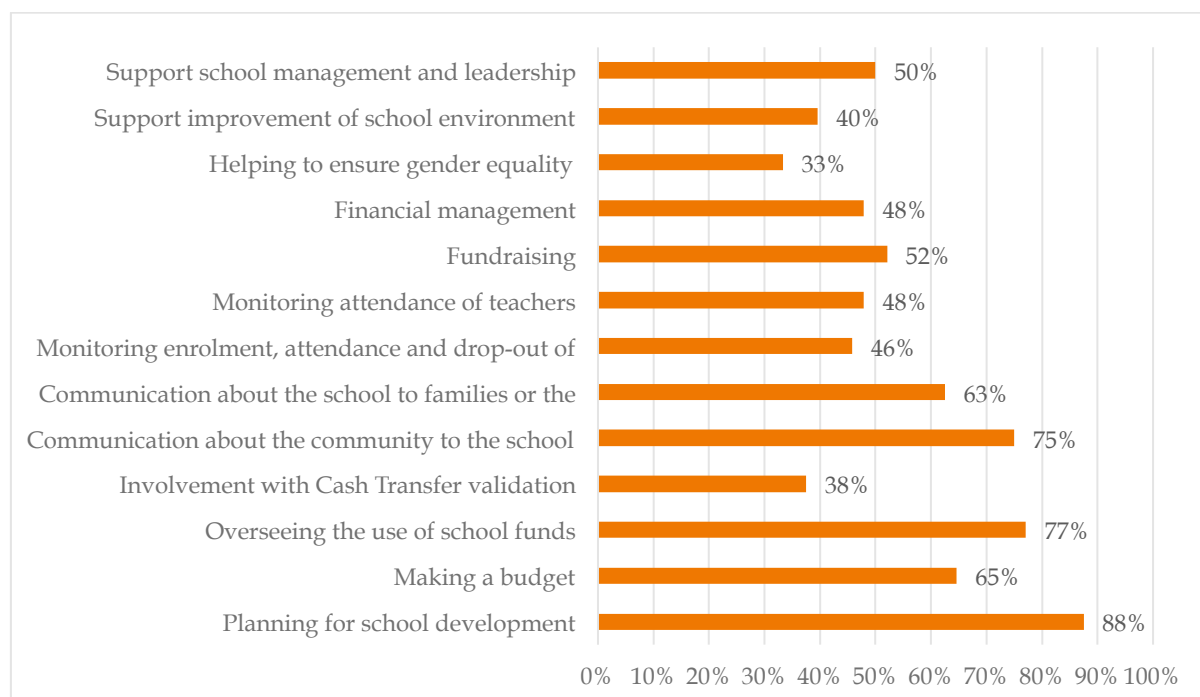
4.6.4 Financial support available to schools

Payam Education Offices more involved in providing support to school financial management processes than at the Baseline, although there is room for improvement particularly with regard to officials' understanding of their roles and responsibilities

The Baseline study noted that the introduction of Capitation Grants had placed more funds directly in the hands of schools, entailing greater responsibilities on subnational education administrations to support school finances. As the Capitation Grant system became more established, it was expected that the Midline results would indicate a marked improvement in terms of the level of support and engagement between Payam Education Office and schools on financial matters.

The findings suggest there has been a small increase in the degree to which Payam Education Offices are involved in supporting financial management, but a worrying drop in their knowledge of their statutory duties in this area. The largest increase was in the proportion of Payam officials who say they approve school budgets: at 65% (n=31) it has almost doubled from the 33% who reported doing so in 2014.

Just under two thirds of Payam officials reported approving Pupil Admission Registers (65%, n=31), while the proportion who said they approved school bank statements has increased from 19% in 2014 to 42% (n=20). Payam officials are now more commonly scrutinising records of school expenditure, with 42% (n=20) reporting that they approved school receipt books (n=20), up from 26% in 2014, and

46% (n=22) reportedly checking payment vouchers, up from 27% at the Baseline. Almost 40% of Payam staff reported checking school cash books or ledgers (38%, n=18), rising from 30% in 2014.

FIGURE 33 PROPORTION OF PAYAM OFFICIALS WHO REPORT APPROVING SCHOOL FINANCIAL RECORDS, COMPARING 2014 AND 2016 WHERE APPLICABLE
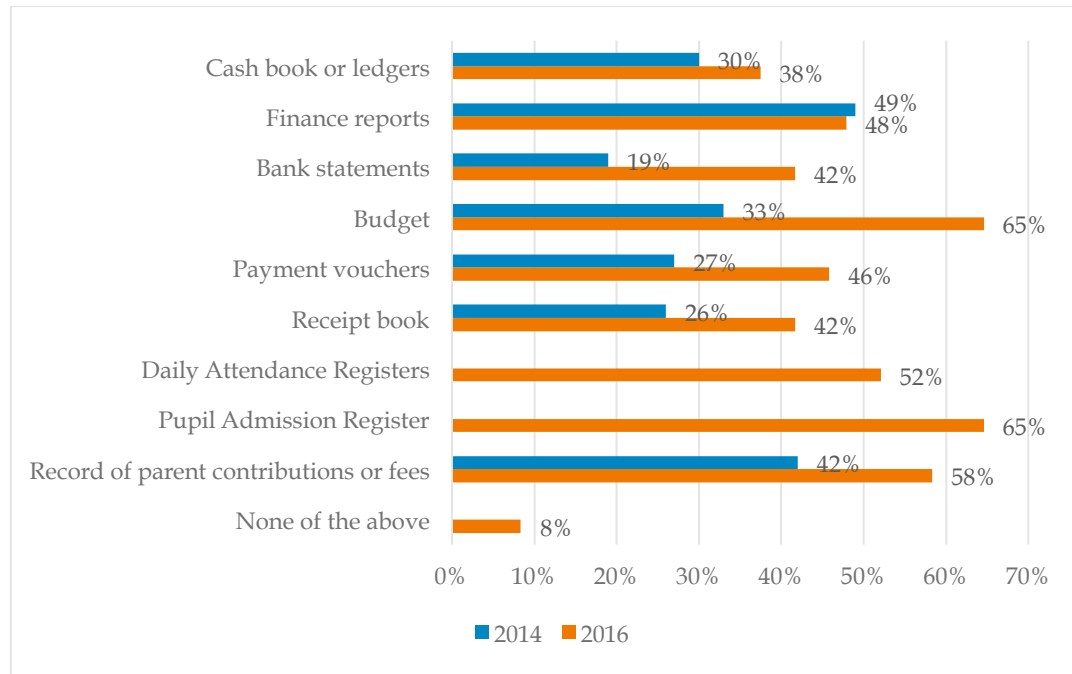
Despite this improvement, over half the officials surveyed are not involved in approving these documents, demonstrating that improvement is still clearly needed.

Approximately half 52% (n=25) said they approved Daily Attendance Registers, documents which are currently under-used. More work is needed to underscore to Payam officials the importance of ensuring that schools are recording pupil attendance on a daily basis.

The proportion of Payam officials involved in helping schools develop their budgets has dropped since the Baseline, from 88% to 75% (n=36). Payam officials also displayed worse knowledge of their statutory obligations than at the Baseline: Although more Payam officials reported approving school budgets than at the Baseline, their awareness of the obligation on them to do so has dropped; 73% (n=35) reported being required to do so, down from 80% in 2014. Only 35% (n=17) knew that they were required to approve school accounts, down from 65% at the Baseline. These findings indicate a worrying drop in levels of understanding among Payam officials of their duties and obligations.

15% of the officials surveyed (n=7) reported that none of the schools in their Payam had bank accounts, leaving a substantial majority who said they did.

5.   Conclusions and Recommendations

- There has been a decline in the retention of key documents, including policy guidance, training manuals and School Development Plans at County Education Departments and Payam Education Offices. This has implications for the ability of County and Payam officials to carry out their work and for standards of accountability.

- County and Payam education officials discharged oversight responsibilities around Capitation Grants and Cash Transfers, but successive reorganisations mean not enough of them have reference copies of policy documents to hand. GESS policy guidance will be distributed regularly and a fresh distribution made for the 2017 Academic Year.

- The decline in record-keeping and retention of documents can be linked to the impact of conflict which has in some cases necessitated the relocation of local education administrations and in others resulted in the damage or destruction of offices.

- The Presidential decree introducing 28 states in place of the former ten in December 2015 and resulting changes to the subnational administrative structure may also have had an impact on both the retention and awareness of documents, leading to office relocations and movement of staff into new roles, resulting in a lack of institutional memory.

- The impact of changes to the subnational organisation of the country on human resources and capacity within local education administrations could be a worthwhile focus of the Endline study.

- In order to improve the retention of documents and officials' understanding of their roles and responsibilities, to encourage better record-keeping mechanisms and to support accountability processes future training is required which focuses on good practice in this area.

-

Activities during school visits

- South Sudan has a large cohort of local education officials relative to the number of schools and teachers under their supervision. There is therefore potential for schools to benefit from a high level of support, but this is conditional on County and Payam staff having a good understanding of their obligations towards schools and carrying them out effectively. Currently a significant proportion of officials are not performing crucial activities during school inspection and monitoring visits, in particular checking Pupil Admission Registers and Daily Attendance Registers.

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- County and Payam staff would benefit from training which focuses on guiding their activities on school visits to ensure that their potential as a tool to improve outcomes for learners and teachers is fully realised.

<div style="background-color:#8B0000;color:white">Access to appropriate technology</div>

County and Payam officials have better access to technology than at the Baseline, in particular mobile phones. Given the increase in availability and usage of mobile phones, more use should be made of smartphone technology to support the work of County and Payam Education offices. In particular, officials should be trained to use smartphones to upload and send accountability documents to www.sssams.org and to record their observations on school visits – and GESS is adding new functionality to the SSSAMS system this year to support this.

<div style="background-color:#8B0000;color:white">Female representation in local education authorities and school management structures</div>

- Women are severely under-represented in the local education administration, as well as in school governance. Steps should be taken to address this imbalance, including by reviewing current recruitment practices and focusing trainings and community mobilisation on ensuring female involvement at school and local level. Getting more women promoted from the 'chalkface', to school leadership and beyond will create role models for female teachers, women contemplating teaching, and school girls.

<div style="background-color:#8B0000;color:white">Strategies in place to deal with teacher-learner relationships</div>

- County and Payam officials are divided over how to respond to cases of inappropriate relationships between teachers and learners. This could be addressed through the development of procedural guidance at national level. County and Payam officials are willing to engage about child protection issues, and want to do the right thing when they do: they need clear guidelines and processes to help them.

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