

# Research Brief

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## OUTPUT 1 BASELINE SURVEY: Quantitative Survey of adults in South Sudan to explore knowledge, attitudes and practice related to education

### Knowledge, Evidence and Research in GESS

The Knowledge, Evidence & Research (KER) component of the Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) programme aims to generate knowledge about best practices in education, both nationally and internationally, in programmatic causality, and in impact. The KER seeks to develop an evidence base for the project interventions, linking inputs to outcomes and impacts, as well as a broader information hub focused on girls' education. To inform the programme activities, research for the overall programme will take place in three phases: baseline (2014), mid-term (2015-16), and end-term (2017-18). The research completed under Output 1, which focuses specifically on the role and impact of social and behaviour change communications seeks to complement the wider KER work.

### GESS Output 1 - Social and Behaviour Change Communications

Led by BBC Media Action, Output 1 seeks to create an enabling social-cultural environment for supporting girls' education through a social and behaviour change communication approach via the radio programme 'Our School', which is broadcast in nine different languages across South Sudan. As well as through radio, the programmes are aired during community mobilization activities, including listening clubs and community dialogue sessions.

### Output 1 Baseline Survey Objectives

The objective of the survey was to collect data on the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, social norms, and practices related to girls' education in South Sudan as well as detailed data on the media landscape and the media behaviour of target audiences. As well as establishing baseline levels of

the knowledge, attitudes and practice that Output 1 seeks to influence, insights from the research have also been used to inform the radio programmes and community mobilisation activities.

### Methodology

The survey went to field in June 2014. It covered six of the former ten states in South Sudan and is representative of the accessible areas of those six states (at the time of fieldwork). In total, interviews were conducted with 1902 respondents aged 15+, who completed a 45 minute quantitative questionnaire with a trained enumerator.

### Key findings

There is clear potential for radio to reach and influence perceptions on issues relating to education. Radio is the most accessed media, with 52% of respondents having access in the home or elsewhere. Radio was also mentioned by respondents as one of the main sources of information about education issues.

However, community mobilisation activities will be necessary to target those with no or low access to radio.

In total, an estimated 37% (946,000) respondents aged 15+ with access to radio listened to the BBC Media Action girls' education radio programme *Our School* in the first four months of broadcast.

Respondents rated their knowledge about education highly; 78% of respondents reported they were "fairly" or "greatly" informed about education in South Sudan. However, when tested on key components of the education system and schooling

practicalities their actual knowledge was much lower.

Attitudes towards girls going to school were generally positive; 88% of respondents agreed that “Girls and boys have the same rights to an education”. However, respondents still reported the average age at which girls in their community left school to be lower than boys and other reported attitudes suggest the view that girls and boys receive a different type of education (e.g. girls are less likely to need an education in later life).

Despite education being a spending priority for most families (just below food and health), the main barrier reported to completing education for both boys and girls was a lack of money for school fees.

Very few parents are taking steps at home to support their daughters with their education, beyond trying to save money for school fees. Any family discussion about education focuses mainly on the importance of studying; discussion about other supportive topics, like homework and what is happening at school, is happening far less.

While most parents reported feeling entitled to question what happens at their child’s school (87%) very few had actually asked a question or sought information from their local school (29%).

### Recommendations for Social and Behaviour Change Communications

- Programming should continue to **acknowledge the local reality, particularly with regard to fees and physical punishment**, in schools and educate audiences on laws and policy.
- Programming should further **demonstrate ways in which parents can budget and plan for school expenses** throughout the year to address finance challenges and poor planning among families, particularly because food and health care are prioritised over education.
- Education needs to happen at home as well as at school. **Parents should be more encouraged to be involved in their children’s education. For example, talking with their children** about what they are learning at school and ways they can free up time to help their children with their studies where possible.
- Programming should leverage the existing culture of questioning and **focus on local level accountability**. Parents should be educated on how they can hold schools more accountable and why accountability is important to their children’s education.
- People have a lot of **pride in the schools in their community and programmes should build on this sense of achievement** as well as the improvements that can be made.

References GESS/ BBC Media Action (2014)  
GESS Output 1 Baseline Survey, June 2014



## Aim

Girls’ Education South Sudan (GESS) is a 5.5 year programme - April 2013 to September 2018 - which aims to transform a generation of South Sudanese, especially girls by increasing access to quality education. There are many barriers (cultural, financial, poor infrastructure/quality) that are preventing girls from going to school. The GESS programme works closely with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) to realise its strategic objective of eliminating barriers to girls’ education and promoting gender equality throughout the education system. GESS is being implemented in the former ten States of South Sudan.



## Management

Girls’ Education South Sudan is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Government of Republic of South Sudan, funded by UK Aid and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan. MoEST is supported in the implementation of GESS by a consortium led by BMB Mott MacDonald, and including BBC Media Action, Charlie Goldsmith Associates and Winrock International.