



# **Girls' Education in South Sudan (GESS)**

## **Output 1: Social & Behavioural Change Communication Endline Report**

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## Executive Summary

Up to 2.4 million children in South Sudan are not receiving an education - the highest proportion of out of school children in the world.<sup>1</sup> Thousands more are at risk of dropping out, a by-product of the ongoing political and economic instability in the country. Girls are more likely than boys to be excluded from education in South Sudan – in some parts of the country, over 75% of primary-aged girls are not in school.<sup>2</sup>

Led by BBC Media Action, Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) Social and Behavioural Change component aimed to create a supportive environment for girls' education through radio programming and community outreach. We produced *Our School*, a 15-minute magazine-style radio programme targeted at girls, their parents, community leaders and teachers. The radio programme was accompanied by public service announcements (PSAs). In addition, to extend the reach and impact of the radio programming, We implemented a range of community mobilisation activities, running from April 2014 to March 2018. Activities included listening groups, interactive drama and community dialogues.

Research was conducted throughout the project to inform the programme's development and evaluate its impact. Three nationally representative household surveys were carried out during the project, alongside qualitative studies. This report presents a synthesis of the research to assess the extent to which the *Our School* radio programme has achieved its objectives over the last four years.

### Key findings from the research

Overall, despite the challenging context in South Sudan, particularly over the last two years of the programme, *Our School* reached a significant proportion of the population and has continued to make a positive impact on education outcomes.

Supported by an extensive network of broadcast partners across all 10 former States in South Sudan, *Our School* reached nearly a third (31%) of the adult population (people aged 15 years and over); an estimated 1.9 million people. Although more than 1.5 million people left to seek refuge in neighbouring countries between July 2016 and August 2018<sup>3</sup>, *Our School* has managed to retain a loyal and engaged audience: 93% of listeners tuned into every other episode in 2018.

In addition, community mobilisation activities have taken place in over 1,763 school communities, extending *Our School* listenership to people who may not have access to radio or to those who speak a different language than that of the radio programme.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media\\_21715.html](https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media_21715.html) (accessed on September 18, 2018)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/juba/pdf/OOSC\\_report.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/juba/pdf/OOSC_report.pdf) (accessed on September 18, 2018)

<sup>3</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/southsudan> (accessed on September 21, 2018)

The number of school communities reached with these activities increased from 437 in 2014 to 1,763 in 2018, surpassing its target of 1,325 at the Endline.

*Our School* contributed to people being more informed about and engaged in education in South Sudan. Audiences were more knowledgeable about the education system; discussed education more with friends, family and community members; and took a more active interest in their child's education by, for instance, talking to them about the importance of education and helping them with their homework. This finding was validated by analysis confirming a significant and positive relationship between listening to *Our School* and consistently higher knowledge, discussion and participation in education related activities, even after controlling for other factors that might influence these outcomes, such as education and age.

Over the course of the programme, general awareness of initiatives supporting girls' education increased (including GESS Cash Transfers and Capitation Grants, training for Head teachers and teachers, school mentors and School Management Committees (SMCs)). In 2018, 65% of respondents were aware of three or more initiatives, compared to 22% in 2014. Regular *Our School* listeners were consistently significantly more likely than non-listeners to be able to identify three or more GESS initiatives at Midline and Endline, reaching 83% by 2018.

However, economic hardship reveals that deep-seated attitudes around prioritising boys' education over girls remain. While *Our School* audiences are consistently more likely to support the idea that girls' education is important and that girls and boys have the same right to an education, many suggest that the education of boys should be prioritised over that of girls when resources are scarce. This is corroborated by qualitative research, which revealed the traditional view that educating boys is a 'better investment' especially in times of crisis, as they continue to provide income for their parents after marriage while a woman leaves her family to live with her husband's family after marriage.

School attendance among girls is increasing. School attendance figures from the South Sudan School Attendance Monitoring System (SAMS) indicate that while more boys are still enrolled in school than girls, in 2018 the latter make up 46% of the school population compared with 40% in 2014. Regular *Our School* listeners with a daughter were significantly more likely to say she was in school compared to non-listeners, even after controlling for a number of other factors, such as levels of income and education.

Notably, the impact of *Our School* did not decline following the outbreak of conflict in July 2016 and the resulting large-scale displacement. Regression analysis on Endline data shows that listeners who had been forced to leave their homes in the last two years were just as likely to know more about education, discuss and participate in education-related activities as listeners who had not been displaced.

This report lays out recommendations based on the research findings to inform any future programming aiming at supporting girls' education.

# This Report

This report forms the final evaluation of the GESS activities under its Social and Behavioural Change component (Output 1) undertaken between May 2014 and September 2018. It focuses on the reach and impact of the radio programme *Our School* on key outcomes related to education. The evaluation is based on a synthesis of data collected across a number of studies completed by BBC Media Action's Research and Learning team throughout the Programme, supplemented by secondary desk research, where relevant.

The report unfolds as follows. Section 1 summarises the overall GESS programme and its Social and Behavioural Change component, including its background, objectives and activities, as well as the research approach; section 2 presents and discusses the evaluation's findings; and section 3 offers some final recommendations.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Project Background

Since the outbreak of civil war in 2013, multiple armed conflicts and economic crises have exacerbated an already vulnerable political and social landscape, resulting in violent inter- and intra-community tensions, hyperinflation, currency devaluation, severe food insecurity and large-scale internal and external population displacement. One year after the August 2015 peace accord, deadly clashes erupted in Juba before spreading to other regions and worsening the humanitarian situation. In early 2017, South Sudan became the world's first country in five years to experience famine in some areas and although large-scale humanitarian assistance helped to contain its escalation, it still faces the risk of famine in 2018. In May-July 2018, almost two in three South Sudanese or 7.1 million people were expected to need urgent humanitarian food and livelihood support, 28% more than the same lean period a year earlier.<sup>4</sup>

South Sudan has the fastest growing displaced population in Africa today and the world's third largest refugee crisis according to UNHCR. As of August 2018, the number of South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers reached nearly 2.5 million people, most of whom have fled to nearby countries, mainly Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia.<sup>5</sup> There are also more than 2 million internally displaced and non-South Sudanese refugees in the country according to UNHCR.<sup>6</sup> Some 85% of South Sudanese refugees are women and children. On August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 parties to the conflict signed a power-sharing agreement aimed at ending the five-year civil war.

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<sup>4</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification South Sudan Technical Working Group, June-July 2018, available from [www.ipcinfo.org](http://www.ipcinfo.org) (accessed on September 21, 2018)

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR, "South Sudan Situation: Regional Overview of Population of Concern", June 30, 2018 (accessed on September 2, 2018), available from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/64731>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

This highly volatile environment has further damaged an already fragile education system, resulting in extremely poor educational outcomes. Current education indicators place South Sudan among countries with the highest rates of school dropout, especially for girls.

There are many barriers that prevent girls and boys from going to school, including lack of food; insecurity; displacement; illiteracy of parents; poverty; the destruction and looting of schools by armed groups; poor perception of schools; and the quality of teaching. Girls often drop out because of early marriage, pregnancy, domestic duties, or lack of safe transport. Often, traditional beliefs about the roles of women and girls deter families from educating girls.

The Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) is a five-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 aid from the UK Government. One of MoGEI's strategic objectives is to eliminate barriers to girls' education and promote gender equality throughout the education system. It worked to achieve this by eliminating barriers to girls' education and promoting gender equality throughout the education system, to improve girls' enrolment, retention and learning at primary and secondary school.

MoGEI leads the GESS programme, supported by implementing partners who provide technical advice and support. 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 are BMB Mott MacDonald/Cambridge Education (lead), BBC Media Action, Charlie Goldsmith Associates and Winrock International.

The activities are structured along three main outputs:

1. Enhanced household and community awareness and empowerment for supporting girls' education through radio programming and community outreach.
2. Effective partnerships between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (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. Knowledge, Evidence and Research (KER) - increased knowledge and evidence of what works to promote girls' education in South Sudan.

The programme was implemented in all 10 former States of South Sudan. It reached over 4,000 not-for-profit, government, faith-based and community schools across the country. GESS also worked in conflict-affected areas to support temporary learning spaces and schools in Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites and camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

## **1.2 Output 1: Social and Behavioural Change Communication**

BBC Media Action implemented Output 1 of the GESS programme. Under this Output, Social and behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) through radio programming and community mobilisation, was used to create a supportive socio-cultural environment for girls' education.

SBCC is the use of communication to change behaviours by positively influencing knowledge, attitudes and social norms at the individual, community and societal level. The approach emphasises “the need to support two-way communication systems that enable dialogue and that allow communities to speak out, express their aspirations and concerns and participate in the decisions that relate to their development.”<sup>7</sup>

In South Sudan, cultural, economic, environmental and logistical barriers remain significant in preventing girls from going to school, staying in school and learning efficiently when in school. Evidence has shown that awareness of the importance of girls' education alone is not enough to overcome these barriers; rather, there needs to be a process of behavioural and social change to shift deep-seated attitudes and opinions regarding the benefits of girls' education.

As such, SBCC was used to enhance people's awareness about the importance of supporting girls' education. It also aimed to empower households and communities to support girls to attend school.

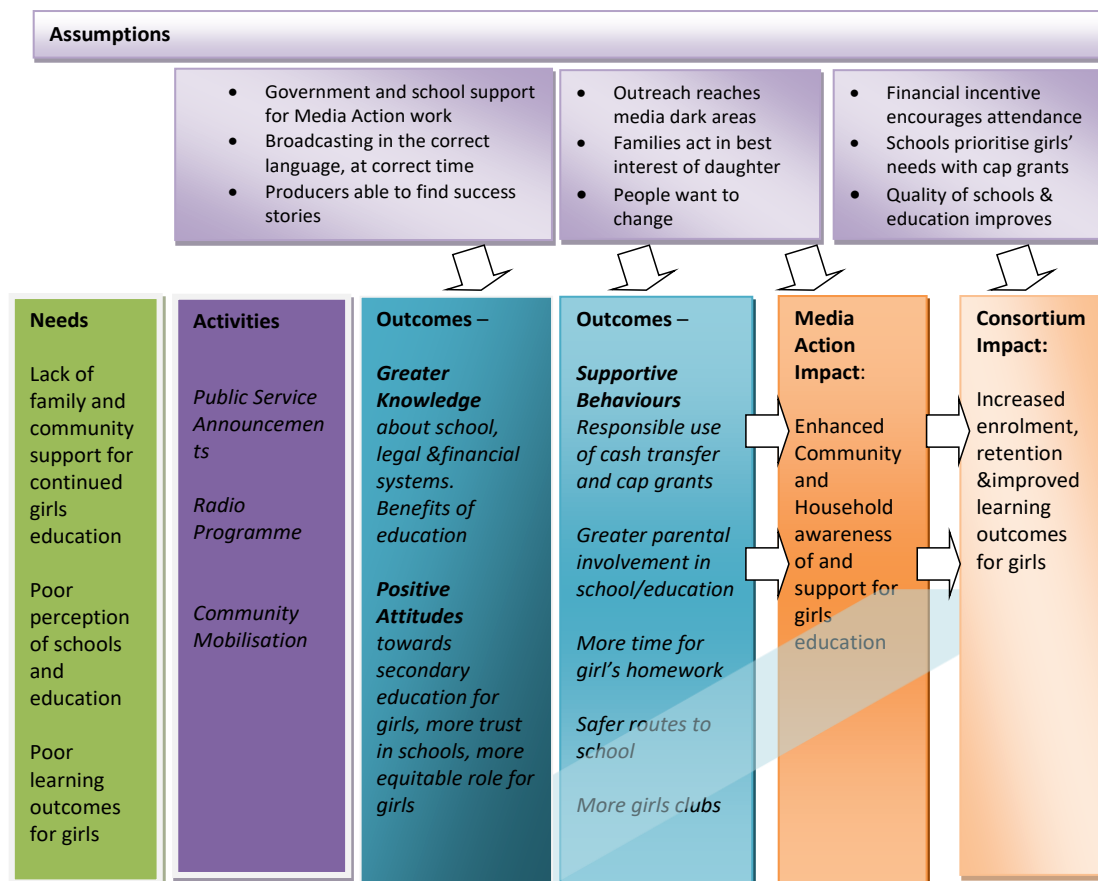
### **1.2.1 Theory of Change**

The theory of change outlines how GESS' Social and Behavioural Change activities were expected to lead to positive outcomes for the audience as part of the wider GESS programme. See Figure 1 overleaf.

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<sup>7</sup> This is the United Nations formal definition of Communication for Development, adopted in 1997, through Article 6 of General Assembly Resolution 51/17. [https://www.unicef.org/cbsc/files/Inter-agency\\_C4D\\_Book\\_2011.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/cbsc/files/Inter-agency_C4D_Book_2011.pdf) (accessed on September 13, 2018)

**Figure I: Output 1 theory of change**



Developed at the outset of the programme, the theory of change was revisited and adapted following the re-emergence of conflict in the country in July 2016. As such, Output 1 adopted a more conflict-sensitive approach, recognising the emerging needs of conflict-affected communities and addressing issues that were relevant to crises. (See section 1.2.2, on impact of conflict and insecurity on project activities)

### 1.2.2 Activities

#### ***Our School* radio programme**



The GESS programme produced *Our School*, a 15-minute weekly magazine-style radio programme targeted at girls, their parents, community leaders and teachers. It aimed to raise awareness around GESS interventions that supported the school system. Made by a team of South Sudanese producers, the programme explored the lives of girls and their families as they struggled to resolve the challenges of going to school.

*Our School* covered a range of topics addressing the key drivers and barriers to girls' education and the key attitudes and behaviours that need to change for people to increase support for girls' education in South Sudan.

#### Examples of topics covered by *Our School*

- Benefits of education
- Budgeting for education
- Dealing with boys in school
- Girls returning to school after failing exams
- Age at which girls should first go to school
- Women role models
- When money is low, why are parents giving preference to boys' education over girls'?

The programme was broadcast nationally from April 2014 to September 2018. Each month, two new episodes and two repeats aired on a number of broadcasters in each of the 10 former States, in nine local languages (Dinka, Bari, Simple (Juba) Arabic, Wau Arabic, Lutoko, Toposa, Azande, Madi and Nuer). At its peak, a total of 40 broadcast partners aired the programme. However, due to insecurity, by September 2018 this had dropped to 31 stations. Stations in the Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile regions were particularly affected.

### Community mobilisation

To extend the reach and impact of the radio programming, BBC Media Action implemented a range of community mobilisation (CM) activities, running from April 2014 to March 2018. Activities included listening groups, street theatre and community dialogues; utilising radio programme content to interact with communities in a way that fitted the particular context. These activities involved listening to the *Our School* programme on solar powered wind-up radios and/or using visual storytelling materials (pictorial translations of issues covered by the radio programme) accompanied by group discussions, music, dance and drama. CM activities targeted school communities in all locations, and particularly those where there was no radio coverage and/or where communities speak a different language from the one of the radio broadcasts.

Through its national CM programme led by BBC Media Action, GESS supported 1,763 school communities prior to the official end of CM activities in March 2018.

To extend the CM activities beyond the lifetime of the programme, volunteer CM champions were recruited from among participants of listening clubs and other CM activities and tasked with carrying on with the CM activities voluntarily. Field visits by the Research and Learning team found that some of the champions were able to continue with their work while others had found the logistics too challenging.

### Public service announcements

Apart from the 15-minute radio programme that formed the core broadcast output, BBC Media Action produced accompanying public service announcements (PSAs) on specific issues in a limited number of languages. These were 1 - 3 minute segments, which aimed to complement the issues addressed in the *Our School* programme by reinforcing key pieces of knowledge and sometimes with a call to action.

A total of 16 PSAs were produced throughout the duration of GESS. Topics they covered included how to qualify for Cash Transfers, advising parents on the need to speak with teachers about their child's progress, the importance of budgeting of education, the long-term benefits of education and the value of education in the workplace.

The PSAs were produced intermittently throughout the project and broadcast on the majority of the partner stations airing *Our School*. However, given the short duration of their broadcast, it was difficult to capture their reach and impact. Therefore, they do not form part of this evaluation.

### **Impact of conflict and insecurity on project activities**

As a result of conflict, some broadcast partners were closed down and some areas became inaccessible for CM activities, so volunteers were recruited to work locally. In addition, the programme adopted partnerships with organisations operating in the United Nations Protection of Civilians sites (PoCs). For instance, Internews distributed over 2,000 Secure Digital cards loaded with the *Our School* radio programme to be played in PoCs via speakers mounted on motorbikes (*Boda-Boda Talk Talk*) – which are used to get critical information to people seeking shelter in UN bases across South Sudan.

Partnerships with radio stations broadcasting in Uganda were also established to reach displaced South Sudanese living there. These included Radio Purchase and Nile FM in Northern Uganda.

In addition, *Our School* was also adapted to reflect the worsening crisis with content that addressed the needs and concerns of conflict-affected communities. Topics addressed by *Our School* included how schools were dealing with the influx of IDP children; easing hunger at school; what communities could do to support teachers to continue teaching; completing education in an IDP camp; what should parents consider when deciding to send their children back to school in times of crisis; how teachers dealt with tension/conflict between learners from different backgrounds; and how parents were coping with the education of their children when the cost of living was so high.

#### **PSA Examples**

**'Budget today to support your children in school.'** When a man orders drinks in a bar another man reminds him that he is supposed to be saving to buy his daughter's school books. A woman also reminds him that the cost of living is high, jobs scarce and prices high, and that his children should not suffer because of his selfishness.

**'Help your daughter to get an education so she can support you in later life.'** An uneducated woman is seeking working in an office. The boss advises her to go back to school and get educated so she can get a job and support her family.

### 1.2.3 Research

The Research and Learning team of BBC Media Action carried out a number of research activities in South Sudan over the life of the project to inform, monitor, and evaluate the project. A multi-method approach was used, employing both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The quantitative research included three nationally representative surveys and one quantitative monitoring system designed to track the effectiveness and reach of the community mobilisation activities. The surveys were carried out in 2014, 2016 and 2018 respectively.

The Baseline survey was carried out to establish benchmarks for the Midline and Endline surveys, while the Midline and Endline surveys focused on determining the reach of the *Our School* radio programme; how engaged listeners were with the programme, and whether listeners had more knowledge, more positive attitudes, and had taken up specific behaviours compared to non-listeners. Given the return of conflict in 2016, and the resulting displacement of a large proportion of the population, the Endline survey included questions to capture information that would support analysis around how displacement may have affected education outcomes.

A range of quantitative analysis methods were undertaken to explore data collected across these studies. This included basic descriptive analysis and tracking of trends over time, and regression modelling to compare key outcomes between those regularly listening to *Our School* and those unexposed to the content at all – testing the impact of the programme on audiences while controlling for potential confounders such as age, education levels or location.

The effectiveness of the CM activities was measured through a mobile phone questionnaire completed by the CM officers after each activity. The activity was deemed to be effective if at least 50% of participants reported taking action. In addition, as the CM activities were completed in cycles of six months, the Research and Learning team conducted qualitative research with participants at the start and the end of the cycle to track any reported changes in their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour as a result of participation. Feedback gathered from CM monitoring and evaluation is used in this report to triangulate findings from the quantitative and qualitative studies.

**Table 1: Overview of quantitative research studies**

Study	Data collection	Method	Participants
Baseline study	July 2014	n=1902 respondents aged 15+	Nationally representative adults 15+
Midline study	May 2016	n=3168 respondents aged 15+	Nationally representative; adults 15+

<b>Endline study</b>	May 2018	n=3040 respondents aged 15+	Nationally representative, adults 15+
<b>CM online monitoring &amp; evaluation</b>	2014 to 2018	Mobile phone questionnaire completed by CM officers	Parents, students, school committees and teachers

Alongside this, qualitative studies were conducted throughout the programme to both shape the project and to explore the impact of *Our School* on audiences in more nuanced ways than quantitative analysis allows. In total, 12 qualitative studies were completed. Specifically, these studies were undertaken to:

1. Identify barriers and enablers to girls' education to inform production of tailored programmes.
2. Gather audiences' views of the programme quality and content in order to improve it.
3. Track changes over time and find out how the radio programme and community mobilisation activities were contributing to these changes.
4. Understand impact on key education outcomes, i.e. knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

An overview of the key qualitative studies that contributed to the evaluation of the programme is provided in Table 2. A number of other small scale qualitative studies were undertaken to test and improve the content of *Our School*. These were not included in this study.

**Table 2: Overview of qualitative research studies**

Study	Data collection	Method	Participants
<b>Formative research</b>	July to August 2013	32 in-depth interviews; 16 focus group discussions	Households, community members and schools in two States (former Eastern Equatoria and former Western Bahr el Ghazal)
<b>Longitudinal study Baseline</b>	February 2015	20 focus group discussions; 72 in-depth interviews – (discontinued in 2016 due to conflict and displacement in the research area)	Teachers, community members, parents of girls and boys in school and out of school, (in four school communities in former Western Bahr el Ghazal State)
<b>Longitudinal study wrap-up</b>	November 2016	13 in-depth interviews	Original participants in the wrap-up study (including parents and teachers PoC site in Wau or around the town)  Radio listeners of <i>Our School</i>

<b>CM pre- and post research</b>	April 2017 And October 2017	12 focus group discussions in two rounds (before and after the end of the activities)	Parents, students, school committees and teachers in the former States of Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal and Central Equatoria
<b>Photovoice activity</b>	November 2017	Tracking the most significant change among participants in CM activities through photographs	50+ participants (parents, students, school committees and teachers) in former Central Equatoria and former Warrap State
<b>Listeners' feedback from radio stations</b>	Throughout the project	Audience feedback through call-ins, texts and visits to the stations gathered by radio stations and analysed by BBC Media Action Research and Learning team	Audiences of <i>Our School</i>

### **Research in a challenging context**

The diverse nature of the population and the ongoing conflict in the country meant conducting research was challenging.

Due to insecurity, fieldwork in some locations was delayed or substituted at times throughout the project. In addition, the language diversity of the country presented a significant challenge to the collection of reliable data at several levels. Firstly, it was difficult to produce reliable local language translations of the questionnaire for the mobile devices. Secondly, several of the languages used are not commonly written down and have many dialects, making standardisation problematic.

Other challenges included the difficulty securing permission from local authorities to approach locals and conduct research and that of recruiting experienced researchers to conduct qualitative and quantitative research. Furthermore, a lack of reliable and up to date population data meant the sample design and weighting for demographic characteristics were challenging. This was particularly problematic at Endline in 2018, when displacement (both external and internal) had rendered available population data (particularly at the state level) highly inaccurate. As such, the Endline data was not weighted. More detail on the sampling design and weighting of the Endline survey is available in the technical appendix.

## 2. Evaluation Findings

The following sections outline Endline research findings. This includes a breakdown of the reach of *Our School*, feedback on audience engagement with the programmes, and evaluation of the impact of the programme on key outcomes related to education.

Data has been analysed to explore trends overtime at the population level, and between regular *Our School* listeners and non-listeners.

### 2.1. GESS Logical Framework Indicators

The table below summarises the achievements of Output 1 against the various indicators for this component. The red figures indicate achievements against targets in million or in percentage point (pp) increases since the Baseline.

As at Endline in 2018, all logical framework targets were exceeded under Output 1, with the exception of the number of people reached by the programme (achieved 1.9 million, against a target of 2 million). Factors contributing to this are detailed in Section 2.3 (Audience Reach and Profile).

**Table 3: Output 1 logical framework indicators**

Outcome indicator 4:	Baseline: Sept-14		Midline: Sept-16	Endline: Sept-18	
Percentage of adults in the sample study who place importance on sending girls to school	27%		36% (Target: Baseline +5pp)	49% (Target: Baseline +10pp)	
Output indicator 1.1	Baseline: Sept-13	Progress: Sept-14	Midline: Sept-16	Endline: Sept-18	
Number of adults (15 years +) reached with girls' education radio outputs	0	0.9 million	2 million (Target: 1.4 million)	1.9 million (Target: 2 million)	
Output indicator 1.2	Sept 14	Progress: Sept-15	Midline: Sept-16	Sept-17	Endline Sept-18
Number of school communities reached	437	667	913	1551	1763

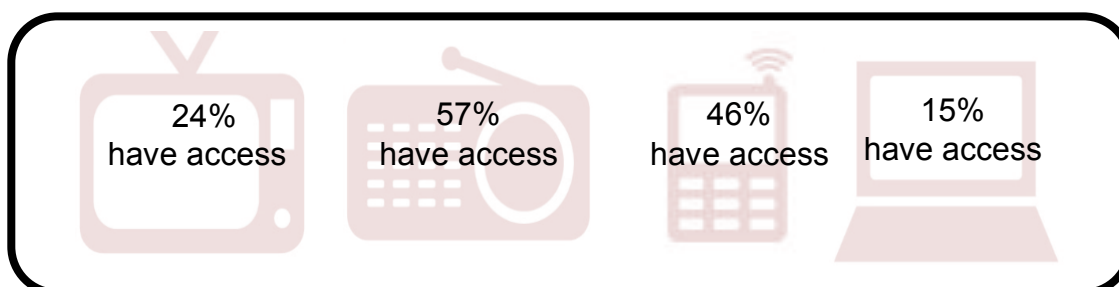
with community mobilisation activities			(Target: 845)	(Target: 1,085)	(Target: 1,325)
<b>Output indicator 1.3:</b>	<b>Baseline: Sept-14</b>	<b>Midline: Sept-16</b>	<b>Endline: Sept-18</b>		
Percentage of people in the sample study who demonstrate awareness and understanding of elements of the school system that support girls' education	<b>22%</b>	<b>53%</b> (Target: Baseline +5pp)	<b>65%</b> (Target: Baseline + 10pp)		

## 2.2 Media Landscape

South Sudan's media landscape is limited by poverty, lack of electricity and poor infrastructure, as well as fragile media freedom.<sup>8</sup> Radio is the most widely accessed media source in South Sudan, as well as the most developed. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 brought about a proliferation of radio stations across the country; many of which were private and backed by foreign funding. There is now a national state-run radio network, and each of the 10 former States has their own radio station. However, much of the population live in remote rural villages beyond the reach of FM stations,<sup>9</sup> and in 2018, just 57% of the population had access to radio<sup>10</sup>, either via a radio set or via their mobile phone. Far fewer have access to TV (24%) or Internet (15%).

### Figure 2: Media access by type

Base: All respondents to Endline survey (n=3,040)<sup>11</sup>



Radio access at the population level increased only slightly since the start of the programme, with 52% of the population reporting access to radio at Baseline in 2014, rising to 57% in 2018. However, access has not grown evenly across all former States. For instance, access has increased in the former States of Jonglei, Central Equatoria, North and Western Bahr el Ghazel and former Upper Nile State. Conversely, radio access has declined among those living in the former States of Unity and Western

<sup>8</sup> BBC South Sudan Media Profile, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14019206> (accessed on September 13, 2018)

<sup>9</sup> Internews. South Sudan Media and Telecoms Landscape Guide 2012 [https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/InfoasAid\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Media\\_Telecoms\\_guide.pdf](https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/InfoasAid_South_Sudan_Media_Telecoms_guide.pdf) (Accessed September 13, 2018)

<sup>10</sup> The Endline survey measured radio access with questions asking respondents if they have access to a radio in the home or anywhere else. As such the data presented here is not a measure or presentation of radio stations' signal coverage.

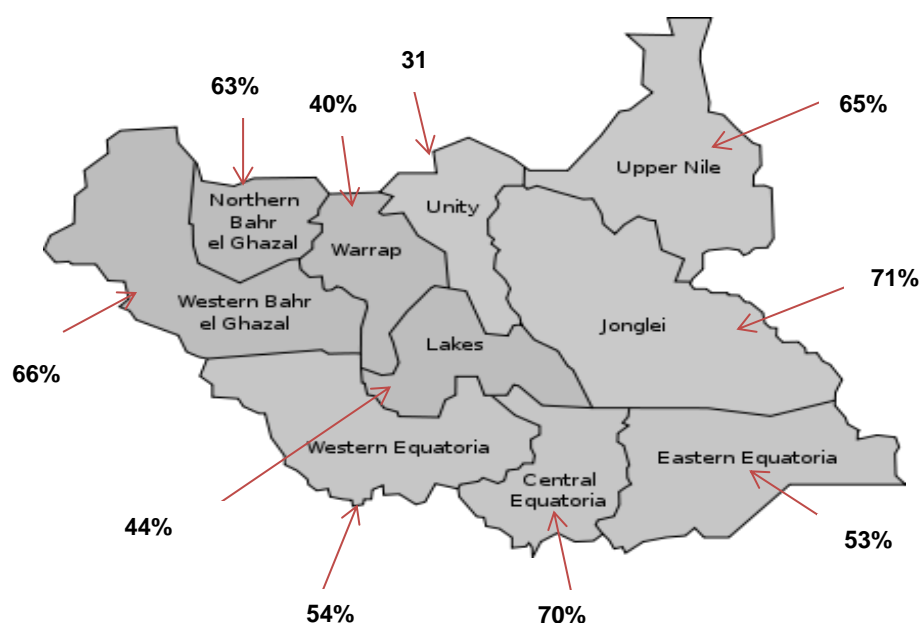
<sup>11</sup> Description of the sample (n) by reach and parenthood status is available in figure 1 of the technical appendix.



Equatoria and remains low at Eastern Equatoria, Lakes and Warrap, as illustrated in Figure 2 below. For example, radio access in the former State of Unity, which has been heavily affected by the rise in conflict since 2016, fell to 31% in 2018, having peaked at 66% in 2016. In contrast, radio access in the former State of Jonglei increased from just 24% at Baseline in 2014, to 71% in 2018.

### Figure 3: Assessment of radio access by former States<sup>12</sup>

Base: Respondents to Endline survey – not including those in POC sites and IDP camps (n=2,440)



Radio access is lower among females compared with males: in 2018 54% of females reported access to radio, compared with 62% of males. Furthermore, access to radio is lower among those with no education and those aged 55 years or over.

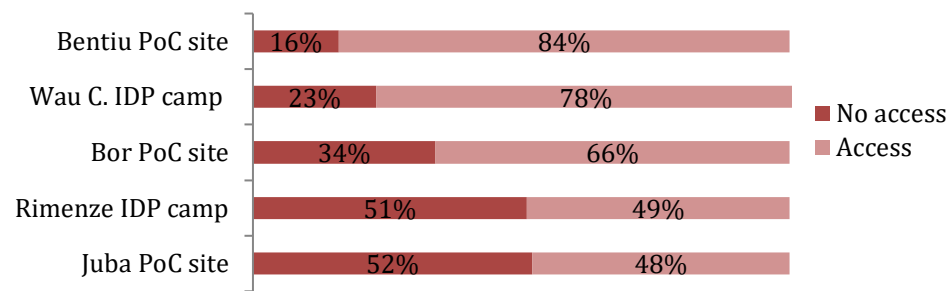
Notably, people living in camps were more likely to have access to radio (65%) compared to those outside the camps (55%). Camps are mainly located in areas within radio coverage and most receive a lot of NGO support. Within the five camps sampled in the Endline survey however, access to radio varied greatly, ranging from 84% of people in Bentiu PoC site able to access radio, to just 48% in Juba PoC. Figure 3 below shows radio access in each of the five camps surveyed.

### Figure 4: Radio access by camp 2018

Base: All respondents to Endline survey in camps (n=600)

<sup>12</sup> 'Former States' refers to the old administrative division of South Sudan which consisted of 10 States. While it was replaced in 2016 by a new division consisting of 32 new States, it is still widely used in official reports. It was used in this study for ease of analysis and comparability with previous studies.



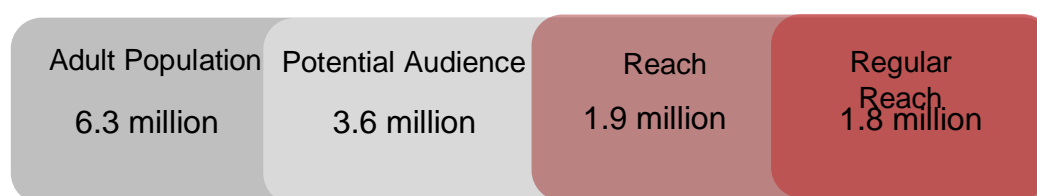


## 2.3 Audience Reach and Profile

*Our School* was broadcast between March 2014 and September 2018. By the time the Endline survey was fielded, the programme and associated PSAs had been on air for four years, with some regional variation as a result of the different language programmes.

The following section looks at how many people *Our School* has reached (defined as all those who report having listened to the programme within the last 12 months at the point of data collection) and regularly reached (defined as those who report listening to at least every other episode)<sup>13</sup> in the 12 months prior to Endline data collection in May 2018, and how this has changed compared with the previous measurement at Midline in 2016. Potential audience is all those who report having access to radio in the household or elsewhere.

**Figure 5: *Our School* reach and regular reach 2018**



As Population Reference Bureau (PRB) projections do not take into account unusual migratory rates, the 2018 total adult population figure it provides is likely to be inaccurate. We therefore calculated an estimate of adult population that takes into account the high level of migration in South Sudan since 2016. This affects the total reach figure (in millions), which is extrapolated from the total adult population based. As such, reach and regular reach of the *Our School* programme is considered a conservative estimate of reach at Endline in 2018. More detail on how reach is calculated can be found in the Appendix.

Nearly a third (31%) of the adult population (aged 15 years or over) of South Sudan or 1.9 million people had listened to *Our School* in the year to May 2018. While as a proportion of the adult population the reach of *Our School* has increased slightly since Midline in 2016 (when 29% of the population were reached), the estimated reach in millions has declined in 2018 reflecting the estimated drop in the adult population resulting from large scale migration following the outbreak of conflict in July 2016.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> At Midline, 'regularly reached' was defined as those who reported listening to *Our School* twice monthly. At Endline, the calculation of the regularly reach was revisited and redefined as those who reported listening to *Our School* once monthly. This was to reflect the fact that after the return of the conflict in July 2016, some broadcast partners were closed down while others had difficulties ensuring a continuous broadcast. Some radio stations reported airing the same episodes for a few weeks. As such, and given that a new episode of *Our School* was produced fortnightly (with replays played every other week), at endline, regularly reached included all those who had listened to at least every other *new* episode, i.e. once monthly.

<sup>14</sup> Estimated reach in millions is based on a calculation that applies the proportion of survey respondents reached by the radio programme to the overall adult population figure. In 2018, the estimated adult population of South Sudan had fallen by an estimated 1.1 million people, based on the UNHCRs estimate

This has meant that the reach of *Our School* at Endline did not meet the logical framework target of 2 million in 2018.

Given the challenging context in which *Our School* was broadcasting, particularly throughout the last two years of the programme, it could be considered positive that reach as a proportion of the population was largely maintained between 2016 and 2018. Qualitative research undertaken in areas affected by the conflict revealed that listenership to *Our School* was negatively affected by displacement and the accompanying economic crisis, which has meant a lack of radios or lack of funds to purchase batteries for radios. Research participants noted that while they had previously listened to the radio programme, they were no longer able to because of their changed living situation, which in some cases meant that they no longer had access to a radio.

*"I used to listen to the [Our School] programme but since I left my home, it became difficult for me to follow because the cost of living is high and batteries are expensive."*  
Longitudinal study participant, male, Wau

Furthermore, for those who had access to radio throughout this time, information needs were different. Respondents noted that priority information needs during the crisis included information about the security situation both in the camps and in their home villages, and information about basic survival, such as health, clean water, hygiene and sanitation and medicine. Education was, perhaps unsurprisingly, considered a secondary priority.

We undertook a number of activities to extend the reach of the *Our School* programme over the final two years of the project. PSAs played across the 31 partner stations. Furthermore, extensive community mobilisation activities were undertaken during 2017 and 2018, focused on reaching hard to reach populations. As part of this work, a total of 40 volunteers were recruited to do the same work as the CM officers in their own communities.

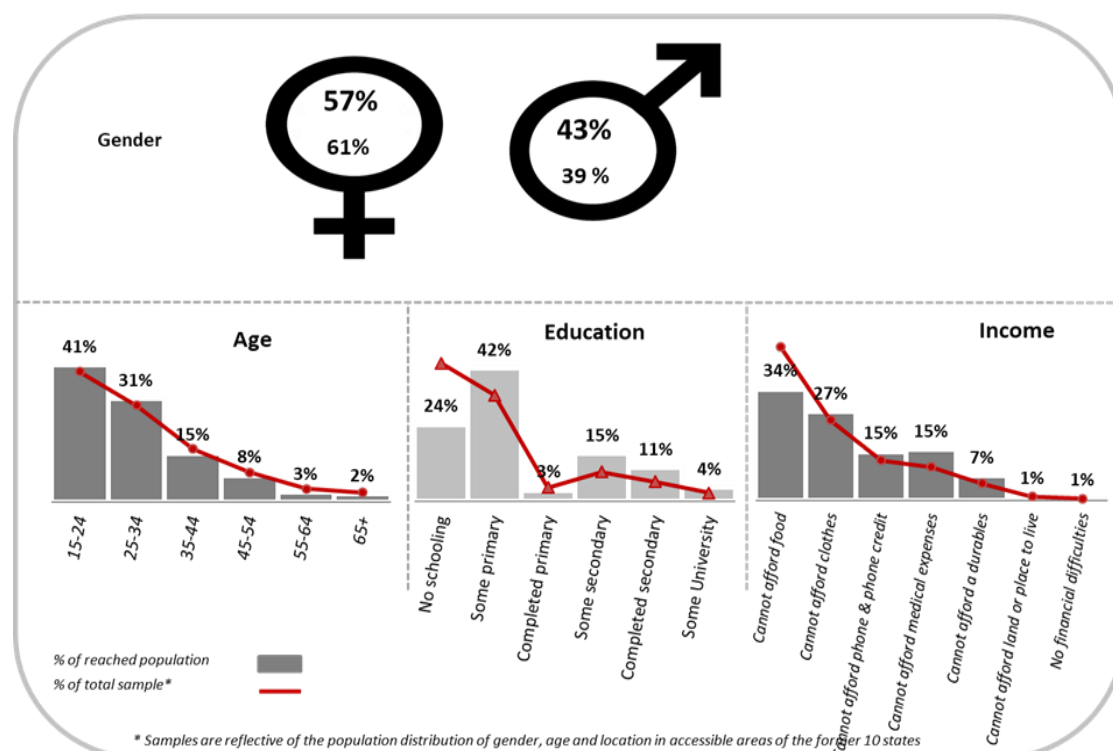
We recognise that listening to a radio programme once is unlikely to affect outcomes and that detectable impact requires frequent engagement with programme outputs. As such, it is hypothesised that those who listen to the radio programme regularly are more likely to demonstrate impact as a result of the intervention. Regular and sustained engagement can be difficult in challenging context, like South Sudan's, where insecurity and displacement are growing. At Endline, 29% reported listening to the *Our School* regularly; at least once monthly, which represents 93% of the overall reached population. This suggests that the audiences of *Our School* were largely loyal and engaged listeners.

Exploring further who made up the *Our School* audience, Figure 5 shows a demographic breakdown of *Our School* audience in 2018 compared with the sample population.

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of the number of refugee and asylum seekers who have left the country since 2016 (see above). More detail on how this extrapolation is made can be found in the Appendix.

**Figure 6: *Our School* reach demographic profile**



Reflecting the fact that the vast majority (93%) of the *Our School* audience were regular listeners, the demographic profile for those reached and regularly reached is very similar.

As has been the case throughout the project, the *Our School* audience is reflective of the age profile of the population, but is under-representative of those with no education and those in the lowest income bracket (defined as: *cannot afford food*). Notably, these groups also tend to have less access to radio.

At Endline in 2018, 57% of the *Our School* audience was female – this represents an increase from 50% at Midline. Women remain slightly under-represented in the *Our School* audience relative to their prevalence in the population – women account for 61% of the population in South Sudan; while they make up 57% of the overall *Our School* audience.

## 2.4 Audience Engagement with *Our School*

*Our School* aimed to engage listeners by providing case studies, role models and portraying best practices. An array of production techniques were used to achieve this, including interviewing contributors in their day-to-day life to portray a realistic idea of what their lives are about and how they are improving them; recording facilitated conversations between parents and school teachers to find out about how they can track the progress of their child, and peer-to-peer discussion aimed at empowering members of society (generally parents) to empower others.

Various rounds of qualitative research consistently revealed high levels of engagement with *Our School*.

### ***Our School* featured real life voices and relevant issues**

Throughout the life of the project, qualitative findings revealed that listeners engaged with *Our School* because of the topics it covered and the way it used real-life voices to portray the issues, bringing them ‘to life’. Research participants described *Our School* as relevant and realistic.

*“I like Our School because when you listen to the people and their words you can tell where they are from and you will know that what they are saying is what they have seen and lived in reality.”* Caller to partner station, female, Wau

Participants mentioned that *Our School* was different from other education-related programmes because it brought together views and stories from real people, at the community level, and it gave realistic examples that everyone could identify with. It also it provided practical solutions to the problems it addressed.

*“Sometimes [other programmes] talk about education but they do not [bring] up problems parents are facing. The BBC radio programme [...] is better than the other ones, which do not talk to people like us.”* School boy, Aweil

### **Learning actionable insight from *Our School***

Participants spoke about taking positive learnings from *Our School* and described it as educative. For example, participants in the Photovoice study talked about how listening to the radio programme had given them a better understanding of GESS Cash Transfers and how these should be used to support girls’ education. Participants in the CM research and callers to partner stations reported learning about supportive practices that could help girls stay in school such as ensuring their daughters had time to study by reducing the amount of household chores or sharing chores among the family.

*“I have learned from the [Our School] programme that I should not give much work to my daughters and I have started doing that and I will make sure they go to School.”* CM participant, female, Yambio

Listeners acknowledged that *Our School* had taught them the importance of parents and guardians monitoring their children’s school attendance, and suggested ways of doing that. For example, listeners said they had learned to follow their child in class to

make sure the child is attending lessons, to always encourage their children to attend lessons, and to contact a teacher in school about whether or not a lesson is being held. Some participants reported that they also monitored their children's schoolbooks, to check their writing, teacher's comments, and the dates to see if they are attending school.

*"My advice goes to all mothers, they should take this seriously. You have to follow up your child to class, even if not every time but once a while. This is exactly what I heard [in Our School] and I will do it for my children."* Caller to partner station, male, Juba

Listeners also mentioned that they learned things such as the importance of education; that no one should drop out of school; and how to save money to register children and buy school materials.

### Discussing *Our School* with others

As another indicator of engagement, listeners also reported discussing *Our School* with others. At Endline in 2018, 58% of those who listened to *Our School* said they had discussed it with others – most often friends (44%) and family (41%). In addition, regular listeners reported discussing with people in their local community (32%), local influencers/community leaders (17%) as well as religious leaders (16%). This shows that *Our School* is prompting discussion in private circles and in the community at large, which is important in the process of addressing attitudes and barriers relating to education.

**Table 4: Listeners discussing *Our School* with others**

Listeners are discussing with	Mentioned by
Friends	44%
Family	41%
People in my local community	32%
Students	18%
Local influencers/ community elders	17%
Religious leaders	16%
Teachers	15%
People I work with/ colleagues	14%
Government officials	10%
Parent Teacher Associations	10%
NGOs	10%
School Management Committee	6%
School mother	5%
Payam Education Supervisor	4%

Source: GESS Endline survey - base includes listeners of *Our School* who reported discussing the programme with others (n=949)

Participants in various rounds of qualitative research said that the usefulness of the content covered in *Our School* had driven more interpersonal discussions at different levels, with parents noting that they discussed the issues it addresses with family members, relatives, children, community members and other parents in the community.

*"I decided to go and talk to those idle kids, tell them that they are still young, they should return to school."* CM participant, Male, Juba

## 2.5 Impact on Education Outcomes

### 2.5.1 Building Knowledge and Understanding of Education

#### Keys insights

- Overall, levels of knowledge and understanding about education issues in South Sudan (including the school system, laws related to education, and the benefits of girls getting an education) have increased since Baseline in 2014.
- Regular listeners to *Our School* consistently demonstrated significantly higher levels of knowledge about education compared with non-listeners.
- The positive relationship between regular exposure to *Our School* and higher levels of knowledge was significant even when taking into account factors that may influence a person's knowledge of education issues, including gender, age, or their own level of education. This suggests that *Our School* has contributed to higher levels of knowledge among listeners.

Building knowledge is an important factor in achieving social and behaviour change. As such, we aimed to contribute to greater knowledge and awareness of school systems among parents, guardians and the wider community. To this end, *Our School* featured themes around **practical knowledge** of the school system (such as term dates, registration procedures, exam dates); **knowledge of laws** that protect girls' and children's rights at school (for instance, the teacher's code of conduct, mandatory school attendance, laws that prohibit abuse); and **understanding of the benefits** for a girl who completes a full education.

#### Improving practical knowledge of the school system

Formative research conducted in 2014 indicated that parents in South Sudan lacked practical knowledge about school, such as term dates, registration procedures, exam dates, and the best age for starting and completing school. This meant that many children were starting school later than the ideal age or parents were not registering their children at all. To address this, *Our School* episodes emphasised practical information on the schooling system throughout the project. These formed the basis of a knowledge test that was administered in each of the three surveys, with four questions asked consistently over the course of the project.<sup>15</sup>

- At what age should a boy start primary school? Correct answer: 5-6 years old
- At what age should a girl start primary school? Correct answer: 5-6 years old
- How much should it cost, according to law, to register a child in a government school? Correct answer: nothing/it's free
- How many classes are there in primary school? Correct answer: 8

Despite 74% of respondents reporting that they felt *well informed* about the school system at Baseline, only 24% of respondents was able to answer at least three of the four questions correctly at Baseline in 2014. For example, less than a third of the population could correctly identify the age at which a child (either a boy or girl) should start school (29%), or knew that it was free to enrol a child at school (30%).

By 2018, knowledge levels had increased at the population level, with 66% of Endline respondents able to answer at least three questions correctly. At Endline, around three quarters of the population were able to identify the age at which a child (either a boy or girl) should start school (74%), and knew how many classes there were in primary school (79%). Respondents continued to be least knowledgeable about the cost of enrolment, with less than half of the population (47%) answering this correctly at Endline, although this is likely to reflect the fact that many schools continue to charge an enrolment fee.

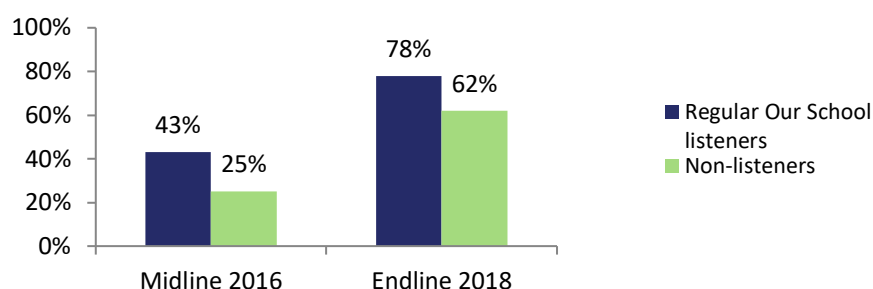
Comparing levels of knowledge between regular *Our School* listeners and non-listeners at Endline indicates that people who listened to *Our School* regularly were significantly more likely to answer at least three questions about the school system correctly, compared with non-listeners.

**Figure 7: Knowledge of the school system among regular *Our School* listeners versus non-listeners – answering at least three questions correctly**

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<sup>15</sup> Surveys included additional knowledge items related to the school system, however only these four knowledge items were asked consistently across all three surveys.





Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

In order to understand the impact of *Our School* on knowledge outcomes, the relationship between regular exposure to *Our School* and knowledge of the school system was explored further through advanced analysis. Regression analysis on Endline data showed that regular *Our School* listeners were **1.4 times** as likely to have higher knowledge of the school system as non-listeners. This is true even after controlling for other factors that could have influenced knowledge, such as gender, age, or levels of education.<sup>16</sup>

#### What is regression analysis?

Regression analysis is a statistical technique that is used to examine the relationship between two variables while controlling for the distorting effects of other factors or characteristics. For instance, someone who is more highly educated may be more likely to listen to *Our School* and also be more likely to frequently discuss education matters. Regression allows researchers to see whether or not there is an association between listening to *Our School* and discussing education, once the effects of other explanatory factors like education have been cancelled out.

This analysis cannot prove that exposure to the programming causes a particular outcome, as it does not identify the direction of the association. For instance, listening to *Our school* could increase discussion, or increased discussion could make someone more likely to listening to *Our School*. However, it provides a more robust method of understanding the association between the radio programme and key outcomes.

### Promoting awareness of practical support for families

The wider GESS programme provided practical support to families to encourage enrolment and retention of girls in school. Initiatives included cash transfers, school capitation grants, and training for school staff. Various awareness-raising activities have been implemented by GESS consortium partners, including press coverage and through partners working in the sector. *Our School* contributed to this by featuring the initiatives in the episodes.

Four out five (80%) Endline survey respondents were aware of the GESS Cash

<sup>16</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

Transfers to girls and their families, and 68% knew about the provision of textbooks. School mentors remained the least mentioned, with less than half (46%) of respondents saying they were aware of this initiative, as shown in Table 5 below.

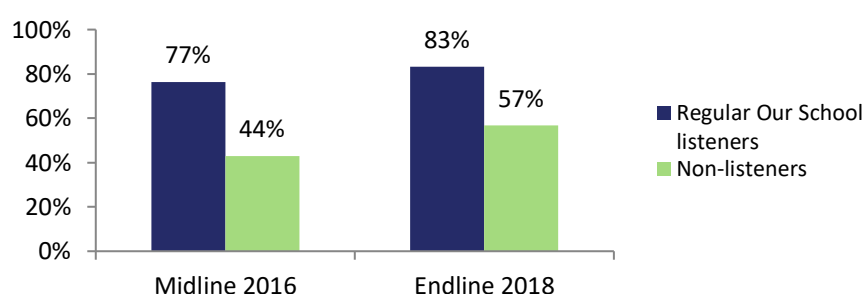
**Table 5: Awareness of GESS initiatives supporting education at Endline (2018) – population level**

Initiatives supporting education	Mentioned by
Cash transfers to girls and their families to help them stay in school	80%
Provision of textbooks	68%
Teacher training	65%
Head teacher training	63%
School capitation grants to help schools with running costs and improvement	58%
Training for the School Management Committee	55%
School mentors	46%

Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=3,040)

Over the course of the programme, general awareness of these initiatives increased among all respondents. At Endline in 2018, 65% of respondents were aware of three or more initiatives, compared to 22% at Baseline in 2014. Regular *Our School* listeners were consistently significantly more likely than non-listeners to be able to identify three or more GESS initiatives both at Midline and Endline, reaching 83% by 2018.

**Figure 8: Awareness of at least three initiatives among regular *Our School* listeners versus non-listeners**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

### Improving knowledge on laws related to education

*Our School* aimed to increase people's knowledge about laws that protect girls' and children's rights at school. It featured information on relevant laws, such as mandatory primary education for all children, the teacher's code of conduct, and the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools.

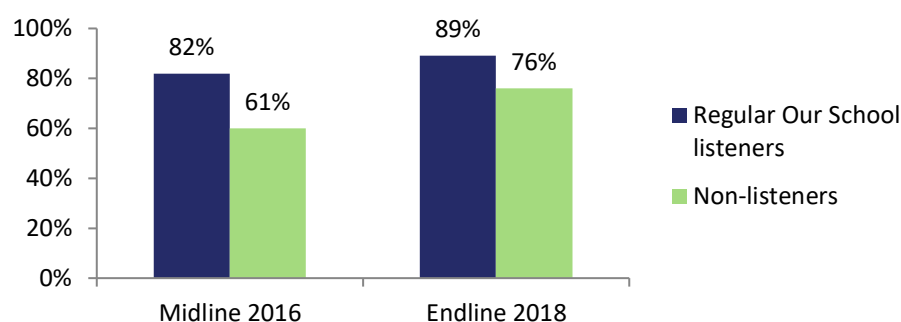
Across each of the three surveys, respondents were asked whether the following three points were included in South Sudan's laws governing the school system:<sup>17</sup>

- Parents are entitled to be informed of the progress, behaviour and attendance of their children at school. Correct answer: Yes
- A teacher is permitted to use physical punishment on children. Correct answer: No
- All children are entitled by law to complete their primary education. Correct answer: Yes

Knowledge of these laws was relatively high at Baseline, with around two thirds of respondents correctly answering at least two of the three questions. Respondents were least knowledgeable about the laws around using physical punishment on children – fewer than half of respondents (44%) were aware that corporal punishment was illegal in South Sudan at Baseline. By Endline, the share of respondents able to correctly answer this question had declined to just 24%.

At each of the time-points (Midline and Endline), regular *Our School* listeners were more likely than people who did not listen regularly to give at least two correct answers.

**Figure 9: Awareness of the laws governing the school system among regular *Our School* listeners versus non-listeners – answering at least two questions correctly**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

Exploring the relationship between knowledge of the laws related to education through advanced analysis indicates that regular *Our School* listeners were 1.6 times as likely to have higher knowledge of the law governing the school system as non-listeners. This is true even after controlling for other factors that could have influenced knowledge, such as gender, age, or levels of education.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Surveys included additional knowledge items related to laws, however only these three knowledge items were asked consistently across all three surveys.

<sup>18</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

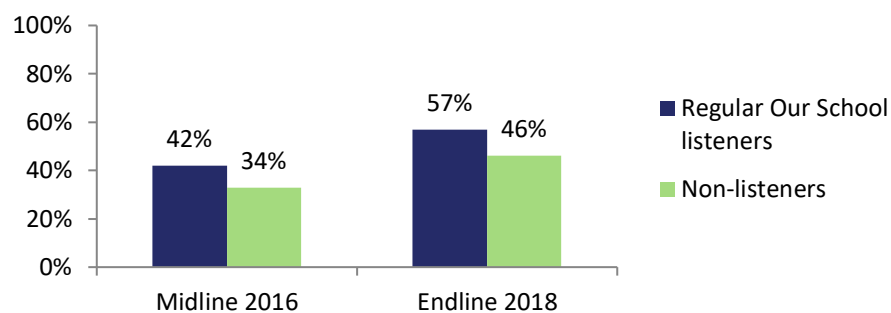
## Improving understanding of the benefits of girls' education

Formative research conducted in 2014 highlighted that a lack of understanding of the benefits of education and what this practically means for a child's future can result in a fatalistic attitude among parents around girls dropping out of school. *Our School* aimed to support an understanding of the value of education; of what girls can realistically do after school, and how completing education will benefit their future and their family's future.

Respondents who mentioned at least four benefits of girls' education qualified as placing value on girls' education. The benefits could be anything from improving a girl's chance of getting a job in the future, to being able to take care of her family.

Understanding of the benefits of girls' education increased over the programme period, from a low level at Baseline, where only 27% of respondents were able to identify four or more benefits, to 49% at Endline. Regular *Our School* listeners were consistently significantly more likely to mention four or more benefits, compared with non-listeners.

**Figure 10: Awareness of (at least four) benefits of girls' education among regular *Our School* listeners versus non-listeners**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

Exploring the relationship between listening to *Our School* and placing value on girls' education through regression analysis showed that this relationship existed even when taking into account other potential factors that may have influenced someone's likelihood to do so, such as gender or level of education. People who regularly listened to *Our School* were **1.2 times** as likely to mention at least four benefits to girls' education.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

## 2.5.2 Fostering Supportive Attitudes towards Girls' Education

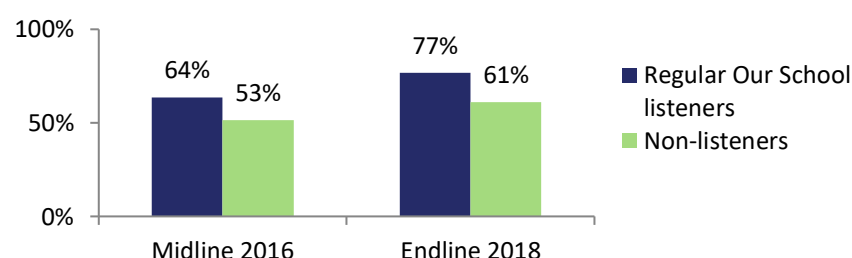
### Key insights

- Overall, supportive attitudes regarding the right of girls to an education and the importance of going to school (for both boys and girls) are widespread in South Sudan, with the majority of respondents holding positive perceptions of gender equality in education, even at Baseline. However, deep-seated attitudes around prioritising boys' education over girls remain prevalent at times of economic hardship.
- People who regularly listened to *Our School* were consistently significantly more likely than non-listeners to have supportive attitudes towards girls' education. However, many still suggested that the education of boys should be prioritised over that of girls when resources are scarce.

Fostering supportive attitudes towards girls' education within families and among the wider community is crucial to achieving social and behaviour change. Through the *Our School* programme, we aimed to contribute to greater household involvement in, and support for, girls going to and staying in school. One of the ways it sought to do this was highlighting gender equity in education; specifically that girls are equally deserving of education with equal economic returns as boys, and that it is equally important for girls and boys to get an education.

Encouragingly, the majority of respondents reported positive attitudes towards the right of girls to education from the outset of the project. At Baseline in 2014, 62% of respondents *strongly agreed* that: "*Girls and boys in South Sudan should have the same right to education*". This increased to 66% at Endline in 2018. Throughout the programme, regular *Our School* listeners were consistently significantly more likely to *strongly agree* with this statement compared with non- listeners.

**Figure 11: Proportion of *Our School* regular listeners versus non-listeners who strongly agree girls and boys in South Sudan have the same right to education**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

Regression analysis revealed a significant relationship between positive attitudes towards girls' rights to education and regular *Our School* listenership even when taking

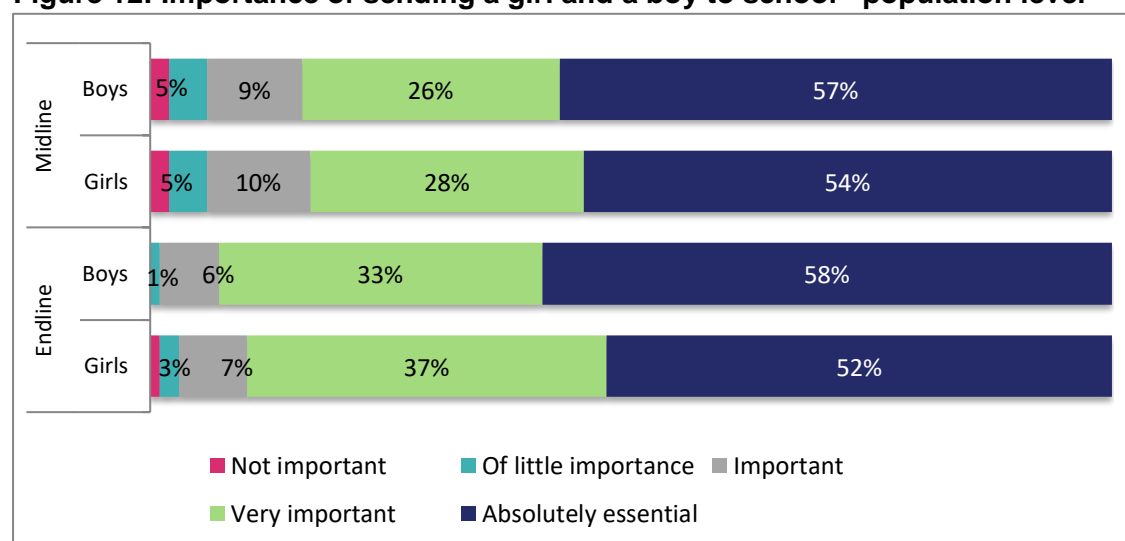
into account other potential factors that may have influenced such attitudes, such as gender or level of education. People who regularly listened to *Our School* were **1.4 times** as likely to *strongly agree* that girls and boys in South Sudan had the same right to education.<sup>20</sup>

Other attitudinal measures regarding girls' equal ability to perform as well in maths and science as boys and their right to have as much time to do homework indicate that regular *Our School* listeners were more likely to have supportive attitudes towards girls' education. For example, at Endline, 93% of regular *Our School* listeners *agreed or strongly agreed* that girls could do as well as boys in maths and science, compared with 85% of non-listeners. Furthermore, 91% of regular *Our School* listeners *agreed or strongly agreed* that household chores should be shared equally between boys and girls, compared with 78% of non-listeners.

### Reinforcing the importance of education for girls and boys

Reflecting the overall positive view of gender equality in terms of rights to education, respondents did not distinguish between boys and girls when it came to the importance of sending a child to school. At least nine out of 10 respondents felt it was *at least as important* to send a girl as a boy to school at both Midline and Endline, with over half of respondents reporting that it was *absolutely essential* to send girls and boys to school.

**Figure 12: Importance of sending a girl and a boy to school– population level**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=3,040); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=3,169) \* This question was not asked at Baseline

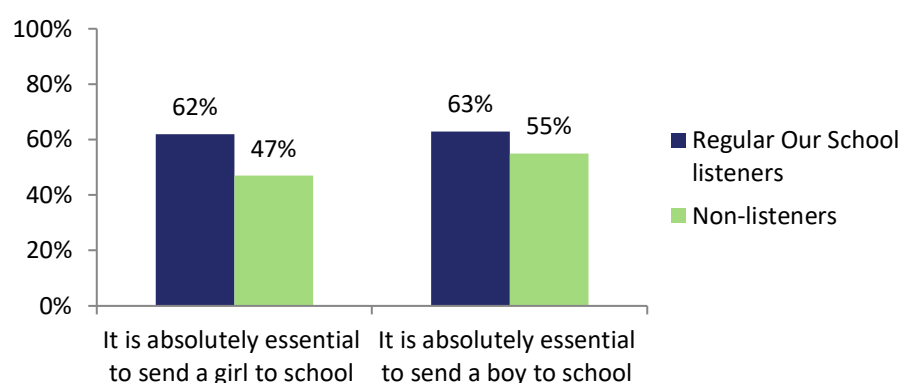
Notably, perceptions of the importance of sending a boy or girl to school varied significantly by State. At Endline, just 16% of respondents living in former Lakes State felt it was *absolutely essential* to send a girl to school, compared with 78% in former Central Equatoria State. State variation was also apparent when it came to views on the importance of sending boys to school: 46% of those living in the Lakes agreed that

<sup>20</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

it was *absolutely essential* to send a boy to school, compared with 86% of respondents in former Central Equatoria State.

At Endline, regular *Our School* listeners were significantly more likely to feel that it was *absolutely essential* to send girls to school (62%, compared with 47% of non-listeners). The findings were similar for boys (63%, compared with 55% of non-listeners).

**Figure 13: Importance of sending girls and boys to school – *Our School* regular listeners versus non-listeners at Endline (2018)**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970)

Exploring this relationship further using advanced analysis showed that regular *Our School* listeners were **1.5 times** as likely as non-listeners to believe that it was *absolutely essential* to send a girl child to school. This is true even when taking factors that may influence people's perceptions, such as gender, age or education into account.<sup>21</sup>

### Economic constraints highlight entrenched attitudes

At a time when nearly half the population is facing severe food insecurity<sup>22</sup>, people in South Sudan are living in significant financial hardship. Despite the majority of respondents holding positive attitudes around gender equality in terms of girls' rights to an education and the importance of sending girls to school, many respondents said they would prioritise boys' education over girls in a situation where money was limited. In fact, attitudes around prioritising boys' over girls' education have become increasingly 'negative' over the programme's lifespan: at Baseline in 2014, 64% of total respondents *disagreed or strongly disagreed* with the statement: "If there is a limited amount of money for education it should be spent on sons first", while at Endline in 2018, the share had fallen to 55% of respondents who *disagreed or strongly disagreed*

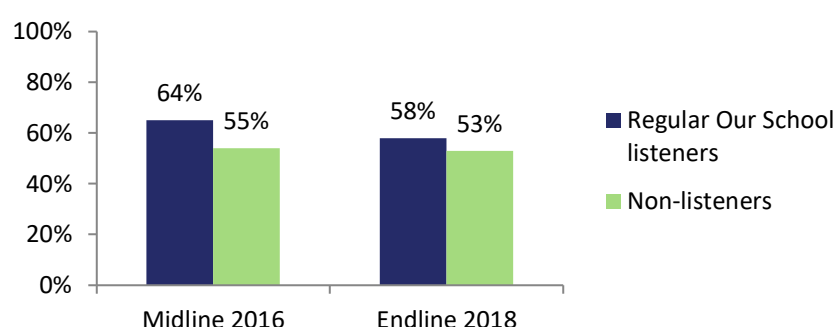
<sup>21</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

<sup>22</sup> The World Bank in South Sudan. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview> (accessed on September 21, 2018)

with this statement.

At both Midline and Endline, regular *Our School* listeners were significantly more likely than non-listeners to *disagree or strongly disagree* that boys' education should be prioritised over that of girls if money was limited. While this suggests the radio programme may have had a positive influence on attitudes, there is still a large proportion of the *Our School* audience who agrees that a boy's education should be prioritised in conditions of economic constraints.

**Figure 14: Regular listeners versus non-listeners who disagree or strongly disagree that boys' education should be prioritised when money is limited**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

Advanced analysis indicates that there is no significant relationship between regular *Our School* listenership and the likelihood of *disagreeing* that boys' education should be prioritised in times of economic hardship, when factors such as gender, age and education are taken into account.<sup>23</sup>

Exploring this further through qualitative research reveals that attitudes towards girls' education in South Sudan are complex, and traditional views on the role of girls and women to stay at home and look after the home, children and elderly continue to prevail in South Sudan. Participants said that they were more likely to send their male child to school, because unlike girls, boys were 'a better investment' as they stay with their family after marriage and continue to provide income for their parents.

*"I have a boy and a girl, but I will not send the girl first (to school) but [I will send] the boy because the girls get easily married and I will lose my money that I paid in school fees".* CM participant, female, Maban

It seems likely that such views may be exacerbated by the challenging living conditions many people experience as a result of the conflict, including significant economic hardship.

<sup>23</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.



### 2.5.3 Supportive Practices and Behaviour

#### Key insights

- Overall, respondents reported doing the same activities to support both boys and girls in education, suggesting they are treating them equally.
- **Adoption of supportive practices:** Regular *Our School* listeners are more likely to have taken actions (such as travelling to school with a child, and visiting a local school) than non-listeners.
- **Discussion:** Respondents reported discussing with sons and daughters regarding school and study, and/or with family, friends and people in the community. Regular listeners of *Our School* were more likely than non-listeners to frequently discuss education with girls and daughters.
- **Creating a supportive home environment:** Regular *Our School* listeners were more likely than non-listeners to be taking an interest in their daughter's education, including talking to them about the importance of education and helping them with their homework.
- **Addressing financial barriers to girls' education:** Regular listeners were more likely than non-listeners to report having saved money or sold something to pay for school fees.
- **Sending daughters to school:** Regular *Our School* listeners with a daughter were more likely to say she was in school than non-listeners.

Encouraging and supporting families and communities to take actions that support girls to enrol and stay in school is an essential element of achieving social and behaviour change. While many parents and communities may understand the need for and importance of girls' education, and believe in the right of girls to an education, there are still many barriers that can prevent girls from going to school in South Sudan. These include a lack of understanding among parents on how they can get involved and support their child in school, insecurity travelling to and from school, and financial difficulties faced by families. Such barriers can be overcome if parents, guardians and the wider community are enabled to take actions that support girls to go to school.

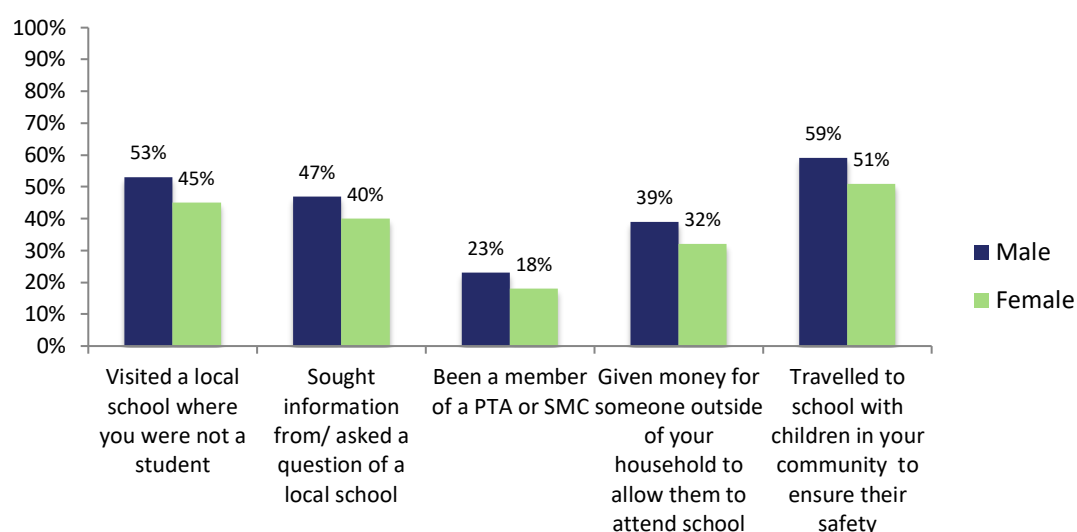
#### Encouraging parents' participation in education

To this end, *Our School* aimed to encourage parents to participate in their child's education. It sought to help parents understand the different ways they could get involved in school, such as joining Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), attending parents' days, joining community discussions on education or approaching head teachers for discussion.

Survey respondents were asked whether in the last year they had participated in a number of different activities. At both Midline and Endline, the most frequently reported activities were travelling to school with a child and visiting a local school.

Notably, the prevalence of these activities was relatively consistent at each time-point, with no increases in reported level of practice over the project period. Men consistently reported higher levels of participation across each of the activities than women. For example, men were more likely to have travelled to school with their child or to have given money to someone outside their household to attend school. This is reflective of men's control of household finances and their role in the community.

**Figure 15: Supportive practices reported by men and women at Endline (2018)**

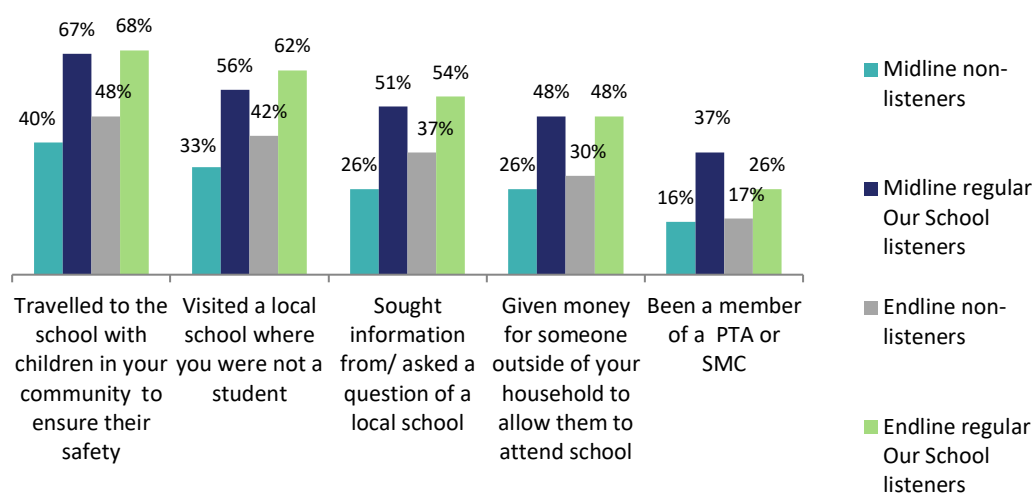


Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=3,040)

\*PTA (Parent teacher association); SMC (School Management Committee)

At both Midline and Endline, regular *Our School* listeners were significantly more likely than non-listeners to be participating in an education related activity. See figure 15 overleaf.

**Figure 16: Supportive practices reported by *Our School* regular listeners versus non-listeners**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=2,970); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=2,987)

\*PTA (Parent teacher association); SMC (School Management Committee)

Exploring this relationship further through advanced analysis showed that at Endline in 2018, regular *Our School* listenership was associated with more supportive practices: regular *Our School* listeners were on average **1.6 times** as likely to have taken two or more actions than non-listeners, even after controlling for other factors that could also influence levels of supportive practice, such as age, gender, education, or outcome levels.<sup>24</sup>

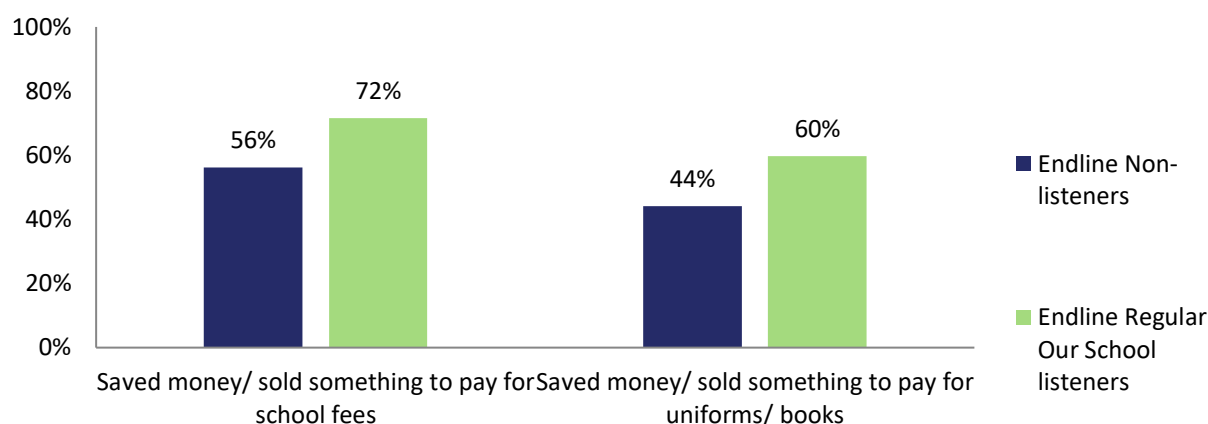
### Addressing financial barriers to girls' education

One of the key barriers to sending children to school is not having enough money to pay for school fees. Limited finances affect the likelihood of girls going to school. At Midline in 2016, 66% said the main reason girls dropped out of school was because there was 'not enough money for school fees', and at Endline 72% gave this reason.

*Our School* aimed to address this issue by showing how families had successfully budgeted for education. It also sought to raise awareness of the fact that registration fees have been abolished, but that there are still some expenses to be paid. At Endline, more than 7 out of 10 respondents (72%) reported having saved money or sold something to pay for school fees.

<sup>24</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

**Figure 17: Parents reporting saving money to support their daughters' education at Endline (2018)**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (Base: parents or guardians of a girl=2,536)

Regression analysis found that regular listeners were **1.4 times** as likely to report having saved money or sold something to pay for school fees in South Sudan, even after controlling for other factors such as levels of income and education, among others.<sup>25</sup>

### Creating a supportive home environment

Given the extreme financial hardship faced by many families in South Sudan, *Our School* particularly focused on types of support that do not require financial investment. For example, episodes focused on how parents can talk to children about education at home and about their child's experiences at school. *Our School* also focused on simple actions such as sharing household chores to free up girls' time for study.

The most frequently mentioned actions taken involved simply talking to children – about the importance of education, their school day, and how they were treated in school. Encouragingly, the share of the respondents reporting taking an action increased between Midline and Endline, and at each time point there was very little difference between the actions parents or guardians reported taking for their sons compared to their daughters.

<sup>25</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

**Table 6: Actions taken to support girls and boys at Endline (2018)**

	% taken action to support girls	% taken action to support boys
Talked to them about how important education is*	43%	41%
Talked to them about their school day	25%	26%
Talked to them about how they were being treated by teachers and other pupils	17%	17%
Helped them with their homework	16%	17%
Freed up time from housework so that they could study	19%	18%
Made sure they had a good meal before school	13%	15%
Talked to them about how to deal with men and boys (with girls for boys)*	8%	7%
Did something to make their journey to and from school easier/ safer	8%	9%
Visited the school they attended	18%	18%

Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (Base: parents/guardians of school age girls in school (n=1,701); parents/guardians of school age boys in school (n=1,758))

\* Questions asked more generally to parents/ guardians of girls (n=2,594) and parents/guardians of boys (n=2,586)

Regular *Our School* listeners were more likely than non-listeners to say they had taken each type of action to support their daughter's education. See Table 7 overleaf.

**Table 7: Reported supportive practices for daughters among *Our School* regular listeners versus non- listeners – parents/ guardians of girls**

	Midline 2016		Endline 2018	
	Non-listeners	Regular listeners	Non-listeners	Regular listeners
Talked to them about how important education is*	38%	41%	37%	57%
Talked to them about their school day	21%	23%	22%	32%
Talked to them about how they were being treated by teachers and other pupils	11%	15%	13%	23%

Helped them with their homework	8%	15%	13%	22%
Made sure they had a good meal before school	13%	17%	11%	16%
Talked to them about how to deal with men and boys*	7%	10%	6%	11%
Did something to make their journey to and from school easier/ safer	9%	13%	7%	11%
Visited the school they attended	15%	26%	13%	21%
Helped them to receive a cash transfer	6%	14%	4%	10%

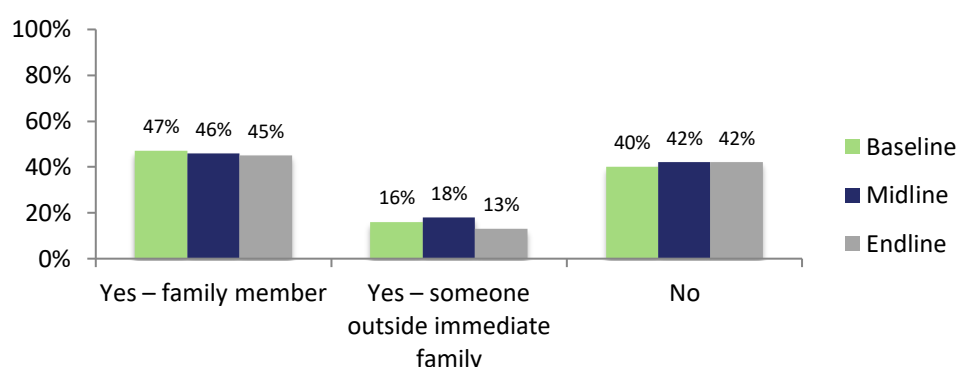
Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (Base: parents/ guardians of girls of school age attending school (n=1,658); GESS Midline survey 2016 (Base: parents/ guardians of girls of school age attending school (n=1,632)).

\*Questions asked more generally to parents/guardians of girls. GESS Endline survey (Base n=2,536); GESS Midline survey (Base n= 2,134)

### Prompting discussion about education

The survey further explored how often respondents were discussing education with others, in particular their children, and what topics they were discussing. Overall, levels of discussion about education issues have remained relatively consistent throughout the lifetime of the project. Those who reported discussing education did so largely within their immediate family. At Endline in 2018, just 13% of respondents reported discussing education issues with someone outside of their family, and 42% of respondents did not discuss education at all.

**Figure 18: Discussion on education issues over time – population level**



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=3,040); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=3,169); GESS Baseline survey 2014 (n=1,092)

Regular *Our School* listeners who had children were significantly more likely to frequently talk with their daughters about their education than non-listeners who had children. Regression analysis showed that regular listeners of *Our School* were **1.3 times** as likely to frequently discuss education with girls and daughters as non-

listeners, even when other factors were taken into account, such as age, gender, education level, or income level.<sup>26</sup>

Among respondents who had a daughter of school age, 78% said they talked to them about the importance of studying hard. Parents also frequently mentioned discussing their hopes for the future with their daughter (mentioned by 52% of parents). Table 8 compares topics of discussion with daughters and sons reveals that discussion topics were similar regardless of the gender of the child.

**Table 8: Reported discussion topics of parents with girls and boys at Endline (2018)**

Topics discussed with children	Girls	Boys
The importance of studying hard	78%	77%
Hopes for the future*	52%	53%
Homework	30%	31%
Success/ failure in exams	30%	30%
What they are learning at school	27%	31%
How to behave on the way to school and at school	21%	24%
How not to get pregnant/how not to get a girl pregnant*	17%	14%
The facilities at school	14%	14%
The quality of the teaching/ behaviour of the teacher	14%	15%
How to handle their periods and attend school	11%	NA
How to keep safe at school	10%	13%
The other children at school	9%	10%
How to deal with men and boys/how to deal with girls*	8%	7%

Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (Base: parents/guardians of girls of school age attending school (n=1,701); parents/guardians of boys of school age attending school n=1,758)

\*Questions asked more generally to parents/guardians of girls. GESS Endline survey (base n=2,594); GESS Midline survey (base n= 2,586)

### School attendance among girls is increasing

Ultimately, *Our School*, and the wider GESS programme aimed to increase the number of girls enrolling and staying in school. School attendance figures from SAMS indicate that more families are managing to send their children to school, with overall school attendance increasing since the start of the GESS programme. Girls' enrolment has increased at a greater rate than boys over this time, and in 2018 girls make up 46% of the school population, up from 40% in 2014. However, girls still make up a much

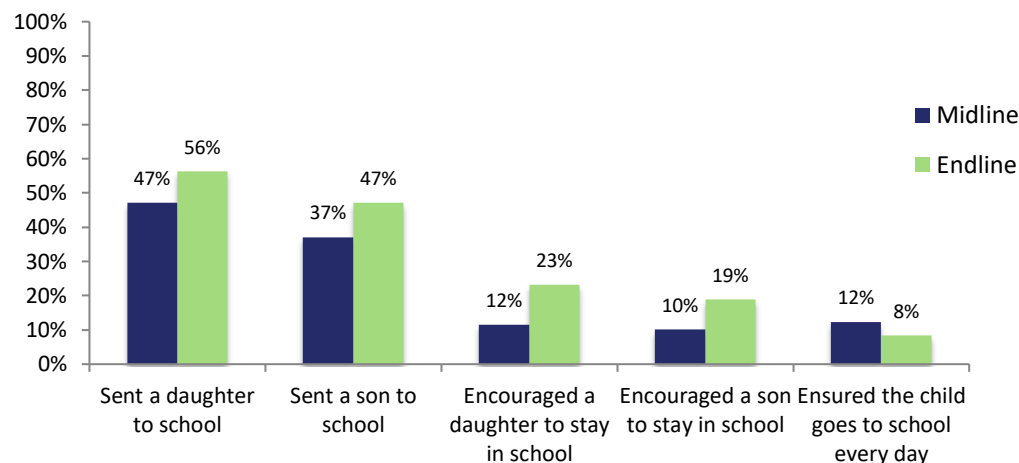
<sup>26</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

smaller proportion of the school population relative to the female population in South Sudan (61%).<sup>27</sup>**Table 9: School attendance figures in South Sudan**

Year	Enrolment - total pupils	Females	Males
2018 (Endline)	1,725, 076	794,170	930,906
2016 (Midline)	1,317, 551	565,879	751,672
2014 (Baseline)	929,069	371,261	557,808

The survey explored whether *Our School* had prompted people to take action to send their children to school and to support them to stay in school. At Endline, among the 69% of *Our School* listeners who said they had taken an action as a result of listening, 56% said they sent a daughter to school, and 47% said they sent a son to school. Furthermore, 23% said they had encouraged a daughter to stay in school, while 19% encouraged a son to stay in school. The share of respondents reporting taking these actions increased significantly from Midline in 2016 to Endline in 2018 in a number of areas.

**Figure 18: Actions attributed to *Our School***



Source: GESS Endline survey 2018 (n=949 reached by *Our School*); GESS Midline survey 2016 (n=909 reached by *Our School*)

Notably, regular *Our School* listeners were significantly more likely to report having a girl child in school than non-listeners. Regression analysis indicated that regular *Our School* listeners with a daughter were **1.2 times** as likely to say they had the daughter

<sup>27</sup><https://www.sssams.org/reports.php?tab=tab2>. Data extracted on September 07, 2018 (Enrolment data for the current year is updated every six hours)



in school as non-listeners. The analysis controlled for factors such as level of education of the respondent, income, age and gender.<sup>28</sup>

### **Impact of *Our School* in a context of displacement in South Sudan**

In total, 1,400 respondents to the Endline survey (46% of the total sample) said they were forced to leave their home/community in the last two years.<sup>29</sup> Advanced analysis on Endline data took into account displacement (among other influencing factors) in an attempt to determine whether this had any bearing on education outcomes measured. Regression results suggest that regular listeners of *Our School* have significantly higher knowledge of the school system in South Sudan, were more likely to participate in education-related activities, and were more likely to discuss education with their daughters, after controlling for influencing factors, including displacement. In other words, listening to *Our School* is significantly associated with more positive educational outcomes, even in times of conflict and displacement.

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<sup>28</sup> Full results, including confounders and logistic regression can be found in the technical appendix.

<sup>29</sup> These were composed of people who were interviewed in an IDP camp/PoC (n=600); those who reported having been at some point in the last two years (n= 385) as well as those who reported having been displaced in the last two years but had not been in an IDP camp/PoC (n= 415)

### 3. Recommendations

For the past two years, *Our School* has been broadcast in an increasingly fragile environment in which conflict has spread to all States and families have not always been able to prioritise the education of their children. There is evidence that *Our School* has made a positive contribution to girls' education. The research points to the fact that *Our School* has increased people's knowledge about how the school system functions, what benefits girls are entitled to and how the law protects them. However, there are some knowledge gaps that programmes could continue to address. For instance, knowledge about the cost of enrolment and about whether or not teachers were allowed to beat a child was scant.

The share of respondents reporting positive attitudes towards girls' education has increased over the lifetime of the project – and regular *Our School* listeners were consistently significantly more likely than non-listeners to have supportive attitudes towards girls' education. However, research shows that people still tend to prioritise educating boys over girls when they face economic hardship. Programmes and activities should continue to question traditional belief systems and showcase ordinary people and influencers challenging them too.

The research revealed stark variations between States in terms of attitudes towards girls' and boys' education. For instance, just 16% of respondents living in former Lakes State felt it was *absolutely essential* to send a girl to school, compared with 78% in former Central Equatoria State. Research to identify social norms, attitudes and barriers to educating girls in certain parts of the country would support the development of targeted programming to foster supportive attitudes towards sending girls to school.

Discussion plays a major role in gradually breaking down the social norms that hold behaviours in place. The evaluation showed that the majority of listeners reported discussing *Our School* with family and friends and many said they discussed the issues that came up with the wider community and key influencers within it. It is vital that future programmes continue to be engaging and informative, so that they prompt wide discussion and give people the confidence to make their opinions heard.

The majority of listeners reported discussing *Our School* with family and friends. Most listeners discussed the importance of studying hard with their daughters and sons. However, more challenging topics were addressed less commonly, including, for example, how girls can handle their menstrual cycle and how they can deal with men and boys. Future programming could consider encouraging parents to have sensitive conversations around these issues with their daughters/girls and providing ideas on how to address them.

Qualitative research has highlighted positive stories of change in relation to the community mobilisation activities, such as listening clubs and community dialogues. The pre and post assessments and Photovoice activities have shown how valuable interpersonal communication is for harder-to-reach communities. Furthermore, as a large proportion of the population remains without access to radio, community mobilisation activities continue to play a crucial role in extending the reach of programming to the most isolated and vulnerable populations.

## Appendix

### South Sudan population estimates and reach calculations

Due to displacement resulting from insecurity, the total population figure in South Sudan provided by the Population Reference Bureau (PRB) might be inaccurate, as PRB projections do not take into account unusual migratory rates. This affects the total reach figure in millions extrapolated from the percentage of those reached by *Our School*, as this extrapolation uses PRB data. The following estimation has therefore been calculated to estimate a more conservative reach.

Population figures of South Sudan		Our School reach figures	
South Sudan 2017 Population Projections (source Population Reference Bureau – PRB)	12,600,00	-	-
% Adult population aged 15+ (source Population Reference Bureau – PRB <a href="https://www.prb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/WPDS-2017.pdf">https://www.prb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/WPDS-2017.pdf</a> )	58%	-	-
<b>Total adult population (aged 15+)</b> <b>NOTE: excludes changes resulting from large population movements</b>	<b>7,308,00</b>	<b>31% of sample (national) listened to Our School</b>	<b>2,265,480</b>
UNCHR Refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan registered or awaiting registration as of 30 June 2018	2,486,253	-	-
% of refugees and asylum seekers 18+ <a href="https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/64731">https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/64731</a> NOTE: Breakdown by 15+ not available	37%	-	-
Estimate of refugees and asylum seekers aged 18+	919,914	-	-
<b>Total adult population excluding an estimate of refugees and asylum seekers of 919,914.</b>	<b>7,308,000 - 919,914 = 6,388,086</b>	<b>31% of sample (national) listened to Our School</b>	<b>1,980,307</b>

A reach figure based on the total PRB population figures of South Sudan is estimated at **2.2 million**. However, the additional estimations detailed above acknowledge the likely drop in the overall PRB Population figure as a result of the scale population movement due to conflict. Therefore, a more conservative reach estimate of **1.9 million** within South Sudan is likely to be more accurate.

However, the figure from UNCHR used to estimate this drop has the following flaws:

- Does not consider that groups from specific areas and States are more likely to have migrated than others.

- Does not consider that groups from specific gender and age groups are more likely to have migrated than others.
- It is based on a figure for people aged 18 and above, but it is applied on a total figure for 15 and above.

*Our School* has been broadcast on three radio stations in Northern Uganda. UNHCR data shows that 43% of South Sudanese refugees are seeking asylum in Uganda. *Our School* listeners in Northern Uganda are not included within this reach figure.