



## Lessons from Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS)

**Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS)** is an initiative of the **Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI)** of the **Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS)**, funded by **UK aid from the UK government**, and GRSS. GESS will transform the lives of a generation of children in South Sudan – especially girls – through education.

In order to realise its strategic objectives of eliminating barriers to girls' education and promoting gender equality throughout the education system, MoGEI is supported by a consortium, led by **BMB Mott MacDonald/Cambridge Education**, and including **BBC Media Action, Charlie Goldsmith Associates** and **Winrock International**. GESS works at the local level through six State-based NGOs, referred to as State Anchors.

GESS is committed to encouraging the enrolment and retention of girls in school and recognises the provision of capitation grants as an effective tool for achieving this. In the context of GESS, Capitation Grants (CGs) are funds made available to all not-for-profit schools to help supplement running costs, improve learning environments, pay incentives to volunteer teachers and reduce reliance on parental contributions to education by removing registration fees for learners. In doing so, CGs help remove the economic barriers to girls' education and improve the quality of education and educational environment provided by schools.

Drawing on the experiences of GESS, this document provides an introduction to the design and implementation of a capitation grant programme. With the package of GESS services in mind, this document is best viewed in conjunction with the publications on GESS Cash Transfers and the South

Sudan Schools Attendance Monitoring System (SSSAMS).

### Designing and Implementing a Capitation Grant Programme

When designing and implementing a capitation grant programme there are four key areas to consider:

1. What the eligibility criteria will be and the way it will be measured.
2. The size of the capitation Grant for each institution.
3. The logistics of administering/dispersing capitation grants.
4. How accountability will be ensured during and after the transfer of funds.

#### 1. Determining the eligibility criteria

When determining the eligibility criteria of a capitation grant programme, one must first consider which organisations the project intends to target.

The GESS programme provides grants to schools. The funds target not-for-profit primary and secondary schools in the Republic of South Sudan (RSS). Any school that fit this profile was able to apply so long as they:

- Establish a School Governing Body (SGB). For GESS, this comes in the form of a School Management Committee (SMC) for primary schools, or a Board of Governors (BoG) for secondary schools. These SGBs

have up to thirteen members - at least five must be female, including one female and one male student representative. The establishment of this governing body was required to ensure a structure was in place to oversee the effective planning, budgeting, management and accountability of CGs and other school resources. To support these bodies, GESS developed a School Governance Toolkit, which is available to download at no cost from the GESS website.<sup>1</sup>

- Create and submit a simple School Development Plan to lay out how the school will spend their money, a template of which was provided to the school by GESS.
- Create a simple School Budget, a template of which is provided to the school by GESS.
- Ensure that the school governing body takes part in training sessions so that they could effectively use the planning and budgeting tools provided.
- Opens a school bank account into which CGs can be paid. In areas where there are no banks, this requirement is waived, and money can be transferred via our State partners.
- Submit a Pupil Admission Register (PAR) – a file that documents student enrolment.
- Daily SMS-based attendance reports for students and teachers at the school or, periodically, paper-based attendance record delivered to our Head Office for areas without Internet connectivity.

State partners approach schools within their area of responsibility to inform them about the CGs scheme. Schools that are interested in joining the scheme are required to meet the necessary requirements, stated above.

Our State partners upload these documents onto the SSSAMS website ([www.sssams.org](http://www.sssams.org)), or deliver them to our Head Office (for areas with no Internet connectivity), where they are reviewed and approved. To ensure continued adherence to the scheme's requirements, our State partners carry out spot checks during the year where they collect documents such as SMC/BoG meeting minutes.

## 2. Determining the size of the capitation grant

When determining the size of a capitation grant it is important to take into consideration the specific needs of each school. For example, secondary schools are likely to have greater outgoing costs than primary schools, since they will need to provide text books and equipment. Similarly, boarding schools may require more money than day schools, since they must provide accommodation to their students. As such, it is important to ensure that the size of the capitation grant

reflects the needs of each individual school.

Throughout the GESS programme, the size of the CG has depended upon the number of students enrolled in school. Larger schools receive more funds than smaller schools with fewer learners.

## 3. The logistics of transferring cash

GESS' CG funds are paid directly into recipient school bank accounts. This reduces the risks associated with transporting large quantities of cash and provides an audit trail, which strengthens accountability. In conflict-affected areas where payment through a bank account is not viable, funds can be transferred on the ground through our State partner, subject to security clearance.



*Deputy Head Teacher from Mahad Primary School in Juba with a printer bought with the school's Capitation Grant*

## 4. Ensuring accountability during and after payment

The GESS CG Programme ensures accountability by tracking the flow of funds from release to receipt via the School Budgeting and Reporting Tool (SBRT) on the SSSAMS website ([www.sssams.org/sbirt](http://www.sssams.org/sbirt)). Schools and partners are required to sign ledgers at each point in the process, which are delivered to our Head Office by State partners. A scan of each hard copy is uploaded to the SBRT and all details are entered manually into the system by our Data Entry team. The SBRT is updated in near real-time as funds are approved, released, confirmed, received, and accounted for. Schools are required to account for all funds that have been received before they are able to

<sup>1</sup> <http://girlseducationsouthsudan.org/manuals-toolkits>

access future CG instalments.

In response to the fact that the process for ensuring accountability often takes time and can result in some schools receiving CGs later than others, GESS launched Direct Digital. This is a programme that automates the data collection process, with a view to improving the efficiency of the system and speeding up the process of payment.

In order to ensure accountability after payments have been made, GESS launched an incident hotline and email address. These allow each school to report grievances to the GESS programme. Each reported incident is documented and followed up, where necessary.

with schools, the percentage of funds allocated to different

items has been adapted to ensure CGs are able to meet the changing needs of schools.

To ensure that CG funds are used appropriately, schools must include a detailed account of intended purchases in their School Development Plan. State partners then carry out spot visits in which schools are required to provide receipts of items they have bought using CG funds. These items and receipts will be crosschecked with the School Development Plan. Where possible, photographs of these are uploaded onto the SBRT.



*GESS' CGs strategy has built-in flexibility to ensure schools that have been destroyed by conflict, or that have increased enrolment due to displaced pupils, can use a higher percentage of their CGs to construct additional class rooms or repair damage*

## Restrictions in the use of capitation grants

The GESS CG programme restricts what schools are able to spend their CGs on to ensure that they are fulfilling their purpose of delivering better quality education and improving school facilities. Schools that receive CGs are able to spend:

- Between 50% - 75% of the funds on investments to the quality of education in schools, for example to purchase teachers' guides, reference books or maths kits.
- Between 25% - 50% on physical improvements to schools and school facilities, for example, on repairs and maintenance or on the building of classrooms.
- Up to 20% on general school support, for example on school meals or financial incentives for volunteer teachers.

Over the course of the programme and following consultation

## Success of the GESS Capitation Grants Programme

CGs allow schools to set their own priorities for development, and to respond to their own needs. At the time of publication, 3,927 schools across South Sudan had benefitted.

GESS commissioned an analysis of the impact of the Capitation Grants and Cash Transfers programmes between 2013 and 2016, which was published in January 2017<sup>2</sup>. This study found that Capitation Grants have had a statistically significant impact on schools being open and on pupil enrolment and attendance.

<sup>2</sup> <http://girlseducationsouthsudan.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Cash-Grants-Impact-on-Enrolment-and-Attendance.pdf>

# INSPIRE EDUCATE TRANSFORM



## AIM

Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) is a programme that will transform the lives of a generation of children in South Sudan – especially girls – through education. South Sudan, the newest country in the world, has some of the lowest educational indicators, with education of girls being among the lowest. Very few girls who begin primary education continue to secondary school; in 2016, 128,000 girls started primary school, but only 2,700 completed secondary school. GESS is determined to change this, so that all girls can go to school, stay in school and achieve in school.

## MANAGEMENT

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

The programme began in 2013, and will last until 2018.