



## 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.

The GESS quality education component took a holistic approach, including school-based teacher professional development, community-based school governance, supportive school supervision and school-based mentoring for girls.

The community-based School Governance (SG) programme aimed to strengthen school management structures, in order to enable school communities to make better decisions on how to improve quality education in their schools.

To ensure that voices of teachers, pupils, parents and community shape change in South Sudan's schools, MoGEI asked all schools to form school governing bodies. Primary schools formed School Management Committees (SMCs) and secondary schools formed Boards of Governors (BoGs) - a

variation on the traditional Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to include the students' voice; both are accountable to their school's PTA. GESS's SG programme aimed to strengthen the capacity of the SMCs and BoGs to plan the development of their schools.

Throughout the programme, GESS has trained 80 County Education Officers (CEOs – State Anchor staff) and 10 State Anchor Team leaders. These staff members have been instrumental in empowering the school governing bodies.

**Over 2,665 schools have been reached through the SG training.** The GESS programme also helped to form over 4,000 SMCs, with Head Teachers being briefed on how to prepare School Development Plans (SDPs) and School Budgets (SBs) in a one-day briefing. 500 Payam Education Supervisors (PESs) received training and 1,000 training materials on SG and supervision were distributed.

**2,665**

Schools reached with School Governance training

**4,000**

School Management Committees formed



Drawing on the experiences of GESS, this document provides an introduction to the design and implementation of an SG programme. With the package of GESS services in mind, this document is best viewed in conjunction with the publications on GESS Teacher Professional Development, Supportive School Supervision and Mentoring.

## Designing and Implementing a School Governance Programme

When designing and implementing an SG programme, there are three key considerations that need to be taken:

- Logistics and Staffing
- Monitoring and Supervision Structure
- Adaptive Programming

### Logistics and Staffing

**In order to ensure the SG programme operates effectively, consideration should be given to logistics and staffing.**

Consideration should be given to how many implementing staff members the programme needs. The GESS School Governance programme is delivered by 80 CEOs across South Sudan.

When the GESS programme started, 80 Counties were targeted. Part way through the programme, the administrative organisation of South Sudan was changed, meaning that the number of States and Counties increased. Ideally a contingency budget should be made available to hire and train more staff should situations like this occur.

When deciding how many implementing staff the programme requires, consider the following: the distance of schools; the number of schools within the locality (the County for South Sudan's context); what means of transport is required; and how funds can be transferred to the locality. Due consideration should also be given to the climate conditions of the operational context, as some regions may become inaccessible during certain times of the year – this should be taken into account in the workplan.

Implementing staff should be in agreement with the need for activity funds to be transferred in a timely manner. This could be on a quarterly basis, or if not on a monthly basis and no later than 2nd of each month. This will ensure that there is enough time each month to use the funds for activities as planned. Avoiding delays in transferring funds and training materials is crucial to avoid delays in implementing activities, and often requires additional consideration and planning in a FCAS.

All implementing staff should have access to the appropriate resources needed to carry out their roles and responsibilities. In contexts where a lot of travel is required, duty of care should be prioritised and ideally all staff should have access to their own serviced motorbike or other appropriate means of transport. In addition to staff needs in terms of accommodation and remuneration, communication needs should be considered. In areas with access to electricity and internet, computers and smart phones should be provided to facilitate regular reporting and communications. Where this is not the case, alternative, paper based reporting systems should be considered.



*A School Management Committee member from Gasmallah Primary School, Maban, Eastern Nile State. Women are actively encouraged to participate.*

Budgets may need to vary according to the operational context, in South Sudan budgets may need to vary between different states. In areas that are more cut off due to conflict, costs may increase. The target number of schools in each area should also be factored into the budget.

### Monitoring and Supervision Structure

The monitoring and supervision structure of an SG programme is essential to ensure smooth delivery. Where partner organisations are used for implementation, capacity building sessions should be held with partners on the core values and principles of the whole programme, in addition to training on content such as training manuals and methodology.

Accountability and supervision structures should be given thoughtful consideration, especially when a programme is carried out through implementing partners. In the GESS Programme, CEOs are accountable to and managed by State Anchor team leaders. In some cases, CEOs have been given additional duties that are not part of the GESS programme, affecting their deliverables. In the Teacher Professional

Development component of the GESS programme, Education Specialists worked within the State Anchors but had more support and follow up from the GESS central team. This model worked more effectively and is recommended.

It is also recommended that mobile staff are hired with the responsibility of monitoring and reinforcing the State-based training, to ensure quality and consistency of the training delivered, and to ensure ease of coordination.

Programmes operating in a FCAS context are often operating in low and limited resource contexts. Activity reporting and the sharing of feedback should be designed with this in mind.

GESS used formal and systematic channels of communication to receive monthly reports compiled by implementing staff. The means of reporting include: [www.sssams.org/sbrt](http://www.sssams.org/sbrt), KoBoCollect tools, mail, paper hard copies and, to a certain extent, by telephone. After receiving quarterly or monthly activity reports, clearly defined feedback should be provided and shared with key implementers, including National and State Ministry staff.



*School Management Committee members from Mahad Primary School, Juba, Jubek State take part in group work - noting the school's priorities*

## Adaptive Programming

**An SG programme operating in a FCAS context should be flexible and responsive to meet the needs of the dynamic context.**

Recruitment of staff should be conflict-sensitive, taking into account any affiliations of the staff member and the area they are to be stationed. Different strategies should be designed on a needs basis to ensure the safety of all staff and that duty of care is upheld. Ideally, qualified staff should be recruited from and work within the same locality, where tensions based on origins may exist.

In GESS, the CEOs provide on the job training to PES, co-delivering SMC and BoG trainings. The training manuals on SG were distributed to guide each PES, with over 500 manuals distributed throughout South Sudan.

The on the job training model was altered slightly in one Payam in order to ensure staff safety. The CEO was unable to visit a particular area of the Payam due to tribal conflict, although the PES was able to do so. The PES and the CEO met in a safe area together to go through the training modules together that the PES was to deliver, and then the PES travelled to deliver the training on his own. After the training, the PES returned to the CEO and provided a debrief and notes on the activity. In another area, one CEO managed to cover 87 schools – the other CEOs were unable to travel in that area as they were not native to that area.

An SG programme should be designed to be flexible to the needs of individual schools, in addition to the context of conflict. The GESS SG training content consisted of standalone modules that could be delivered separately.

A pre-assessment tool was designed to be used at each school to ascertain the existing capacity of the SMC/BoGs. For schools that do not have existing SMC/BoGs, these bodies are formed during the training. Where capacity is lower, modules on those topics are prioritised over topics where SMC/BoGs already have a strong capacity. This enables training to be tailored to the specific needs of each school. Post-assessments are then carried out to monitor the effects of the training and to identify any need for follow-up support.

The School Governance Lessons Learnt report will soon be available on the GESS website.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://girlseducationsouthsudan.org/research-reports-2>

**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

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