

Education Cannot Wait in South Sudan

Education is critical in averting the loss of another generation

Since the current crisis began in December 2013:

- 1,188 schools in the 3 most affected States (Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile) have closed.
- Nearly half a million children and adolescents need education interventions due to the current crisis.
- Over 9,000 children have been recruited into armed forces and groups since January 2014.
- More than 90 schools in the country are occupied by fighting forces and internally displaced people.
- Lack of education is a push factor for people to leave South Sudan to neighbouring countries so their children can continue to go to school.
- South Sudan already has poor education indicators. 75% of the population is illiterate. 60% is aged under 18.



IDP children attend a temporary learning space in Lakes State, March 2014.

Why Promote Education During an Emergency?

- Education is life-saving and life sustaining, providing psychosocial support, strengthening survival skills and coping mechanisms.
- Education is a community priority during emergencies in South Sudan¹.
- Education is valued by parents as a means for protection; providing safe spaces for children and adolescents protect them from dangers and exploitation².
- Education is critical for developmental needs of children and adolescents.
- Education restores schools as zones of peace and learning.
- Education is a fundamental right.

What has happened so far?

The High-level Humanitarian Conference on South Sudan (Oslo, May 2014) recognised the importance of education and protection to avert the loss of a generation³.

Education Cluster partners work to provide learning and protection in temporary learning spaces in IDP and Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites and emergency teacher training on life skills and psychosocial support.

Since 2014, more than 120,000 students and teachers have been reached with education activities.

However, education is not prioritized in the humanitarian response, receiving just 15% percent of funding needed. Funding for critical education in emergency projects is running out.

Education Cluster was the only programmatic cluster to not to receive Common Humanitarian Funds for July-December 2014. Most partners rely heavily on these funds for emergency education programs.

What happens next if Education is not prioritised?

In 3 months.....

- ✗ 70% of current emergency education in the most conflict affected areas will stop (Unity, Upper Nile, and Jonglei States).
- ✗ Education partners will no longer be able to pay teachers' and facilitators' allowances. Education activities will stop.
- ✗ Close to half a million previously enrolled children and adolescents are out of school, and are at increased risk of engaging in negative coping strategies, recruitment into armed groups, child labor, Gender Based Violence, and violence in cramped living conditions in IDP sites.
- ✗ The occupation of schools by armed groups continues and escalates; some schools are destroyed.
- ✗ Lifesaving messages on cholera, mine awareness, GBV, HIV/AIDS in IDP sites may no longer reach children, adolescents and their families.



Soldiers occupying a school in Pibor County, Jonglei State, May 2013.

¹ South Sudan Education Cluster Impact Evaluation Report, 2013

² South Sudan Education Cluster Impact Evaluation Report, 2013

³ <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Outcome%20Document%20-%20South%20Sudan%20Conference%20FINAL1.pdf>

The longer the delay the more risk of losing another generation

In 6 months.....

- ✘ Essential basic learning materials run out for lack of funds. Supplies run out in the hardest to reach communities.
- ✘ Children miss a full academic school year. Many of them will never return to school, leading to another generation of citizens who grow up in South Sudan without an education.
- ✘ Unpaid teachers seek alternative employment, further depleting the education workforce.

In 12 months.....

- ✘ Schools fall into disrepair and are used for other purposes, severe shortage of teachers even for the few schools that are open.
- ✘ More textbooks are damaged and destroyed, representing a loss of the \$5 million investment in their printing and distribution in 2013.
- ✘ Dramatic increase in dropout numbers, leading to an increase in early marriage and child labor.
- ✘ Families continue to leave the country in order to access quality education for their children, straining neighboring countries' resources.

Education is a peace dividend. Hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese boys and girls continue to miss the opportunity to gain an education, something their parents had great hopes for. Since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, funding for education has lagged behind other sectors, with educational needs increasing in South Sudan's ever-recurrent conflicts⁴. We urgently need to prevent the loss of another generation in the current crisis.

A Call to Action

We call on donors to:

1. **SUPPORT** education in emergency programming by investing 4% of all humanitarian funding in education in emergencies. The sector needs at least \$27million to meet urgent needs until December 2014.
2. **ADVOCATE** for education to be integral part of the humanitarian response, in line with commitments made in Oslo, at the High-level Humanitarian Conference on South Sudan in May 2014.

We call on Humanitarian Decision Makers to:

1. **PRIORITIZE** education as part of the multi-sector humanitarian response, including cluster representation in all rapid needs assessments.
2. **INCLUDE** education in emergency cargo in the supply pipeline.
3. **FUND** education through the Common Humanitarian Fund allocations.

We call on the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to:

1. **ENSURE** the payment of teacher salaries in the most-affected States and disburse payments as soon as possible.
2. Ensure timely circulation of **DIRECTIVES** for teachers and other education personnel on administration and jurisdiction issues affecting schools and learning in the affected areas, as well as adequate follow-up actions.
3. Actively **SUPPORT** displaced students to facilitate opportunities to sit exams and receive certificates.

We call on the all parties to the conflict to:

1. **TAKE** all possible measures to safeguard schools, so they can be used for educational purposes.

"The other services are good but short lived...with education, the children will capture it and hold it forever. Human beings don't survive on just food."
(Community Leader, Juba IDP camp)

"I want to be literate." (Schoolgirl, aged 12 on why she is attending the emergency education school in an IDP site in Juba)

"We have already forgotten what we learned in school because it has been so long. We are ready to go back."
(Schoolboy, aged 12)



IDP children playing at UNMISS PoC site in Malakal, March 2014

⁴ "Education in South Sudan: investing in a better future", a review by Gordon Brown, 2012