



**Save the Children**



# Hear it from the **Children**

**South Sudan**

**'We want to learn - even during war'**

This study was commissioned by Save the Children and was written by Hannah Graham. The methodology utilised within this report was originally developed by Catherine Gladwell from Jigsaw Consult.

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Front Cover: Primary School students at Nyiel Primary School

Photo: Jenn Warren/Save the Children

Back Cover: Primary School students at Khaltouk primary school.

Photo: Hedinn Halldorsson/Save the Children



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# Acronyms

<b>AES</b>	Alternative Education Systems
<b>ALP</b>	Accelerated Learning Program
<b>CFS</b>	Child-Friendly Space
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development
<b>EiE</b>	Education in Emergencies
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>GESS</b>	Girls' Education South Sudan
<b>GUN</b>	Greater Upper Nile
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>MoEST</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OOS/C</b>	Out of School / Child
<b>PoC</b>	Protection of Civilians
<b>PTA</b>	Parent-Teacher Association
<b>RSS</b>	Republic of South Sudan
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
<b>SMC</b>	School Management Committee
<b>STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infection
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNMISS</b>	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

# Foreword

In May 2015, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This was a critical step towards protecting and promoting the rights of all children in our country. Within this Convention there is one article in particular that reads as essential to the future prosperity of this new nation of South Sudan. Article 28: “States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.”

The ongoing conflict in some parts of our country has forced near 400,000 children out of their classroom. These children are the future of South Sudan, and we must work to foster their intellect and the curiosity of our children so they can realize their full potential.

This report confirms what those of us in Government have known for a long time. In the face of great hardship, children are asking for books, pens and knowledge – and we must all ensure these young minds receive such essential tools. The Ministers and the Undersecretaries of tomorrow are at school today – and it is our duty to ensure that they are well equipped to lead the development of our country.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, as well as on behalf of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, I congratulate Save the Children and its partners for speaking to our children across the country, and capturing their voices in this report that has been appropriately named Hear It From The Children.

Our children have challenged us in this report. They have spoken of their overwhelming desire to learn – even during war. As a Ministry, we are going to study this report with keen interest, and in greater detail to see how we can respond positively to the voices of our children.



Hon. Dr. John Gai Yoh  
**Minister of Education, Science and Technology**

# Executive Summary

Over 800,000 children have been internally displaced within South Sudan since the on-going political crisis began on 15 December 2013. This study seeks to understand how this statistic translates into individual childhoods, and where children place their priorities. To this end, Save the Children, INTERSOS, World Vision International and CARE consulted 367 children and adults in crisis-affected areas throughout South Sudan. Their message was crystal clear: *'We want to learn – even during war.'*<sup>1</sup>

Education is therefore a top priority for conflict-affected children in South Sudan. Parents, teachers and the wider community stress its importance and support its provision. If humanitarian interventions are to remain accountable to the communities they serve, such priorities must be taken into account. By articulating the benefits of education in emergencies in the words of children and their communities, this study invites the government, donors, and humanitarian agencies to re-evaluate their priorities and recognize children's demand for education must be more adequately supported as an essential and lifesaving aspect of emergency humanitarian interventions.

## Key Findings

Conflict affected communities view education as a fundamental right. When asked to rank the importance of various social services such as health, water, shelter, education, food and play, 28% of children and 25% of community members respectively ranked education as their top priority.

It was evident that community members took proactive steps to provide education – with some helping to construct temporary learning spaces (TLS) and lending their support through Parent Teacher Associations (PTA).

A father in Awerial County captured the burning need for education in emergencies very well when he said, *"... we beg you to let the school progress well. The only thing that we prioritise here is the school. We will support you if you bring this."*

## Education Protects

Children and parents strongly value the protective role of education. Not only does education teach children how to better respond to and safeguard themselves against dangers such as landmines or gunfire, but schools offer a safe place for children, in an otherwise unstable environment: *"When we are in school, we can feel safe and we learn how to protect ourselves."* said a 16 year old girl from Bor town in Jonglei state.

Children attending school in a safe learning space can reduce the risk of forced conscription by armed groups, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), early marriage, and child labour<sup>2</sup>. With teachers trained on psychosocial support and life skills and by using tools such as UNESCO's Skills for Life teaching and learning material, children are given the emotional support they need to overcome challenges stemming from the conflict. Education also has the potential to challenge some of the key socio-political factors that fuel violence in South Sudan. Since tribal identity remains the primary cause of conflict, educating people on human rights and peace building can help reduce the use of violence as a means of resolving conflict<sup>3</sup>.

## Education Enables Other Sectors

Rather than viewing components of a response separately, parents and children explained that families would benefit more from an integrated response where they are able to access services equitably.

*"The family is improved when there is everything together – education, health, water, food and the others."*<sup>4</sup>

Humanitarian workers and teachers emphasised the importance of schools as entry points for other sectors assistance. Children consulted, for example, consistently named their teacher as the person who first conveyed crucial health, sanitation and hygiene information.



## Education Builds Resilience

Community members cited education as a key factor for those who either managed to escape the conflict, or those who developed stronger coping mechanisms. Education offers practical skills to more effectively overcome the daily challenges resulting from the conflict. For instance, a teacher in Malakal explained that schools provide the opportunity to teach children how to

respond to threats of illness<sup>6</sup>, fire or gunfire. A number of parents and children also noted that educated families often made better decisions about where to seek shelter when fighting breaks out<sup>7</sup>. Crucially, education allows communities to prepare and plan for the future, to hope and to envisage rebuilding their lives. This is vital if humanitarian gains are to be sustained.

Khaltouk Primary School



# Recommendations

In South Sudan, both national and international actors are working to support children in emergencies. We call on the government, donors, non-state actors and humanitarian agencies to examine the findings of this report and consider how to better address the need for education in emergencies.

## I. Government & Non-State Actors

I.1 Ensure humanitarian access to enable agencies to support displaced and conflict-affected children and provide them with the education they are asking for.

I.2 Uphold the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, ensuring that schools, teachers and children are protected from armed occupation and/or attack.

I.3 Maintain the national education budget allocation, prioritising timely payment of teachers in government areas and UN Protection of Civilian (PoC) Sites, as well as ensuring payment for teachers in IO controlled areas. Ensure children have access to sit and/or re-sit their examinations and receive certification in 2015, following the MoEST June 2014 resolutions.

I.4 Non state armed groups must commit to the protection of children's education in their territories, and sign-up to the 2010 Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict.

I.5 Increase national and state level coordination amongst education actors to identify gaps and develop effective interventions.

I.6 Seek support in rebuilding or rehabilitating schools that have been either fully or partially destroyed by the conflict

## 2. Donors

2.1 Increase funding for education in emergencies in South Sudan from 2% to ensure that more children are able to access education throughout conflict-affected areas. Currently with education averaging around 2% of overall humanitarian funding, the needs cannot be adequately met.

2.2 Continue to provide flexible funding that can be re-allocated between emergency and longer-term interventions, as the context requires. This flexibility should acknowledge the need to support teachers in emergency situations, who might otherwise be forced to leave the profession.

2.3 Ensure education is funded as part of an integrated humanitarian response to maximise the role of education as an enabling sector.

2.4 Fund a sector-wide response to ensure that all levels of education are addressed, with particular focus on early childhood care and adolescents' skills and education, in addition to primary-level provision.

## 3. Humanitarian Actors

3.1 Improve accountability to communities by identifying their priorities and assessing multi-sector needs.

3.2 Plan and deliver multi-sector and integrated programming to ensure education enables the provision of protection, health, WASH and nutrition services, where possible.

3.3 Align incentive and payment amounts with national pay-scales and agreed humanitarian agency amounts to ensure that teachers are not incentivised to leave the profession to take-up manual labour on a daily rate.

3.4 Increase sharing of best practices amongst non-state actors to identify possible areas of collaboration, ensure equitable quality, and prevent duplication of services.

# Background and effect of the crisis on education in South Sudan

In December 2013, violence erupted in the capital Juba and quickly spread to Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei states which are collectively known as Greater Upper Nile region. It is estimated that 1.9 million people were displaced within South Sudan and into neighbouring countries in the region. Out of a total of 1.5 million internally displaced people in South Sudan, 800,000 are children. Children have since been repeatedly targeted for conscription by armed groups, and they have suffered serious physical violence and SGBV.

The widespread need for civilian protection during the crisis resulted in the emergence of Protection of Civilian (POC) sites within fortified UN bases that had been designed to only house UN Peacekeepers and staff.

Overcrowding inside the PoC sites around the country pose health and hygiene risks, and have in some cases even led to tensions and sporadic outbreaks of violence within the sites. In addition to seeking protection in PoC sites, civilians have also fled to safer communities and established informal settlements there.

Some parts of the country are under the control of Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement In Opposition (SPLM/IO). Basic services are not delivered in these areas, and government payments are not reaching teachers and other civil servants - which has sadly led to school closures.

Critical gaps in education were evident before the outbreak of the conflict. Only 10 % of children completed primary education, and female enrolment remains disproportionately low at only 33% in primary schools. The quality of education was concerning, with 59% of primary teachers untrained. The crisis has exacerbated the situation. Today, it is estimated that an additional 400,000 children in South Sudan have been forced to drop out of school due to conflict. Millions of children are unable to access education, and thousands have been recruited into armed groups or are being exploited through child labour.

The state of education in South Sudan is more concerning than ever before. In conflict affected areas, the limited education facilities mainly serve primary-level needs, and in some cases, early childhood development (ECD) which is often introduced after the construction of a child-friendly space (CFS). The capacity of primary schools (if and when they are available) is often incapable of meeting the need for education. As a result, many schools are forced to either run morning and afternoon shifts, or divide temporary learning spaces (designed for one class) in order to accommodate more children. Very few of the children consulted for this study had access to secondary school education.



# Methodology

This study used the methodology prescribed in Save the Children's original 'Hear it from the Children' study (which can be found in Appendix 2). The study focused on children and communities in conflict affected areas. Research was conducted throughout Greater Upper Nile (Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei states), in IDP-hosting Lakes state, and Juba where the political and humanitarian crisis began. Lakes state currently hosts the largest number of IDPs – although it is not directly affected by the crisis<sup>16</sup>. Efforts were also made to carry out consultations in both government and opposition-held areas, as well as in PoC sites, IDP settlements, and among conflict-affected groups in both urban and rural settings.

The conduct of this study was primarily based on community consultations undertaken through focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews.

Through FGDs, 115 adults were consulted – including

parents, teachers, and community leaders. An additional 252 children (both girls and boys) were consulted through FGDs. The children were aged 6-18 years, and they included those who are currently enrolled in education, and those who are out of school. Where possible and appropriate, children were divided and consulted according to age and gender. Confidentiality and child safeguarding rules and policies were strictly adhered to throughout the consultative process. A do no harm approach was also utilized to uphold humanitarian principles throughout the research process.

The primary research was carried out by a consultant, who later trained researchers from partner organisations using the prescribed methodology. These researchers conducted focus group discussions in areas where they, and their organisations, had better access than the consultant researcher.

Ahou Teaching and Learning Space, Awerial IDP Camp



## Results

# Education: A Priority for Conflict Affected Communities

Children and adolescents are the most affected by South Sudan's on-going conflict. In fact, over half of the IDPs within the country are children.

National and international actors have a responsibility to ensure accountability to the affected communities they aim to support. As this report will demonstrate, when young people are included in consultative processes, they do indeed highlight the issues that are of critical importance to them - *education in emergency* in this case.

*"We want to learn – even during war"* – said a 10 year old boy from Mahad IDP settlement.

Throughout the conflict-affected areas, there are dozens of examples of communities working together to ensure their children have access to education. Teachers worked voluntarily, parents contributed what little income they could, and communities helped with construction. In Duk County, in Jonglei state, a number of parents organised themselves and constructed several classrooms from locally available materials.

In the capital Juba, a man living in one of the UN's PoC sites described how he and others supported the opening of a school. *"We the community collected money, and even now, the women are making tea (to raise money) to buy chalk and are mobilising the children so that they attend"* the man said.

The demand for education in emergency is rooted in a growing awareness of children's rights, as well as a greater understanding of the benefits education can bring. As one 14 year old girl bravely said, *"...even if there is no food (during a crisis), we have a right to get education very soon."*

Limited resources result in the majority of programming targeting children of primary school age. There are few programmes in place which aim to reach older students, and the most significant being the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) under the Alternative Education Systems (AES) where the eight year primary school curriculum is condensed into four years for the benefit of older children. A small amount of schemes focusing on skills training are also available, although overall, opportunities for adolescent education remains minimal.

There are almost no secondary school facilities in displaced communities – thus raising serious concern among primary school students that *"there will be no promotion"* to secondary school. Many children are affected by this gap, and they are *"doing nothing or doing bits of small work"* across PoCs and IDP settlements<sup>17</sup>. Communities consulted emphasised the need for children to have access to secondary education.

*"NGOs should give full support to girls and boys to complete their education – this is very important to me"*, said a 17 year old girl living in the UN PoC site in Bor – Jonglei state.

## Analysis of Findings

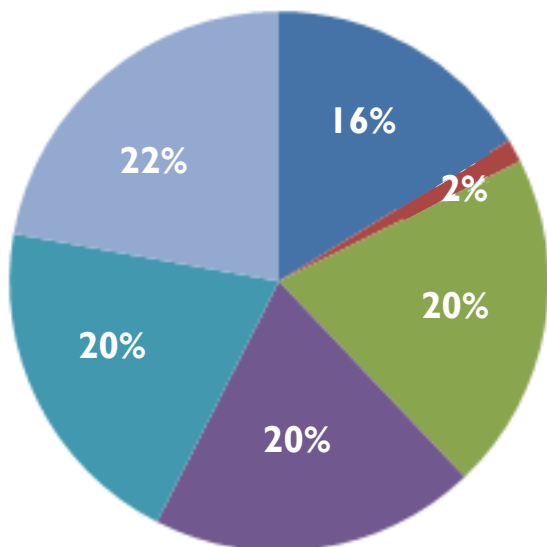
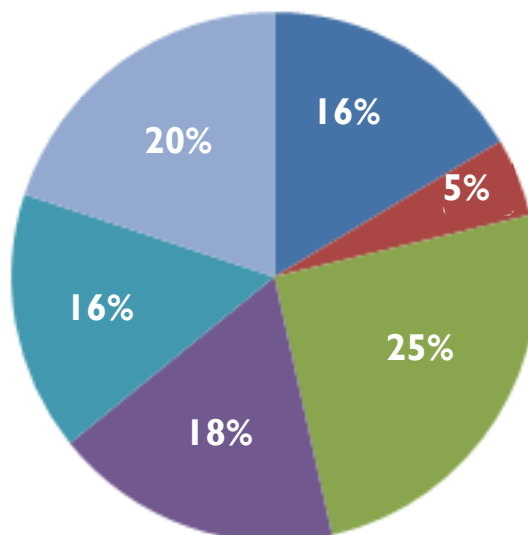
Children of different age groups, parents, teachers and community leaders in crisis-affected areas were asked to list their priorities. This enabled researchers to gain a better understanding of where education sits on the list of priorities in the minds of the consulted communities.

367 participants were shown images of basic services and needs (food, water, healthcare, education, shelter and psychosocial support) and asked to state the three most important to them in times of conflict or crisis.



### Community Prioritisation

Reference to “community” in this context means parents, teachers, community leaders, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) representatives, and children. The findings therefore represent the combined view of all those consulted – with education being ranked first priority by a quarter of all community members.

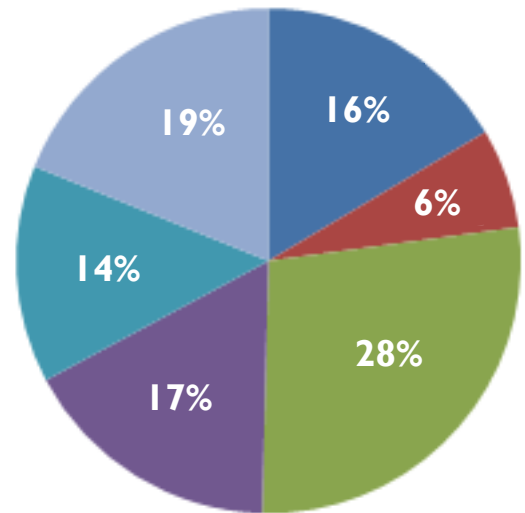


### Adult Prioritisation

Of the 115 adults consulted, 20% rated education as being of equal importance as shelter, food, water, and healthcare.

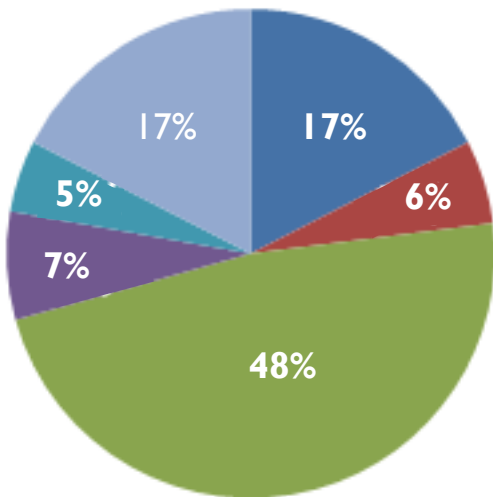
### Children Prioritisation

Of the 252 children who were consulted, 28% prioritised education above all other needs and services. As one 15 year old girl from Malakal put it, "...education is more important than food. If you are educated, you can get your own food."<sup>18</sup>



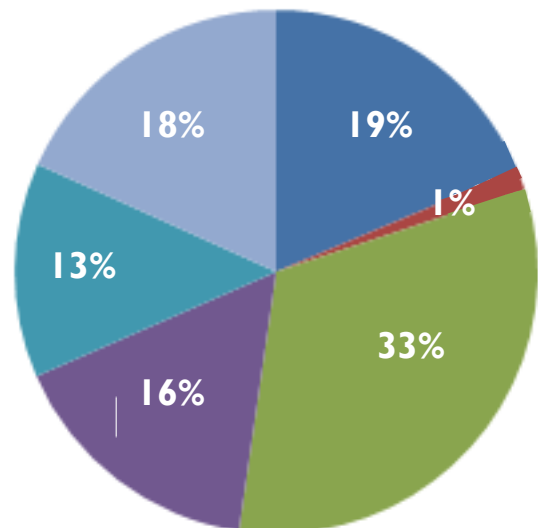
### Children and Adults Prioritisation in PoC

Results from UN PoC sites in Juba, Bor, Malakal and Bentiu show that nearly half (48%) of children and adults prioritised education in emergency above other all other needs.



### Children and Adults Prioritisation outside PoC

In contrast, only 33% of the consulted people who are neither living in PoC sites nor in IDP settlements (rural or urban) prioritised education.





## ‘Education cannot wait’

Quite often support for children’s educational needs is relegated in the first few months of an emergency. Most humanitarian actors tend to prioritise interventions such as nutrition, healthcare, WASH and non-food items (NFIs).

During the course of this research, community members were asked to state the point at which they think education should be prioritised in an emergency. They had the option to either choose straightaway; after one month; after two months; or after three months.

52% of all participants thought education should be provided immediately after the onset of an emergency.

Although a greater percentage of children prioritised education, an even higher proportion of adults (57.5%) stressed its urgency in an emergency response compared to 49.2% of children. Parents explained that the timing of an education intervention is crucial for their children’s wellbeing.

*“It’s important to have education immediately because people are traumatised by conflict. Education cannot wait” – Father, Tongping PoC, Juba.*

This view was echoed by another parent living in an IDP settlement in Awerial in Lakes state. He said, *“...we think that school should start straightaway – because life does not stop, and so children need to resume straightaway.”*

The justification provided by children who thought they did not need education ‘straight away’ is, on close analysis, in fact a demonstration of the challenges and

additional pressures that are thrust upon them in times of conflict. Many displaced children spoke of the need to support their parents and younger siblings to settle into life as IDPs.

As an 11 year old girl living in the UN PoC site in Malakal explained *“...I am not going to school just now because I need to look after the baby while my mother works.”*

In fact, communities did not only lament the lack of urgency in the provision of education in emergency – they challenged humanitarian actors to give education equal priority. *“We want it (education) to come with food and healthcare”* a 17 year old girl living in the UN PoC site in Bor said.

## Children ‘Competing With Time’

Many people interviewed (including children) also expressed concern about the implications of prolonged displacement, and wanted to ensure education features in long term planning.

*“Our children are competing with time. If we leave them, they will grow up without education and a good future. We don’t know how long the war will take, so we need to make sure they are at least in school.”* said a mother from Bor town – the capital of Jonglei state.

The urgency of education is concerned is a view shared by all – both children and adults.

*“We don’t want to delay. If we delay, we will remain behind”* said a 15 year old boy from Duk County in Jonglei state.

## At what point after an emergency should education be provided?

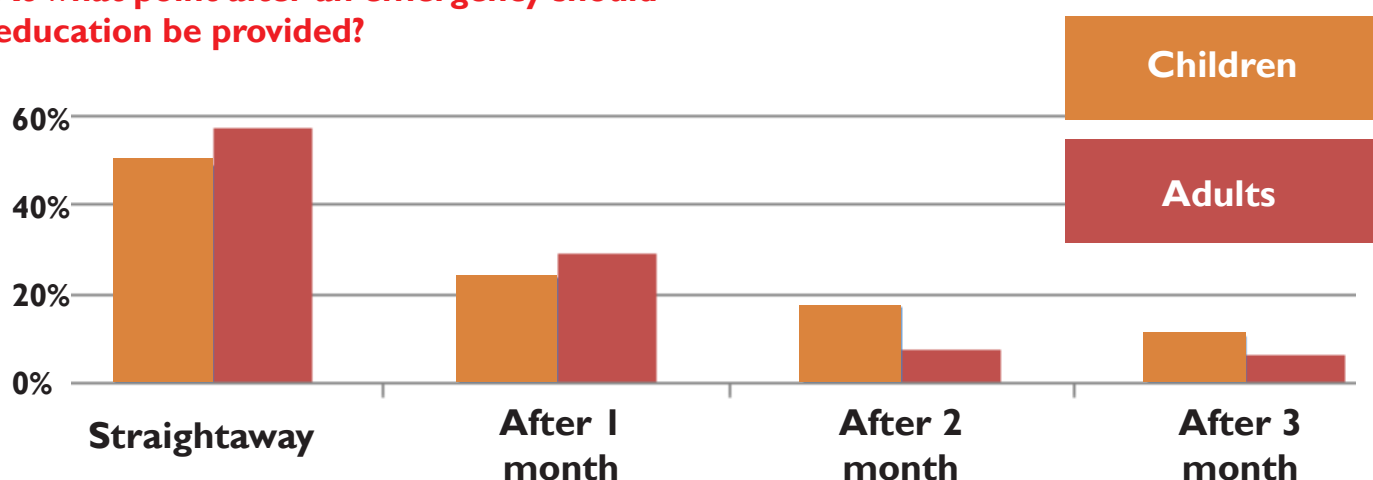




Photo: Colin Crowley/Save the Children

Nur school in Doro camp, Upper Nile

# Results

## Education as Protection

Conflict increases the vulnerability of children.

- It is estimated that more than 13,000 children are now associated with armed groups in South Sudan<sup>19</sup>.
- Families and whole communities have been uprooted. Approximately 600,000 children are suffering from psychological trauma as a consequence of the violence they have witnessed<sup>20</sup>.
- Many displaced children are unaccompanied, while others have little supervision as their parents or guardians carry out income generating activities.

In situations of armed conflict, children are at increased risk of being exposed to violence, harmful practices, negative coping strategies like recruitment into armed groups, early marriage, child labour, and commercial sexual exploitation – all this is true for South Sudan. Although the provision of education cannot eliminate such risks, it can help to mitigate them, and in equal measure, improving the mechanisms that protect children can also help improve educational outcomes.

*“I sometimes feel safer at school than when I’m not”* said a 16 year old boy from Pibor in the newly created Greater Pibor Administrative Area.

As well as providing a safe place, schools can occupy a child’s time – and thus limiting their exposure to harmful activities in the community.

*“Most of the children, their parents are not here. Some are staying with their relatives, some (parents) died. Some children are staying alone... We need the humanitarian communities – all the NGOs - to support education”* a teacher at the UN PoC site in Juba said.

### Learning How to Stay Safe in Crisis

A significant protection benefit to come from education is the opportunity to teach children about their own safety in times of crisis, as well as how to respond to differing dangers. In the words of an 11 year old from Mingkaman in Lakes state. *“Teachers teach us how to protect ourselves from dangerous things”* she said.

Provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills can help children better safeguard their health, improving their ability to meaningfully engage with public health and hygiene staff and information.

Education in emergency can also build awareness of physical threats such as landmines which, when applied, can be life-saving.

During consultations, many children were able to correctly identify the symbol indicating ‘danger’ and, keen to demonstrate their knowledge, they recounted that in rural areas, it warns them of the presence of landmines or explosives. Significantly, many of the children who recognised the warning symbol explained that they were taught by their teachers, and that they knew how to avoid the area or to call for help in such situations. *“School taught us the signs warning of danger, like in the case of (land) mines.”* said a 14 year old boy from Bor in Jonglei state.

According to one Child Protection Specialist in Malakal PoC site, children are taught how to respond safely to gunfire, as well as to flooding and outbreaks of fire within the camp.

Education also equips children with critical thinking skills which enable reasoned decision-making. As one father in Juba PoC put it, *“...education allows children to think for themselves.”*

Another teacher who was recruited into an armed group as a child added the weight of his personal experience and said, *“...education helps me know how to protect myself and interact with other people. All that I have learned lets me respond to something by thinking and then analysing.”*<sup>21</sup>

### The ‘Back to Learning’ Campaign

Conceived by the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF, the ‘Back to Learning’ campaign was launched in South Sudan by His Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit. It aims to get the 400,000 children whose schooling was interrupted by the conflict back into classrooms. The campaign also calls for schools to be promoted as Zones of Peace where...children are protected from harm<sup>22</sup>

With the on-going recruitment of children and adolescents into armed groups, the need for safe spaces for children in South Sudan cannot be emphasised strongly enough<sup>23</sup>. Although schools are not immune from such practices<sup>23</sup>, community members still believe they are much safer spaces in conflict-affected areas.

*“When the militia<sup>24</sup> came last year and there was fighting, there were many young boys carrying guns. If there were more schools, fewer children would be recruited by armed groups”* said a teacher at the UN PoC site in Malakal, Upper Nile state.





Photo: Hedinn Halldorsson/Save the Children





A number of parents said that even the mere perception that exudes from the term 'school children' reduces the likelihood of them being targeted, and the community is more likely to step in to defend school children if they are targeted.

*"A school uniform is like security. When a child moves around the town in uniform, even somebody with ill intentions will not do anything because anyone in the town will recognise that child as a pupil and want to protect her. Without that uniform, somebody can try to kidnap her"* a PTA member in Bor town in Jonglei state said.

Children become associated with armed groups for a wide range of reasons. These include failures in the legal and social systems designed to protect children; culture, tradition and social norms; the need for self-defence and economic support; impunity against children's human rights violations; and the persistence of conflict. Children may also seek to join armed groups for ideological reasons, and this is often as a response to real or perceived injustices and incidents of social exclusion.

While it would be wrong to conclude that children with access to education are automatically protected from this practice, community members felt there was a correlation between lack of schooling opportunities and child recruitment.

*"When you have no... purpose, you have no hope – your only hope is the military"* a teacher and parent from the PoC site in Malakal said poetically.

One humanitarian worker believes that the correlation between lack of schooling opportunities and child recruitment is reflected in the views of the recruiting groups themselves. According to the UN humanitarian worker based in Upper Nile, *"... during one assessment, we went to an occupied school. I asked one soldier: "what do you think about this child being associated with armed groups?" He replied: "there is no school for this child – what is he supposed to do? When the school opens, we will send him back."*

Education in emergency is a key component of any strategy designed to effectively mitigate the risks of child recruitment. The provision of education is a vital part of any child or adolescent-centred disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme because it enables children to envision alternative futures as civilians.

*"Education prevents us from joining the military"* said a 15 year old boy from the UN PoC site in Bentiu – Unity state.

## Education Mitigates SGBV, Exploitation and Early Marriage

Ms Zainab Hawa Bangura, the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict described incidents of sexual violence against girls and women since the crisis erupted in South Sudan as “rampant.”<sup>25</sup>

These grave violations against women and children have not only been perpetrated by combatants, but also by members of the community who take advantage of the breakdown in law enforcement mechanisms and community ties.

*“In this emergency, girls are more vulnerable than usual because they are doing nothing. Some of them are raped and they conceive”* said the UNICEF staff in Malakal – Upper Nile state.

Tens of thousands of people sought refuge in UN PoC sites across the country. The high population density within the PoCs and IDP camps has also served as a catalyst for increased rape and sexual violence against women and children.

*“Rape is common in the camp among girls, ladies, and even young children”* a teacher living in the UN PoC site in Malakal said.

Education can therefore provide a safe place for girls and their families. As was the case with child recruitment by armed groups, many communities also believe that perceptions about girls who attend school have a positive bearing on their level of safety from sexual violence.

*“Amongst the youth, there are a lot of cases of GBV. Many youth have worse ideas than they did before they came to the PoC. A group of 20 boys raped one girl”*, said a teacher at the UN PoC site in Malakal. And children themselves have explanations about why violence is increasing. *“Those (boys) who don’t come to school are more angry... some of the boys not in school attack people. We girls might be attacked”* said a 15 year old girl from the UN PoC site in Malakal.

Both forced and early marriages are still a big problem in South Sudan. In the consulted communities, forced marriages are also associated with SGBV – as, in some cases, rape victims are forced to marry the perpetrator, and in other circumstances new brides become victims of SGBV. *“Forced marriage is rampant.”* a humanitarian worker at the UN PoC site in Malakal confirmed.

Schools are therefore an important opportunity to teach adolescents about the risks and devastating effects of sexual violence on both the victims and wider community.

As families become separated by violence, and as livelihoods are interrupted, girls become more vulnerable to exploitative practices as way to survive. As some girls resort to, or are forced into commercial sexual exploitation to survive, others are at heightened risk of early marriage due to the attraction of dowry payments that are customary in many communities in South Sudan.

*“In our culture, girls can be a source of wealth. But if a girl is in school, she knows her rights. The girl’s safety is being monitored (by teachers) and if she is wearing a uniform, even the public will watch out for her”* said a mother from Bor town in Jonglei state.

Girls and parents alike explained that, *“when girls are in school, they are protected from early marriage.”*<sup>26</sup> And once again, children in South Sudan demonstrated an amazing awareness of the challenges they face, and the possible mitigation measures that could be taken.

*“For us to be in school, it is safer than staying at home – because you cannot be forced to get married earlier”* said a 12 year old girl from Bor town in Jonglei state.

All communities consulted viewed the levels of commercial sexual exploitation to be very high. A document released by the US Government states that since the onset of violence in December 2013, children are at increased risk of sex trafficking, with girls – some as young as 10 years old being involved in commercial sex exploitation<sup>27</sup>. A teacher in Malakal explained the drivers of prostitution and how the associated risks may be limited.

*“Prostitution is a big problem in the camp, driven by poverty and trauma. Education is needed to teach the youth how to be safe. We’re already seeing more young people know about HIV because of the school.”*

One community leader in a Juba PoC felt that education *“...can help prevent children from becoming engaged in prostitution.”*

## Teachers’ role in protecting children

As communities struggle to cope with the increased stress<sup>28</sup> of survival or the effects of trauma during a crisis, child labour and domestic violence pose major risks to girls and boys.

Teachers can be a valuable protection resource in monitoring a child’s wellbeing outside of the classroom as well as within. On more than one occasion during consultations with adults and children, a child was witnessed being beaten by a member of the community nearby, before a teacher was able to intervene and resolve the dispute peacefully.



*“In the camp last week I found one parent beating his child. He was frustrated as the child spent all his time playing in the street and his father wanted time to himself without worrying that he’s getting into trouble. I arranged with him so that the child now comes to school”*  
– Teacher, Malakal PoC.

As families are separated or adopt survival strategies in the crisis, many children take on additional responsibilities within the home, or are expected to seek more formal employment.

*“I am not going to school because my mother told me I had to build a tent first for the younger children... There are no good things about not going to school”* – 11 year old girl, Malakal PoC.

In densely populated IDP settings such as the PoCs or other settlements, this is a widespread problem.

*“There are a lot of children not in school here in the camp. Many of them have to work at home”* – 12 year old girl, Malakal PoC

Teachers have the potential to assist children, and their families, and yet resources and compensation are required for this to be viable. As one 9 year old boy in Bentiu PoC said *“parents and teachers love us.”*

Speaking of the skills attained through a recent training he and his colleagues attended, a teacher in Malakal PoC said: *“It is our role to change the lives as well as the ideas of children. We use all of our training to understand the psychology (of children).”*

The protection of children from abuse can be better assured in the presence of trained adults who live in the same community and are able to monitor their wellbeing daily.



Amdan Primary School, Bentiu







## Results

# Education as Part of an Integrated Humanitarian Response

Education, if integrated in the initial phases of a coordinated humanitarian response, can be life-saving, life-sustaining, as well as life-changing. Rather than competing with or detracting from other sectors, education in emergencies often complements activities in WASH, health, livelihoods, and nutrition. It is also a central component of protection.

While education in emergencies is not prioritised to the same extent as other sectors, many of those consulted did not distinguish it as a separate response. In fact, they felt that education added value to other sectors<sup>29</sup>.

*“If all your other needs like food, water, health and shelter are provided for but one is missing, it is no good. They are all more meaningful if they are provided together. People benefit more from all other provisions if education is there too”* – PTA member, Bor Town

Schools and education spaces serve as a meeting point for children, parents and community leaders. They offer shared space for the dissemination of information by teachers and other leaders to the wider community. *“...school environments are an opportunity to engage with conflict-affected children and a way of (implementing) community outreach that cannot (otherwise) be replicated. Many IDPs in remote locations still have a structure of teachers and community figures who assist in displacement settings, and we need to be better at capitalising on this”* – South Sudan Protection Specialist.

Schools can therefore provide an ‘entry point’ within a community through which humanitarian partners can better access and implement activities with children. This is vital in protection responses where partners can assess and monitor vulnerable children by working with teachers, as well as working with students in order to access extremely vulnerable out-of-school children living on the fringes of a community.

*“We identify unaccompanied and other vulnerable children through the school and in working with teachers and children there, are able to locate and assess vulnerable children in the community”* – Child protection specialist, Malakal

Education interventions are essential to meeting the objectives of the country wide Strategic Response Plan for 2015. Providing education for children regardless of displacement and conflict ensures that the rights of

children, who are extremely vulnerable, are protected. Additionally, education increases individuals’ abilities to improve self-reliance and increase coping capacities that enable them to lead healthy lives.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Water, sanitation, and education facilities are limited in South Sudan. School therefore offers the optimum environment through which to teach safe hygiene and sanitation practices.

Children have the capacity to share and teach these important messages to the wider community. In densely populated IDP settlements or camps, the promotion of good hygiene is crucial to ensure the surrounding environment remains clean and safe for the prevention of life-threatening diarrhoeal diseases.

*“School teaches us how not to get cholera, dysentery and typhoid...our teachers tell us here in the camp”* – 15 year old boy, Bor PoC.

*“With skills and knowledge from school you can pass this onto your neighbours. You can teach them what you learned about sanitation”* – 14 year old boy, Bor PoC.

## Health

Even before the onset of the crisis, 80% of healthcare services in South Sudan were provided by and or supported by humanitarian agencies. The breakdown of healthcare services, mass displacement of civilians and conditions inside densely populated IDP settlements, as well as PoC camps, have made communities more vulnerable to outbreaks<sup>31</sup> of disease, particularly measles, malaria and cholera.

South Sudan’s poor infrastructure means that a health response often takes time to operationalize, and logistical movement of supplies can be time consuming. In a report on the crisis, the World Health Organisation (WHO) explained that sensitisation of health risks is a vital component of the response.

‘Risk communication is a critical tool for effective management of public health emergencies. When the public is at risk of a real or potential health threat, treatment options may be limited, direct interventions may take time to organize and resources may be few. Communicating advice and guidance, therefore, is often



Photo: Emmanuel Kenyi/Save the Children

the most important public health tool in managing a risk.<sup>32</sup>

In many conflict-affected settings, schools and teachers were actively working with children and communities to teach them about health risks, with the additional support of humanitarian partners. Such practices have the potential to make real impact, given that over half of IDPs are children.

Children consulted also believed education “[helped them] to learn when to get medication and how.”<sup>33</sup> Without education, some added, that they are less equipped to safeguard their own health.

“If somebody is not educated, he or she will not go to the clinic because they don’t understand the importance of it” – 15 year old boy, CFS, Aweril.

Furthermore, school and classrooms offer entry points to access and monitor children who might be unhealthy or at risk<sup>34</sup>.

“A team of hygiene promoters visit schools to do training, also [to offer] nutritional information and to teach pregnant and lactating mothers how to manage pregnancy” – PTA Member, Yuai, Uror

### **Nutrition**

Approximately 3.5 million people in South Sudan currently face emergency levels of food insecurity<sup>35</sup>. Globally, programming among the food security and nutrition sectors generally intersects with education in the form of school feeding programmes.





Maluaklon Primary School

Providing children with at least one meal per day incentivises them to attend school where they learn valuable messages. It also supports the daily nutrition of one of the most vulnerable groups.

One mother in a Juba PoC appreciated nutritional programmes established by MSF in the camp, saying they had helped many children recover from malnutrition. She also added: “if I am not educated, I will not know if a child is malnourished...”

Teachers working with their pupils on a daily basis are increasingly able to recognise the symptoms of malnutrition, and where possible, they refer families to nutritional specialists for support. This is particularly the case in PoC sites or large IDP settlements where such nutritional programmes are available and teachers have been trained, but the community might lack the

necessary awareness in either recognising the symptoms of malnutrition or knowing how to access needed support.

### **Camp Security: The Role of Young People**

With the establishment of PoC sites and large IDP settlements, safe and effective management of densely populated camp settings is vital.

Many parents, community leaders, and humanitarian partners highlighted the ‘problem’ of out-of-school children and adolescents who contribute to the general sense of disruption of daily life in the PoCs and IDP settlements.

A member of the PoC camp management team in Malakal claimed that there are major problems of youth smuggling prohibited items into the camp, spontaneous violence, and stealing from UNMISS stores – all of which disrupts security and affects the ability of humanitarian actors to work.

*“The youth are more likely to commit crimes, drink alcohol and resort to drugs. Last year, we had a major problem with them fighting and really needed to keep them busy...many UN stores are being broken into by youth, and property is damaged. There is a lot of stealing within the communities which can trigger more conflict. There is also GBV which community leaders try to settle in a local court”* – Humanitarian Youth Worker, Malakal PoC.

*“Youth have a certain level of activeness, and they want to be involved, and have purpose. In school, they are kept busy, but in its absence, they are left with nothing”* – UNICEF official, Malakal PoC

When asked about a proposed solution to the internal security issues, camp management staff in Malakal said, “...it’s over one year that these people are in the camp. The CFS and education strategy wasn’t a priority in the beginning, but now it needs to happen. Education would keep children busy and reduce the incidence of conflict within the camp.”

It was not only camp management who viewed education as a viable solution to idle children – school was frequently offered as the best option by the children themselves:

*“When you are not educated you can misbehave and get involved in stealing things. There are many children in the camp who don’t go to school and many of them steal things and do other bad things. At school, children can get good advice which can help them. When we are at school, we don’t fight but those children not at school fight a lot”* – 10 year old boy, Malakal PoC

# Results

## Education builds Resilience

Resilience is the outcome of improved abilities to recover from, withstand or adapt to adversity. Education is an important contributor to the resilience of children and communities: psychologically, socially, economically, and through physical preparedness. Many parents who spoke of the resilience of children highlighted a 'difference' between those children and adolescents in school, and those who are not.

*“Educated children have so many things. They know how to prevent sickness, protect vulnerable people in the family and provide healthcare in the community. They have decision-making abilities. If someone is educated they can protect the whole community”* – Parent, CFS, Mingkaman.

*“The only thing we want is for our children to learn. I am not educated and this makes me vulnerable. We do not want them to be vulnerable like us”* – Father, Mingkaman.

Education can further children's resilience by providing them with psychosocial support to overcome traumatic events and the practical skills to respond to future challenges more effectively. Economically, an appropriate and quality education provides children with the skills required to later gain employment and it allows parents more free time, enabling them to generate an income which limits the economic impact of the crisis.

*“We know that school is very important because an educated child helps the family. Communities do better if children are educated, so do families”* – Father, Awerial.

*“An uneducated person always faces problems when crisis arises”* – 15 year old girl, CFS, Awerial.

### Physical Preparedness & Resilience

Community leaders and children believe educated people have additional knowledge and skills which better prepares them to respond to physical threats and the onset of conflict. Education can provide children and their families with the knowledge and critical thinking skills essential in hazardous situations.

*“The children who don't go to school live dangerous lives. They think differently. They lack knowledge to live healthy lives”*  
-16 year old (in-school) boy, Malakal PoC.

### Psychosocial Resilience in Children

Forced migration and atrocities committed in South Sudan since the beginning of the crisis have had a significant impact on the psychological wellbeing of people of all ages in conflict-affected communities<sup>36</sup>.

*“People are traumatised. I've lost some relatives. I sometimes do not know what to do”* – Teacher, Juba PoC.

Children and adults alike spoke of education as helping children cope with the effects of traumatic events and disturbing memories.

*“Some children here in the community have washed their minds by being in school and those (traumatic) things should not come back.”* – Mother, Mingkamen

In describing how this stress often manifested in children through destructive behaviour, a father in Jonglei state described education as helping children return to a sense of routine where they are less aggressive.

*“During crisis children were idle and played aggressively with each other mostly because they were idle, now they get home and do homework and they love one another more”* – Father, Duk County.

One 15 year old boy living as an IDP in Mingkaman, Lakes state explained that, “...someone who has gone to school can control their anger and emotions...uneducated children are less able to cope with trauma.”<sup>37</sup>

Education (alongside other factors) is 'fundamental to improving prevention and rehabilitative interventions for war-affected children.'<sup>38</sup> This is partly due to the psychological relief that children gain from learning and playing with friends as well the additional support that comes with being part of a school community.

*“Without education, children end up stressed over the hardship but feel comfortable because of school classmates, teachers and parents who are always by their side to support them...”* – 14 year old boy, Bentiu PoC.





Photo: Christena Dowsett/Save the Children



## Psychosocial Resilience at Family and Community Level

During consultations, adults and children often explained that whole families and the wider community can also benefit from education.

*“The child will teach the community when they are being educated.” – 11 year old boy, PoC, Juba*

As community bonds are strengthened, so too is the level of resilience. In some cases, parents and teachers claimed that seeing children in school helped the community as a whole to continue daily life with a sense of normalcy, even if it has been affected by the conflict.

*“When the school is functioning and children are here and playing...the community feels that things are ok” – Teacher, Malakal PoC.*

In other instances, community leaders felt that the presence of a school had united people living as IDPs in a new community. *“When we came here we didn’t know one another, now we are the community of the camp... Education is the only answer to all these problems.”<sup>39</sup>*

## Economic Resilience & Livelihoods

*“Without education, life becomes hard and you cannot get employment” -16 year old girl, Bentiu PoC.*



The long-term benefits of education to an individual's economic prospects are widely acknowledged. During crises, income generating opportunities are typically disrupted and yet opportunities are still available if the individual is able to adapt his or her skills. The provision of relevant education – particularly at a secondary or vocational level – is vital to ensuring that communities have the skills to withstand upheaval such as displacement.

With appropriate quality secondary or vocational training, many more young people could benefit in small-scale business and trading ventures, as well as a

limited number of jobs, supporting the provision of basic services within conflict-affected communities.

In the absence of higher educational opportunities, there is an increased expectation that adolescents should enter into employment. One humanitarian worker summarised the challenge that many face.

*“Most of these youth – before the crisis...were supported by family. Now they are in the middle without that support but they also lack the qualifications required to get any work that's advertised” – Humanitarian Worker, Malakal PoC.*

If children and adolescents are to be able to adapt to economic conditions resulting from the crisis, they must have access to appropriate education or training.

A member of the UNICEF team in Malakal said, *“we have some youth activities, but more is really needed – especially the need to boost education for them...they need another skill to generate income.”*

In discussing the type of education that best support livelihoods, vocational training was praised as offering a short-term and practical solution, better suited for the opportunities available in an emergency and uncertain setting.

*“I have been a refugee in many countries and when you find yourself like this you need short courses which also have a practical element. These can provide youth with skills and employment” – Humanitarian Youth Officer, Malakal PoC.*



Nur Primary School, Maban





Photo: Colin Crowley/Save the Children

# Results

## Education & Community Transformation

In South Sudan, some communities have already been displaced for 18 months. Education in emergencies has the potential to both contribute to peacebuilding efforts and offset the effects of the crisis by increasing links to longer-term development. In contexts like South Sudan where a protracted crisis has severely affected the education system, the need for closely linking emergency and development is even greater.

### Education: Promoting Peaceful Behaviour

*“Those children in and out of school are different. Those at home are involved with fighting but those in school will not as they are interested in knowledge. Those in cattle camps and those in school have different ideas”* – Mother, Mingkaman.

Children and adolescents are sometimes considered part of a ‘community defence strategy’<sup>40</sup> in South Sudan whereby young people can resort to violence with the support of elders.

*“Youth are direct victims of violence and also the perpetrators, but they may not be at the root of the problem – the problem comes from the messaging that their parents and communities share”* – Humanitarian worker, Malakal PoC.

As young people throughout South Sudan are increasingly drawn into or affected by conflict, education, where *“you learn how to engage in dialogue rather than confrontation,”*<sup>41</sup> is an essential tool for looking to a peaceful future.

*“Fighting is like lighting a grass fire - it spreads, but education stops the fire”* – Parent, Yuai, Uror.

A father in Awerial gave an example of education as a contributing factor in keeping children out of political violence. *“If there is no school, our children will get involved with violence. But during the conflict, those children who had been involved in fighting returned to school if they had been there before. This is how we know that education can prevent violence.”*

Community members’ testimonies repeatedly indicated that educated children have a greater ability to act on facts rather than speculation or emotion.

*“Education teaches people their rights so that they fight for*

*what they know, not in a war that they cannot understand. When there is education, people sit and discuss a problem until they agree rather than resorting to quarrelling or fighting”* – Parent, Bor town.

The result, claimed one boy, is that, *“...when there are educated people in a country, these people are able to minimise crisis. We pupils cannot involve ourselves (in violence) and we will set examples to those who have not gone to school so that they don’t involve themselves in fighting either.”*<sup>42</sup>

### Education Promotes Social Cohesion

Education fosters social cohesion within a community, and can be *“...key to equal societal participation.”*<sup>43</sup> Schools should be inclusive - allowing children and parents to participate, regardless of social, ethnic or cultural background.

*“What brings people together is the school because a school is for everyone”* – Headteacher, Malakal PoC.

*“We need the humanitarian community...to support education. We can see the changes. When we came here we didn’t know one another. Now we are the community of the camp...”* – Community Leader, Juba PoC.

The current conflict has its roots in a political struggle, although much of the conflict blighting South Sudan can also be attributed to ethnic differences and tribal identity.

Schools in some parts are a means of integrating people of differing ethnicities and tribes. Community leaders and teachers noted that school students are some of the first to overcome discrimination<sup>44</sup> and are more likely to overcome cultural or ethnic barriers during a conflict.

### Future Development & Rebuilding

The provision of education and training opportunities is a significant factor contributing to the future stability, development and economic productivity of a country.

<sup>45</sup> Linking a humanitarian response with longer-term developmental concerns and government policies is vital in safeguarding the futures of such a large population of displaced or conflict-affected children.

*“The child who is not enrolled in school will not have a good future”* - 14 year old boy, Juba PoC.



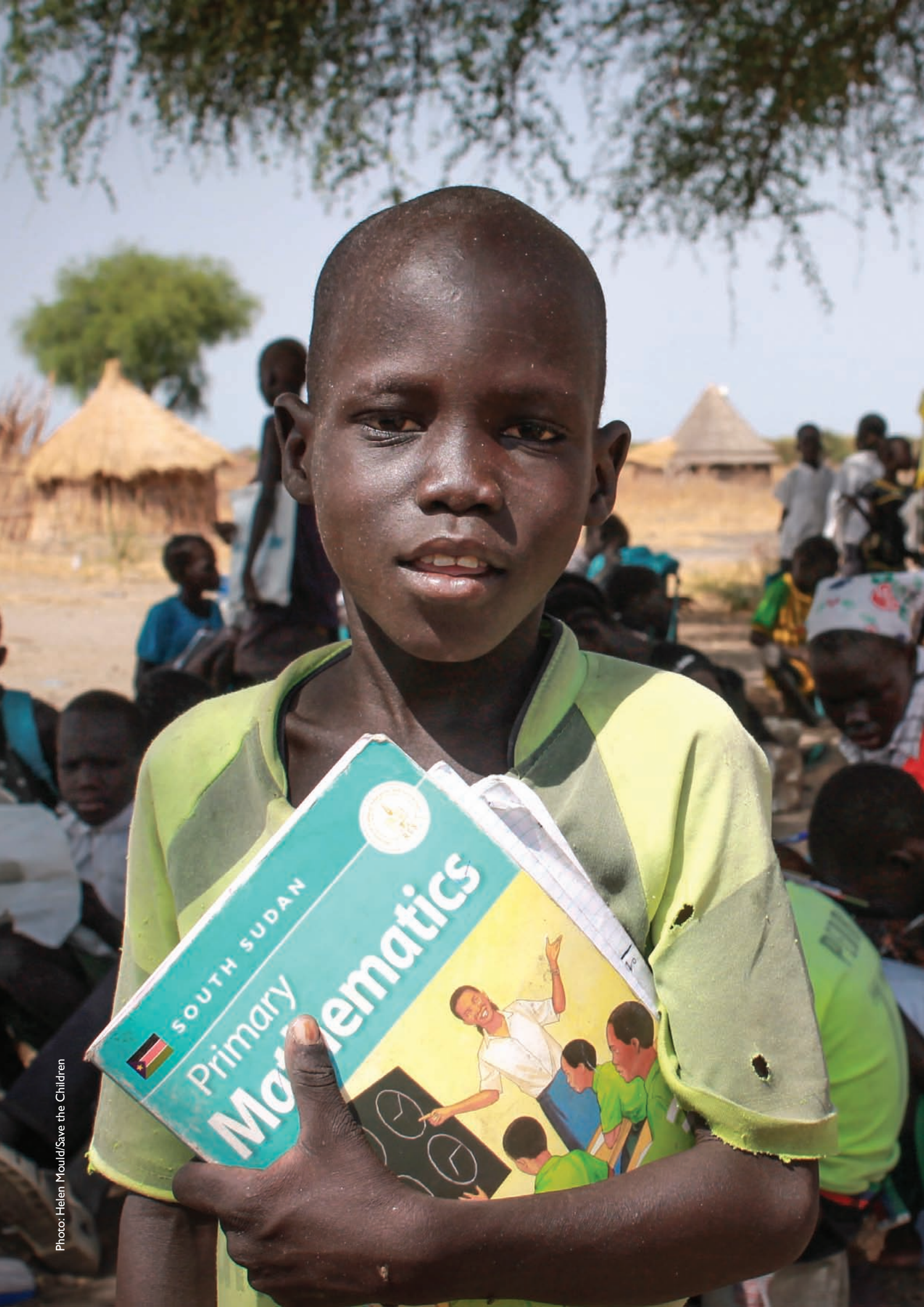


Photo: Helen Mould/Save the Children





One of the key developmental benefits of education in emergencies is that it ‘provides self-reliance.’<sup>46</sup>

*“Learning in emergency means I can support myself and my family later...this experience will help us build our country.”* – 13 year old boy, Bentiu PoC

Many children spoke of the professions they hoped to join in the future: doctor, teacher, pilot, president or, generally, leaders.<sup>47</sup> Some simply said, “education will let me help others.”<sup>48</sup>

As one girl put it, “...if a child gets education, after finishing school she will get a job. If she has money she will sponsor other children to be like her.”<sup>49</sup>

Providing education in emergencies and ensuring this is linked with longer-term programming allows children and adolescents to build on their learning, plan ahead and support their communities going forward. With increased collaboration between donors, non-state actors and local governments, children will be able to continue developing skills needed for their future, regardless of crisis.

The Memorandum of Understanding between South Sudan’s Education Cluster and the DFID-funded project Girls’ Education South Sudan (GESS) project demonstrates how emergency and development education provision can be coordinated. State-level education clusters and GESS partners now coordinate programming in each state so as to address state-specific challenges and needs of temporary learning spaces, pecifically through the provision of GESS-supported school capitation grants and materials.

Cross-sector strategies are equally able to bridge the divide between developmental and humanitarian approaches. Livelihoods initiatives can provide education and skills training, which can benefit local markets in the short-term and support the creation of a productive workforce in the long-term.



# Conclusion

Education is a priority for conflict-affected children in South Sudan. Parents, teachers and the wider community stress its importance and support its provision. If humanitarian interventions are to remain accountable to the communities they serve, they must take such priorities into account.

Communities in crisis value education in emergencies for the resilience, protection and peacebuilding benefits it offers as much as the opportunity for future development.

*“Despite all the difficulties I faced due to the war between the SPLA and the Sudan Government army, my education was never interrupted. As the current conflict continues, the Ministers and the Undersecretaries of tomorrow are at school today – but if the war interrupts their education, they won’t live up to their potential”* - Undersecretary for Education, South Sudan: Michael Lopuke.

Children in South Sudan are particularly vulnerable, whether to recruitment – or re-recruitment - by armed groups, SGBV, radicalisation, exploitation, or systematic abuse. The provision of education helps mitigate against these increased protection risks and when children feel safe in their learning environment, they can achieve greater education outcomes. Crucially, communities emphasise that education interventions should take place straightaway during an emergency alongside ‘food and healthcare.’<sup>50</sup> The availability of education from the onset of an emergency is believed to offer psychosocial or protective benefits to children who might otherwise become withdrawn or vulnerable.

*“Children are competing with time. If we leave them, they will grow up without education and a good future. Because we don’t know how long the war will take, they should still be in school”* – Mother, PoC, Juba.

Khaltouk Primary School





As the humanitarian response continues in South Sudan, national and international actors should capitalise on the benefits education can offer in a response. In emergencies, schools can serve as platforms for sensitisation and entry points for direct interventions from other sectors. Furthermore, teachers can be trained to work closely with partners in monitoring the wellbeing of children and also increase their skill set for future employment. As such, support for education need not detract from other sectors but rather compliment their efforts.

Through education, children and their families build resilience. The psychosocial benefits of education to children recovering from traumatic experiences were frequently cited, as was the increased physical preparedness and resilience of children who attend school.

Education was widely reported by communities to be an essential component of peacebuilding, promoting social cohesion within the classroom that can be replicated in the wider community.

*“Fighting is like lighting a grass fire, it spreads, and education stops the fire.”*

Primary-level education has been the focus of the education in emergency response to-date, meaning many older children of post-primary level - or those who have never attended school - are excluded from the benefits education provides. Support for education at pre-primary, primary and post-primary levels, combined with the availability of skills training, would help to ensure children and adolescents become a productive force for peace and development, rather than a group increasingly at risk of being drawn into the conflict – both as perpetrators and victims. It is also important to ensure that out-of-school youth are given the opportunity to access education through various alternative education sector programmes. This is an essential avenue for them to develop new skills and increase their self-efficacy.

*“If we stay fighting, we will stay undeveloped. Education is the thing to change that” – 16 year old OOS boy, Malakal PoC.*





# Recommendations

In South Sudan, both national and international actors are working to support children in emergencies. We call on the government, donors, non-state actors and humanitarian agencies to examine the findings of this report and consider how to better address the need for education in emergencies.

## I. Government & Non-State Actors

1.1 Ensure humanitarian access to enable agencies to support displaced and conflict-affected children and provide them with the education they are asking for.

1.2 Uphold the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, ensuring that schools, teachers and children are protected from armed occupation and/or attack.

1.3 Maintain the national education budget allocation, prioritising timely payment of teachers in government areas and UN Protection of Civilian (PoC) Sites, as well as ensuring payment for teachers in IO controlled areas. Ensure children have access to sit and/or re-sit their examinations and receive certification in 2015, following the MoEST June 2014 resolutions.

1.4 Non state armed groups must commit to the protection of children's education in their territories, and sign-up to the 2010 Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict.

1.5 Increase national and state level coordination amongst education actors to identify gaps and develop effective interventions.

1.6 Seek support in rebuilding or rehabilitating schools that have been either fully or partially destroyed by the conflict

## 2. Donors

2.1 Increase funding for education in emergencies in South Sudan from 2% to ensure that more children are able to access education throughout conflict-affected areas. Currently with education averaging around 2% of overall humanitarian funding, the needs cannot be adequately met<sup>52</sup>.

2.2 Continue to provide flexible funding that can be re-allocated between emergency and longer-term interventions, as the context requires. This flexibility should acknowledge the need to support teachers in emergency situations, who might otherwise be forced to leave the profession.

2.3 Ensure education is funded as part of an integrated humanitarian response to maximise the role of education as an enabling sector.

2.4 Fund a sector-wide response to ensure that all levels of education are addressed, with particular focus on early childhood care and adolescents' skills and education, in addition to primary-level provision.

## 3. Humanitarian Actors

3.1 Improve accountability to communities by identifying their priorities and assessing multi-sector needs.

3.2 Plan and deliver multi-sector and integrated programming to ensure education enables the provision of protection, health, WASH and nutrition services, where possible.

3.3 Align incentive and payment amounts with national pay-scales and agreed humanitarian agency amounts to ensure that teachers are not incentivised to leave the profession to take-up manual labour on a daily rate.

3.4 Increase sharing of best practices amongst non-state actors to identify possible areas of collaboration, ensure equitable quality, and prevent duplication of services.

# Appendix I

## Breakdown of interviews and focus groups

### Child Focus Groups

**Child Focus Group 1** (in school children aged 5-10 years; 8 (4 boys, 4 girls); Mahad IDP Settlement, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 2** (mixed in and out of school children aged 5-12 years; 8 (4 boys, 4 girls); Mingkamen IDP Settlement, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 3** (mixed in and out of school children aged 5 – 10 years; 12 (6 boys, 6 girls); Kodok, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 4** (mixed in and out of school children aged 5-10 years; 12 (6 boys, 6 girls); Wau Shilluk IDP Settlement, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 5** (in school children aged 5-10 years; 10 (5 boys, 5 girls); Malakal PoC, 01/2015)

**Child Focus Group 6** (mixed in and out of school children aged 6 – 10 years; 10 (5 boys, 5 girls); Bentiu PoC, 01/2015)

**Child Focus Group 7** (mixed in and out of school children aged 5 – 10 years; 10 (6 boys, 4 girls); Yuai, 11/2014)

**Child Focus Group 8** (in school children aged 5-10 years; 10 (5 boys, 5 girls); Pibor Town, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 9** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 8 (8 girls); Mingkamen IDP Settlement, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 10** (children, status unknown, aged 11-18 years; 8 (8 girls); Akobo, 11/2014)

**Child Focus Group 11** (out of school children aged 11-18 years; 3 (3 girls); Juba PoC, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 12** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 9 (9 girls); Bor PoC, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 13** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 8 (8 girls); Malakal PoC, 01/2015)

**Child Focus Group 14** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 11 (11 girls); Bentiu PoC, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 15** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 11 (11 girls); Yuai, 11/2014)

**Child Focus Group 16** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 4 (4 girls); Bor Town, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 17** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 11 (6 boys, 5 girls); Pibor Town, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 18** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 10 (10 boys); Malakal PoC, 01/2015)

**Child Focus Group 19** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 10 (10 boys); Juba PoC, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 20** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 8 (8 boys); Bor PoC, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 21** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 8 (8 boys); Mingkamen IDP

Settlement, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 22** (children, status unknown, aged 11 – 18 years; 10 (10 boys); Akobo, 11/2014)

**Child Focus Group 23** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 10 (10 boys); Kodok, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 24** (mixed in and out of school children aged 12-17 years; 12 (12 boys); Wau Shilluk IDP Settlement, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 25** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 10 (10 boys); Bentiu PoC, 01/2015)

**Child Focus Group 26** (mixed in and out of school children aged 11-18 years; 10 (10 boys); Yuai, 11/2014)

**Child Focus Group 27** (in school children aged 11-18 years; 4 (4 boys); Bor Town, 09/2014)

**Child Focus Group 28** (out of school children aged 5-15 years; 10 (5 boys, 5 girls); Duk, 12/2014)

**Child Focus Group 29** (out of school children aged 10-18 years; 11 (6 boys, 5 girls); Malakal PoC, 02/2015)

### Adult Focus Groups

**Adult Focus Group 1** (community leaders; 12 (6 male, 6 female); Kodok, 12/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 2** (school management committee; 12 (6 male, 6 female); Kodok, 12/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 3** (parents; 12 (6 male, 6 female); Mingkamen IDP Settlement, 09/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 4** (community leaders; 6 (4 male, 2 female); Wau Shilluk, 12/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 5** (school management committee; 12 (6 male, 6 female); Wau Shilluk, 12/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 6** (teachers and community leaders; 8 (7 male, 1 female); Juba PoC, 09/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 7** (school management committee; 8 (7 male, 1 female); Bor PoC, 09/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 8** (school management committee; 10 (2 male, 8 female); Bentiu PoC, Rubkona, 01/2015)

**Adult Focus Group 9** (parents and teachers; 6 (4 male, 2 female); Bor Town, 09/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 10** (parents and school management committee; 10 (7 male, 3 female); Yuai, 11/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 11** (parents and school management committee; 12 (8 male, 4 female); Duk, 12/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 12** (parents and school management committee; 12 (10 male, 2 female); Duk, 12/2014)

**Adult Focus Group 13** (parents, teachers and school management committee; 12 (10 male, 2 female); Akobo, 11/2014)

Please note there are more groups listed than represented in the quantitative figures. Unfortunately some feedback was deemed too unreliable to include in the figures.







# Appendix 2

## Methodology

### Children Focus Group Guide

#### Introduction: Ball name game

- 1) Get children in a circle. Throw the ball around the circle – when you catch the ball you have to say your name and your age.
- 2) Explain we are here to talk about school and why school is important in life. Explain confidentiality – no names will be used, and no one has to answer any question they don't want to etc...

#### Activity 1: Barriers to education (This activity remains the same for in-school/out-of-school children)

- 1) Show children image of a child. Tell them that this child is not able to go to school.
- 2) Show them the happy face and the sad face. Ask if they think the child is happy or sad about not being in school.
- 3) With selected face, ask for a volunteer to stick the face on the child, using blu-tack.  
(If happy, ask why. If sad, move straight on to stage 4)
- 4) In pairs, ask children to think about why this child might not be in school. What makes it difficult to go to school here? Why is this child sad that they're not in school? Children feedback to facilitator who notes answers on Post it notes and sticks them round the image of the child.

#### Activity 2: Positive outcomes of education

(This activity will be adapted slightly for out-of-school children)

For in-school children:

- 1) Show image of child again. This time tell the children that s/he is in school.
- 2) Show the happy face and the sad face. Ask if they think the child is happy or sad about being in school.
- 3) With selected face, ask for a volunteer to stick the face on the child, using Blu-tack.  
(If sad, ask why. If happy, move straight on to stage 4).
- 4) Ask children why they think the child is happy to be in school. How does being in school help us? Show children pictures of different areas of life school can impact. For each area, ask, how does school help me with this (eg, at home, with my family, with my friends, in my community, for my future, with my health). Try to elicit answers linked to stability, resilience, prospects, strengthening other sectors, etc.
- 5) If it did not come out in 3), show sad face again. Ask children if there are any reasons they can think of why someone might be sad at school.

For out-of-school children:

- 1), 2), 3) As above
- 4) Ask children why they want to go to school. What might be better in life if you could go to school? Use the pictures of different areas of life school can impact to elicit responses.

#### Activity 3: Prioritisation

- 1) Tell children that there are lots of things that are important to us in life, especially when life is hard and we have to move because of fighting. We would like to know which things you think are really important.
- 2) Give each child picture flashcards of different things. Ask them to pick the top three most important ones.
- 3) Note the ordering, and ask children why they chose as they did. Ask, if they had to choose one thing, which thing is most important for their lives.

#### Finish and thank you

Thank children, and give chocolates to say thanks for participating!

#### Materials needed:

- Ball
- Image of child, laminated
- Happy/sad faces, laminated
- Blu-tack
- Post-it notes
- Areas of life flashcards, laminated
- Prioritisation flashcards, laminated

### PTA/SMC Focus Group Guide

#### Introduction:

- Introductions
- Explain purpose of research

#### Activity 1: Challenges

- Break participants into groups. Give each group a set of Post-it notes. Place two large pieces of paper on the floor, one with the image of a child, marked 'challenges for access', one with an image of a school, marked 'challenges for delivery'.
- Ask participants to brainstorm their experiences for each category, write each experience on a Post-it note and stick it on the relevant piece of paper.
- Discuss the Post-it notes, drawing out any interesting findings.

**Activity 2:** Benefits of education in emergencies

Q1 What do you see as the main benefits of providing education to children in situations of conflict?

Q2 Have you seen any examples of how education can provide an alternative to violence or contribute to peace-building in your community? (Have you seen any changes in your community that you think are as a result of education? What are they, and why do you link them to education?)

Q3 Have you seen any examples of how education can contribute to the economic development of individuals and communities? (What work is available in this region?

What do young people here aspire to do in the future? Is education helping children and youth get this work/prepare for this future? How? Is what they are learning in the classroom relevant to the work that is available?)

Q4 Have you seen any examples of how education contributes to individual and community resilience? (Do you think education can help children recover more quickly from crisis and become less vulnerable? How? Does it matter when and for how long education is provided? What changes have you seen in children since they started this programme?)

Q5 Do you think that education contributes to protecting children? (How? What does it protect them from?)





How do you ensure that this happens in your school?)

**Activity 3:** Education and the community priorities/other sectors

Q1 Sometimes it isn't possible for the government or big international organisations to provide education for all children. Do you know of any examples where the community itself has taken the initiative and established/run education programmes?

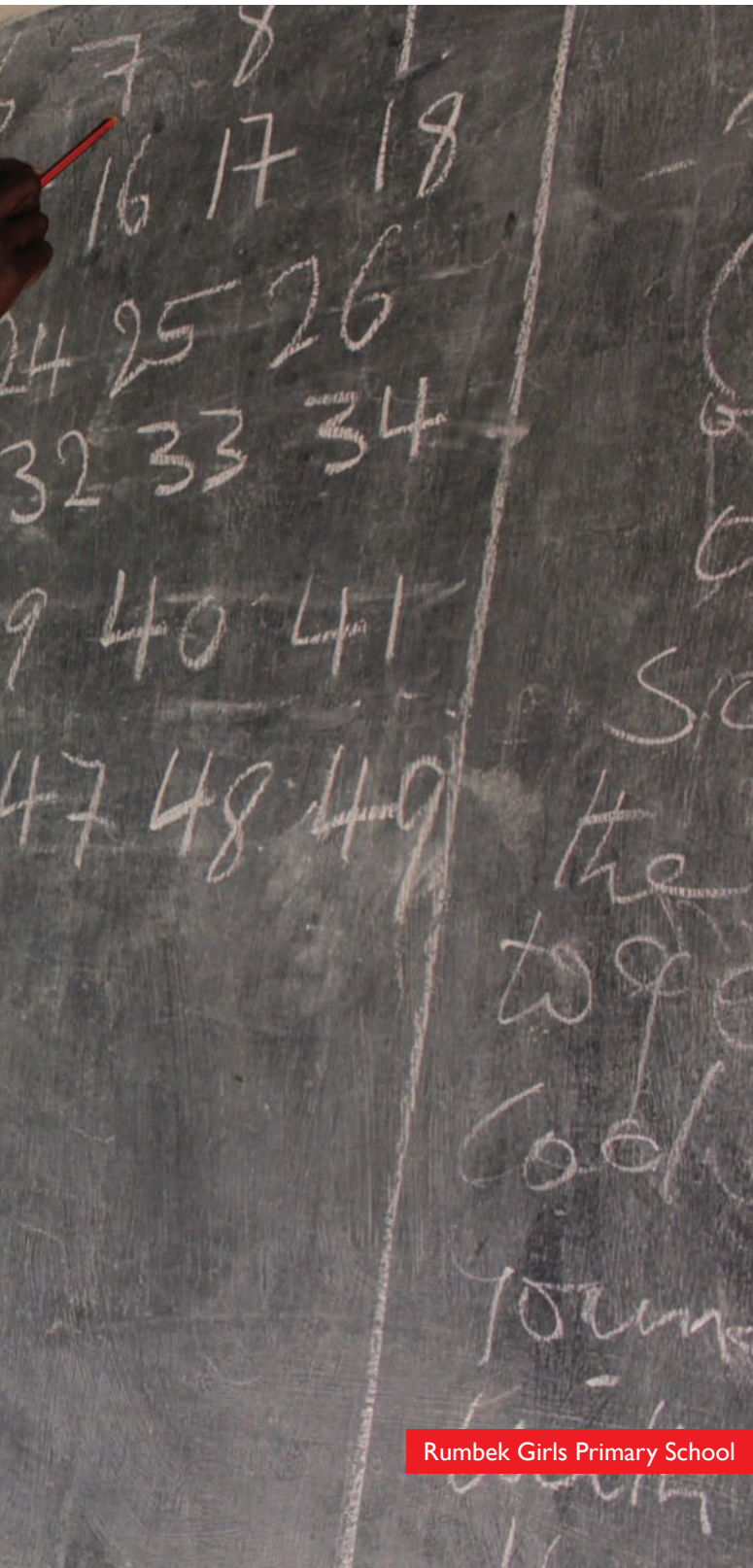
Q2 Sometimes education programmes can support other programmes, like health and nutrition, etc. In your schools, do you link with health, water, nutrition professionals? (How? How does this help your work and theirs?)

**Prioritisation activity:**

- Explain that in emergencies, when we are displaced, we have many needs, and it can be hard to prioritise. Give prioritisation flashcards and ask them to pick the three most important things for their community as a whole.
- Note the ordering, and ask the community leaders to explain why they chose as they did. Why did they place education as they did? Does that change over time? When does education become important? Is it just as important for girls and boys?
- Ask, if they had to choose just one thing to be provided by an external organisation, what would they choose and why?

**Activity 4:** Why this matters!

- Break participants back into original groups. Give each group three pieces of paper, one marked 'no more funding', one marked 'why in the first three months?', and one marked 'why now?' and a pack of Post-it notes.
- Ask the groups to brainstorm their thoughts about what would happen a) if donors didn't fund education any more, b) why education is important in the first three months after an emergency/displacement, and c) why education is important now, or on an on-going basis.



# Endnotes

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  50. 17 year old girl, Bor PoC
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Over 800,000 children have been internally displaced within South Sudan since the on-going political crisis began on 15 December 2013. This study seeks to understand how this statistic translates into individual childhoods, and where children place their priorities.

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