

YOUTH EDUCATION IN SOUTH SUDAN: Current opportunities and challenges



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About this document

This note builds on the previous ASA (P164399, delivered in June 2018), as one of two tracks of work under P168293 - Exploring Cross-Sectoral Education Opportunities in South Sudan. It provides the elements for assessing the current educational context for youth in South Sudan.

In order to understand the current landscape, the note provides a mapping of the options available as well as it discusses and provides examples related to some of the cross-cutting themes identified during the mapping. Finally, the last part of the note proposes pathways for future engagement taking the identified challenges into consideration.

This document also draws from the findings summarized in the workshop report, *South Sudan Youth: Lessons from the past and pathways to a future "Resilient Peace"*. The workshop was co-organized by the World Bank and USAID on February 11, 2019, in Washington, D.C. The main purpose was the sharing of lessons learned from previous work in South Sudan (and other FCV countries), discussing the current situation of youth and exploring alternatives for future youth programming.

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Steve Evans. South Sudan: Independence Celebration. [Southern Sudanese expressed joy and jubilation on their day of independence, July 9, from Sudan. Here this young man celebrated with face painting. From: Flickr/ World Bank Photo Collection]

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¹ The full list with names and affiliations can be found in the appendixes II and III.

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List of Acronyms

AES	Alternative Education System
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US government)
CEC	Civic Engagement Center
CGS	Community Girls' School
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEVCO	International Cooperation and Development
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EU	European Union
FCV	Fragile, Conflict and Violence
FYI	Foundation for Youth Initiative
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GESS	Girls Education South Sudan
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRDA	Grassroots Development Association
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organization
MoCYS	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
MoGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
MoHEST	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NNGOs	National Non-Governmental Organizations
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NYU	New York University
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)

OOSC	Out-of-School Children
PEP	Pastoralist Education Program
SCG	Search for Common Ground
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSYPADO	South Sudan Youth Peace and Development Organization
S4YE	Solutions for Youth Employment
TTIs	Teacher Training Institutes
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCL	University College London
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNYDA	Upper Nile Youth Development Association
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI	World Vision International
YEI	Young Adult Empowerment Initiative
YSAT	Youth Social Advocacy Team
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

Executive Summary

This note provides a review of youth education and other youth engagement programs that are being delivered by diverse providers in South Sudan. It provides an overview of the education landscape for youth and current challenges facing young people in the country. It synthesizes program documents, written reports focused on youth, and interviews with donors, NGO program implementers and youth leaders. It also includes three anonymous interviews, with the identities kept confidential due to safety and security issues within the country and refugee camps.²

The note presents a summary of information on programs that appear to be effective in the given context and identifies some alternative pathways for young people. Information on current programs is presented as well as key findings and issues, highlighting education and training needs, provisions, and opportunities across programs. The goal is to provide a focused set of recommendations of ways in which the World Bank can effectively contribute to the lives of young people in South Sudan.

This output follows up on recommendations from the previous work where youth engagement was identified as a key area for further research and dialogue³. It recognizes there is a lack of information on types and relevance of youth programs and organizations in South Sudan. Moreover, identifying alternative pathways for youth education is a key action point of the Djibouti Declaration on Regional Refugee Education (December 2017) and this mapping and analysis can potentially inform and support agencies working on education and reintegration of refugees and IDPs in South Sudan. The approach is linked with the sources of youth vulnerabilities, exclusion and trauma and represents a beginning in terms of identifying some of the more effective and perhaps sustainable ways to address these issues through programs whether those are coordinated, formal or informal.

The review focuses on two main areas of programs: (1) Education in its various forms, from secondary schools (which serve only a small proportion of the youth) and the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), and (2) TVET programs that focus on skills for livelihoods. Integral to both of these areas are the importance of providing young people with the foundations of functional literacy and functional numeracy, and specific employable skills, as well as addressing socio-emotional issues, as building blocks for their lives, their livelihoods and their civic engagement. The Education sector in South Sudan, a highly patchwork configuration, currently functions within the realities of gender constraints, livelihoods issues, psychosocial and socio-emotional stress and many situations of displaced refugees and IDPs.⁴

² The note has taken a cautious approach with the interviews of young people in particular and youth agencies in general due to concerns about security and the political situation within the country. This has meant that direct quotes are usually not for attribution to individuals and the paper provides anonymity to three young people who were interviewed, as well as an NGO researcher.

³ World Bank, South Sudan Education: Engagement Strategy and Proposed Next Steps, 2018.

⁴ See: *ibid.*

In a context where most students do not go beyond P3-P4 levels and where they often endure violence and trauma, the central focus for youth education should be alternative education, second-chance programs, basic skills, demobilization and empowerment. Yet, only a small minority of youth participate in ALP. A key focus could be how to scale up ALP and expand a diverse range of service providers. Similarly, the scale of current TVET is dwarfed by the need. Access is very limited and delivery expensive. Vocational and job training policy should focus on the local, informal apprenticeships, which increases the importance of engaging with various non-state, especially youth, organizations.

The current situation in South Sudan for youth related programs, both in education and skills training is highly fragmented, both in terms of implementation and access to detailed information on programs. Furthermore, there is a notable absence of assessments let alone more structured Monitoring and Evaluation of programs, whether of donors or youth organizations⁵. With these limitations, this paper addresses some of the current programmatic approaches to young people in South Sudan in terms of their formal and informal education, their socio-emotional development and their current access to skills building. In addition, the landscape of implementing agencies is in flux due to issues of capacity, donor funds and local manifestations of violent conflict.

Some key findings from this review are summarized below:

- There is currently a lack of capacity in government ministries⁶, formal NGOs and youth organizations to meet the challenge of engaging young people at scale and with quality programs. This means that for secondary education, ALP and TVET, there currently exists a patchwork of programs across the country, with mixed quality and capacity;⁷
- Building institutional and capacity building in both secondary education/ALP and TVET is necessary to support programs that will perform effectively, including incorporating socio-emotional and psychosocial resources;
- One of the ways in which different youth programs can be strengthened and sustained is through more effectively linking sites and services, such as youth centers and through various forms of sports, arts, drama, music, radio and other media;
- Incorporating increased youth participation can help guide investments and program priorities and contribute to the process of building capacity and effectiveness/responsiveness. However, there are existing realities of mistrust between many young people and their government;

⁵ For example, the DFID supported Girls Education South Sudan program has lacked access to many of the communities involved, resulting in a third-party assessment that had some quantitative information but lacked many of the qualitative results of the first phase. GESS and UK Aid, Girls Education South Sudan: Learning Assessment, 2018.

⁶ Public education is organized into two ministries, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI), and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MoHEST). The MoGEI is responsible early childhood education, primary, secondary, alternative education systems (AES), teacher training, and post-primary technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

⁷ A June 2018 TVET Working Group Report noted that 4 out of 23 non-completed donor projects had an Education theme and 7 had a Livelihoods theme.

- Diverse and committed youth organizations have emerged in a difficult and complex context as illustrated in the program examples which are presented from the work of young people themselves.

A few recommendations have emerged for each of the two main areas of programs:

- *Access to Education:* there should be careful expansion of the secondary education and ALP/AES systems (dependent on functioning of primary education) with appropriate pedagogy available for all grade levels. The secondary school and ALP system needs to include training of teachers, provision of textbooks, or virtual learning media, and learning assessments. Various forms of non-formal, alternative education need expansion, which includes establishing safe learning spaces and pro-actively ensuring the inclusion of girls. Education programs need resources for integrating youth in refugee and IDP camps in all activities;
- *Access to Training:* the TVET curriculum and learning materials should be refined and adapted for diverse local settings and specific markets, and for greater emphasis on the inclusion of girls. Programs should be based on assessments of youth vulnerabilities and then monitor the impact of training and skills on these vulnerabilities. Investments are needed in capacity building for trainers and teachers, and to strengthen links between schools, ALP and TVET, including greater oversight and performance feedback. It is important to develop market focused innovative training packages, if possible, with pathways to employment or credit for small business. There is potential to create a TVET+ approach that incorporates literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional resources.

Additionally, some areas that require greater attention going forward were identified, recognizing the operationalization in FCV situations, not the least in the context of South Sudan. The delivery of programs with and for youth requires both a focus on the core building blocks necessary for young people's lives and an integration of wider factors that are key elements of the current context.

- *Functional Literacy and Numeracy:* All TVET programs should incorporate a core element of literacy and numeracy skills to ensure that all participants acquire basic, functional skills in these two areas;
- *Socio-emotional and psychosocial programs:* Training and curricula should provide teachers, tutors and trainers with general information on the development of youth brains and socio-emotional changes including specifics on culture, norms and gender as well as the specifics on impacts of violent conflict;
- *Gender:* Programs should incorporate gender disaggregation and along education/non-education, to address issues of gender exclusion on the ground. This is particularly important for dealing with education and skills building opportunities. This is more than a crosscutting theme, as it requires more in-depth attention to the granularity of how gender relations are structured;

- *Social Inclusion:* Programs can build on the examples of youth organizations that specifically sought to bring together excluded groups, such as different ethnic, pastoralists and others, or people with disabilities;
- *Partnerships:* Programs that engage young people for change require building relationships. This means that initiatives should not be 'one off'; instead, they require long-term capacity and program quality. External support needs to contribute to program adaptation, so that the support for local partners is flexible enough to support innovation, learning or scaling up;
- *Scale and Sustainability:* Youth networks and programs face the challenge of stretching from the local up to the regional and national levels, with different entry points, potential allies, and relevant tactics at each scale. A key question for promoting sustainability of youth projects refers to why some initiatives fail to grow while others succeed. Part of sustainability results from impacts that are not the outcome of the initiative's goals, but from the 'by products' that create new dynamics within communities and amongst youth.

Introduction

In South Sudan, the importance of focusing on young people is clear, as they represent the majority of the population⁸, with the average South Sudanese being 17 years old and the average 3rd grader reported as being already 14 years old. Furthermore, South Sudanese youth have low educational attainment, inconsistent economic participation and are also affected by the widespread violence that has existed for a number of years in different regions of the country.

Box 1. Youth Definition

The United Nations defines youth as those individuals between ages 15 and 24 years old, with statistics on youth based on this definition. However, while age is the easiest way to define youth, the latter age limit has been increasing. Youth represents a period of transition, from childhood to adulthood, when the individual usually leaves compulsory education and is expected to find a first employment.

The age limit has been increasing as a result of higher levels of unemployment and the costs for setting up an independent household. In FCV contexts this concept becomes even more fluid, where youth have fewer opportunities to build a sustainable livelihood. Faced with increased vulnerability to conflict and crime, youth in South Sudan is defined in a more flexible manner, comprising those individuals who are 15 to 35 years old.

Source : <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>

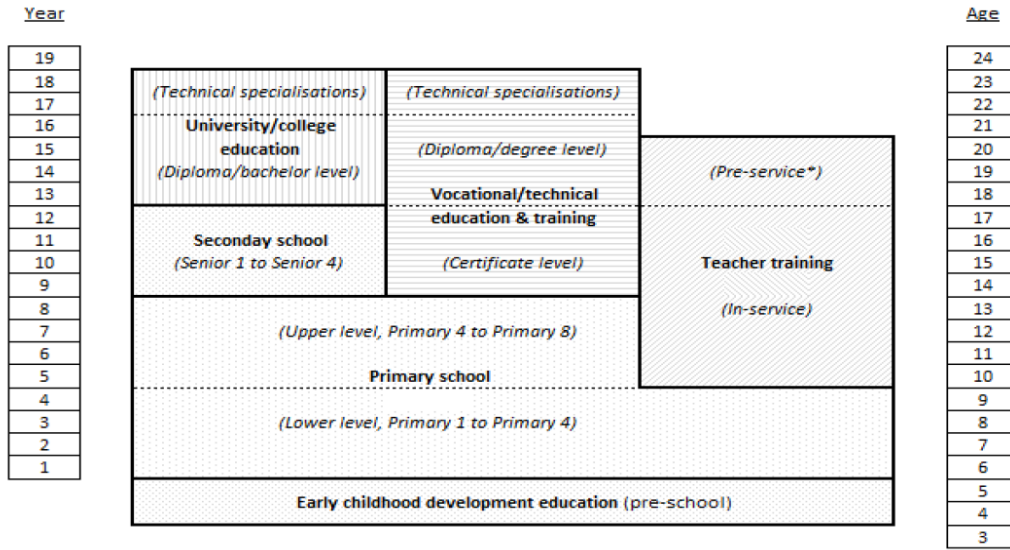
1.1. Education System Overview

The formal education system structure is presented in Figure 1 below. It comprises 8 years of primary education, followed by 4 years of secondary and 4 years of higher education. The four years of secondary education can be in general education schools or technical and vocational education and training (TVET) centers. Teacher training institute (TTI) programs and technical education at diploma/degree level are included under higher education.

Due to decades of civil war the effective and sustained development of basic services was relatively non-existent and accessing infrastructure was difficult. In addition to the formal education system, the MoGEI put in place (with support from NGOs) the Alternative Education System (AES). Under this system, the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) absorbs most of the students (85 percent), targeting learners aged 12-18 years old. Many adults also join the program as a route to become literate and educated.

Figure 1. South Sudan Education System Structure

⁸ According to the National Bureau of Statistics, 51 percent of the population in South Sudan is under 18 years old, 72 percent are less than 30 years old and 34.24 percent are between ages 20 and 29 (UNESCO, UNFPA, MoCYS, and UNMISS 2018).



Source: MoGEI 2016.

1.2. Youth Education

South Sudan’s current education system cannot provide children and adolescents with adequate levels of learning to build a more secure and prosperous future. Box 2 below presents the results in terms of human capital index developed by the World Bank. South Sudan ranks 156 out of 157 countries with available data. Recent assessments indicate that more than half of the adult population of South Sudan had little or no formal education. A mere 5 percent of the current age cohort currently enrolled in secondary education has sufficient qualifications to enter tertiary education. The situation is even worse for girls.⁹

Box 2. South Sudan and the Human Capital Index (HCI)¹⁰

Human capital is a key determinant of economic development and wealth. The new generations of workers are facing an increased demand for higher levels of human capital, including advanced cognitive and socio-behavioral skills. As the nature of work evolves in response to rapid technological change, investing properly in human capital is considered not only desirable, but necessary in the pursuit of prosperity.

However, a child born in South Sudan today will be only 30 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.¹¹ South Sudan’s score is the second lowest in the HCI distribution – behind Chad only. Children in South Sudan can expect to complete 4.2 years of preprimary, primary and secondary school by age 18. In addition, when years of schooling are adjusted for quality of learning, this is only equivalent to 2.3 years: a learning gap of 1.9 years.

Even when education programs are available, the quality often has been low, sometimes

⁹ World Bank, South Sudan Education Note, 2018.

¹⁰ Gatti et al. 2018; and South Sudan Country Brief, available at www.worldbank.org/humancapitalproject.

¹¹ The official definition of HCI.

extremely low. Furthermore, South Sudan has the highest proportion of out-of-school children in the world. The country has experienced five years of internal violent conflict since the breakdown of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in December 2013, leading to widespread insecurity, increasing recruitment of children into armed groups and driving mass displacement in the form of both refugees and IDPs. There are nearly 4.3 million people estimated to be internally displaced or seeking refuge in other neighboring countries. About 7 million people have been affected by the conflict, with children accounting for around 60% of South Sudan's displaced population.¹²

The education system had approximately 5,042 schools (EMIS 2013/2015), but in the beginning of 2017, the county-level assessment found only 3,215 schools open.¹³ Furthermore, learning outcomes are weak for both literacy and numeracy and regional disparities within the country in terms of learning are wide. Around 2.2 million children and youth are not in school (out of 3.7 million primary and secondary school-aged children). The gender parity index (GPI) in South Sudan is the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa at 0.69. The fragmented current system has been termed "Islands of Education" because on the ground assessments found that there were schools surrounded by, in educational terms, little or no formal education¹⁴.

Another point to consider is that education does not necessarily promote protection. Male youth secondary school graduates in refugee camps in Kenya and Uganda have been abducted or forced to join different militias. Secondary school graduates instantly became officers in militaries. That seemed to be why many male secondary school students in the Kakuma Refugee Camp, in northwestern Kenya, left school after Form 3 and did not graduate.

1.3. Methodology for the Youth Program Mapping

Despite the lack of coordination or common narrative, South Sudanese youth have access to a wide range of programs, often more accessible through ALP and TVET than in formal secondary education. The next section provides a summary of some of these programs. The mapping exercise is not exhaustive but intended to cover as much information available allows. The research was initially based on government documents, youth-focused reports and other program-related documents, which were complemented with follow up interviews with representatives from partner agencies, notably UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, USAID and EMPOWER. As part of the interviews, we requested recommendations for current reports on youth programs as well as recommendations for youth leaders as interviewees. We were cautioned to avoid certain youth organizations due to the politicization of some youth agencies by the currently contending political parties. Based on the partner recommendations, we conducted interviews with a number of youth leaders (see Appendix II) and reviewed government, donor and youth organization reports (see References). In addition, we co-organized a workshop in February 2019 with USAID, which provided us with additional inputs from organizations that have been involved with youth programs in South Sudan (see Appendix III for more details on the workshop). Overall,

¹² WFP (World Food Programme). 2019. *WFP South Sudan Crisis – Situation Report #241*. Rome.

¹³ South Sudan Education Cluster, Education Cluster Assessment 2017, p.15.

¹⁴ Sommers, Marc. (2005). *Islands of Education: Schooling, Civil War, and the Southern Sudanese (1983-2004)*.

the documentation on youth programs in South Sudan, other than secondary education and TVET, is weak in terms of evaluations or assessments of impact or quality.¹⁵

¹⁵ Reviews of secondary education include MoGEI 2017-22 General Education Strategic Plan, Windle Trust, and EMIS. Reviews of TVET include the qualitative interviews from BBC Media Action, the summary provided by EMPOWER and presentations by the TVET Working Group. No independent evaluations of other types of programs, either qualitative or quantitative, were provided by donor agencies, INGOs or youth organizations, beyond the surveys contributed by Mercy Corps, Search for Common Ground, BBC Media Action and related partners.

Mapping of Youth Programs

South Sudan youth face unique circumstances of violent conflict and conflict-related disruptions, such as migration, displacement and associated physical and mental health consequences, as well as the lack of educational and skills opportunities. The inherent fragility of young people's lives makes it difficult for them to cope with stresses, of different types, frequently local and specific. It also makes them less able to influence their environment to reduce those stresses; as a result, they become increasingly vulnerable. Even when trends move in the right direction, the more vulnerable are often unable to benefit because they lack assets and strong institutions working in their favor.

Children and youth are often the most visible victims in crises that sustain political and economic instability. They are the 'canaries in the coal mine' whose well-being provides an indication of the deeper impacts of violent conflict. They lack voice or power to access services in situations where resources are often the source of conflict between different interest groups.¹⁶ This section provides a general overview of some of the ways that organizations approach youth and youth programming in South Sudan.

2.1. Youth Programming

Donor organizations have funded an array of programs for youth, often more in ALP and TVET than in formal secondary education, but there is no coordination mechanism or common narrative between these organizations. There have been government/donor events in the past 18 months¹⁷ that have sought to address some of the specific skills and 'out of school' challenges. There is collaboration between UN agencies such as UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF with bilateral partners (and various NGOs) on reaching out to youth and engaging with youth organizations¹⁸. These programs, notable in their increasing adaptability and sensitivity to youth voice, remain a patchwork due to the current issues of governance, conflict and displacement. In addition, typical of youth programming by both national governments and external donors in more stable contexts, there is no single agency/system that is responsible for 'youth', compared to primary/secondary education or health ministries.

Major NGOs have designed and implemented multiple approaches to working with youth. The larger operational NGOs, such as PLAN, have set up youth centers many of which unfortunately were closed after the break down of the CPA. They also have invested programmatic resources into education opportunities for youth in terms of AES and ALP (World Vision, Oxfam) and other methods.¹⁹ These centers offered a range of programs that provided an array of resources for young people and could provide the template for future efforts at engaging with youth. Youth centers can promote civic engagement, provide youth with skills training and hold parenting

¹⁶ Conciliation Resources, *Youth Perspectives on Peace: South Sudan*, April 2018.

¹⁷ First National Youth Conference, August 2018; South Sudan TVET Working Group, June 5, 2018; TVET Working Group, October 24, 2018.

¹⁸ UNESCO and EMPOWER: *Labor Market and TVET Assessment*, presentation, 2018.

¹⁹ PLAN, *Adolescent Girls in Crisis, Voices from South Sudan*, 2018; World Vision, *Upper Nile: Education in Emergencies*, 2014.

programs. However, these centers are also potential locations for contestation over resources and ‘voice’.²⁰

Other organizations, such as Mercy Corps and Search for Common Ground, have focused more on peace building.²¹ Their approaches to peace building are broad based, as they seek to engage young people on the issues of greatest concern to them, so that ‘peace building’ is much broader than sometimes defined. This includes using community radio, narratives, and dialogues in communities, and making these programs available in a number of languages. With social media outreach, they intend to discuss prevailing cultural norms and plant a seed for changing the way society deals with violence, gender, and other difficult topics.

Another approach for working with youth is through media, such as through BBC Media Action²² as well as Search for Common Ground (SCG). Both have programs in local radio stations throughout South Sudan, although only in English, ‘basic’ Arabic, Dinka and Nuer at this time. BBC Media Action has completed a number of listener surveys of the impact of their work. In developing future program concepts, it would be valuable to incorporate the surveys of those organizations such as BBC media Action and SCG (and others) to determine the most efficient way of using media. Some of these surveys also provide insights into how young people use and experience TVET programs.

UNFPA, USAID and UNESCO have all noted that they face significant challenges in getting data from all regions, which has implications for inclusivity.²³ There remain notable gaps in demographic information, youth data, youth mapping, and youth organizational mapping. This leads to a lack of a comprehensive analysis and organizational landscape, which should include the sensitive issues of the politics of youth and youth organizations, including gender, ethnicity and political parties.

In several instances, interviewees reported that there is a tension regarding programs and implementation, because donors want local partners, but they also have ‘go to’ people or organizations (i.e. they use the same INGOs and NNGOs). EMPOWER²⁴ found that many youth agencies did not have capacity to implement planned programs or had used certain types of funding with difficulty.²⁵ They tried to find the ‘middle tier’ for funding, which resulted in over 300 plus applications (indicating the complexity of the CSO landscape). They provided funding in five states, with a 60,000 USD maximum for each grantee, in areas such as peacebuilding, livelihoods, and HIV/AIDS.

EMPOWER provides awards to youth CSOs to help them test different thematic areas. It built its program based on meetings with other funders to determine how they were operating, which

²⁰ USAID/World Bank workshop, South Sudan youth, February 11, 2019, youth landscape presentation.

²¹ Mercy corps, *Youth at the Crossroads, 2014*; Katie Smith, *Building a Constituency for Peace (Search for common Ground), 2017*.

²² Interviews with BBC Media Action, Search for Common Ground and youth organizations.

²³ Interviews in December 2018 and January 2019.

²⁴ A multi-donor supported agency managed by Norwegian Refugee Council.

²⁵ See Appendix I for more information.

ones have civil society support mechanisms, and of what type. Key areas of interest for youth CSOs included organizational strategy and resource mobilization, asset management, first aid training, trauma healing, data management and document management, financial management and gender inclusion.

A number of interviews noted the need to understand more regarding the roles of social media in communicating within different communities and across groups. There is also a lack of information, the lack of a 'window' on current vulnerabilities experienced both by the host and refugee populations, with the biggest challenge to external agencies in the areas of education and livelihoods. Further, interviewees commented that there is a major issue at the community level, which is how to build local government and CBO capacity as the interviewees believed that donor agencies are not set up for this task.

2.2. Pathways to Youth Education

The absence of school infrastructure in many locales has been widely noted in various assessments and summary reports²⁶. Most schools conduct classes outside, so that in these schools teaching is suspended when it rains or there are other weather issues. It was found that at many schools, desks and other equipment are rare. Often, children sit on stones, bricks, buckets or logs during lessons, which makes sustained learning even more difficult.

More than half of secondary school-aged children in most parts of the country were also found to be out of school in 2015, with OOSC rates reaching almost 75% for girls in rural areas. Twice as many girls as boys did not have the opportunity to obtain a secondary education, and the proportion of girls who were not in secondary school in rural areas was twice as high as their peers in urban areas.²⁷

Table 1. Enrollment by Sub-Sector (2016)

	Number	%	Number	% of female students
AES	136,784	9.7	62,108	45.4
ECDE	102,092	7.3	48,673	47.7
Primary	1,098,292	78.0	459,301	41.8
Secondary	58,597	4.2	20,181	34.4
TTI	393	0.1	123	31.3
TVET	5,178	0.4	1,716	33.1
University	6,333	0.4	2,625	41.4
Total	1,407,669	15.3	594,727	42.4

Source: MoGEI 2017.

Rural schools often do not provide instruction beyond the P3 or P4 level, which means that most children do not have an opportunity to complete a full cycle of primary education, let alone opportunities for secondary education. Teachers have usually received basic training, but there

²⁶ World Vision *Upper Nile: Education in Emergencies*, 2014.

²⁷ Global Initiative on Out of School Children, South Sudan Study, p. 11.

remain serious issues in teacher competencies and many schools do not have an adequate number of teachers. Thus, there is understaffing, and this is found particularly in the hard-to-reach rural areas, or communities that have been affected by violence. The lack of female staff in the education system particularly in rural schools is a source of concern raised by both girls and parents.

In surveys conducted by different NGOs, students, parents, and local education officials frequently expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching and the conduct of some teachers in schools.²⁸ Donor and NGO assessments of rural teachers highlighted poor mastery of the English language (the main medium of instruction) and teachers' frequent lack of in-depth mastery of the curriculum. Students frequently did not receive instruction in some of the topics when teachers are not trained in the subject involved. Box 3 describes in more detail the difficulties related to the language of instruction in South Sudan.

Box 3. Language of instruction²⁹

South Sudan is a culturally diverse country. Even though English is the official language, there are over 64 other recognized national languages. While most teachers had been educated and trained in Arabic, which was the language adopted by much of Southern Sudan throughout decades of civil war, the government established English to be the official language of Instruction. It was established that national languages are to be used in preprimary and primary grades 1-3 (according to the new curriculum framework), and by the end of grade 5, all subjects are to be taught in English. At the senior secondary level, French, Kiswahili and Arabic are offered as optional subjects.

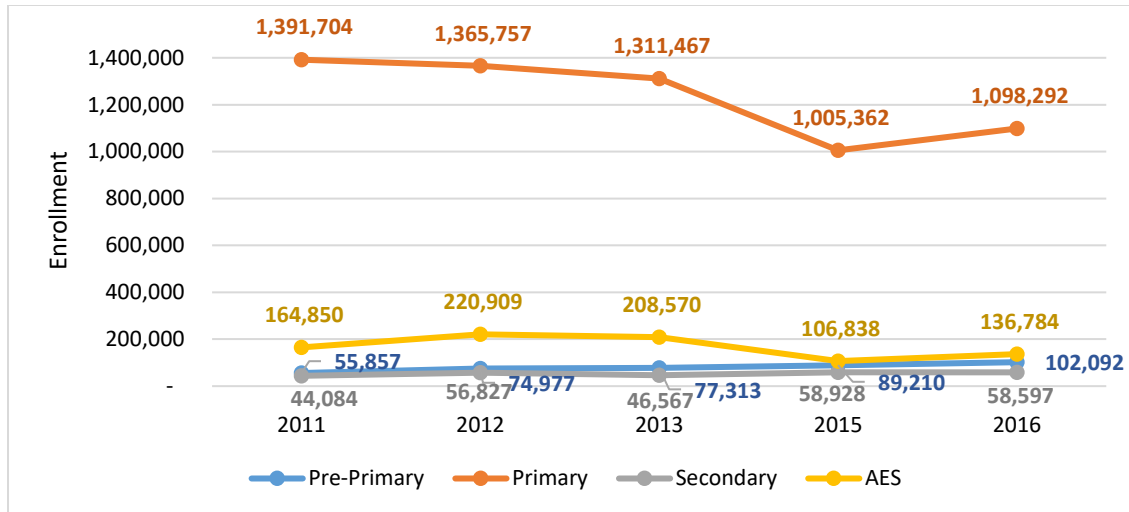
Even if a language of instruction policy exists on paper, it means teachers are not adequately prepared and teaching materials are insufficient. Indeed, language has been reported as a significant difficulty for several reasons:

- Different population groups that were in exile have returned with a knowledge of Arabic, English or Kiswahili. They are frequently identified as different due to their language;
- Most people who remained in South Sudan do not speak one of these three languages; they speak their 'traditional' language – at least 9 language groups. This means that in order to reach these people through literacy programs and other initiatives, there is a need to use community radio, tutors and other actors who can speak local languages;
- In terms of teaching materials, decisions will have to be made in order to make resources accessible. English may be the national language, but if most young people are not able to speak it, then programs for them at the youth centers need to be adapted to the local language.

Figure 2. Enrollment trends in South Sudan

²⁸ World Vision, Tambura Field Assessment, 2015; Youth organization interviews (January-February 2019).

²⁹ Hammond, H. 2013; MoGEI 2015a. World Bank/USAID workshop report, February 11, 2019; interviews with EMPOWER and BBC Media Action.



Source: MoGEI, National Education Statistics, 2013, 2015, 2016.³⁰

Because of the strength of patriarchal norms in local communities, there are gender-based division of roles in families, which require that girls perform most of the domestic chores. This affects girls’ time for schooling and girls are often withdrawn from school to support their mothers in demanding situations such as babysitting, trade, farming illness in the family. Early onset of sexual activities is widespread among girls leading to early pregnancies and school dropout. Early marriage of girls is an embedded norm in many local cultures driven by the high value attached to the childbearing and eternal indebtedness accruing to the girl’s family.³¹

The overall education landscape shows that between poor facilities, lack of textbooks and teaching materials, and the overall poor quality of teaching, children and youth do not learn to read or write to the grade level standard. In a random test in one study school, the reviewers found that P3 pupils could not correctly identify letters of the alphabet presented randomly.³² A large percentage of young people are not in school, have not completed more than 3 or 4 years of schooling, and have little prospect of further formal schooling. This is particularly the case for girls, for rural youth and for pastoralist communities.

- While there are national, governmental bodies responsible for secondary education and for ALP, the reality, which is the usual situation in FCV settings, is that on-site programs are currently a scattered collection of efforts. Interviewees consistently noted that in order to address this immediate and medium-term challenge of poor educational and skills opportunities, a combination of educational approaches around functional literacy/numeracy, socio-emotional learning and skills preparation is essential.
- Agencies at different levels have mandates for elements within the current patchwork of programs in schools, TVET centers, youth centers and other locations. There is a gap between national frameworks in different parts of the government and the realities on

³⁰ The collapse of the CPA within South Sudan at the end of 2013 led to increased violence and displacement, and the resultant enrollment decline between 2013 and 2015.

³¹ PLAN International, *Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Voices from South Sudan*, 2018.

³² World Vision, *Tambura Field Assessment 2015*.

the ground. The gap cannot be filled only with a top-down approach due to lack of capacity and coherence. As is common in FCV settings, it would be better to work with and document the multiple providers: government, UN, EU, bilaterals, NGOs, youth organizations, and the private sector. Various elements exist now for youth through a range of programs in AES/ALP and TVET initiatives. It would be timely to bring together the various national strategies and donor strategies. This could build on the current patchwork mapping that exists through agencies such as UNFPA and UNESCO on TVET, OOSC, and various educational assessments.

Alternative learning for functional literacy and numeracy

The widespread lack of basic educational foundations, both due to drop outs, and students who have been denied education due to conflict and displacement, has contributed to the growing interest by the government, donors and local organizations in the development and implementation of AES courses as a way to bridge the large gaps in access to educational services. In 2015 the AES reported 106,838 (see Table 2) students enrolled, where the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) contributed with 81.5 percent of all learners.³³ A Mercy Corps study found that approximately twenty percent of respondents had attended AES courses with 57 percent of those attending ALP and 66 percent of attendees completing all four years of the ALP course.³⁴ By providing accelerated classes, the AES remove over age children and youth already enrolled and help reducing the pressure on primary schools. Moreover, as programs have more flexibility in terms of timing, location and mode of delivery, they provide education opportunities to youth and adults while addressing their needs related to livelihood responsibilities.³⁵

Table 2. AES' enrolment and share of females, by state, 2015

	Number of students	Share of females
Central Equatoria	12,673	51.6%
Eastern Equatoria	4,179	47.1%
Lakes	21,819	35.7%
Northern Bahr el Ghazal	31,735	42.0%
Warrap	13,382	43.8%
Western Bahr el Ghazal	10,616	41.0%
Western Equatoria	12,434	49.4%
South Sudan	106,838	43.0%

Source: MoGEI 2015b. National Education Statistics.

The current plan by the MoGEI is for AES to continue with three out of its six programs, and primarily the ALP, which is designed to incorporate the curriculum for eight years of primary into four years. The ALP was originally designed for those between ages 12-18, but due to the disruptions of the conflict, youth up to age 25 are allowed to enroll. Another program involves the Community Girls' Schools (CGS) which are located closer to girls' homes, so parents would

³³ MoGEI 2015b. National Education Statistics. South Sudan.

³⁴ Mercy Corps, Youth at the Crossroads, 2014

³⁵ MoGEI 2015c. Policy for Alternative Education Systems. South Sudan.

find the schooling less risky. The third is the Pastoralist Education Program (PEP) which was established to reach children, youth and adults in pastoral areas³⁶.

For various forms of ALP and AES, there are challenges in terms of ensuring basic literacy and numeracy due to the inability of young people to access program sites, as well as the implementation of multiple curricula (this is the case for schools and TVET centers). The lack of schooling opportunities reduces the presence and participation of young people, resulting in high levels of illiteracy. Interviewees argued that donors do not adequately prioritize approaches for integrated literacy and numeracy into skills building. Achieving sustainable functional literacy and numeracy presents a major challenge, because the length of time needed for basic skills may require participation/attendance, regularly, for 2 to 3 years. Both youth leaders and donors argued that one approach would be to expand and improve training on vocation skills and then encourage them into ALP along with their employment or apprenticeship.

Youth organizations pointed to the need to support accelerated learning and empowering initiatives for over-aged, out-of-school children, adolescent and young people, with special focus on girls. The programs would focus on the teaching, learning and empowerment of the targeted adolescent and youth (with focus on inclusion of girls/young women) as well as on improving the capacity of the communities and local educational authorities to administer and manage education programs. These have to be adaptable in order to be implemented in a highly complex and volatile environment.

Table 3. Number and percentage of AES schools by program and ownership type, 2016

Type	Total		Government		Non-government	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
ALP	767	78.5%	570	74.3%	197	25.7%
BFALP	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
CGS	193	19.8%	27	14.0%	166	86.0%
IEC	4	19.8%	2	50.0%	2	50.0%
PEP	13	0.4%	11	84.6%	2	15.4%
Multiple	28	1.3%	15	53.6%	13	46.4%
Other	8	78.5%	-	0.0%	8	100.0%
Total 2016	1,013	100.0%	625	61.7%	388	38.3%
2015	1,085	100.0%	694	64.0%	391	36.0%

Source: MoGEI 2016, National Education Statistics.

Program examples

Oxfam IBIS had a three- pronged ALP initiative that included:³⁷

³⁶ MoGEI, 2017-22 General Plan.

³⁷ Oxfam, Education in Fragile Situations, 2017.

- **Teacher training:** The ALP project trained teachers with pedagogies for 12 to 18 year-old children using the government-designated curriculum that condenses an 8-year primary education to 4 years. The teacher training focuses on learner centered methodology and gender sensitive pedagogy in the classroom;
- **Empowerment of Communities:** The communities were empowered to network with each other in order to identify, analyze and influence common priority issues in relation to the local government policies and administration practices to support the community ownership process as a means of widening coverage;
- **Curriculum development and capacity building of national and district education officers:** Close cooperation with education authorities contributed to the improvement and development of the secondary education curriculum; enhancing cultural diversity, dialogue and with special focus on life skills.

Youth organizations also consistently mentioned and highlighted the importance of psychosocial support in communities that have experienced violence, displacement and severe economic insecurity. This emphasis was consistent with both organizations working within South Sudan and those organizations working in refugee and IDPs settings. The emphasis on socio-emotional skills or development is also consistent with what youth organizations in other low resource settings highlight as one of their main goals and program emphases.

Youth skills building: TVET³⁸

The TVET sector has a governmental structure through the MoGEI and a range of formal but separate programs funded by donors, as well as individual initiatives. There were several events held in 2018 that were organized by the Ministry and donors to map or at least review the current landscape for TVET programs, including the current shortcomings and gaps.³⁹ These events highlighted that there are a number of elements still needed to establish more coherence and capacity. This includes establishing multi-year programs that can provide more socio-emotional skills and also ‘refresh’ courses, linking labor market assessments with TVET plans, and the practices for hiring and training of teachers. Organizations are using multiple curricula without an established national curriculum, which runs parallel to private youth training and employment with local businesses.

The MoGEI manages the structure for TVET at the national level. In a recent presentation, it outlined the goals and objectives of vocational training:

- Promote relevant Vocational Training for entrants into the labor market (skill, employability).
- Provide high quality, relevant, comprehensive, integrated, demand-driven, competency-based, modularized Vocational Training.

³⁸ A useful recent resource is the BBC Media Action survey through 39 interviews and 24 focus group discussions.

³⁹ MoGEI, 2018; UNESCO/EMPOWER, 2018;

- Promote and deliver competency based and entrepreneurship skills training.
- Mobilize resources for sustainable delivery and development of Vocational Training.
- Foster development of appropriate attitudes and behavior change that are appropriate to a productive, safe and healthy working environment.⁴⁰

TVET policies include the MoGEI serving as the authorized body to carry out the registration and accreditation process nationwide, based on the inputs and the outcomes. The MoGEI goal for TVET states that it focuses on promoting relevant and quality non-formal and formal technical and vocational education, as well as training. The overall approach would be shaped by a unified and efficient TVET system providing well-trained graduates while incorporating gender equity and inclusiveness.

As seen in the formative research, there are numerous counterproductive attitudes around TVET despite knowledge about the courses available. When asked to respond to a series of attitudinal statements, 78 out of 90 participants gave at least one response demonstrating a negative attitude towards TVET courses or TVET-related work. For instance, 41 participants agreed that “TVET is only beneficial to those who have failed in their education” and 39 agreed that “TVET skills involve unpleasant dirty work that youth do not want to do”.⁴¹

Youth organizations have pressed donor agencies on issues that emerged from the agencies’ internal discussions to move beyond a top-down approach to TVET, as many young people have a negative view of the current TVET arrangements. It is unclear how much reflection on change has happened in different agencies, but generally agencies report that their approaches to TVET and other skills will reflect their discussions with youth organizations. UNESCO has outlined in detail their work at supporting national youth dialogues, which requires an exceptional amount of balancing between political, ethnic and organizational interests.⁴² The reports from UNESCO reflect an openness by donors and NGOs to youth voices as they are developing their programs. At the same time, there remains a general complaint that TVET centers are run too much like schools, and that there is a need to move to youth-led approaches in skills as well as literacy and numeracy.

A number of interviews strongly pointed out that effective TVET efforts require labor market assessment as well as design changes. Additional concerns focused on the hiring and training of teachers which does not have a consistent criterion, though there are renewed efforts to train youth in national certified training. In current practice, though, there are multiple curricula, without a national curriculum such as examples of private youth training and employment with local businesses. There were also notable challenges with incentive payments for teachers, and a large fragmentation of actors in the sector so that the interviewees noted that there were both NGO TVET centers and Government centers managed similarly to private centers with contracting out to NGOs.

⁴⁰ MoGEI, 2018 Presentation by Juac Agok Anyar to TVET Working Group.

⁴¹ BBC EU DEVCO Longitudinal Baseline Findings, p. 2.

⁴² UNESCO, Promotion of Youth Voices for Sustainable Peace and Development, youth public gathering, 2018.

There was very limited vocational training available. Every community felt that it was needed, and wanted training for carpentry, computer training, farming, healthcare and driving amongst others. Fewer traditionally female occupations were mentioned by respondents.⁴³

A major new effort to expand and strengthen TVET is an initiative led by a donor/NGO partnership in coordination with the MoGEI. The Ministry's goals for 2018-22 include bringing together a more coherent and consistent curriculum in TVET, and the establishment of the multi-agency initiative has provided an opportunity for addressing three of the issues that were identified in the five-year goals, including curriculum and training, upgrading learning centers and establishing better linkages with income generation (the latter addressing a major critique from youth organizations).

Young people expressed very strong views on the structural problems with the current landscape of training programs. They argued for example that agencies should not bring people to Juba for training programs and that it is essential to 'go to the grassroots' to ensure that programs are rooted in the realities of the local economies. In addition, they stated that both in South Sudan and in refugee settings in Uganda changes to approaches are essential: 'Do not impose solutions from the outside, local dynamics require local solutions.' This was a widely repeated point from youth organizations and some of the larger agencies, both within South Sudan and in the refugee communities in Uganda. If anything, the point was even stronger from the refugee communities, as they argued that the donors have top down approaches to TVET that did not listen to local needs.

Some youth asked for a demand driven 'opportunity system' that would provide systematic engagement with private sector. This would link with vocational skills that would range widely, from bakery, electric wiring, tailoring, salon hairdressing, bricklaying and mechanic. Youth organizations also pointed to the importance of attention to agriculture and agribusiness. They stated that there are challenges in terms of how to make farming and commercial agriculture attractive particularly to youth and women. Youth organizations have sought to build up practical agribusiness tools and basic skill sets through well-tailored training programs such as environment friendly modern agriculture methods, value addition, financial sustainability, branding and marketing of agricultural produces and by-products using small out growers' cooperative societies.⁴⁴

A wider employment problem is that there are negative views of the willingness of South Sudanese youth to work as hard as youth from Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia. The radio programs, such as those from BBC Media Action, have sought to address both the education and skills needs of young people, and the perception of South Sudanese youth in the business communities. This was achieved through various radio programs that are addressed to rural and town markets.⁴⁵ In addition, through radio, various organizations have sought to make access and capacities for soft skills available more broadly beyond TVET. Both the radio programs and what could be termed as TVET plus provide an opportunity to Expand beyond resource heavy TVET with socio-emotional

⁴³ World Vision, Upper Nile, p. 7.

⁴⁴ Interviews with FYI, YSAT, and YEI, among others.

⁴⁵ Interviews with BBC Media Action, EMPOWER.

learning, and life skills.

Table 4. TVET Programs: EU DEVCO, TVET and CSO Consortium, 2018

sector	agency	location	time frame	program design
TVET (MoGEI/EU DEVCO)	BBC Media Action, VOSDO ⁴⁶ - FCA - FCA - NRC - NRC - ACROSS - ACROSS - ACROSS	Central Equatoria - Juba - Juba Tech - Juba – Don Bosco - POC 3 - Lologo - Juba – MTC - Divine Flavours restaurant - Lainya	2018-20	TVET curriculum and teacher training; TVET Center Rehabilitation and training; Income Generating Opportunities
TVET (MoGEI/EU DEVCO)	NRC, BBC MA, VOSDO	Western Bar el Ghazal – Government center – Don Bosco – POC	2018-20	TVET curriculum and teacher training; TVET Center Rehabilitation and training; Income Generating Opportunities
TVET (MoGEI/EU DEVCO)	NRC, BBC Media Action, VOSDO	Warrap – Kuajok – Twic	2018-20	TVET curriculum and teacher training; TVET Center Rehabilitation and training; Income Generating Opportunities
TVET (MoGEI/EU DEVCO)	BBC Media Action, VOSDO – Nile Hope – FCA	Jonglei – Twic East, Duk – Fangak, Bor, Pibor	2018-20	TVET curriculum and teacher training; TVET Center Rehabilitation and training; Income Generating Opportunities
TVET (CSOs)	NRC and BBC Media Action	– Central Equatoria – Western Bahr el Ghazal – Warrap – Norther Bahr el Ghazal – Jonglei	2018-20	Establish CSO Funding Mechanism

Source: Craig Dean, March 6, 2018: EU DEVCO TVET and CSO Consortium.

⁴⁶ Vocational Skills Development Organization; Finn Church Action; Norwegian Refugee Council.

Table 5. TVET Institutes

	TVET Centers (number)	Distribution (%)	Students (number)	Distribution (%)
Central Equatoria	20	65	2,106	69
Eastern Equatoria	5	16	227	7
Lakes	2	6	236	8
Northern Bahr el Ghazal	1	3	69	2
Western Bahr el Ghazal	1	3	312	10
Western Equatoria	2	6	100	3
Total	31		3,050	

Source: MoGEI, 2015b. National Education Statistics.

Program examples

The Young Adult Empowerment Initiative (YEI) has sought to expand the role vocational service in its communities' development initiatives among women and youth in South Sudan and in refugee settlements in Uganda. Programs under this component currently include bakery, electric wiring, tailoring, salon hairdressing, bricklaying and mechanic as we continue to mobilize resources to include and scale up more programs. The TVET national workshop that reviewed current approaches provided a number of valuable recommendations for the sector⁴⁷:

- National TVET Policy and improved coordination;
- Link TVET to needs of Food Security and Livelihoods projects (buy seeds and tools produced by youth);
- Address negative perceptions of TVET and youth;
- Engage business community (demand driven training paid for by businesses);
- Improve access to capital, logistics and warehousing for all businesses;
- Youth engagement and protection (sports, culture, recreation, psychosocial support);
- Take training and support to local youth groups, not just center-based.

⁴⁷ EMPOWER, Creating Youth Employment and Strengthening Civil Society, 2018.

Youth-Related Themes

This section explores some of the key cross-cutting themes identified during the youth programming review and the youth workshop co-organized by World Bank/USAID. It also provides relevant program examples related to these, including approaches to address some of the identified issues. Where possible, the emphasis in program examples has been from youth organizations, as their approaches frequently reflect the priorities and interests of young people at the community level.

3.1 Psychosocial support/Socio-emotional development

Young people, especially younger adolescents, are at a time of great changes in their socioemotional development. The addition of displacement, violence and increased insecurity creates additional challenges for them.⁴⁸ Connecting psychosocial programs for trauma and socioemotional (not the same, as all youth have socioemotional development processes) can occur in community dialogues, literacy groups, through radio programs, or training in local youth centers.⁴⁹

It is important to note that education or TVET programs also have the potential for adverse psychosocial effects. When a program is inappropriately matched to a young person's goals, abilities or resources, it can actually increase their stress, while reducing their economic security and social participation. The introduction of psychosocial and coping skills programs can effectively complement livelihood programs by deepening the foundation provided to at risk youth. The innovative aspect of this work is that while integrated livelihood and psychosocial programming may not yet be common practice for aid agencies, evidence clearly indicates that the two programs share complementary objectives. When implemented together, they have the potential to support more effectively the well-being of beneficiaries.

Program examples

The YWCA of South Sudan is implementing a program focused on trauma healing and various approaches to counseling. Through the psychosocial support program, YWCA offers counseling and trauma healing to the members of the community, legal aid, legal advice and dispute resolution on Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This project has positive impacted on the lives of the community through improved access to justice for vulnerable community members, reduced rate of domestic violence, increased awareness of human rights and peace building at the grassroots levels.

⁴⁸ World Bank, Invisible Wounds, Workshop Report, 2015.

⁴⁹ Psychosocial support is defined as any activity that builds a community's or an individual's internal capacities, while simultaneously reducing stress, enabling economic participation and strengthening social capital. Life skills building is a process by which young people develop their abilities to perform tasks, solve problems and set and achieve their goals.

Organizations such as Young Adult Empowerment Initiative (YEI), Youth Social Advocacy Team (YSAT) and others have brought together a number of programs to improve socio-emotional wellbeing. Sport instruction and physical training, as well as music, drama and arts, have been shown to have a number of benefits. They provide opportunities for social contacts across community boundaries, as well as promoting communication between young people and adults. If structured appropriately, they can contribute to a commitment to community involvement and community norms as well. Sports, drama, music and arts can be a politics-free zone that promotes equity and Inclusion, promoting an appreciation of one's own individuality and the value of others in a context of social diversity.

The youth organizations reported that sports players, actors, musicians who trust one another work well together. Learning to trust the capacities of others to carry out their roles and responsibilities, in ways that also contribute to the well-being of teammates, is an essential ingredient of socio-emotional development. Finally, with trust comes responsibility: understanding that individual behavior in practice sessions and in games influences and has impact upon the performance and experience of others. Working with and for others are key aspects of sport in society projects.

3.2. Youth Networks/Centers⁵⁰

Various organizations, both international NGOs and South Sudanese youth agencies have built and operated youth centers, though a number have closed due to local outbreaks of violence. The youth centers at their best function as 'one stop shops'. They can provide a range of services including sports, peer education, drama, sexual reproductive health services and information, voluntary counseling and testing, legal advice, life skills trainings and a host of other clubs and recreation activities aimed to build the capacity, skills, and confidence of the youth.

Most young people who come to youth centers lack education or skills and face many barriers to success. Many youth come from displaced families, are single or double orphans, and struggle financially. Often youth who drop out of school due to lack of money or support are left on the streets. Girls are especially at-risk due to a host of cultural and social issues that leave them out of receiving vital information for making decisions about their lives.

Interviewees highlighted that youth programs have to be 'on the street' to reach out to those who are most at-risk and often slip through the cracks of formal systems. Youth programs can offer an encouraging environment, in which to inspire, build up and support young people in the community. To promote positive behavioral change in youth, information can be provided in combination with a range of life skills within a conducive environment. Drama and music, games, and other forms of positive recreation are used to educate and encourage children and youth, contributing to their positive mental, psychosocial, and physical development. This approach can

⁵⁰ Some discussants at the World Bank/USAID workshop cautioned that youth centers can be locations for conflict over power between different groups or factions in a community.

also provide equal opportunities for both girls and boys by mainstreaming sexual reproductive health and gender issues in all programs and activities.

The same young people who live within the community can participate in the organization and management of local centers. They can be mentored into positions as peer educators and program coordinators to give them the skills and knowledge necessary for future employment. Youth centers and youth networks can promote employment and/or income generating activities for youth. Youth organizations also reported that their experiences with initial groups of students was important for the adjustment of the programs through reflection and evaluation. The implementers made adjustments in their programs due to their experiences with the first groups of students or trainees.

Program examples

OKAY AFRICA reported that there are no quick wins in the local communities, but the local programs but reduce the mistrust and suspicion between groups. They highlighted that some of the community level divisions are inter-generational, which requires community platforms for dialogue and discussion of shared problems. They work to facilitate dialogue between youth and help them understand how relations and connections can be established and developed.

The OKAY AF foundation has worked with local centers and networks to promote Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programs linked with training for new opportunities. They have sought to bring together vocational skills, rural schools and new forms of training. They believe that schools can expand horizons through youth centers. In the case of sports, this means not just soccer, but wrestling, basketball, and volleyball. They note that the ‘ball is not Dinka or Nuer’.

YWCA has been implementing a project called *Creating Stronger Civil Society Linkages in the greater Western Equatoria state*. The project is implemented with the goal of strengthening the current youth center at the YWCA and establishing a Civic Engagement Center (CEC). The goal is to reach out to more civil society groups in the greater Western Equatoria State in an effort to bridge information gaps and provide meeting spaces and information resources to the local organizations and community members.

3.3. Civic engagement, security and local actions

Interviews with donors noted that there is more attention to youth policies by the government, donors and NGOs, but many young people remain skeptical of the ‘elder’ generation. Donors see a heightened political will and policies that reflect the importance of youth, as the most important resource for the future. However, there is a disconnect between policies/intentions and the operationalization on the ground of these broad frameworks. Young people are self-organizing to address issues that they perceive as essential for their wellbeing. This includes literacy, numeracy, and skills for employment, sports, health and civic engagement. In rural areas, some of the youth organizations have worked actively to promote dialogue between communities that have had conflict over land, water and other assets.

Specific challenges reported by youth groups working on peace and security

Constraints on their ability to operate freely were the most commonly mentioned challenge identified by interviewees and in the grey literature. Many respondents attributed this to a lack of trust in young people and their organizations. The lack of trust sometimes manifested in youth organizations being prohibited from registration or barred from the formal recognition that might enable them to access additional funding. There are issues of security risks and restricted civic space that impose clear limits on what young people can do and their freedom to organize publicly.

Many youth-led organizations are often severely underfunded (half of the 399 youth-led organizations surveyed operate on 5,000 USD or less per year) and heavily dependent on volunteerism. Many readily acknowledge their lack of institutional, technical and human capacity, including the ability to raise, administer and account for larger funds, and to evaluate and monitor the impact of their initiatives.

Social Cohesion/Peacebuilding

There are various approaches to conflict reduction, peace building and social cohesion. A number of interviewees identified the importance of determining the nature of local violent conflicts, so that when young people come together, there can be specific questions about the perceptions of the causes and remedies of the violence. These can include both identifying the local issues and then asking the youth how the issues can be resolved for all parties. The youth organizations see the task as building up from the community meetings to developing dialogue with MPs and older community leaders.

The YWCA has formed over 30 peacemaker group of youth in different regions of South Sudan, with the focus on the promotion of peaceful relations in different communities. Within this initiative, the YWCA has sought to engage youth in peace prompting activities such as drama, sports, songs, and dancing. The groups also use social media such Facebook, WhatsApp and Radio Stations to disseminate messages of peace to wider audiences.

Grassroots Development Association (GRDA) works to train communities in conflict mediation and dialogue, through providing peace building training to youths and facilitating communal peace dialogue. They utilize media such as community radio talk shows to promote a culture of peace and reconciliation, reaching thousands of people at a time. They also facilitate 'Sports for Peace' activities in order to engage youths in peace building.

Youth leadership/peacebuilding

South Sudan Youth Peace and Development Organization (SSYPADO) joined with other stakeholders, in conducting civic education and observing the 2010 Southern Sudan elections and as well as the 2011 referendum. They advocated for and promoted greater youth affirmative

action to ensure participation of youth in public life following the referendum. In the midst of the breakdown of trust, they sought to participate and to engage youth in the development of the South Sudan Youth policy and constitution of South Sudan youth union which gave definition of youth and guarantee their participation in public life.

To bridge ethnic divisions and rebuild social fabrics among South Sudanese communities both at home and in refugee settlements in Uganda, YEI trains youth and women from different ethnic backgrounds who act as bridge builders among the rival communities. Sports proved very effective in uniting people who have outstanding differences. YEI engaged refugee youth via sports for peace in various settlements. These sports activities bring together many youth from diverse backgrounds. Playing together brought unity of purpose as it strengthens bonds in relationships.

OKAY Africa has a concern that current approaches to local forms of violence, which are distinct from the national level conflict, lack a framework for young people to hand over their guns and then to have productive lives. They believe that local youth centers and youth networks can be better at linking education, skills, and psychosocial support. They expressed a concern that 'transition' for external agencies is different than at the local level and pointed to possible lessons from DDR in other countries.

3.4. Gender

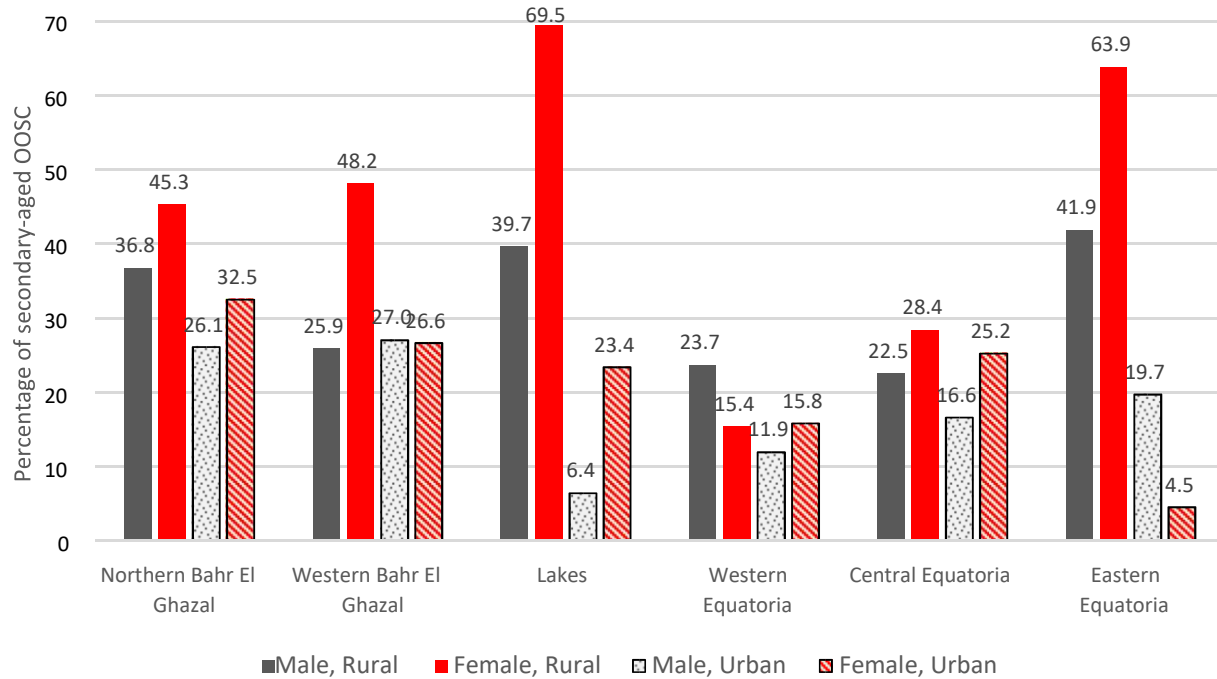
The status of women and the expectations of masculinity, especially in pastoralist societies, has a significant impact on access and attainment for female youth. The social norms that define and prescribe gender roles are strongly patriarchal, especially in rural areas. In a recent Parliamentary, debate about youth issues and the role of women, the views of many older South Sudanese officials were verbally conveyed in the discussions in ways that highlighted the gap between aspirations for equality and the current realities.

One issue that frequently came up in interviews is gender and the situation facing girls. Matters such as GBV, Early Child Marriage, Early Age at birth of first child, lack of access to education beyond primary (if that), were highlighted. The gender disparities are significant throughout the country, and it was notable that in the referrals to youth agencies that were provided for this review, young men lead virtually all of them. In turn, most of these young men identified gender as something that their organizations considered important but the lack of visible women leaders (except through the YWCA) was notable.

Restrictive social norms hinder women's access to education and inclusion in the job market. Participants described how the traditional division of labor places women within the house. Male family members, especially husbands and fathers, have a say in what women can do. If allowed to work, women are excluded from male-dominated professions, such as carpentry or welding, as they both require physical effort. The research revealed, however, a more liberal attitude in Juba around the type of work women can do. Female participants acknowledged they lack support from the family and community to engage in studies and work they are really

interested in. Challenges outweigh opportunities for other groups such as disabled people and internally displaced people; opportunities remain limited for them, and they lack support from their communities and NGOs to access education and employment.⁵¹

Figure 3. Percentage of secondary-aged OOSC



Source: Global Initiative on Out of School Children 2018, p. 44.

Note: Rates of OOSC of secondary school age, by sex, former state, and zone of residence.

Program examples

The most notable organization focusing on women’s issues according to external perspectives is the YWCA of South Sudan founded in 1997 as a women’s group in the local Anglican Church in Yambio town. The YWCA has established a current structure of nine branches across different states. The national YWCA of South Sudan headquarter is located in Yambio and has five thematic programs focusing on Improved protection and security for girls and women, enhanced women’s and girls’ economic empowerment, Leadership capacity of young women and women and Strengthening institutional governance.

Under the ‘let girls talk’ program, a platform is established to bring young women together so that they can discuss common issues affecting their lives. YWCA gives training to young women on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), leadership training, so that they could organize a ‘go back to school’ campaign and empower them to speak up for themselves.

Girls' restricted access to educational opportunities has been exacerbated by certain cultural

⁵¹ BBC Media Action 2018, p. 4.

practices and by conflict. Even when education has been cited by different communities as a priority, social pressures and practices, particularly early marriage, result in low school enrolment rates for girls. PLAN International noted that one area that could get more attention involves connecting child mothers with ALP, TVET and ECD. This could be linked with basic Parenting skills. Along with early child marriage and early age at birth, is the important integrating factor between youth organizations and ECD. Most of the parents of children under five, especially if it is the first or second child, are very young themselves. This presents an opportunity for an integrated community program, either through youth centers or radio that provides both adult' learning and ECD skills for parents.

Gender and TVET

Interviews with training and education program organizers found that continued mentoring and monitoring for girls are vital for the success of the programs. During the course of the training program, staff seek to monitor and follow along with how the female student aspirations change and adapt during the program. This includes keeping in contact with their ideas and interests as the courses proceed. Staff try to ask students or trainees to think 'forward' a few years ahead of the course. The better programs also sought to establish an emotional support function for the staff. They noted that the pedagogical methods must be designed to fit local needs for enterprise and business, as well as the local norms for young women.

Interviewees consistently noted that TVET staff should adapt to the barriers facing young women in attendance and sustaining involvement. For example, this meant identifying the cultural barriers at the specific location. Even when there are fewer women students or trainees, there were ways through outreach and design of the program where the difference in numbers could be reduced. In the case of women students, the retention of students or trainees depends on multiple factors, including the presence of female role models, school or training schedules, and the social environment of the school or training site. Interviews highlighted the importance of female mentors and trainers, both during the program itself and afterwards.

There remain barriers to recruiting young women to education or training programs, as well as into employment. Cultural norms vary, so that the relative level of obstacles from social norms will be different between contexts. In all cases, there are some obstacles, but an effective program and a commitment at the classroom level provides for a more conducive atmosphere. There are key roles for female mentors and support systems in the training programs and in the ways to connect the preparation in soft skills with how soft skills are practical in livelihoods.

Women students and trainees may be able to speak more openly and credibly to other women about issues such as health and family problems. In addition, outreach of teachers or trainers to students who missed sessions or who were having difficulties attending is essential in promoting trainee retention. Flexible schedules or programs and positive social environments also increase retention of students and trainees.

3.5. Agriculture

The comments from youth organizations as well as donors on the importance of not focusing too much on Juba for training provides a reminder of the value of giving attention to locations that are rural in terms of education and TVET opportunities.

A number of interviewees noted the need to invest in agriculture and pastoralist enterprises, with several vigorously arguing that both because of the insecurity in some areas and the 'Juba focus' of agencies, there has been inadequate attention to the needs and opportunities of young people in rural areas.⁵²

The majority of South Sudan's population, including young people, continue to work in the areas of agriculture and livestock production. As these two sectors will continue to provide essential livelihoods opportunities and the potential for expansion of productive markets, it is necessary to give more attention to the potential roles that young people do and will have within these two sectors. Training programs need to provide young people both with skills in specific products and also to identify market links in such areas as food processing and marketing as well as production.

Some youth organizations have built up training programs to encourage youth people to see how to make the transition from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture. This requires the provision of training in practical agribusiness tools and basic skill sets through areas such environment friendly agricultural methods, approaches to value added products, financial literacy, and marketing of agricultural products and by-products. YEI and FYI have both built up different approaches to smallholder cooperative societies to reduce the power of middle men and improve the access to financial assistance and other farm to market resources.

While the breakdown of the CPA created obstacles to local programming, many of the youth organizations in South Sudan have maintained and even expanded their agriculturally focused programs.

Program examples

The Upper Nile Youth Development Association has linked an environmental program with local rural livelihoods. Their focus is on Natural Resource Management (NRM), which provides support for a broad category of activities focused on improving how local communities use and yet conserve their natural environment. The livelihoods oriented NRM focuses more on sustainable economic development programs that engage young people in taking stock of the local resources. available to a community. UNYDA engages local communities in the NRM so that the resource management and the livelihoods programs are effectively linked. They also have a range of skills building activities include: irrigation schemes, vegetable production, livestock rearing, and fisheries which can contribute to strengthening and diversifying livelihoods.

The Foundation for Youth Initiatives has over a dozen rural agribusiness ventures that provide

⁵² Mercy Corps, Youth at the Crossroads, p. 12.

support to young people in developing rural businesses. The Gezira Young People Agribusiness Trust was formed in 2012 by 135 South Sudanese youth who come from different ethnic backgrounds to engage in the business of fruit juice and smoothie blending. The primary goals of the organization are to create jobs to enable youth to become self-reliant, support food security in their community, and provide market linkages to fresh fruit farmers. Foundation for Youth Initiative supported Kuru-ko Wate's Kuro-ko Wate on its Commercial Vegetable Capacity Building Project. The Project invested on irrigated agriculture, which involve production of jute, kale, cabbage, tomatoes, okra, pepper, pumpkin and watermelons.

Young Adult Empowerment has established agribusiness centers that seek to make farming and commercial agriculture more accessible to young people, including young women. The programs offer practical agribusiness tools and basic skill sets through locally adapted training programs such as environment friendly agriculture methods, the introduction of product value added information, branding and marketing of agricultural produces and by-products. They use small growers' cooperative societies as an intermediary organization to assist with both technical resources and marketing.

3.6. Refugees/IDPs

Children displaced by conflict – Children make up around 60% of South Sudan's 1.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and at least 16,715 children are estimated to be missing, separated, and unaccompanied since December 2013. While available data do not allow for an estimate of OOSC rates for children of IDPs, recent data collection show a scarcity of schools across all levels and types of education in assessed "hard-to-reach" areas with high numbers of IDPs.⁵³

There are large displaced population, both within South Sudan and in neighboring countries. Young people and youth organizations are active in both settings, seeking to provide both ALP and TVET, along with psychosocial support. There are high levels of children and youth at risk, both in terms of access to education and social cohesion. The challenges are varied, including the shortage of schools, challenges with access to schools, lack of family resources for supplies, lack of preparation for school due to excessively long gaps in children's educational history.

Schools can also be problematic with issues of harassment and prejudice, language differences, and the lack of resources to address refugee youth's psychosocial issues. Some youth are not able to go to school simply because their work is the primary or only source of income for the family.

Trauma exists both due to the causes of displacement and because of on-going violence within South Sudanese communities. High levels of GBV within the refugee communities that are not reported due to shame and fear, as well as lack of trust and lack of safe shelters. There is clear evidence within the refugee communities of problems with GBV, violence against children, and violence by children 'acting out'.

⁵³ Global Initiative on Out of School Youth, 2018, p. 12.

More underage girls are under pressure to marry, and at younger age, which is a common cultural practice in some communities throughout the region, but one that places girls, especially in the refugee context, at added risk for dangerous pregnancies, abusive relationships, and school drop-out. Some early marriages are entered into for economic reasons, to provide the girl with the customary dowry or to alleviate the expenses of a mouth to feed, while others are intended to protect the girl from the sexual abuse directed toward unattached girls or to provide an alternative to idleness resulting from not being in school.

A number of youth organizations have programs in Uganda, both as cross-border organizations (i.e. working both in South Sudan and in refugee settings, and as organizations founded in the camps). This work has been going on for several years, as young people sought to address both the violence within the camps and to organize youth for productive activities. Youth interviewees noted, for example, that inter-ethnic violence in West Nile refugees' camp in Uganda was widespread in 2014.

Interviewees cited their own experiences involving the recent trauma of refugees, which then acted as an incitement to deepening pre-existing inter-ethnic tensions. The refugees frequently settled into specific ethnic clusters. The Nuer settle apart from the Dinka, as an example. Because of the scarcity of resources, this spatial division was ineffective because the refugees would contest for the limited resources. As a last resort, the authorities would deploy police but that became a brutal and ineffective means for establishing peace between or within the different communities. The refugees complained that the police intervention was deemed as outright human right violation in forms of physical torture and were seen as having further escalated violent behaviors. The isolation, the lack of resources and the police actions all widened the rifts of already broken social fabrics.

Program examples

The Young-adult Empowerment Initiative conducted several assessments in Bidi and Kiryandongo refugees' settlements. The findings suggested major four areas of urgent interventions:

- The need for psycho-support among freshly traumatized refugees might mitigate inter-ethnic tensions.
- Activities that promote Social Integration and Cohesion among refugees and diffuse hostilities with their host community i.e. sports for peace, cultural galas, festivals, musical-concerts for peace and so on should be prioritized.
- Direct involvement of the refugees in decision making mechanisms i.e. in peace building and community dialogues is important peace projects ownership and sustainability.
- Refugee – led youth and women organizations believe that they understand ethnic dynamics better than INGOs and should receive support to lead peace building and reconciliatory processes.

Youth Social Advocacy Team (YSAT) based in Uganda's West Nile refugee camps bring together

young people from different communities. YSAT found itself operating in a camp that was divided between communities so that young people could meet or work together. This was magnified by the lack of a neutral space that could bring refugees together to discuss issues of common interests. This led to an exacerbating of tension, as refugees were subject to unreliable information obtained as hearsay and rumours regarding the peace activities in South Sudan. YSAT found that division social divides were hardening among refugees where civility become almost impossible or non-existent. Programs were developed to establish a neutral space and information platform that could disseminate the nature of the peace agreements in order to rebuild social cohesion and trust within the refugee communities.

In situations of displacement, youth organizations have sought to bring together young people from different communities. Often, they have found that, at first, the camps are divided between communities so that no one could meet or work together. In refugee camps, youth organizations have worked to bring together different ethnic groups that were not willing or able to work together due to the conflicts within South Sudan. Youth organizations have tried to engage with the current condition of young people and have suggested four areas of interventions:

- The need for psycho-support among freshly traumatized refugees and IDPs that help to might mitigate inter-ethnic tensions.
- Activities that promote Social Integration and Cohesion among refugees and diffuse hostilities with their host community i.e. sports for peace, cultural galas, festivals, musical-concerts for peace and so on should be prioritized.
- Direct involvement of the refugees in decision-making mechanisms, so that various forms of community dialogues are important peace projects ownership and sustainability.
- Refugee-led youth and women organizations understand tribal dynamics better than INGOs and should be given necessary support to lead peace building and reconciliatory processes.

3.7. Teachers, Tutors, Trainers

Four major areas of common concern for human resource development in the education sector South Sudan emerged in the literature and interviews, as well as several areas for investigation and research. These four interrelated areas were:

- Quality and appropriateness of existing education and training programs;
- Gender;
- Aspiration and leadership;
- Employment issues.

The quality and appropriateness of current education and training models are problematic for both primary and secondary (including TVET) education workforce development. The low quality of education, a key challenge across the country, is particularly problematic in conflict-affected contexts with shortages in supply of qualified school graduates. Academic

certification processes are flawed and do not always correlate with skills. While secondary education is critical to long term workforce development, non-formal and short-term technical and vocational education and training may at times be more appropriate to produce education workers than school-based education, particularly in refugee, post-conflict and other contexts where schooling has been disrupted and populations displaced. Lack of appropriate and effective in-service training also adversely affects workforce development in both sectors (Education and TVET).

Maintaining gender balance in the workforce is a challenge in both sectors. In many conflict-affected contexts, fewer girls graduate from secondary school and fewer young women enter employment than boys and young men. This perpetuates a vicious circle: fewer female teachers and healthcare workers, means fewer girls and women can go to school or access healthcare. Among the serious issues that limits secondary education access of girls is security, particularly with regard to sexual predation in and on the journey to schools, and concerns for their safety and honor. Female teachers also face the same security and honor issues. Schools can be made safer and more acceptable for girls by increasing the number of female educators.

Closely related to the above concerns is that of aspiration: many marginalized and disadvantaged young people, especially but not only young women, have difficulties seeing a path or role for themselves in the education sector. Both role modeling and mentorship are useful strategies for workforce development. A parallel problem is that in some contexts young people's aspirations, focused on formal, government-salaried jobs, are too high: education workforce needs in conflict-affected and fragile contexts are not primarily for university graduates.

3.8. Media (Radio)

Donors noted that Radio Miraya is considered as the most convenient media assets for providing access to information because of the spread of its broadcasts, across all of South Sudan, and also the availability of programs in local languages. There are a number of government, private, and internationally supported radio stations available, but no assessment of overall impact has been developed. There are specific instances where radio programs or media agencies have engaged quite specifically in youth development and educational areas.

BBC Media Action developed a radio program entitled, "Life in Lulu", a fictional drama set in Lulu village with the aim that "Individuals and communities, including women, elders and young people, are more resilient to impacts of crises and frequently resolve local conflicts in peaceful and non-violent ways". They also produced, "Building Futures", a magazine radio program that aims to drive demand towards TVET among youth, their families and wider communities and address social and cultural barriers to TVET uptake. The program also seeks to change the attitudes of business owners towards South Sudanese youth and reduce barriers towards employing youth, particularly TVET graduates.

Search for Common ground developed a partnership with UNICEF and the Catholic Radio Network in South Sudan to use radio and participatory theater to discuss and address issues affecting young people and their communities. They provided training in conflict-sensitive reporting and worked with young media practitioners to identify areas of shared interest that transcended ethnic and religious divisions in a (nationwide) radio talk show. They also worked with South Sudanese writers to develop a radio drama called “Sergeant Esther”⁵⁴ and developed participatory theater programs. Different actors would travel to different communities and design performances on locally relevant issues that interacted with community members. The actors would discuss the drama with the audience members directly⁵⁵ allowing them to develop their own solutions. Both male and female listeners praised the radio programming’s diverse perspectives on subjects such as forced marriage, girls' education, helping widows and orphans, peace building, and conflict resolution.

Among the key benefits for youth from the use of radio in South Sudan are:

- *Provide information and build knowledge* – e.g. provide information and build knowledge and understanding about menstruation, STIs, the dangers of early pregnancy, where and how to report GBV, how to register for TVET, how to start a business, where to get financial support, etc.;
- *Change attitudes* – e.g. improving attitudes towards TVET, viewing TVET as important and not just for academic dropouts;
- *Role model/demonstrate behavior* – e.g. how to be more self-reliant, how to resolve conflict peacefully;
- *Shift social norms* - for instance those that marginalize women or young people or prevent them from accessing the services they need – e.g. changing norms about early marriage, STD testing, power dynamics in relationships between men and women;
- *Build efficacy / empower* – e.g. empowering women to make decisions, increasing the efficacy of young people to get more involved in peace building processes;
- *Provide a platform and opportunities for people to voice their opinions or have a dialogue/discussion* – e.g. through radio talk shows or call-in programs.

⁵⁴ Included the production of 15 participatory theater performances, reaching an audience of nearly 6,000 attendees, 25 radio dramas produced and broadcast nationwide, establishment of 3 women and girls’ listener clubs, and support to 6 small-scale peace initiatives.

⁵⁵ about 25%+ of the population in target areas listens to the radio show and 36%+ of people surveyed in the target areas attended a participatory theater show in their community.

Moving Forward: Pathways for Youth

This section builds upon the research synthesis undertaken on youth and education in South Sudan.⁵⁶ The review has noted that young people lack **opportunities** to complete their primary and secondary education, either through the formal school system or through AES programs. While access for all young people is essential, the Government of South Sudan and donor agencies should also ensure that they invest in the provision of quality programs when expanding education. This relates to the connections to TVET, where improving the relevance of skills, includes easing barriers to entering employment or livelihoods sectors, and enhancing youth voice in education and TVET policies.

Educational and vocational programs in all of their forms should be designed to enhance the **capacities** required to make use of these programs. The programs should be open to input from youth organizations so that youth can inform the design from their own experiences, enable them to utilize their resources effectively and enhance programmatic flexibility in a fragile context. Essential for South Sudan, the programs must be tailored to provide **second chances** that support young people to get their lives back on track, given the disruptions of violent conflict and displacement, as well as the lack of resources in many programs. Lessons from different cross-cutting areas, such as youth centers, peace building, psycho social support, gender inclusion, small enterprise development and radio outreach should contribute to the design and adaptation of a range of educational initiatives.

4.1. Recommendations

At the core of educational opportunities for young people are two areas of programs. The review of current evidence and youth perspectives offers some ideas on what is required to enhance each of them.

- *Access to Education:* there should be careful expansion of the secondary education and ALP/AES systems (dependent on functioning of primary education) with appropriate pedagogy available for all grade levels. The secondary school and ALP system needs to include training of teachers, provision of textbooks, or virtual learning media, and learning assessments. Various forms of non-formal, alternative education need expansion, which includes establishing safe learning spaces and pro-actively ensuring the inclusion of girls. Education programs need resources for integrating youth in refugee and IDP camps in all activities;
- *Access to Training:* the TVET curriculum and learning materials should be refined and adapted for diverse local settings and specific markets. Programs should be based on assessments of youth vulnerabilities and then monitor the impact of training and skills on these vulnerabilities. Investments are needed in capacity building for trainers and teachers, and to strengthen links between schools, ALP and TVET, including greater

⁵⁶ A wider picture of the priorities of youth organizations is illustrated in Appendix I which summarizes the areas where EMPOWER provided new awards in 2019.

oversight and performance feedback. It is important to develop market focused innovative training packages, if possible, with pathways to employment or credit for small business. There is potential to create a TVET+ approach that incorporates literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional resources.

4.2. Mechanisms for delivering youth programs

The delivery of programs in South Sudan requires both a focus on the core building blocks necessary for success of young people and an integration of wider factors that have been found to be vital in the current context. The building blocks include literacy and numeracy, socioemotional development and well-trained and supported teachers, tutors and trainers in programs that can be assessed for effectiveness. The wider factors include addressing the equal inclusion of women, entrepreneurial skills and support for the role of radio and other media in providing access to information related to but also beyond the classroom. Finally, the active participation of young people and organizations of youth remains foundational for the future of South Sudan.

The architecture and performance of youth programs, and the level of governmental commitment to make them work for the majority, all contribute to deciding how to work with essential services. The organization players, relationships and resource flows are dynamic and will be affected by the impacts of the country's protracted crisis and some of its consequences, including the flow of funding.

Youth programs in the face of a large-scale refugee or conflict crisis can focus on helping organizations expand their capacity and respond to specialized needs and to new pockets of vulnerability. This might include technical assistance to identify emerging forms of vulnerability, strengthen planning and resourcing for future shocks, and scale up specialist services (e.g. life skills, mental health etc.), and resourcing support to expand services and youth inclusion capability.

Recognizing that there is currently a patchwork of programs and initiatives, the World Bank can support partners to weave together approaches to functional literacy/numeracy, socio-emotional and psycho-social support and skills training into programs through clear adaptation of resources suitable for the local context, support of teachers and trainers, and inclusion of youth voices.

Literacy

Various agencies promote the development of literacy skills for youth at all skill levels, supporting those at the lowest levels with targeted phonics and word-recognition activities, and embedding reading and writing into the duration of the learning sessions. Youth were encouraged to try to read and write, whether or not they had the full capacity, and to be tested. Four distinct areas can be assessed:

- Letters: number of letters youth could correctly identify from a 20-letter grid;
- Fluency: Number of words the youth could read correctly from a passage within one or two minutes;
- Accuracy: percentage of reading passage that the youth read correctly;
- Comprehension: Number of specific questions the youth answered correctly from a list of 'literal' questions.

Numeracy

Functional numeracy is a central component of learning and educational programs. As functional literacy, aspects such as budgeting and saving, is part of livelihoods competency for youth, programs that build young people's capacity to undertake basic numeric functions serves as a foundation for keeping budgets and being able to manage money (S4YE).

- Counting: Shown 6 numbers and asked to write down the number that comes before or after each number;
- Oral Counting: Hear 6 numbers and asked to write down the number that comes before or after each number;
- Operations: Given one minute each set to complete for sets of 10 addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division questions;
- Word Problems: 8 single- and multi-step problems that were phrased to reflect livelihood and budgeting issues that youth would be likely to experience in the agricultural labor market;
- Financial Literacy: A financial literacy score gives an overall sense of youths' comfort managing money, and their perception of their budgeting and saving skills. The financial literacy score is the sum of youth's responses to five questions that focus on how youth budget their money, methods they use to save money and their overall comfort in managing their money.

Socio-Emotional Development

One part of socio-emotional development is the capacity to develop resilience when faced with every day challenges as well as more serious life events. For those exposed to high levels of stress, finding balance and perspective may be difficult. Adding to this complexity, individual reactions can vary in important ways by gender, age, and other identity characteristics. Restoring balance wellbeing for young people is particularly critical, because in ability to overcome difficult situations increases resilience, further reinforcing their socio-emotional development.

Elements of socio-emotional development include a positive self-concept, which contributes to self-confidence. In addition, essential for the transition to productive adulthood and particularly important in contexts of fragility, the development of self-control that allows young people to control their immediate impulses, focus their attention and manage their emotions and

behaviors. This underpins their capacity to engage in higher order thinking with problem solving, critical thinking and reflective decision making, connecting both to their education and training, and also to violence prevention.

The current landscape in South Sudan makes it both more difficult yet also more essential that basic assessment systems be put in place around the goals and outcomes for ALP and TVET+ programs. When implemented, these could determine if:

- The program is flexible and suitable for over-age learners, and the centers are effectively managed;
- Curriculum, materials and pedagogy are genuinely accelerated, ALP or TVET+ are suitable and use relevant language of instruction;
- The learning environment is inclusive, safe and learning-ready, including incentives for having girls in the program;
- Teachers and trainers are recruited, supervised and remunerated;
- Teachers participate in continuous professional development;
- Core elements of socio-emotional learning are incorporated;

In addition, assessments could determine the extent to which the project has reached specific objectives:

- Increased literacy and numeracy levels of targeted students;
- Number of students completing fully, partly and/or integrated into formal education;
- Students with improved socio-emotional skills and coping mechanisms;
- Students report that centers are secure and safe learning environments, including for girls, youth from excluded groups and students with disabilities.

4.3. Remaining questions

While the mapping exercise provided the initial background information regarding what is available to South Sudanese youth in terms of education and training programs, a few questions remain. These are related to the actual effectiveness of the current programming, the harmonization of the curricula offered and respective accreditations, as well as what is the best alternative to incorporate the different cross-cutting issues into the program implementation strategy in order to achieve the best outcomes, given South Sudan's context.

- What are the current 'curricula' in use in secondary schools, TVET programs, ALP initiatives, youth organizations and how have they been evaluated?
- What is known of the relative effectiveness of the current methods of delivery: schools; TVET; youth centers; other venues, and who delivers these programs?
- What are structural approaches to including girls and young women into programs?
- What are pathways for more integrated resources? Government; donors; NGOs; CBOs; youth organizations?

- For secondary schools, AES/ALP, and TVET+, what are the most effective approaches to Teacher and Mentor Training?

The success of the YWCA in establishing programs for young women stands out as a reminder that overall gender norms remain an obstacle for both young women in South Sudan and for the country's development and balanced growth. Government agencies, donors and local organizations must give greater attention in depth and detail for consideration of cultural/gender norms in designing interventions and gaining community buy-in, perhaps conceptualizing how a young woman could be supported in one of three pathways:

- **School:** Supporting the return to formal education for young women requires specific approaches that address both current obstacles and the factors that removed them from schooling previously. Some interviewees highlighted the importance of programs that have a significant percentage of women in the school setting. Female students could speak more openly and credibly to other women about personal issues such as health and family problems. Some also felt safer with a balance of men and women.
- **Training:** Vocational/apprenticeship training methods can be designed to fit local needs, norms, and businesses. The pedagogy can provide encouragement to young women for skills development and testing out ideas as noted by one organization, 'we don't teach, students learn.' The local realities of gender social norms and levels of education significantly shape the ability of program participants to access the program due to family norms or due to their lack of adequate education. Tailoring TVET to local gender norms and existing education levels for women is essential for recruitment and retention.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Starting a small business training can be adapted to fit business realities, and this includes ways to assess progress through 'hands on' projects that engaged young women's interests more dynamically than 'teaching to the test'. This gives business trainees an opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them before actually starting a business. Programs can adapt to barriers for young women in different business social enterprises and specific skill areas. This may require an analysis and identification of the cultural barriers to young women. When there are likely to be fewer women led businesses, there are ways through outreach and design of the program that the difference in numbers could be overcome.

Linkages with other World Bank Projects

The review of youth programs offers potential connections between different youth programs and World Bank projects. Three World Bank projects are outlined below with specific linkages to various youth organizations and programs set out as well. Organizations of Youth are distinct from ‘youth organizations’, as these have been initiated and sustained by young people’s mobilization and leadership.

The connections with other World Bank projects can **support greater cross-sectoral and life-cycle programming**, so that programs targeting or involving young people as beneficiaries in one sector are aware of and can respond effectively to the environment and constraints that young people face in other sectors, and that reflect the lived experience of young people. For example, productive employment may require a combination of interventions that enhance political voice, psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy, and security, as well as employment.

In addition, the areas of linkages can support greater engagement with **young people as agents of development**, actively delivering programs and services, taking advantage of their greater creativity and appetite for risk, to deliver more effective services and achieve human development outcomes.

P169120, South Sudan Resilient Agricultural Livelihoods Project

Building Capacity for Good Agricultural Practices

- *Include literacy and numeracy skills:* Agriculture training programs should incorporate a core element of literacy and numeracy skills to ensure that all participants acquire basic, functional skills in these two areas. This can contribute to make subsistence farming and commercial agriculture attractive to youth.
- *Socio-emotional and psychosocial programs:* Training and curricula can provide trainers with general information on the development of youth brains and socio-emotional changes including specifics on culture, norms and gender as well as the specifics on impacts of violent conflict.

Building Capacity for Producer Organizations

- *Cooperates and marketing opportunities:* Provide support to grassroots, small agribusiness institutions including farmer cooperatives, community-based organizations, associations, and youth-led enterprises that improve livelihoods and market access for their members.

P169949, Enhancing Community Resilience and Local Governance Project

Inclusive Community Planning and Conflict management

- Various organizations work to train communities in conflict mediation and dialogue, through providing peace building training to youths and facilitating communal peace dialogue. They can advocate for and promote greater youth affirmative action to ensure participation of youth in public life despite the disillusionment following the breakdown

of the CPA. They utilize media such as community radio talk shows to promote a culture of peace and reconciliation, reaching thousands of people at a time.

Strengthening Community Institutions

- *Gender and Social Inclusion:* Local Programs can build on the examples of youth organizations that specifically sought to bring together excluded groups, such as different ethnic, pastoralists and others, or people with disabilities. Programs such as the YWCA's Civic Engagement initiative can contribute to this area of work.

P169274, South Sudan Safety Net Project (SSSNP)

Labor Intensive Public Works "Plus"

- Utilize initiatives for promoting *social cohesion and inclusion* among youth. As the project looks to continue strengthening local institution and community capacity to implement and manage development activities. It can work with local youth centers and networks to promote social cohesion and inclusion efforts linked with training for new opportunities.

Strengthening Safety Net Delivery Tools

- The training should incorporate a core element of *literacy and numeracy skills*, including financial literacy training, to ensure that all participants acquire basic, functional skills in these two areas. Particular consideration would be given to ensure female participation in an effort to promote equity and contribute to positive impacts on poverty and gender empowerment.

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Appendix I

Table 6. EMPOWER: Capacity building priorities for civil society/youth organizations

Area	Topic	Method
1. Values, governance, networks	a. PSEA, Anti-corruption & conflict of interest (policy and training)	Project launch workshop.
	b. Do No Harm and gender mainstreaming.	Project launch workshop.
	c. Engagement in cluster (protection, education, FSL, CCCM)	Mentoring from NRC staff.
	d. Organizational strategy and resource mobilization.	Consultant costs included in CSO budget. NRC specific workshops by consultant.
	e. website development.	Consultant costs included in CSO budget.
2. Programming	a. Trauma healing	Consultant costs included in CSO budget.
	b. Peace building	NRC Protection team training of CSO in Juba, Bor, Wau Consultant costs included in CSO budget.
	c. Project Management	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
3. MEAL	a. MEAL tools and systems	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	b. Data management and document filing.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
4. Finance	a. Accounting software – installation and training.	CSO budget include costs of software. Online learning. Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	b. Accounting software – refresher.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	c. Financial management, internal controls and supporting documents.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
5. Human Resources	a. Code of conduct	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	b. recruitment policy and procedures.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	c. JD development and performance management.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	e. Whistle blowing procedures (linked to Area 1).	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
6. Logistics	a. segregation of duties.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	b. procurement thresholds.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	d. tracking of PRs.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.

Area	Topic	Method
	c. warehousing	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
	d. asset management	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.
7. Safety	a. First aid training	Procurement of first aid kits and extinguishers. Complete online learning.
	b. Security policy and safety plans.	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring. Online training.
	c. staff inductions	Project launch workshop and implementation mentoring.

Source: Craig Dean, personal communication, January 29, 2019.

Appendix II

Table 7. List of individuals consulted and respective affiliation⁵⁷

Name	Organization
Albino Gaw Dar	Foundation for Youth Initiative
Angelo Lubang	PLAN
Animu Athiei	South Sudan Girls' Initiative
Augustino Deng	SSYPADO
Catherine Buckell	BBC Media Action/South Sudan
Chris Berry	DFID
Craig Dean	EMPOWER
Croshelle Harris-Hussein	USAID/Juba
Elisabeth King	NYU
Fazle Rabbani	GPE
Gatwal Gar	Young-Adult Empowerment Initiative
Hai Tiet	UNESCO
Jackie Bage	YWCA
Jake Peters	Maban based NGO
Joana Cook	UCL
John Jal Dak	Youth Social Advocacy Team (YSAT)
Lizzy Ongoro	Save the Children
Marc Sommers	Youth at Risk Consultant
Mary Marle	UNFPA
Mike McCabe	USAID
Mike Wessels	Columbia University
Pauline Lee	WVI
Payton Knopf	USIP
Priyam Saraf	World Bank
Rachel Taza	Search for Common Ground
Saji Prelis	Search for Common Ground
Sara Pantuliano	ODI
Susan Nicolai	ODI/Education Can't Wait
Vinoba Gautam	UNICEF/Juba
Wani Michael	OKAY Africa Foundation
Wendy Wheaton	USAID

⁵⁷ Additionally, two anonymous youth from South Sudan and one anonymous youth from Uganda refugee camps were consulted.

Appendix III

This Appendix presents the framing questions and final recommendations from the youth workshop organized by the World Bank and USAID. The list of participants and agenda are also included for reference.

Youth in South Sudan: Lessons from the past and pathways to a future “Resilient Peace”

When young people are uprooted, jobless, intolerant, alienated, and have few opportunities for positive engagement, they represent a ready pool of recruits for groups seeking to mobilize violence.

Yet, as the same time, we should avoid harmful myths and stereotypes about young people’s easy susceptibility to violent behavior that continues to drive some elements of youth policy and programming.

February 11, 2019

USAID/World Bank

World Bank, J Building, 7-044 (701 18th Street NW)

The World Bank and USAID jointly organized a workshop on Youth in South Sudan on February 11, 2019, that involved staff from both agencies, as well as invited external participants. The purpose of this event was to share lessons learned from previous work in South Sudan (and other FCV countries), discuss the current situation of youth and explore alternatives for future youth programming. (List of Participants and the Agenda are in the Appendices).

In South Sudan, the complex situation created by the conflict, which may continue for some time, it is possible to take steps to consolidate peace by grounding a coordinated, holistic and sequenced approach in lessons from previous international engagements in South Sudan. USAID’s approach will therefore prioritize mitigating the war’s human, economic, and social damage; enabling South Sudanese to rebound from this trauma; and laying the foundation for a durable and just peace. The youth assessment should therefore pay attention to youth’s involvement or lack of involvement in designing USAID project-funded activities and/or decision-making at all levels i.e. from formal structures to non-formal structures at the community and household level.

Framing Questions

- What are the past lessons and current issues facing youth in the South Sudan context, particularly the challenges from the protracted crisis, that shape the current situation of young people;
- Present selected experiences on the roles of youth organizations, governments and development agencies in addressing youth issues in protracted crises;
- Outline the ways in which different sectors can contribute to a coherent youth agenda in South Sudan;
- Identify realistic elements of an effective multi-sector approach to promote tangible results and outcomes in different sectors; and
- Informally propose ways in which donor agencies and youth organizations could support specific programs at scale.

Priorities for the way forward

Youth programs should redress the negative effects of violence. The reality on the ground is that the threat of political instability and conflict is present and will remain for the near future in South Sudan. Redressing negative effects includes a combination of psychosocial support, skill building, and meaningful engagement and livelihoods activities.

Programs should never lose sight of gender dynamics in program design for South Sudan. The alarming rate of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) as a weapon of war in South Sudan requires particular focus and attention to young girls and women in our youth programs. We are supporting safe corridor activities allowing girls to have parents/peers accompany them safely to/from school, as well as, focusing on safe learning and empowerment spaces for young women.

Programs should be conflict-sensitive and localized due to inter- and intra-state differences. There are extreme differences in education access, quality, and varying levels of market activity in each state. Programs, not informed by prevailing local conflict dynamics, may end up being harmful. Thus, they need to engage high-risk youth (i.e. those unemployed and who feel there is not suitable work available) to acquire the skills that are in demand in local markets in order to reduce their vulnerability to recruitment by elders or politicians for violent activities.

Programs should be intentional, and initiatives must respond directly to the current needs of young people as well as the larger environment. Traditional programs (such as vocational training courses, which do not link to the current, market and/or oversaturate the market) have often proven to not only be ineffective in South Sudan but also may exacerbate the frustrations of youth and increase their acceptance of violence. Market assessments need be conducted to determine that the value chain for dairy is promising for young people; our program would train youth specifically in skills related to identified entry points along that value chain. And, will ensure that our goals and objectives do not distort markets or create tension both within and

It is also important to recognize that young people's contribution to peace is not just institutionalized, organized or taking the form of "projects". Youth leadership is found in diverse institutions and organizations, frequently outside formal political institutions and youth organizations, in seemingly unorganized systems and informal movements. Youth involvement in popular protest and social movements is an important component of youth peace work and is often perceived as potentially threatening by many governmental and international actors.

Investing in young people's capacities, agency and leadership through substantial (flexible) funding support (allowing risk-taking and innovation), network building and capacity strengthening. It also means including young people in design, implementation and evaluation.

Prioritizing partnerships and collaborative action, where young people are viewed as equal and essential partners for peace. These partnerships have increased their ability to participate in national and international campaigns, strengthened their legitimacy on the ground, and sometimes offered a degree of protection in repressive or threatening environments. Partnerships are also an invaluable vehicle for sharing information and filling in the gaps with their knowledge and data.

However, fostering partnerships and collaborations should not disempower youth or skew the balance of power between young people and those with whom they partner. There is also potential that, in the

demand for standardized methods of program planning, design, monitoring and evaluation, the innovation and risk-taking that are the lifeblood of much youth work on peace and security may be inadvertently inhibited.

How can we be sure that institutions like ours are youth friendly and understand the unique needs of this constituency? How do we activate this generation of S. Sudanese youth to demand and deliver development goals?

Plan Transitions for Youth in South Sudan, a country where the current and likely near-term future will be in flux, both nationally and regionally. Despite the uncertainty of the current and potential political settlements (national, regional and local), the future of South Sudan requires investing in young people through a range of programs and donor instruments.

Youth programs must go beyond giving attention to immediate needs and incorporate approaches to supporting young people for a healthy transition into adult roles. **Ideally, programs should be designed as "feeders" into political, economic, and social institutions for adults.** Cooperative relationships with formal institutions (such as schools, churches, mosques, and community service organizations) allow youth to interact with and learn from adults and to plan concrete options for their adult lives. Mentoring of youth by responsible adults in the community helps youth widen their horizons and build pathways toward the future.

Agenda:

9:00 – 9:30	Breakfast
9:30 – 10:00	Welcome and Introductions Facilitators: Steve Commins, World Bank & Wendy Wheaton, USAID Setting the Stage for our Discussions on Youth in South Sudan
Lessons: Education & Youth Programs, South Sudan- Successes & Challenges	
10:00 – 10:30	Session 1 - Panel Discussion – ‘A Conversation about Youth in South Sudan: Setting the Stage’ Chair: Steve Commins Guiding Questions: What are the key youth-related issues in South Sudan, today? How do youth view their role in societal change, and what are the challenges and opportunities to engage in the context of South Sudan? What are recent lessons in Education programs that are entry points for youth engagement? 1. Youth in Conflict Perspectives in South Sudan: Historical perspective (Marc Sommers) 2. Youth Coordinator USAID, Perspectives on Youth: Best Practices in Conflict (Mike McCabe) 3. Lessons in Education Sector and Navigating Youth Needs (Fazle Rabbani)
10:30 – 10:50	Q&A
Current Programs: Key Issues, Gaps and Models for scaling in South Sudan	

11:00 11:30	–	<p>Session 2 - Panel Discussion – ‘Leveraging Experiences from other conflict settings and programs’ Chair: Wendy Wheaton Guiding Questions: How do we keep focused on Youth across sectors? Do multi-sectoral goals strengthen youth engagement practices? How effective are these strategies in conflict-affected settings? These capacities have multi-sectoral elements, but how can they be grounded and funded in a sectoral world? And what would that look like?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mental Health & Psychosocial Support & Cross-Cutting Issues (Greg Pirio) 2. Skills Building & Education Alternatives for Youth (Mattias Lundberg) 3. Civic Education in Conflict-Affected Somalia (Whitney Nollau)
11:30 11:50	–	Q&A
12:00 12:30	–	Lunch Break
The Role of Youth in Leading Pathways to Resilient Peace in South Sudan		
12:30 1:00	–	<p>Session 3 – Panel Discussion – ‘Advancing youth programming given the current peace and security settings’ Chair: Natasha de Andrade Falcao, World Bank Guiding Questions: Given the parameters of peace and security currently and going forward, what are approaches that can be applied in South Sudan? What are feasible programs for the next 18 months? What have we learned from South Sudan experiences and more broadly youth programming in situations of violent conflict that are applicable in South Sudan?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Engagement and Empowerment (Brad Strickland) 2. Youth Peace and Security (Rachel Taza) 3. Youth-led Pathways for Peace in the Diaspora (David Acuoth)
1:00 – 1:20		Q&A
1:20 – 1:30		<p>Closing and Next Steps Chair: Wendy Wheaton, Steve Commins and Natasha de Andrade Falcao</p>

Participants:

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