



The World Bank

Building Skills for Human Capital Development in South Sudan (P178654)

Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 10-Mar-2023 | Report No: PIDA35263



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country South Sudan	Project ID P178654	Project Name Building Skills for Human Capital Development in South Sudan	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date 22-Feb-2023	Estimated Board Date 12-May-2023	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) South Sudan	Implementing Agency Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of General Education and Instruction	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project's Development Objective is to increase skills development opportunities in teaching and digital agriculture and strengthen capacity for management of the education system.

Components

- Component 1: Teaching Skills to Strengthen Education Delivery
- Component 2: Digital Skills for Agriculture
- Component 3: Inclusion of Refugee and Host Communities
- Component 4: System Building
- Component 5: Contingency Emergency Response Component

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	57.33
Total Financing	57.33
of which IBRD/IDA	45.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

**World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	45.00
IDA Grant	45.00

Non-World Bank Group Financing

Other Sources	12.33
MULTIPLE DONORS	12.33

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **South Sudan is poised to change its growth and development trajectory following a history of conflict that has hindered growth.** The prolonged civil war with repeated cycles of violence has had disastrous impacts on the country's population. Between 2013 and 2018, 380,000 people are reported to have died as a result of armed conflict, with 2 million people internally displaced and an additional 2.3 million living as refugees abroad.¹ Conflict also affected virtually all economic activity, and household incomes are estimated to have declined by a staggering 70 percent between 2011 and 2018.² An estimated nine out of ten South Sudanese people live in poverty.³ The signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan in September 2018 and the subsequent formation of a unity government in February 2020 have provided a measure of hope for recovery and created a window of opportunity in policymaking to foster sustainable and equitable growth. The country's economic outlook is cautiously optimistic, with a growth rate of 6.5 percent in 2022 and a forecasted rate of 5.6 percent growth in 2023.⁴

2. **South Sudan is focusing on establishing the foundations of a diversified economy for inclusive growth.** South Sudan's Revised National Development Strategy (2021-2024) recognizes that investments in human capital can be a catalyst for economic diversification. There is mounting evidence that countries cannot achieve sustained and inclusive economic development unless human capital is strengthened.⁵ Given its young population, with an average

¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/south-sudan.html>

² International Monetary Fund 2019. "Republic of South Sudan. 2019 Article IV Consultation Report." IMF Country Report No. 19/153.

³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2022b Humanitarian Needs Overview: South Sudan.

⁴ International Monetary Fund. 2022. World Economic Outlook, October 2022. IMF, Washington, DC. <https://www.imf.org/countries/SSD>

⁵ World Bank. 2022. South Sudan Economic Monitor, February 2022: Towards a Jobs Agenda. World Bank, Washington, DC.



age of 19 and 45 percent under the age of 15, South Sudan has an opportunity to access a demographic dividend and lay the foundation for future human capital accumulation. Providing this young population with opportunities for skills development in key sectors could increase income per capita and the country's economic productivity. However, limited access to quality education and training has constrained human capital accumulation for South Sudan during the period of conflict. South Sudan had a score of 0.31 on the World Bank's Human Capital Index (HCI) in 2020, which means that a South Sudanese child born in that year will only be 31 percent as productive by age 18 as she could have been if she had access to full health and complete education. The education component of the HCI shows that the average child in South Sudan completes only 4.7 of the 14 expected years of school by the age of 18, which, when adjusted for learning, reduces to only 2.5 years.

3. Women face considerable challenges in building and utilizing their human capital. Women face particularly difficult conditions due to the traditional patriarchal system and the consequences of the conflict, both of which contribute to gender-based violence levels that are among the highest in the world. South Sudan also ranks in the bottom third of countries for the life-course gender gap⁶ and women's empowerment in the Human Development Index (HDI). Over 84 percent of women in South Sudan are illiterate, and 50 percent of girls under the legal age of 18 are married. Slightly more than one-quarter of all households are female-headed as a result of the conflict, but women are also less likely than men to be employed as waged and salaried workers. As a result of restrictive gender and social norms, women and girls in South Sudan have fewer choices and opportunities and less agency and options for self-determination.

4. South Sudan is highly vulnerable to climate change and the risks of climate change are increasing. The country is particularly prone to adverse climate hazards that include extreme temperatures, droughts, and extreme precipitation and flooding. Despite having one of the richest agricultural areas in Africa, with fertile soils and abundant water, frequent flooding, droughts, ongoing conflict, and the displacement of millions of persons has drastically reduced South Sudan's food production, resulting in an estimated 7.5 million people being considered "food insecure."⁷ Considering that 95 percent of the population depends on climate-sensitive natural resources — particularly rainfed subsistence agriculture — the importance of building a skills base and engaging girls and women in climate resilient agriculture is thus imperative. At the same time, mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation skills in the education system is important and will help accelerate growth, create jobs, and prepare the country to combat the effects of climate change.

5. Refugees experience significant service delivery gaps that affect their quality of life and ability to acquire and utilize their human capital. As of September 30, 2022,⁸ South Sudan had 336,689 registered refugees and 72,639 refugee households. The Sudanese refugee population is by far the largest (92 percent of the refugee population). 52 percent of refugees are female, and women and children represent 81 percent of refugees. 60 percent of refugees are between the ages of 0 and 17, 38 percent are between 18 and 59, and the remainder over 60. Most refugees reside in camps in Jam Jang in the Ruweng Administrative Area and Maban in Upper Nile State, both near the northern border with Sudan. While humanitarian actors provide crucial support, refugees currently have limited access to critical health, sanitation, and education services, as well as to the means to earn a livelihood. Refugee host communities also face similar deprivation in socioeconomic conditions.

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/36994>

⁶ The UNDP's life-course gender gap dashboard contains 13 indicators that display gender gaps in choices and opportunities over the life course—childhood and youth, adulthood, and older age. Retrieved from <https://hdr.undp.org/life-course-gender-gapint>

⁷ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/south-sudan_en

⁸ UNHCR. *UNHCR South Sudan – Information Products: September 2022*. Information conveyed by email.



6. **Established in the Refugee Act, 2012, South Sudan's legal framework for refugees is seen as one of the most progressive in East Africa.** The Government has maintained its policy of granting refugees access to its territory and installing practical arrangements for their initial reception and registration. Refugees are granted freedom of movement and, in principle, are free to settle anywhere in the country. The Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) has played an important role in coordinating Government refugee policy and establishing a presence in key refugee impacted areas, despite capacity challenges related to a lack of technical, human, and financial resources. The country's generous approach to refugees is particularly notable in view of the severe extreme poverty and many other urgent development challenges it faces. The World Bank, following consultation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), confirms that the protection framework for refugees continues to be adequate in South Sudan.

7. **Investments in human capital are critical for South Sudan to leverage its natural endowments and grow a competitive economy.** As South Sudan rebuilds infrastructure and institutions in this new development phase, investing in the education and skills of its citizens and the large number of refugees and their host communities could yield rich dividends. The HCI suggests that in a scenario of complete education and full health, South Sudan could have a future Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per worker that is 3.34 times higher in the long run compared to the current scenario.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

8. **The civil war impeded the development of South Sudan's education system and disrupted education provision.** Education infrastructure and education personnel were often attacked during the period of conflict, with the United Nations (UN) reporting 293 attacks on schools or military use of schools between December 2013 and October 2017.⁹ During this period, government spending was directed towards humanitarian aid and, in 2017, South Sudan spent only 1 percent of its GDP on education, far lower than the averages for Sub-Saharan Africa (4 percent) and low-income countries (3.6 percent). This lack of investment in education over the last decade has affected the country's stock of human capital, and youth now entering the labor market have few employable skills. It has also degraded the quality of education institutions in the country, placing the human capital of future generations in jeopardy.

9. **Rebuilding the country's education system requires addressing the significant shortfalls in qualified teachers.** According to the 2021 Education Census Report, 26 percent of schools across the country are non-operational due to lack of teachers. At the same time, the high pupil-qualified teacher ratio (PQTR) of 86:1 in primary schools significantly compromises the ability to provide quality education. There is also a large gap between male and female teachers. Of the 60,711 teachers in the country, only about 18 percent are female.¹⁰ The difficulty in finding qualified teachers has led the education system to recruit volunteer teachers. For instance, 46 percent of primary education teachers are volunteers without training. The lack of qualified teachers has impacted student learning, with more than 94 percent of school children unable to read and understand a simple text by the age of 10.¹¹ To offer quality education to those currently enrolled in schools, more than 30,000 volunteers teaching in South Sudanese schools need to be trained. At the same time, to meet the ambition of universal access to education,

⁹ UNICEF. 2017. "South Sudan: The impact of the crisis on children-Briefing Note."

¹⁰ Data based on Government of South Sudan National Education Census Report 2021.

¹¹ World Bank. 2022. Strategies for Addressing Stunting and Learning Poverty in South Sudan



another 30,000 qualified teachers will be needed just at the primary level to offer quality basic education to South Sudanese children.

10. Effective teachers can jumpstart the education system in South Sudan. Teachers' content knowledge and teaching skills significantly impact student learning. Even in resource-constrained settings where students lack access to basic infrastructure, qualified and effective teachers can change a child's learning trajectory. A review of interventions across low- and middle-income countries reveals that the most effective interventions to improve student learning rely upon teachers. For instance, teacher-driven interventions such as structured pedagogy programs raised student scores between 0.14 and 0.23 standard deviations, corresponding to approximately 6 to 9 months of learning, and the impact is even larger in settings of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV).¹² In addition to learning, effective teachers can significantly enhance students' long-term academic, socioemotional, and professional achievements. Teacher quality also affects student retention and could influence the demand for education. For teachers to perform effectively, they must be well prepared and equipped with traditional competencies, such as content knowledge and pedagogy skills, and non-traditional competencies such as socioemotional skills. Therefore, prioritizing teacher professional development is critical to strengthening school systems and improving human capital accumulation.

11. The lack of effective teacher training programs is a significant barrier to increasing access to quality education. Recognizing that low and irregularly paid salaries pose a significant challenge to attracting and retaining teachers in the profession, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) has increased teacher salaries and committed to regularize payments. An enduring concern, however, is the limited capacity of the existing educational institutions to offer teacher training programs to meet both current needs for qualified teachers to offer quality education and to expand schooling to achieve the country's goal of universal access to education. Only a few educational institutions providing pre-service and in-service training are operational; as of March 2022, only 3 public National Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs), 3 private TTIs, and 6 County Education Centers were in operation.¹³ The few operational institutions also lack financial resources and adequately equipped facilities. Most teacher training offered focuses on subject matter content and little time is devoted to learner-centered pedagogical approaches. Training is delivered by trainers who meet minimum educational qualifications (bachelor's degrees) but have received little training in instructing student teachers. There is little in-service training or professional development on offer – teachers received only two days of training on content and pedagogies appropriate for the newly introduced competency-based curriculum.¹⁴ To fill this gap in teachers' training, development partners and faith-based organizations have financed and delivered several accredited and non-accredited teacher training programs.¹⁵ However, the high reliance on non-governmental partners, coupled with the limited planning capacity of MoGEI, has led to fragmentation of teacher training, with programs of varying quality distributed unevenly across states.

12. A well-structured approach to improving teaching skills and competencies would build on and complement the existing programs of other development partners. Several development partners have been investing in improving access to quality education in South Sudan. Among these development partners is the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which is implementing a grant through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The GPE's

¹² World Bank. 2021. Successful Teachers, Successful Students: Recruiting and Supporting Society's Most Crucial Profession

¹³ TTIs offer residential pre-service and in-service teacher training

¹⁴ Adum, Peter and Christophe Morgan. (Forthcoming). National Teacher Training Institutes and Country Education Centers Tutors.

¹⁵ Accredited programs such as simplified forms of pre-service programs and in-service or CPD programs leading to QTS. Non-accredited programs such as the Save the Children's Enabling Teachers CPD program for primary school teachers (Strategies for Addressing Stunting and Learning Poverty in South Sudan).



efforts focus on aspects such as strengthening the system's capacity, information management, and girls' education. Other development partners active in this arena in South Sudan include the European Union (EU) Delegation, which has provided cash incentives for 30,000 teachers,¹⁶ and UK AID,¹⁷ which is implementing a program covering areas such as teacher development, school system strengthening, and life skills. This is in addition to initiatives by the African Development Bank (AFDB), Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the World Food Program (WFP). In general, development partners in South Sudan have focused on bringing children to schools and improving the quality of education through infrastructure development, school feeding, cash transfers, system capacity development, and teachers' development. Despite the significance of all these components, however, learning outcomes will not improve without a more focused effort to address the shortage in the supply of qualified teachers. Therefore, investing in a well-structured teacher training model is key to integrating partners' efforts in teacher development and building a cadre of qualified teachers.

13. Building a cadre of qualified teachers can improve schooling and human capital outcomes for generations to come. An effective approach must reach individuals who are attracted by the teaching profession but face constraints in accessing training, like volunteer teachers. It must include pre-service training and continuous professional development opportunities for both qualified and unqualified teachers that have strong potential to improve their effectiveness. Offering these training opportunities to youth also creates avenues for them to be gainfully employed increasing the opportunity cost of violence and making them less susceptible to recruitment into armed groups.

14. South Sudan could also reap rich dividends by investing in skills needed for strategic sectors, especially agriculture. The sector is estimated to account for 36 percent of the non-oil GDP. Most agriculture currently practiced in South Sudan consists of subsistence farming, but the country has the potential to feed itself and export food to neighboring countries. South Sudan has about five times the area of agricultural land per capita compared to Kenya, Uganda, or Ethiopia, but only about 1-2 percent is cultivated. Apart from the conflict, manual farming practices limit the cultivation of arable land, and World Bank¹⁸ and AFDB¹⁹ reports note South Sudan's weak capacity to provide extension services to farmers as a constraint to improving agricultural productivity. Addressing the complex challenge of increasing agricultural productivity requires building knowledge and skills in climate resilient agriculture, as well as harnessing new technology to unlock the agriculture sector's full economic potential.

15. Investments in agricultural skills can have significant job-multiplier effects, with considerable welfare impacts. Agriculture and food systems are the primary source of livelihood for around 88 percent of rural households and about half of urban households. Investments that make agriculture productive can have tremendous job-multiplier effects beyond primary production, including reviving market-oriented activities and market links, and the emergence of medium-sized farmers that are commercially oriented. In other Sub-Saharan African countries, this emerging segment of dynamic, small/medium-size farmers have been driving productivity growth and the jobs generation. Between 2008 and 2014, for example, medium-scale farms in the United Republic of Tanzania created 13 million days of additional work annually for hired workers. Improving the productivity of agricultural jobs also has

¹⁶ Through programs such as IMPACT and OUTREACH

¹⁷ Funded through the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO)

¹⁸ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32103/South-Sudan-Linking-the-Agriculture-and-Food-Sector-to-the-Job-Creation-Agenda.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/SouthSudanInfrastructureActionPlanProgramforSustainedStrongEconomicGrowthChapterDevelopmentofAgricultureinSouthSudan.pdf> African Development Bank. 2013. South Sudan: An Infrastructure Action Plan - A Program for Sustained Strong Economic Growth



the capacity for gender empowerment, with close to 80 percent of farm labor provided by women. Closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains for the agricultural sector and for society.²⁰

16. Building local capacity in precision and climate resilient agriculture will also strengthen South Sudan's ability to withstand weather shocks and improve food security. South Sudan is the fifth most vulnerable country to climate change, according to the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Country Index, and the eighth most affected country by weather-related loss events. In 2021 alone, recurrent flooding damaged more than 65,000 hectares dedicated to cereal production. Climate shocks, including flooding and droughts, have exacerbated food insecurity in certain areas, which can have particularly long-lasting effects on the human capital of young children. Studies from Sub-Saharan Africa show that household food insecurity is significantly associated with stunting, which in turn is linked to reductions in lifelong learning, cognition, educational attainment, and economic potential.

17. Building skills in teaching and agriculture is aligned with the national priorities identified by the Government of South Sudan in the Revised National Strategy (2021-2024). The Revised National Strategy (2021-2024) highlights supporting teacher training institutions and fast-track teacher training through pre-service and in-service programs as key strategic interventions to address the poor quality of education. The importance of teacher training is also highlighted in the Government's General Education Strategic Plan (2017-2022). The Strategic Plan identifies the setting of minimum requirements for all new teachers and revitalizing teacher training institutions to improve and expand pre-service and in-service training options as key strategies to improve the competency of its teachers.²¹ The Revised National Strategy indicates that the MoGEI and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MoHEST) will lead teacher training interventions, but increasing institutional capacity and improving coordination between the two entities is essential to achieve these goals. In fact, the Revised National Strategy included strengthening the institutional capacity of the two ministries as part of the service cluster objectives. The Revised National Strategy also proclaims modernizing agriculture as a priority area. The strategy suggests that agriculture presents an opportunity for economic diversification in the short and medium term and will create job opportunities for the young population. The Strategy also highlights the importance of incorporating Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the delivery of education and skills training.

18. The dissemination of foundational learning skills and building capacity for improved agricultural practices are key to promoting resilience in South Sudan. Promoting learning and the capacity to acquire skills through qualified teachers would enhance social cohesion and improve stability. Empirical evidence suggests that countries that invest in human capital create more engaged citizens that build the foundation for stable democracies. In Nigeria, for example, the cohort that benefitted from the introduction of universal primary education in the mid-1970s was found to be more engaged in political life, paying closer attention to the news, attending community meetings, and voting more often than those who did not go to primary school.²² In addition, building the capacity of youth for effective agricultural practices would contribute to increasing the socioeconomic opportunities for youth and empowering women, accelerating economic dividends. This would help rebuild lost human capital in South Sudan and generate potential to break cycles of violence.

19. For sustainable improvements in the education and skills sectors, investing in strengthening the institutional capacity of education governing entities will be critical. Education governing-ministries, the MoGEI and

²⁰ "Closing the Knowledge Gap" Report 2014.

²¹ The Government is currently assessing the implementation of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and preparing a new 5-year plan.

²² World Bank. (2018). The Human Capital Project. Washington, DC: World Bank



the MoHEST, have limited capacity to plan, coordinate, and provide oversight essential to managing the education system effectively. This impedes these ministries from effectively addressing the systemic challenges, including attracting, preparing, and managing qualified teachers. This limited institutional and coordination capacity of the education governing ministries in an ecosystem that is characterized by high reliance on non-governmental partners has led to fragmented interventions and inefficient use of resources. As the government takes on a more prominent role in service delivery, it will be important to invest in its capacity for planning and implementing education reform to ensure sustained improvements in education outcomes of the country's children.

20. Functional mechanisms to support evidence-based decision-making and management of the sector are needed. MoGEI has an Education Management Information System (EMIS), but its implementation has not been tackled comprehensively to date and the existing data essential for sector evaluation and development has significant gaps. The EMIS requires dissemination to all states and harmonization with other databases in the MoGEI, such as the examination results, South Sudan School Attendance and Monitoring System, Human Resources Management Information System, and Financial Management Information System. The existing data collection instruments also need revision to incorporate the required information for monitoring the implementation of key indicators. Quality, reliable data is fundamental to inform education decisions and policies and enhance transparency. Accordingly, strengthening the EMIS and the annual school survey process to provide quality education information, in a timely manner, at every administrative level is essential to support the functions of the education ministries.

21. The education governing ministries lack the policy tools and implementation capacity needed for education sector management. The General Education system is characterized by inequitable allocation of teachers, unclear deployment drivers, and outdated salary structure. The existing frameworks mainly exist at the national level and usually are not disseminated at the sub-national levels nor enforced at the national and sub-national levels. Improving and enforcing the policy framework to address the existing education challenges and guiding the sector activities is fundamental in enhancing individual and organizational performance, as well as maintaining it over time to achieve the required results. Strengthening the physical capacity, such as suitable physical infrastructure and equipment, is equally important to implement the introduced change and encourage individuals. Currently, the existing physical and Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and office equipment in the education ministries, mainly at the sub-national levels, are insufficient. The technology of some systems, such as the EMIS, requires updating to facilitate dissemination to states. Improving the physical infrastructure and upgrading equipment are necessary to address the capacity gap fully.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

PDO Statement

22. The Project's Development Objective is to increase skills development opportunities in teaching and digital agriculture and strengthen capacity for management of the education system.

PDO Level Indicators

23. The PDO will be measured by the following indicators:

- i. Share of trainees enrolled in Project-supported teacher training programs that successfully



- complete the program, disaggregated by gender and refugee/host community status (%).
- ii. Share of trainees enrolled in agriculture digital training programs certified, disaggregated by gender and refugee/host community status (%).
- iii. National Institutional development plans implemented (text).

D. Project Description

24. **The Project will support South Sudan in establishing the minimum skills base needed to accelerate human capital formation by addressing skills constraints in key sectors that contribute to human capital—education and agriculture.** In both these sectors, a lack of critical skills is a binding constraint for improving sector performance, which will need to be addressed to enable complementary investments to produce returns. The Project interventions will focus on: (i) enhancing teachers' skills to strengthen education delivery through in-service and pre-service professional development; (ii) fostering the development of digital skills in youth through the piloting of a blended education model for a digital agriculture program; and (iii) strengthening the government's capacity to manage the education system by providing technical assistance and capacity building to the MoGEI and the MoHEST, strengthening information management systems, and establishing a Project Implementation Unit to manage Project activities. In addition, given the dire status of the large refugee population in South Sudan and the low education outcomes of its host communities, support will be provided to these communities to lift their education status.

25. **The Project will prioritize skills development of women given their key role in both the education and agriculture sectors in South Sudan.** Evidence shows that female teachers positively impact girls' school enrollment and retention, as they contribute to creating a supportive environment and girl-friendly schools. Female teachers could also act as role models who motivate girls to learn and empower them to develop their skills. The Project will prioritize training for female teachers given the many benefits of female teachers and to correct the current low proportion of female teachers in South Sudan's teaching force. At the same time, inclusion of women in the agri-food sector would also have the potential to raise productivity.

26. **The Project will also prioritize teaching and digital agriculture skills of other marginalized groups, particularly refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), given the disproportionate challenges in access to services and opportunities they face.** Evidence shows that education is a durable solution for refugee and internally displaced children. Training teachers from refugee and internally displaced communities will enhance their employment opportunities and increase the supply pool of teachers who can teach in the native languages that refugees and IDPs speak. Thus, effective refugee and IDP teachers could support displaced children by providing them with fundamental learning in their native language, cognitive skills, and psychosocial support when they are most vulnerable. In addition, given that fewer than half of IDPs of working age are employed in South Sudan, improving their skills in agriculture would increase their opportunity to join the job market. This would reduce the devastating losses in their earnings, network, and connections to the labor market.

Component 1: Teaching Skills to Strengthen Education Delivery (US\$30 million, of which US\$20 million from National PBA, US\$7 million from GPE and US\$3 million from WHR)



27. **This component will build the foundations for a scalable and effective teacher professional development system tailored to the context of South Sudan.** The component will establish/strengthen mechanisms for preparing new teachers to meet future needs through formal pre-service teacher training and provide training to in-service teachers (particularly voluntary teachers) to improve their teaching practices. More specifically, the component will support, among others: (a) activities to strengthen the formal pre-service teacher professional development; (b) accelerated modalities for secondary education of unqualified teachers, (c) mechanisms for continuous in-service teacher professional development; (d) scholarships and other activities to attract more female teachers (both prospective teachers and in-service teachers) to teacher training opportunities; (e) rapid evaluations and multiple iterations to fine-tune the design of the teacher training programs; (f) training for refugee teachers targeted to the specific needs of refugee populations including socio-emotional support and language skills; (f) technical assistance to support the development, adaptation, and implementation of key building blocks of the teacher professional development system of South Sudan, with a focus on strengthening the capacity and sustainability of the system.

Component 2: Digital Skills for Agriculture (US\$8 million, of which US\$2 million from WHR)

28. **This component will support the development and implementation of an innovative digital agriculture skills program.** The program will be offered across the country through existing higher education institutions and will be implemented by MoHEST. In particular, the component will support the development and implementation of diploma and certificate programs in digital skills for climate resilient agriculture, which will focus on equipping students with digital skills and technical knowledge in precision and climate resilient agriculture that have economic potential. The delivery model for the program will combine remote training provided by international experts with face-to-face support for students provided by local tutors. This blended training approach will allow the country to leverage international knowhow to build local expertise in climate resilient agriculture and mitigate the negative effects of climate change. The program is expected to train approximately 3,500 trainees from across the country. This component will promote enrollment and retention of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially those from refugee and host communities. These students will receive additional support to enroll in and attend the training course in the form of stipends to meet housing and sustenance needs. The Project will target to benefit at least 500 refugee students under this component.

Component 3: Inclusion of Refugee and Host Communities (US\$5 million from WHR and US\$ 3 million from GPE)

29. **This component will support the re-operationalization of schools in refugee hosting areas in Ruweng Administrative Area, Upper Nile State and Western Equatoria.** The component will provide a basic package of support to approximately 30 currently non-functional schools in the targeted areas to ensure their functionality. Communities in refugee hosting areas that have large numbers of primary-aged girls and boys that are not in school will be prioritized. The basic package of support will include refurbishment of existing school facilities to make them more adaptable to climate change by ensuring they are flood-resistant and learning-conducive. It will also provide qualified teachers recruited following a merit-based process prioritizing local teachers. In addition, school grants to meet recurrent expenditures will be provided to the supported schools. The component will also support strengthening of school management through State and County Education Department. Environmental and security factors and community support for the schools will be assessed to determine the package of support to be provided to the school. The re-operationalized schools are expected to enroll an additional 5,000 out-of-school children. These activities will be coordinated closely with existing World Bank-financed projects in social



protection to promote children's access to schooling opportunities in these areas, as well as with other development partners that provide support to refugees and their host communities to build on successful pilots, specifically UNHCR, which currently plays a leading role in coordinating education services for refugee and many host community students.

Component 4: System Building (US\$ 11.33 million of which US\$ 9 million from IDA and US\$ 2.33 million from GPE)

30. **This component will provide support to the Government to operationalize and strengthen fundamental elements of a functional education system.** Establishing functionality to manage and monitor the education system will be critical for the coherence and sustainability of sector investments. Component 4 will support this goal through: (i) strengthening the capacity of the Government (both MoGEI and MoHEST) for better planning, implementation, management, and monitoring of the sector; (ii) strengthening the capacity of the federal and state ministries of education for regular and reliable monitoring of the sector and evaluation of key initiatives to generate data and evidence for future; and (iii) the establishment of a cross-ministerial (MoHEST and MoGEI) Project Implementation Unit (PIU) to coordinate and manage day-to-day project implementation.

Component 5: Contingency Emergency Response Component (US\$0)

31. **A zero allocation Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) is included in the proposed Project given the political, social, and economic uncertainties the country is facing, and the possibility of natural disasters that may affect the delivery of basic services.** If needed, the CERC can be activated and funded during implementation to allow the Government of South Sudan to rapidly reallocate uncommitted IDA funds, as appropriate, to support emergency response in relevant sectors and/or parts of the country. The Project Operations Manual (POM) will include an annex with the procedures for triggering and implementing the CERC and the Financing Agreement will set out specific requirements, including the preparation and adoption of the CERC Manual, the Emergency Action Plan, and the environmental and social instruments required for the proper implementation of the CERC.

Legal Operational Policies

Triggered?

Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The Project would support South Sudan to establish the minimum skills base needed to enable the country to accelerate human capital formation. The Project will have national coverage.



South Sudan is a landlocked country that lies between latitudes 3°N and 13° N and longitudes 24°E and 36°E. The country's territory totals 644,329 km² and has many plains and plateaus that are drained by the Nile and its numerous tributaries. South Sudan is endowed with a wealth of biodiversity, which provides the country with great opportunity for socioeconomic development, as well as many biological resources that have considerable economic and social value. Most South Sudanese depend on biological diversity for goods and services, either directly or indirectly, for their basic and development needs. The country has a wide range of habitats, including lowland forest, montane forest, savannah woodland, savannah grassland, wetlands and floodplains, the Sudd Wetland, and the semi-arid region in the north, which support a very rich diversity of animal and plant species. However, such biodiversity, including wildlife, is currently under threat, due to weak environmental regulation, poor development planning, fires, and most importantly, fragility resulting from conflict, instability, and insecurity.

South Sudan faces several development challenges due to decades of political instability, poverty, and persistent food insecurity, all of which are exacerbated by climate change. With around half its population living below the national poverty line, a weak economy, and ongoing political conflict, South Sudan ranks among the world's most fragile states. Despite having one of Africa's richest agricultural areas with fertile soils and abundant water, frequent flooding, conflict, and the displacement of millions of people have drastically reduced the country's food production, which has left an estimated 7.5 million people facing food insecurity. Climate change in South Sudan is manifested through erratic onset and duration of rains, delayed and shorter rainy seasons, less rainfall in some areas leading to decreased water table levels and the southward expansion of the desert (Government of South Sudan Initial National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2018).

Most of the project activities are not anticipated to have significant E&S risks. The project activities will not require new land acquisition. However, some of the activities under the project components include minor civil works (rehabilitation and renovation activities) which will be undertaken within the existing compounds. Almost all the ESSs will be relevant to the project except ESS5 and ESS9.

(i) Environmental Risk Management

32. **The key environmental risks associated with the project are rated as Moderate.** The environment and health and safety risks associated are anticipated to result from the rehabilitation of NTTIs including proportional allocation of gender-separated washrooms and water delivery points for each school, renovation of institutions/polytechnics and provision of teaching and learning equipment. Renovation of NTTIs may include refurbishment activities including painting of walls, replacing of light bulbs/minor electrical repairs, and repairing of plumping works, and could bring minor occupational health and safety, pollution, and waste generation-related risks. In addition, the procurement of IT equipment required for NTTIs and remote learning (projectors, servers, solar chargers, satellites, etc.) will also generate small quantities of electronic waste. Risks and impacts related to minor civil works such as noise, waste, construction dust, contamination of soil, generation of domestic waste, soil erosion, water effluents, potential health safety risks due to possible exposure to environmental liabilities such as asbestos, lead based paint and; poor water provision and quality will affect health. The cumulative impact of the works and presence of contractors and machinery at each targeted site is unknown at the moment, but careful supervision will be needed to avoid accidents. Other potential impacts at the sub-project area level are related to waste generated from minor construction activities (cement mixing areas, metal, wood and paint residues, diesel and other residues); open pits in the soil can cause accidents; cutting of trees to use as building material; and road accidents; among others. During



operations, the project will produce some amount of waste by-products, risk of provision of inadequate potable water, generation of wastewater, potential safety risks to students, teachers and facility administration staff due to man-made disasters (fire, explosions, inadequate structural or related safety of buildings, etc.), natural disasters (floods, droughts, health diseases, etc.) and poor ambient air quality within classrooms.

33. Project activities will be undertaken in compliance with the World Bank's Advisory Note on Technical Assistance and the ESF. The project has planned to undertake installation of energy saving teaching and learning equipment—including ICT infrastructure, however, challenges associated with the limited environmental and social management capacity of both the MOGEI and the MOHEST remain. In light of the limited institutional capacity of implementing partners, small, localized, & reversible nature of environmental, health and safety risks of the referenced activities, the overall risks and potential adverse environmental impacts are rated Moderate.

(ii) Social Risk Management

34. **The potential social benefits outweigh the risks associated with the proposed project activities.** The Project is expected to benefit students, teachers, and communities across South Sudan with improved education system performance, improved quality of teaching and agriculture practices, and increased opportunities for skills development and employment for those who will receive training under the Project. The Project aims to ensure equity by using a targeted approach to generate a more equitable and beneficial development outcome, particularly for youth and women. These are achieved through 1) reducing constraints faced by women to enter the teaching profession 2) prioritize youth in disadvantaged areas 3) strengthening the institutional environment for education training.

35. **The potential social risks can be classified as (i) contextual and (ii) project specific.** The overall contextual risks relate to conflict and fragility due to protracted civil war and delayed realization of the peace process. Second, potential security and safety risks to beneficiaries, workers and school communities. Third, due to prolonged conflict in South Sudan, the institutions and services are considerably weak, especially at the local level. Fourth, the accessibility of some of the project areas due to conflict or remoteness make the accessibility of project services a challenge. Security and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment are other contextual risks in the country. Project related potential risks include: (i) inadequate stakeholder consultation/engagement; (ii) selection biases and corrupt practices in selection of institutions and trainees/beneficiaries; (iii) lack of functional grievance redress mechanisms; (iv) discriminatory practices in accessing project services and benefits; (v) inadequate protection of labor and working conditions; (vi) labor influx risks; and (ix) gender-based violence /SEA risks. Another potential risk is conflict between host and refugees due to the perception that refugees are sharing resources that should go for South Sudanese. However, as the project mainly focuses on urban areas where security risks may be relatively lower, the social risk of the project is rated as substantial. Women in South Sudan are less likely to be employed in wage and salaried work and women constitute a small minority in education sector as educators due to the restrictive gender and social norms and protracted civil wars that left women with fewer choices and opportunities, less agency and options for self-determination. The unavailability of services such as childcare hamper women's participation in employment. The vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in South Sudan comprise, people affected by human-made social and economic shocks, refugees, IDPs, soldiers, demobilized soldiers (including those displaced), child soldiers, young girls, women headed households, child headed households, female ex-combatants, etc. The risk related to land acquisition is low. Project activities do not require land for implementation. Some maintenance and renovation activities that are necessary for re-opening and equipping of NTTIs, and availing connectivity to NTTIs and Public Universities, however, all will be done in the existing compound and no new land



will be acquired. During preparation, it is confirmed that all of these construction activities will take place within the existing premises of institutions and there will not be any new land acquisition for the project. Accessibility of internet labs and digital gadgets for persons with disability could result in exclusion of vulnerable groups. The low skills in the use of such gadgets may put vulnerable groups such as women at a disadvantage. Hence, the project will identify such risks as part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework and include mitigation measures which ensures inclusion of vulnerable groups including people with disability. In particular, the rehabilitation work will take into consideration the accessibility of students with special needs.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

36. **Overall project leadership will be provided by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).** The PSC will be co-chaired by the Under Secretaries of MoGEI and MoHEST and will provide strategic direction and guidance on high-level risk management and decision-making on project objectives. This inclusive body will be crucial for promoting dialogue, consensus-building, and joint decision-making on key aspects of the education system.

37. **MoGEI and MoHEST will be responsible for implementation of Project activities.** MoGEI and MoHEST will establish separate Project Implementation Units (PIUs) that will be responsible for implementation of their respective components and activities. The two PIUs will coordinate implementation, build capacity of Ministry teams for implementation, facilitate support for compliance with environment and social requirements for the Project, collect and compile data from the project results framework, and manage communications for the Project. Each PIU will comprise of (i) a Project coordinator; (ii) Financial Management Specialist, and (iii) Accountant, (iv) Procurement Specialist, (v) Environmental Specialist, (vi) Social Specialist, and (vii) Gender Based Violence specialist.

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