

Annual Progress Report 2021

Education in Emergency
Upper Nile
South Sudan

1 June 2022: QZA-18/353 – Project B



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Acronyms

ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
CDSS	Community Development Support Service
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standards
CP	Child Protection
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DPO	Disabled Peoples Organizations
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
ETLE	Effective Teaching and Learning Environment
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGA	Income Generation Activities
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (rating from 1 for low to 5 famine)
LDSC	Latter-day Saints Charities
MOGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
N/A	Not Applicable
NIRA	Network for Integration and Rural Advancement
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PTA	Parent Teacher Associations
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SMC	School Management Committees
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers

1. Basic Information

Name of Project: Education in Emergency Upper Nile
Name of grant recipient: Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Norway
Agreement number: QZA-18/0353 – Project B
Agreement period: 01.04.2020 – 29.02.2024
Report for year: 2021
Type of report submitted: Annual Progress Report



Introduction

The objective of the Education in Emergency Upper Nile project is that all learners, regardless of background, ability, and gender, equitably access, engage in and learn in inclusive educational institutions. The project is learner-focused and incorporates conflict-sensitivity approaches to develop education pathways for the conflict affected children, girls, out of school children and youth, and children with disabilities. The project components focus on quality, equity, inclusion, protection, psychosocial support and participation of parents, communities, and civil society in strengthened learning environments and education systems. Widespread poverty, conflict, food insecurity and epidemics are continual challenges in South Sudan.

Peace and Security. The program target areas of Upper Nile are seeing progress towards political stabilization and significant refugee and IDP returns. This is attributed to the formation of the Government of National Unity in Juba in February 2020 and the state government for Upper Nile in March 2021. At the same time, political contentions regarding territory and the implementation of the peace process continue. In March 2021 government soldiers launched attacks on seven villages near Nasir town after a government soldier was killed by unidentified gunman. The incident led to temporary displacement of 14,688 (10,273 f; 4,415 m) among whom were 4,896 (2,929 f; 1,967 m) children. The project plays an important role in normalizing education provision in opposition control areas and promoting dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation. Apart from this, the overall number of community level incidences such as revenge killings and cattle raiding has also reduced.

Disasters. The Sobat corridor of Upper Nile experienced heavy rains between July and November 2021 that obstructed access to air strips and transportation routes making it difficult transport project supplies to the project sites. The flooding impacted harvests, contributing to the deteriorating food security and economic conditions. The effects of disruptions to supply chains during COVID-19 measures were still felt throughout 2021.

Covid-19. As of 3 May 2021, schools re-opened across South Sudan, including project target schools in an adverse context after significant disruption to education, livelihoods, food security and economy

Food Insecurity. Maiwut and Nasir counties were classified in emergency (IPC-4) acute food insecurity, with 59% experiencing acute or emergency level food insecurity, during 2021.ⁱ Most communities in Upper Nile are almost entirely dependent on food rations from World Food program. Food assistance plays a big role in reducing conflict and reducing the impact of food insecurity on school attendance. The situation is further deteriorating due to the war in Ukraine.

SDGs and sector alignment



The project contributes to SDG 4 by promoting inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all as set out in the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030. Specifically, the project contributes to (a) SDG 4.A to build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability, and gender sensitive to provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments, (b) SDG 4.C to increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries and (c) SDG 4.5 to eliminate all discrimination in education. This has been done through project output indicators 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, reaching out-of-school children and raising inclusive education standards. While COVID-19 has led to significant setbacks for SDG4, the project has continued to engage parents, communities, teachers, and students in efforts to sustain education services and adapt programming.



The project contributes to SDG 5, to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls by increasing access to learning opportunities for women and girls and increasing representation of women in school management structures, supporting female teachers, and involving female students in student leadership.



The project is aligned with the Government of South Sudan's sector strategies for Education, the South Sudan National Development Strategy (SSNDS) 2018-2021 and Vision 2040 by (a) creating an enabling environment for the voluntary return and integration of IDPs and refugees, (b) enrolling out-of-school children, (c) increasing the proportion of children completing primary education, (d) strengthening the capacity of local education officials, (e) expanding services to opposition-controlled areas, (f) consolidate peace and stabilize the economy, (g) promoting community participation in education, (h) enhancing partnerships with community networks, and (i) Increased advocacy through clusters

Overall performance

The year 2021 saw several major disruptions to education and project operations relating to COVID-19, food insecurity, conflict, economic challenges, and flooding. We note the following overarching performance factors:

- The Covid 19 pandemic led to the closure of schools from March 2020 to May 2021. This has distorted the national school calendar with the school year for 2021 running up to March 2022. This affects the measurement of some indicators.
- The COVID-19 school closures had a high impact on performance of P8 students in examinations, with 16% of girls and 15% of boys passing the Primary Eight National examination. The mentors interacted with the learners in the schools and noted that the poor performance is due to absenteeism, the low qualifications of the teachers and the closure of schools during COVID-19. The primary eight textbooks for the new curriculum were not available in the schools, the candidates were taught using the old curriculum while the examination was set using the new curriculum.
- The project has been able to sustain interest in education during the school closures through adapted programming and has seen strong re-enrolment in 2021. But while the project had strong success in getting children back into school, there is still a considerable number of children who are out-of-school, as some parents still don't prioritize education.
- Flooding and disasters led to irregular attendance of schools and affected transportation and access.
- Teacher professional development was a feature of the sustainability strategy, providing a pathway for improving teacher competency, raising education quality, and contributing to raising student learning outcomes. Involvement of government officials in implementation of project activities created ownership and shared responsibility in the teacher training program. The involvement of the local tutors and the local education authorities in teacher training program was also an aspect of sustainability and ownership of this program. It was expected that involvement of the local tutors in training of the student teachers will help to build the capacity of the tutors to continue with teacher training and mentoring with support from the local education authorities in the future as discussed with MoGEI.
- The qualification level of teachers in South Sudan is generally very low. ADRA South Sudan has developed the Teacher Mentorship Support (TEAMS) approach to address these gaps and is seeing steady progress through the mentoring sessions that are being conducted with the teachers. It was noted that the mentoring is still highly valued and effective, with over 90% of teachers value mentoring and coaching above other forms of professional development. The mentors have made a significant contribution towards the results, as they have engaged school communities and teachers in running school activities, build the capacity of the parents, PTA members and teachers to do things differently to support their schools.
- Sixteen local counsellors were recruited and deployed to the project targeted schools to build local capacity for continued support for the school communities in the absence of support from humanitarian agencies. The project is overachieving targets for referrals support again in 2021 due to the contribution of the counsellors and engagement from teachers, PTA/SMC members, head teachers, local communities, and local organizations.
- The project made positive progress in work with organizations of persons with disability (DPOs) and Women's associations, to strengthen participation, inclusion, and engagement in advocacy and in peace processes.
- There was a very high level of community participation and engagement (see results example).



Meeting with newly formed organization of persons with disability (DPO) in Nasir

Key achievements

11,788	children and youth enrolled in education programs (5,388 f; 6,400 m)
6,702	learners received teaching and learning materials (3,201 f, 3,501 m)
700	out-of-school children and youth enrolled in the ALP program, 76% are adolescent girls (532 f; 168 m)
850	children and youth received referral support for cases such as neglect, early/forced marriage, child labor, and psychosocial counselling for trauma and health related needs. (395 f; 455 m)
325	girls received dignity kits.
306	persons with disabilities included
6,597	IDP returnees are reached
2,142	refugee returnees are reached
496	parents and caregivers participated in family strengthening activities and education awareness activities. (203 f, 293 m)
290	PTA/SMC members trained on psychosocial support, child protection, child rights and gender-based violence. (156 f; 134 m)
23	Classrooms constructed/rehabilitated in Nasir and Maiwut
20	Toilet stances (5 blocks) were constructed to improve the ratio of students to latrines
27	local education officials trained (27m)
194	teachers trained (21 f; 173 m)
39	head teachers trained (1 f; 38 m)
24	accelerated learning facilitators trained (2 f; 22 m)

2. Progress towards achieving the objectives

This report uses a traffic light system to visualize the achievement progress towards the 2020 targets.

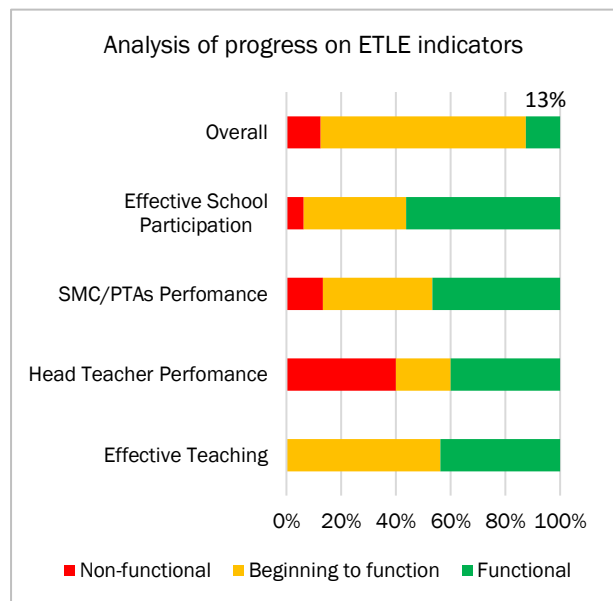
- 3 Achieving targets
Functioning
- 2 Beginning to show
progress
- 1 No Progress
- ★ Not measured

Objective: All learners, regardless of background, ability, and gender, equitably access, engage in and learn in inclusive educational institutions

Objective Indicator 1: # and % of learners in supported educational institutions achieving expected standards of quality, inclusive and effective learner-friendly education environments (ETLE composite indicator) **Target:** 25% **Achieved:** 13%

2

1,121 learners (13%) were in the 2 schools that achieved the expected standards in all ETLE indicators. This was out of the 8,603 learners who were enrolled in 16 educational institutions that were part of the ETLE assessment. This refers to the schools that meet standards in all of output indicators 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 3.2.1, and 4.1.1. From the assessment, 2,944 learners or 34% were in schools that met at least 3 of 4 the standards and 4,015 or 47% were in schools that met at least 2 of the standards. Only 1,015 students or 12% were in the two schools that were not achieving standards on any of the key ETLE indicators. The graph to the right represents an analysis of the ETLE data grouping the schools by their level of functionality.



Non-functional: schools that did not meet standards on any of the key indicators.

Beginning to function: schools that met many of the key indicators and showed significant progress.

Functional: schools that met more than 50% of standards for all indicators.

The project activities are leading to improvements in effectiveness of teaching and learning. While the project is investing in community engagement, SMC/PTA roles in school management, a strong emphasis during 2021 and 2022 is on strengthening the performance of teachers through the continuous professional development, in-service training and through mentoring, and on the capacity building of the head teachers for effective management of the schools.

Objective indicator 2: % and # of learners (f/m) enrolled in supported educational institutions that remain in the educational institution the following year (disability) (Norad indicator 1.2)

Target: 70% **Achieved:** N/A due to COVID-19 closures

★

The number of learners that remained in the learning institution this year has not been calculated because in 2020, the learners were not enrolled in regular classes. During the pandemic the project supported learning continuity for 5,395 (2,638 f; 2756 m) learners through small groups. Prior to the COVID-19 school closures on March 20, 2020, the enrolment was 8,214 (3,752 f; 4,462 m) learners. In the 2021 academic year, a total of 11,788 (5,388 females, 6,400 males) learners enrolled in project supported educational institutions when they re-opened in May 2021. This will provide a basis for the reporting for the 2022 report. Considering the significant barriers to education and the disruptions, the project has performed exceptionally in its efforts to get learners back into school.

Outcome 1: More conflict affected children and youth access and participate in inclusive education

Outcome Indicator 1.1: % and # of out-of-school children (f/m) enrolled in supported educational institutions that remain in the learning institution the following year (disability)

Target: 70% **Achieved:** N/A

★

The number of out-of-school learners that remained in the learning institution this year has not been calculated because in 2020, the learners were not enrolled in regular classes. In 2021 a total of 700 (532 f; 168 m) youths enrolled into seven (7) Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) centers. This will be the basis for reporting against this indicator in 2022.

Output 1.1: More out-of-school children and youth access education

Indicator 1.1.1: # of out-of-school children (f/m) supported to enroll into an appropriate level of education (disability) (Norad indicator 1.1.1) (cumulative)

3

Target: 450 **Achieved:** 700

In 2021 a total of 700 (532 f; 168 m) youths enrolled into seven (7) Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) centers in Kurengke, Mandeng, Jikmir, Nyiengok in Nasir County and Maiwut, Pagak and Jekow in Maiwut County. While the definition of this indicator includes all persons of school going age that have not been in an educational institution for the last 6 months, we are only counting those enrolled in ALP here even though most of the 11,788 learners were not attending school during the COVID-19 school closures. The ALP centers have been specifically set up to reach out-of-school children and youth who have fully dropped out of school. When the ALP centers opened at the beginning of the year an initial number of 347 (275 f; 72 m) out-of-school children and youth were enrolled, but by quarter 4 of 2021, this number had grown to 700, including 19 (13 f; 6 m) with disability. A total of 24 (2 f; 22 m) facilitators were trained and were teaching in the ALP classes. It is noted that more female youths enrolled in the accelerated learning Program (76%) compared to their male counterparts, demonstrating the role of ALP in increasing educational opportunities for adolescent girls. The adolescent girls who participated in the ALP had previously dropped out mainly because of teenage pregnancy, early or forced marriages.

Output 1.2: Educational institutions and authorities have increased capacity to provide and manage inclusive education

Indicator 1.2.1: # of educational personnel (f/m) trained to support and respond to inclusive education (level of education, type of education personnel) (Norad core indicator 5) (cumulative)

3

Target: 228 **Achieved:** 275 (27 f; 248 m)

A total of 275 (27 f; 248 m) education personnel were trained in Maiwut and Nasir counties during the reporting period. This includes 16 (1 f; 15 m) officials, 39 (1 f; 38 m) head teachers and their deputies, 24 (2 f; 22 m) ALP facilitators and 196 (23 f; 173 m) teachers. This included an intensive two-week session from 2-16 November for continuous professional development training and in-service training at Maiwut secondary school in Maiwut and Stephen Duol Primary school in Nasir. In 2021, the National Ministry of Education through National Teacher Training Institute (NTTI), Rombur and Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS) took part in facilitation of In-service and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) teacher training program in both Maiwut and Nasir counties. The in-service and CPD training focused on methodologies of teaching and learning. At the local level, the county education officials also took part in the opening and closing of the training programs. Involvement of government officials in implementation of project activities created ownership and shared responsibility in the teacher training program. The verification, training and production of training materials were the roles of government while ADRA undertook the facilitation of the training program in terms of feeding, payment of incentives, transportation of trainees and tutors. Training has previously been provided to the teachers on child protection, psychosocial support, sexual gender-based violence, and disaster risk reduction in education institutions and developed action plans to implement what was learnt. Training has also been provided to teachers on psychosocial support and referral pathways. The project team continues to build cooperation between teachers, education officials, PTAs and community representatives in schools on practices of child labor, abuse, early/forced marriage and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Hiring of mentors to engage with school communities and teachers in running school activities has been a major contributor to increasing the capacity of teachers, parents, PTA members and head teachers. Training of the local education officials was conducted through mentoring on how to promote inclusive education, provide gender sensitive education, develop a child friendly education environment and to conduct school inspection and supervision. Joint school inspection and supervision visits were conducted as part of the monitoring to observe the conduct of the teachers and head teachers in relation to the code of conduct in the schools and check teachers' attendance records, visitors record books, student attendance registers, store records and the school rules and regulations forms.



Training of county education officials



Toilet block in Nasir



Timothy girls primary school classroom rehabilitation



Nasir County Education office rehabilitation

Outcome 2 More children and youth learn in safe, protective, and healthy education institutions

Outcome indicator 2.1: # of learners (f/m) enrolled in supported educational institutions (disability) (Norad core indicator 1)

3

Target: 8,214 **Achieved:** 11,788 (5,388 females, 6,400 males)

In the 2021 academic year, a total of 11,788 (5,388 females, 6,400 males) learners enrolled in project supported educational institutions when they re-opened in May 2021. This included 5,608 (2,983 f; 2,625 m) learners in Maiwut County and 6,180 (2,388 f; 2,625 m) in Nasir County. The project reached 297 (122 f; 175 m) learners with disabilities. Considering the significant barriers to education and the disruptions, the project has performed exceptionally in its efforts to get learners back into school. This achievement is attributed to the education awareness programs conducted in the communities and an increase in the number of returnees arriving in Upper Nile State. With the formation of the new government for Upper Nile and trend of stabilization, many of the IDPs and refugees have begun returning to original areas, particularly in and around Nasir town, formerly an opposition stronghold. While the situation is still fragile, NGOs have been encouraged to support this normalization by including schools in these return areas in project support. As was indicated in the annual plan for 2022, the project is expanding its coverage from 16 schools to 23 schools. Enrollment in the 16 schools for 2021 so far as schools reopened has been 8,603 (4,011 f; 4,592 m). The additional schools that already started receiving support in 2021 bring enrollment up to a total of 11,788 (5,388 females, 6,400 males) students reached by the project. While the ETL assessment was only conducted in the 16 schools, the targets for 2022 have been revised to 23 schools for all indicators. There are still considerable numbers of children who are still out-of-school. Work is continuous to sensitize communities about the important of education through 'back to learning' campaigns and advocacy through county education officials and community leaders. ADRA is working with a range of civil society organizations, UNKEA and TADO, the Women's Association and Disabled Peoples Association to address barriers to education access. Flooding and insecurity in the project target areas resulted in irregular school attendance for some learners. Referral support was provided to learners with medical conditions such as wounds, snake bites, stomach and respiratory diseases and malaria to facilities run by UNKEA and South Sudan Red Cross, and an additional 19 (11 f; 8 m) were referred to Gambella Regional Hospital in Ethiopia.

Output 2.1 Educational institutions provide safe, gender-sensitive and protective infrastructure

Indicator 2.1.1: # of classrooms constructed or rehabilitated (type of learning space, constructed/rehabilitated) (Norad core indicator 2) (cumulative)

3

Target: 35 classrooms **Achieved:** 53 classrooms

During 2021 a total of 23 classrooms were constructed/rehabilitated. This brings the cumulative achievement for the number of classrooms renovated/constructed to 53 which is above the overall project target. This included 19 classrooms rehabilitated in Nasir and 4 classrooms constructed in Maiwut. Most of this work took place in the third and fourth quarter of 2021, after the rainy season. An additional 4 classrooms were initiated in Maiwut, but this was delayed due to price increases of construction materials in Ethiopia. The renovation of schools and county education office in Nasir town was realized to be a pulling factor for the population movement to Nasir town as there is hope of children going to learn in the newly renovated schools.

Indicator 2.1.2: # of supported educational institutions provided with basic drinking water (cumulative)

3

Target: 8 **Achieved:** 11 (2 through this project, 9 in coordination with other actors)

During 2021, the project did not construct or rehabilitate any water sources. ADRA coordinated with other actors in the target area to rehabilitate the water sources and improve access to basic drinking water. In Nasir County, Relief International (RI) rehabilitated 5 boreholes in ADRA target areas in Nasir West, Torkech, Mandeng, Torpuot school communities and installed water taps in Jikmir next to Stephen Duol Primary School. In Maiwut county, Samaritan Purse rehabilitated 2 boreholes in Jotome and Kulong primary schools, International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) installed water taps in SDA school community while ADRA UNHCR Protection project repaired one borehole in Pagak Primary School. This strong coordination among the implementing partners on the ground to address the identified

gaps saved money for this activity. In total, the project coordinated with other actors to provide basic drinking water to 9 supported educational institutions (7 boreholes and 2 tap water points) in Nasir and Maiwut.

Indicator 2.1.3: # of toilets constructed or rehabilitated (sex) (Norad indicator 1.2.1) (cumulative)
Target: 70 **Achieved:** 56

2

The project continued to work towards the minimum standards recommended by the WASH cluster of 30 girls per toilet and 60 boys per toilet. During 2021 a total of 22 toilet stances (12 for girls, 10 for boys) were constructed. In Nasir West Primary school 8 toilet stances were constructed, 2 blocks with 4 stances in each. In Nasir Centre, 10 toilet stances were constructed. Additionally, 4 toilet stances were constructed at the Nasir County Education Centre. With the formation of the state government in Upper Nile and further stabilization, many of the IDPs from Nasir (an area controlled by the government) began to return. The project continues to balance support to communities within the areas controlled by different groups, ensuring that investment contributes to further stabilization within Upper Nile.

Output 2.2 Educational institutions have strengthened links with health and protection services

Indicator 2.2.1: # of referrals to health, safety and/or protection services (sex)(cumulative)
Target: 200 **Achieved:** 1494 (940 f; 890 m)

3

A total of 850 (395 f; 455 m) children between the ages of 7 and 18 years were referred to relevant services from the project supported schools and school communities in 2021. Referrals were for wounds, snake bites, stomach disorders, malaria, protection cases and psychosocial support. Of these, 19 (11 f; 8 m) were referred to Gambella in Ethiopia for better medical services for conditions such as tongue stiffness, heart complications, swollen knees and abdomen and sight impairment. Child protection responses included cases such as neglect, early/forced marriage, and child labor cases. This brings the cumulative total to 1,494 (940 f; 890 m) children since the start of the project. The accelerated learning program was able to enroll some of girls who had dropped out of school due to teenage pregnancy during the COVID-19 school closures. The project team continued to work with the 278 (127 f; 151 m) child protection actors (education personnel, teachers, parents, community leaders, religious leaders, CBO representatives) who were trained the previous year on basic concepts of child protection, psychosocial support, sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), child rights, inclusive education, and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures. They also continued to implement the action plans on child protection, child safeguarding, and methods of mitigating child abuses and sexual gender-based violence in the community. The training further resulted in increased reporting of child abuse and referral to psychosocial services in the project locations. Community dialogues continued to discuss issues related to child rights, child protection, child abuses, early and forced marriages and mobilization of children to come to school leading to an increase in the reporting of cases of abuse against children by counsellors, child protection officers, local authorities, and the police.

Indicator 2.2.2: # of schools where PTAs/SMCs have implemented activities on child protection, and inclusive and peace education (cumulative)
Target: 11 schools **Achieved:** 17 schools

3

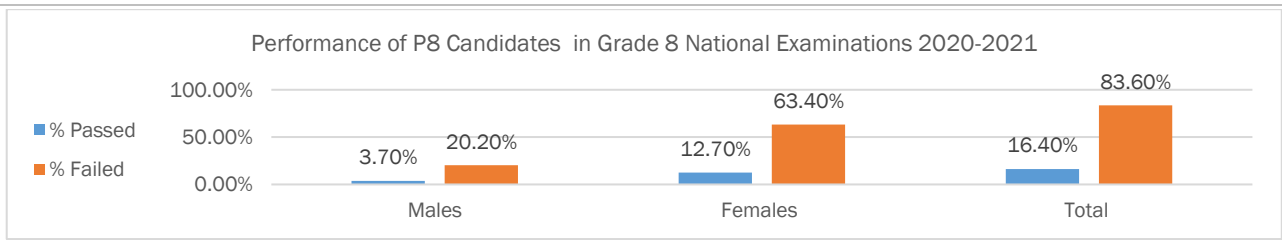
PTA/SMCs in 17 schools implemented activities on child protection, inclusive education, and peace education. They were maintained the school surroundings, created a safe school environment, conducted mass awareness in the school communities on the prevention and dangers of child/early marriages, and participated in dialogues on prevention of corporal punishment and the importance of peaceful co-existence in the school communities. Case management committees of the PTAs supported referrals.

Outcome 3: Learner's benefit from improved quality teaching and relevant learning and relevant learning
 Community Support to Education is strengthened

Outcome indicator 3.1: % reduction in gender disparities in learning achievements in end-of-school exams
Target: 2% **Achievement:** 6.6% more girls passed or a disparity of 1.06

3

The 2020 primary eight national examination results were very poor across South Sudan. This was due to the COVID-19 school closures, absenteeism from classes, low qualification level of teachers for the P8 classes and limited resources. The new P8 textbooks have not yet been made available, but the exam was based on the new textbooks. In the project targeted schools only 16.4% of the 134 candidates who sat the national examination in March 2021 passed the examination. More girls (76%) sat the exam than boys. 16.6% of girls passed, while 15.6% of boys passed, this means that there is an 7.5% disparity in the pass rate of girls and boys, with a higher % of girls passing. The results indicate that girls performed better than Boys.



Output 3.1 Educational institutions have effective management structures and systems

Indicator 3.1.1: % of head teachers (f/m) meeting expected standards for managing supported educational institutions and strengthening systems (ETLE)

3

Target: 25% of 16 **Achieved:** 44% of 16

In the 16 schools assessed, 44% of the head teachers were meeting the standards for managing educational institutions and strengthening systems. The head teachers demonstrated the ability to working with the school communities, to set school teaching and learning goals and to align school activities on the timetable with the school goals. The Head Teachers ensured school schedules were followed and monitored teachers to ensure that good records were kept. These achievements were attributed to the capacity development of the Head teachers and their deputies on school management and administration by the mentors and the project staff. The mentors facilitated community and school level activities, provided training, and mentoring to 32 school managers (16 head teachers and 16 deputy head teachers) on effective school management and their roles and responsibilities in the management and development of the school system. The head teachers were mentored on school administration, management, filing systems, record keeping, school development planning, and resource mobilization for the school, storeroom, and assets management.

Indicator 3.1.2: # of target PTA/SMC members (f/m) trained (Norad core indicator 4)

3

Target: 157 **Achieved:** 256

A total of 256 (147 f; 109 m) PTA/SMC members were trained in 2021. Project staff mobilized the PTA/SMC members during the first quarter and began the training from the second quarter onwards. The training included topics on safe protective and supportive school environments, school development and implementation of school development plans, inclusive education, child protection, psychosocial support, and disaster risk reduction in schools. The PTA members developed school development plans after the training. Activities that the PTAs carried out to reduce risks and improve safety included slashing and digging around the school compound to avoid the risk of snake's bite, construction of dykes around the schools to prevent flood water from flowing into the classrooms, trenches for firebreaks during the dry season, repair of walls of the temporary learning spaces to ensure safety, repair of classroom mud floors and staff rooms after flooding, repair of boreholes for safe water and the supply of clean water to the children.

Indicator 3.1.3: % of supported educational institutions where SMCs/PTAs meeting expected standards in managing and strengthening supported educational institutions (ETLE)

3

Target: 25% **Achieved:** 44% of 16

Support and mentoring were provided to the PTAs /SMCs to improve their knowledge and skills pertaining to their roles and responsibilities as well as resource mobilization for the schools. Using the ETLE indicators to assess each school, it was found that a total of 7 (44%) of the 16 assessed PTA/SMCs met expected standards in managing and strengthening educational institutions.

Output 3.2: Educational institutions have improved quality teaching

Indicator 3.2.1: % of teachers (f/m) in supported educational institutions who meet expected standards in effective teaching practices (ETLE)

3

Target: 20% of 100 **Achieved:** 43% of 197

In the 16 assessed schools, 43% (85 of 197) of teachers met expected standards of effective teaching practice. During the mid-term review, it was established over 90 percent of teachers valued mentoring and coaching above other forms of professional development. The teacher training was provided by teacher training institutions and due to the low education level of most teachers, the training may have been pitched at a higher level above what volunteer / underqualified teachers could grasp. More teacher professional development should be a focus for the project in the next two years to improve teachers' performance and wellbeing, in order to retain teachers and education staff. The project continued to support 177 (22 f; 155 m) (111 Nasir, 66 Maiwut) staff with incentives and 16 education officials for effective supervision. Mentoring support was provided to develop their skills and knowledge in classroom management, lesson planning and delivery, development of work schemes, professional ethics and the teachers' professional code of conduct.

Output 3.3: Educational institutions have effective and relevant teaching and learning materials

Indicator 3.3.1: # of learners (f/m) provided with learning materials (Norad core indicator 3)

Target: 6,500 **Achieved:** 6,702

3

A total of 6,702 (3,201 f; 3,501 m) children received learning materials in the project supported schools. The learning materials provided included exercise books, rulers, pens, pencils, erasers, and sharpeners. The learning materials benefitted the children throughout the year as the counties have no book or stationary shops and the parents can't afford to purchase the items from Ethiopia. Parents also are less likely to provide learning materials to girls as they are more likely to be married off as a source of income for the families. Dignity kits were also provided to the girls to reduce dropouts.

Indicator 3.3.2: # of textbooks provided to target educational institutions (Norad indicator 2.1.1)

Target: 1,060 textbooks **Achieved:** 2240

3

Textbooks were distributed to the teachers and learners in the project targeted education institutions since the start of the project by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education through Christian Mission Development organization in Nasir and Maiwut. This included textbooks for supported schools for P2, P4, P6, P8, Senior two and Senior four classes by UNICEF, Christian Mission Development (CMD). The project printed 2,240 textbooks for the in-service and continuous professional development (CPD) training program for Upper Nile for the training of 174 (12 f; 162 m) teachers. This included 1,760 teachers' workbooks and 480 handbooks and resource books.



CPD teacher training



CPD teacher training



Training of student leaders

Outcome 4: Learners, parents, communities, and other stakeholders are more positively engaged with educational systems

Outcome indicator 4.1: % community members (f/m) that report having a positive engagement with the school

Target: 10% **Achieved:** 83%

3

A total of 83% or 250 out of 300 community members interviewed indicated that they have had a positive engagement with the school. This number is made up of chiefs, 7 (3 f; 4 m) 16 (16 m) education officials, 5 (4 f; 1 m) church leaders and 256 (147 f; 109 m) parents and learners. The parents reported having engaged in school management meetings and being invited to attend disciplinary and planning meetings in the school. Additionally, parents reported having engaged in awareness campaign on child rights, child protection and how to prevent child abuses in the school and the school communities. They were engaged in peace and reconciliation meetings

organized in the school communities, as a way of maintaining peace and peaceful co-existence in the school communities. The learners reported that they were engaged in extracurricular activities in the school, play and recreational activities and there were opportunities for students to take on leadership roles such as prefects, class monitors, and to participate in parents' meetings. 17% of those interviewed stated they had not engaged with the project targeted schools and the school communities as they were not part of the trainings or awareness in the school communities throughout the year. Overall, there was demand for more opportunities for engagement in community groups such as Village Saving and Loan Associations, and REFLECT Classes, and Literacy classes. There are some community members who still look at engagement in school activities as the sole responsibility of the Teachers, PTAs/ SMCs members, Education Partners, and the local education authorities. There are still high numbers of out-of-school children. The advocacy initiatives and involvement of local or community-based organization to scale up campaigns on the importance and value of education is crucial towards changing these perceptions. Awareness is also done during church services, community meetings and peace conferences.

Output 4.1 Learners have increased influence on decision-making in educational institutions

Indicator 4.1.1: % of supported educational institutions that meet expected standards of participation of learners in decision-making (ETLE)

Target: 25% **Achieved:** 44% (7 of 16)

3

In 7 (44%) out of the 16 schools that underwent the ETLE assessment, there was evidence that the expected standards of participation of learners in decision making process were being met. After the training and mentoring, the head teachers were promoting active participation of learners in the school clubs and co-curricular activities and sports events. Student leaders were trained on their roles and responsibilities by the head teachers and the mentors, and student's leaders were engaged in PTA/SMC meetings to give the students a voice on student issues, for example on corporal punishment, child neglect and school activities. Student leaders supported the enforcement of school rules and regulations while providing suggestions for alternative methods of discipline in school. The main criteria assessed were (a) that students have opportunities to participate in student organizations and (b) that students are involved in decision making activities in their schools. The seven schools that met the standards were the Stephen Duol, Kurengke, Torpuot, Kierwan primary schools in Nasir County and the Gainen, Pagak and the SDA Primary schools in Maiwut. The schools with high scores had strengths of promoting active participation of learners in the school clubs and co-curricular activities, with all students given equal opportunity to participate, irrespective of gender, culture or ethnicity. In the schools that didn't meet the standards for participation, the head teachers did encourage student activities, but were not active in supporting learners to mobilize. There were very few student clubs and student representatives were not regularly invited to participate in PTA/SMC meetings.

Output 4.2 Communities demonstrate increased support to educational institutions

Indicator 4.2.1: # of parents (f/m) of learners in supported educational institutions participating in family-strengthening activities

Target: 300 **Achieved:** 496

3

A total of 496 (203 f; 293 m) parents and caregivers participated in family-strengthening activities during 2021. The project training focused on the family life and the rights of children within the family. It enabled them to provide more psychosocial support to their children in form of listening, guidance, and counselling, and to provide more support to their children's education. It also increased their involvement in project advocacy work for the rights of their children in the school communities on matters related to child abuse, child neglect and forced/early marriage. The training was provided orally due to limited literacy of the parents, and they were orally assessed to ensure that they understood the importance of family strengthening initiative.

Indicator 4.2.2: % of supported educational institutions that receive support from the community

Target: 35% of 16 **Achieved:** 100% of 16

3

All 16 schools assessed were receiving support from the parents of the learners and the school communities. The project mobilized communities and conducted family strengthening training for the parents, and through school action plans. The support provided by the communities to the schools focused on improvements to infrastructure, maintenance of the compound, DRR activities and support to learners with food, water, and transportation. This included, but was not limited to, cleaning of the school compound, clearing of bushes to reduce risk of snakebites, cleaning and repairing latrines, repair to boreholes, collection of water for schools, cultivation of maize or other crops in school gardens to address food gaps for learners, protecting schools against flooding through construction of dykes and placement of sandbags, supporting students with river crossing during the rainy season, building fire breaks, repairs to walls and floors of temporary learning spaces after flooding, provision of labor and materials for school renovations, building school offices and supporting the transportation of children and youth for referrals. Findings from the mid-term assessment revealed that Parental engagement in the target schools is high. Most parent respondents (between 87.5 – 93.8 percent) reported meeting with the teacher, participating in clean up days, attending PTA meetings and supporting back to school campaigns.

Outcome 5: Strengthened civil society influences education policies and practices	
Outcome indicator 5.1: # of policies, plans and budgets developed/ revised to include quality, protective and inclusive education for marginalized groups (provincial or national level) Target: 1 Achieved: 2	3
<p>In 2021 the project team made strong progress towards development of action plans that can influence policy and budgets relating to quality, protective and inclusive education. This was primarily achieved through its partnership with the Universal Knowledge Empowerment Agency (UNKEA) and Touch Africa Development Organization (TADO), through the cooperation with ICRC, RI and other INGOs, and through the collaboration with other civil society organizations in Maiwut and Nasir, mentioned in output 5.2. The cooperation with the Umbrella Union of People Living with Disabilities from the national level, the formation of local associations of persons with disability also led to the enrollment of more children with disability in schools, and greater engagement of persons with disability in the project and in dialogue with other stakeholders. The cooperation with the women's organizations (output 5.1) also resulted in action plans going forwards on peaceful co-existence and conflict mitigation.</p>	
Output 5.1 Improved capability of civil society organizations to track, monitor and advocate for improved education for marginalized groups	
Indicator 5.1.1: # of advocacy initiatives undertaken by civil society and non-governmental organizations Target: 1 Achieved: 2	3
<p>In 2021 two advocacy initiatives were implemented with organizations or persons with disability and the Nasir Women's association. The project worked with the Umbrella Union of People with Disability to conduct awareness on the rights of people living with disabilities. As a result, three local associations for persons with disability were established in Nasir and Maiwut to engage persons with disability in advocacy work around inclusion, access, and rights of persons with disabilities. The initial focus was for them to gain access to information and services from all the stakeholders in the respective counties, including humanitarian organizations, government, CBOs, and local community structures. The project has established partnerships with the Greater Kapoeta Women Association (GKWA) and the Nasir Women Association (NWA). The Women's associations focus on gender equality, gender justice, women's rights, GBV, education, peace education and sustainable development through the participation of women. They have a strong focus on the empowerment of women to engage in advocacy work. In 2021, the project supported the Nasir Women's Association to conducted mass awareness in Mandeng Boma of Nasir County on 22 December 2021 on peaceful co-existence and conflict mitigation in the community. A total of 291 (150 f; 141 m) adults and 64 (41 f; 23 m) youths and children participated in the advocacy programs on peace and security in Nasir County. The key messaged included: Protection of women and children in the community; Girl child education and child rights: Conflict mitigation to ensure peaceful co-existence; Need for rule of law to handle perpetrators who are punished for their acts</p>	
Output 5.2 Civil society fora and networks strengthened to advocate more effectively for education for marginalized groups	
Indicator 5.2.1: # of civil society fora and networks that are created or strengthened to influence education for marginalized groups. Target: 1 Achieved: 2	3
<p>The project is focusing on policies and plans relating to protective and inclusive education for marginalized groups in the project supported communities. Progress was made during 2021 in consolidating the partnerships with UNKEA and TADO and mapping civil society actors (June 17-24) to engage collective advocacy initiatives and establish civil society fora in Maiwut and Nasir. Advocacy training was conducted in Maiwut from 4-6 October 2021 with 11 (4 f; 7 m) representatives from WADU Women Association, the Coalition for Humanity, NIDO, RUCAPD, South Sudan Red Cross, Youth Culture and Sports and the Church of God. Advocacy training was conducted in Nasir from 11-13 October with 21 (1 f; 20 m) representatives from Nile Hope, Community Health and Development Organization (CHADO), Community Action Organization (CAO) and Across Africa Development Organization (AADO). The training was about advocate for inclusive education and how to identify challenges facing the education sector in the counties and the state. They were also trained on the possible measures to mitigate the identified challenges.</p>	

Results Example

Results example 1: Schools receiving support from the communities

The project target was that 35% of schools receive support from the community. The project tracks the proportion of educational institutions where community members provide the institution with financial resources or in-kind contributions. The goal is to get a nominal contribution from the community such as food contributions, or support for labor or materials during construction and renovation work.

During the 2020 and 2021 implementation periods, however, we found that the community participation went way beyond expectations. The support provided by the communities to the schools enabled improvements to infrastructure, maintenance of the compound, DRR activities and support to learners with food, water, and transportation. The support provided included, but was not limited to, cleaning of the school compound, clearing of bushes to reduce risk of snakebites, cleaning and repairing latrines, repair to boreholes, collection of water for schools, cultivation of maize or other crops in school gardens to address food gaps for learners, protecting schools against flooding through construction of dykes and placement of sandbags, supporting students with river crossing during the rainy season, building fire breaks, repairs to walls and floors of temporary learning spaces after flooding, provision of labor and materials for school renovations, building school offices and supporting the transportation of children and youth for referrals.

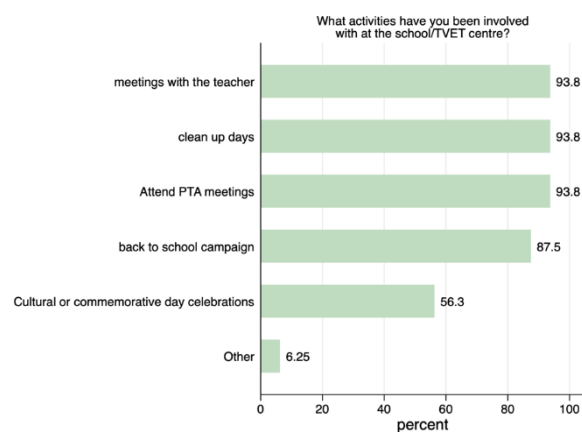
In Kuetrengke community in Nasir County one block of two classrooms, one room for teachers, and one room for P1 class was completed with support from the community. They also built dikes around the school premises to prevent flood water from reaching the school. In other schools' parents constructed fire belts to prevent fires from reaching the school compound.



In schools like Maker, Torckech, and Kuetrengke where there were no nearby water sources, parents supplied water to the schools. In Nyiengok, Lueth, Benyik and Torckech primary schools' parents provided canoes (small boats) for the children to cross river Sobat, during school days, and especially during the season of flooding. Parents in Nyiengok, had cultivated and planted maize in school garden at the river site during the month of November and December. The produce harvested from the garden supported the communities during the period when there was no food distributed by World Food Program as there are inconsistencies in the distribution schedules.

The project has achieved this strong participation of communities through mobilization activities, family strengthening activities, training for the PTA/SMCs and various school events. When conducting the ETLE assessments, we found that all 16 schools assessed were receiving support from the parents of the learners and the school communities.

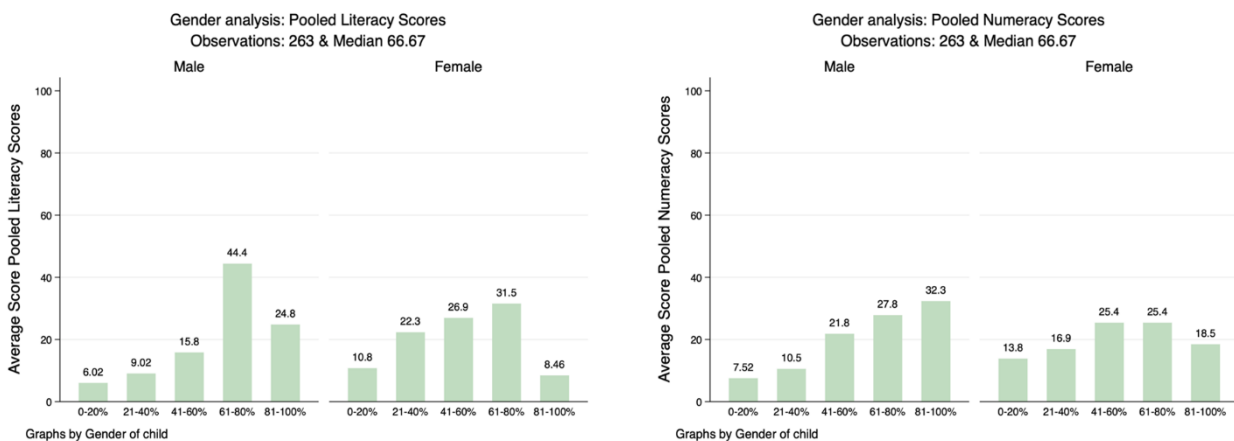
Findings from the mid-term assessment revealed that Parental engagement in the target schools is high. Most parent respondents (between 87.5 – 93.8 percent) reported meeting with the teacher, participating in clean up days, attending PTA meetings and supporting back to school campaigns. Parents also felt that more could be done to improve student outcomes, through providing rewards and encouragement to students, providing extra resources. To address these suggestions, the project plan to facilitate catch up classes for candidate classes to improve their performance and provide continuous mentoring of teachers and PTAs/SMCs which is key to sustainability and ownership when the project phases out.



Results example 2: Learning outcomes in project supported schools

The EiE Upper Nile project is highly relevant to supporting the education needs of conflict affected children in the Upper Nile State counties of Nasir and Maiwut in South Sudan, including out of school children and youth (OOSCY), girls and children with disabilities. The project response to COVID-19 was highly relevant to meeting the education needs of children in the target areas, where mentors were recruited and deployed to target communities to support learning continuity. When doing the mid-term evaluation, there was a concern that the learning disruptions from COVID-19 would lead to a much poorer performance in the learning assessments. It was positive to see that the students generally performed well in the Grade 4 literacy and numeracy assessment, although there is still room for improvement.

Over 50 percent of girls scored above 50 percent on the literacy and numeracy assessment and three quarters of male students achieved this level. The difference between the literacy and numeracy scores were not significant at this level. For Grade 4 Numeracy subtests - children performed well in some subtests (listening passage, reading comprehension, subtraction and interpreting graphs) whereas in other subtests (word identification, reading and word problems in mathematics) they struggled to answer the questions. This suggests that coverage of a range of curriculum areas may have been limited. This could also be an effect of extended school closures which limited coverage of the curriculum. Absenteeism may also be the explanation to explain the learning gaps in some areas. The reading and listening comprehension scores showed a notable difference between girls and boys.



Observations:

- Male students were more likely (24.8 percent) to obtain scores above 80 percent in the literacy assessment and less likely (6.02 percent) to struggle answering questions. Very few female students (8.46 percent) scored above 80 percent and one in ten scored below 20 percent.
- Students found the comprehension subtest the most difficult and 28.5 percent of female students compared to 12.8 percent of male students were unable to answer any comprehension tasks. This differs from the listening comprehension task, which female students perform better in. This task required them to listen to the enumerator read the story and then answer some questions which had been read to them. It implies students have developed listening skills but reading for meaning remains a challenge for some. This is a trend that is often seen in students who are developing their reading proficiency. Generally, speaking and listening skills are developed before reading and writing skills.
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- On the numeracy tests, one third of male students compared to only 18.5 percent of female students scored above 80 percent in the numeracy assessment. During the validation exercise, it was explained that a lot of pastoralist children attend EiE target schools and often miss school when they move with their parents. This could explain the variation in the class. It suggests that the pastoralist children are scoring lower than other children because they miss significant periods of school.

Project deviations, risks and cross-cutting issues

Deviations and unintended positive and negative consequences

Many of the deviations for 2021 were to minimize the impacts of school closures when schools reopened in March 2021 and to adapt to progress in the peace process and refugee/IDP returns.

- The number of learners being supported by the project has increased. As stated in the 2022 annual plan approved by Norad, there was need to expand the support from 16 schools to 23 schools. This was because of the formation of the new government for Upper Nile and trend of stabilization that resulted in many of the IDPs and refugees returning to original areas, particularly in and around Nasir town, formerly an opposition stronghold. While the situation is still fragile, NGOs have been encouraged to support this normalization by including schools in these return areas in project support. Enrollment in the 16 schools for 2021 when schools reopened was 8,603 (4,011 f; 4,592 m). The additional schools that already started receiving support from the project in 2021 brought the enrollment up to a total of 11,788 (5,388 females, 6,400 males) students reached by the project.
- The project incorporated some activities not included in the original activity plan; the teacher training program (CPD and In-service), the inclusion of Union of people with disabilities programs and women for peace and security. In this regard 193 (180 males, 13 females) student teachers completed face to face sessions in both Nasir and Maiwut
- During 2021 a total of 23 classrooms were constructed/rehabilitated. This brings the cumulative achievement for the number of classrooms renovated/constructed to 53 which is above the overall project target.
- There were 700 (168 males, 532 females) out of school youth enrolled for the accelerated learning program at the end of 2021, which is 250 more than the target of 450 out of school youth. Enrolment of female out of school learners were higher than that of males because in these communities, early marriage and forced marriages were still common mostly affecting school going girls.
- The project did not provide any schools with drinking water in 2021. Instead, Relief International (RI), Samaritan Pursue (SP), International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and the ADRA UNHCR Protection project installed water taps and rehabilitated 9 water points (7 boreholes and 2 tap water points) in both Nasir and Maiwut counties. To avoid duplication of project activities, the budget line for this activity was reallocated for construction work instead, supporting additional schools.
- There were 850 (455 males, 395 female) children referred to relevant health and protection services from the project targeted schools and the school communities in 2021, which is 750 children more than the target of 100 children for 2021. Children were referred for issues including wounds, snake bites, stomach disorder, malaria, protection needs and psychosocial support.
- There were 17 schools where PTAs/SMCs activities were implemented on child protection, and inclusive and peace education, which is an achievement of 6 schools more than the target of 11 schools.
- 256 (109 males, 147 females) parents' teachers' association members were trained in 2021, which is 135 members more than the target of 121 members.
- The percentage of the supported schools meeting the expected standard of participation of learners in decision making process has reached 69%, which is 34% higher than the target of 35%.
- 496 (203 females, 293 males) parents of learners in supported educational institutions participated in family-strengthening activities, which is 196 more than the target of 300 parents.
- 100% of supported educational institutions receive support from the community, which is 65% more than the target of 35%.

Risk Management

ADRA Norway provides quarterly updates to the ADRA board of directors of a risk management matrix to track and manage risks associated implementation of the program portfolio and continually refining its risk management system to ensure active risk management. ADRA South Sudan maintains a risk register and provides risk analysis updates and security updates regularly for ADRA Norway's review.

Major risks that materialized during 2021 included:

- An incident where one Government soldier where killed was reported on March 14th, 2021, in Nasir town. The incident resulted in displacement of the communities in Koat Payam. The incident prompted the government soldiers to launch attacks in the nearby Villages of Ketbeck, Wicjock, luakwien, Dhorkotni, Ngueny, Luel and Chanchow. The incident led to displacement of 14,688 (10,273F:4,415M) among whom were 4,896 (1,967M, 2,929F) children. During the displacement, school children and teachers lost their teaching/learning materials which were later replaced by the project when they returned to their respective communities.

- There was an isolated incident where youth from Murle community attacked communities living in Wading Payam of Nasir County raiding cattle and abducted 3 children (2b,1g) and 2 women in the area. This incident did not interfere with project activities since it occurred outside the project operational area.
- Schools were closed for a period of 3 weeks because of disputes between fractions of the mainstream party concerning dissatisfaction with the leadership of the main SPLA/M IO in September 2021.
- In January 2021, South Sudan experienced an outbreak of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. Following the outbreak, the government announced a partial lock down from 3 February to 3 March 2021, to mitigate the spread, which was later extended to April 3rd. The partial lock down led to a delay in the reopening of the schools in the country.
- Between the month of July and November 2021, the corridor of Upper Nile, especially along the Sobat corridor, experienced heavy rains. The rains obstructed access to the air strips which made it difficult to transport project supplies to the project sites.
- Flooding affected most of the schools and communities in the project target areas between September and November and resulted in some delays to activities. Flooding impeded movement and construction work could not continue in that period.
- Insecurity persisted in the target areas, with sporadic incidences of inter-communal violence, cattle raiding and revenge killings. Local authorities moved quickly and were able to mediate and restore peace relatively fast allowing movement and activities to resume. This resulted in short term delays, where movement of staff was restricted until the situation became more secure and mediation efforts resolved the situation.

Adjustments that have been made to the Risk Assessment (Annex 7) are as follows:

- Under political risks (1.1-1.3) relating to instability, security and threats of local conflict, risk ratings have been reduced for some of the probability and consequence ratings from high to medium. The consequence rating for political instability has been left at high as the peace process could still break down and have a significant impact on the project operating context.
- The political will risk (1.4) rating for probability has been reduced to low as there are strong positive developments evident in the formation of a state government for Upper Nile and the selection of persons from the opposition into key positions.
- The risk relating to coordination between central government and state government (1.5) has been added due to the slow progress in setting up the new systems in the country for the 10 states.
- The rating of risks associated with food security and hunger (2.2) has been raised as flooding during the raining season, drought in the dry season and economic disruptions due to COVID-19 are having a significant impact on food security. It is likely that this will have an impact on enrollment.
- Under the COVID-19 risks, the probability of children not returning to school (3.2) has been downgraded from high to medium as schools re-open and community engagement in education was sustained through the period of school closures.
- While there was significant inflation during 2020, the exchange rates and prices are stabilizing so the probability and consequence ratings have been downgraded from high to medium for the risk on emergence of hyperinflation (4.1).
- Risks associated with financial institutions operating in the target areas (4.3) were downgraded as there are improvements seen in financial services as the country stabilizes.
- The probability rating for the risk of donor fatigue (4.4) has been increased from low to medium as global priorities shift due to COVID-19. In 2022 this is also likely to be impacted by the Ukraine crisis.
- The risk relating to quality teaching (5.3) has been downgraded to medium as improvements have been observed through the deployment of mentors to the target schools.
- NGOs in South Sudan have seen increased pressure from youth groups to employ local youth from the project areas in Easter Equatorial and Torit. We have added this trend as a new risk (5.4) and have begun taking preventative measures based on our experience in the other states.
- Risk ratings for the child protection risks (6) were lowered from high/medium to low due to the progress of the project in training and engaging authorities, teachers, SMCs/PTAs and parents during 2020 and increased commitment of authorities to cooperate in the management of cases.
- Risks associated with educational partners (7.4) and Limited time to conduct the in-service training (7.4.1) have been added to the risk assessment document.
- Under Climate change and environmental risks (9), risks due to project activities associated with communities becoming more exposed (9.1), Land and biodiversity damages (9.2) and Construction, procurement and traveling leading to greenhouse gas emissions (9.3) have been added to the risk assessment document.
- The issue of teenage pregnancy (10.3) has been added to the women's rights and gender equality risks section.

Cross-cutting issues and discussion on unintended consequences

Human rights and conflict sensitivity

As risks associated with conflict and insecurity have materialized, the project has actively worked with local actors to ensure regular meetings and dialogue alongside education conferences held with the stakeholders create good communication avenues and coordination during the project implementation and ensure that the project does no harm. The project has made efforts to engage with stakeholders, local authorities, and community leaders at the start of any activities to lay a strong foundation for mutual understanding and acceptance of the project within the relevant communities. The community leaders who had been previously participated in peace dialogues, trainings on human rights and conflict resolution have responded promptly to conflicts and initiated mediation to resolve conflicts between communities, something which is attributable to the project activities supported from Norad, UNHCR and other ADRA donors. ADRA Norway finalized its overall approach to conflict sensitivity with partners in 2021. This is helping the project to be more explicit regarding how it engages in the local context and with local actors.

Measures to mitigate safeguarding and protection risks are mainstreamed across the project activities to improve the capacity of learning institutions to ensure not only that education is safe for learners, but proactively protecting and supporting the most vulnerable. ADRA South Sudan trained the SMC/PTAs, head teachers and local on child rights and child protection, peace and conflict resolutions, gender sensitivity in schools and in the communities conducted by the mentors to act as child protection and safeguarding actors in the targeted school communities. Teachers were trained on code of conduct that prohibits corporal punishment in schools. By the end of the training, the participants stated that the training had challenged their beliefs and they recognized that the cultural and traditional norms they were perpetuating comprised child abuse. The SMCs, PTAs, teachers, and community leaders resolved to work together to promote the protection of children and report any concerns. Emphasis was made on teachers ensuring the consideration of child rights in decision making that affects children's wellbeing.

Children were also sensitized on their rights to education, health, communication, food, and shelters to increase knowledge and reduce abuses, corporal punishment, and harassment of any kind. The children were encouraged to report any forms of abuse they experienced. Experience showed that children learnt their rights, and this was demonstrated during one of the schools closing days' occasions where a female pupil recited basic child rights like right to education, right to health, right to feeding, right to protection and right to self-expression.

Support is being provided to project team members to develop and strengthen their understanding of inclusion and their capacity to identify, manage and monitor issues relating to disability and impairment, exclusion based on ethnicity or membership of minority groups or languages, or any other kind of exclusion or marginalization. ADRA South Sudan is part of the Norad funded Together for Inclusion (TOFI) project implementation, and as such has developed partnerships in 2021 with organizations for persons with disabilities (DPOs) and with Women's Associations and incorporating the principles of "nothing about us without us" in program activities.

Women's rights and gender equality and alignment with the resolution on "Women, Peace and Security"

ADRA has actively worked during 2021 to increase engagement with women's organizations as a key element of the resolution on "Women, Peace and Security" to actively promote and support the engagement of women in local and national processes. ADRA supported the women associations to conduct mass awareness in Mandeng Boma in December 2021 on peaceful co-existence and conflict mitigation in the community.

In community awareness campaigns, the importance of education for girls has been emphasized, bringing enrolment up to 46% girls. Specific issues related to early/forced marriage have been discussed in communities and with stakeholders, to find local solutions and prevent such harmful practices. With the development of local bylaws and observed changes in attitudes within the communities' prohibiting girls from getting married at an early stage, there is prospect of increase in girl's enrolment, retention, and completion of primary school cycle. This will consequently increase the girls' opportunity of enrolling into secondary education and enable girls to compete for employment opportunities as teachers with their male counterparts.

Gender has been mainstreamed since the beginning of the project. The project has worked to increase women's participation and representation in all structures in the school communities. PTA membership is 54% women. 63% of support for referrals and psychosocial support and services is going to girls. The project has developed a female gender desk for protection, where female staff and female mentors can provide support to girls. The project is also working to address the large gender gap for teachers. Currently, only 11% of teachers are female. This is partly because few girls' complete school, resulting in few women being qualified to become teachers.

The project considered gender issues as one of its priorities. Construction of segregated WASH facilities in all supported schools and provision of sanitary materials for adolescent girls were distributed to cater for gender

equity in the project activities and service provision. Enrolment of female out of school learners was higher than that of males because in these communities, early marriage and forced marriages were still common mostly affecting school going girls. ADRA has worked to bring these girls back into school.

Anti-corruption

ADRA Norway has a risk analysis process for fraud and corruption to ensure that controls are in place to manage risks, including a risk statement, risk analysis, risk mitigation and monitoring. All partners have updated fraud, whistleblowing and complaints policies and practices in place. ADRA maintains a clear zero tolerance position against bribes. ADRA employees are required to report corruption or extortion that they face. Routine joint monitoring has helped to reduce the risk of possible corrupt practices.

In procurements that exceeded NOK 100,000, ADRA Norway oversees the procurement/tendering process, reviews all supporting documents and checks prospective contractors before contracts are signed. During country visits, ADRA Norway staff perform regular on-site verification and spot checks. During the COVID-19 pandemic this has been monitored remotely. ADRA South Sudan uses the SunPlus accounting system for financial management to increase efficiency, transparency, and financial accountability. There are internal controls systems at both the field office and the headquarters to ensure that resources were used for the intended purpose as per the approved work plan and budget. Cash transfers to the field for activities are insured and limited to 50,000\$ per field location to minimize the risks. ADRA South Sudan uses a Money Transfer Company (L.E.M International Company limited) to transfer cash to all project locations, given the fact that in South Sudan the banking system is poorly established, and banks are only present in the capital Juba since the outbreak of civil war in 2013. At field level, LEM handles the payment of local staff and vendors as much as possible.

The field Cashiers verify financial documentations and send them to HQ for verification before going ahead for any payment. Any bigger amount to be paid to the contractors in the field is channeled through the money transfer companies, to minimize the risk of handling cash and ensure proper documentation for the procurement process. There were no cases of fraud/misappropriation of funds recorded in 2021 for the EiE project. Head teachers and PTA trainings equally had an element on financial management component since they are involved in management of school financial and non-financial resources

The environment and vulnerability to climate change

ADRA Norway's organizational strategy for 2021 to 2025 has an emphasis on the environmental sustainability and climate change, increasing our engagement through our programs and working towards lighthouse certification by 2022 for our office. ADRA Norway is a part of ADRA Europe's Resilience Working Group to roll out the Carbon Neutral Strategy for the ADRA Network. In line with SDG goal 13, and the Paris Agreement and Kyoto protocol on reduction of greenhouse gasses and climate-resilient sustainable development, we will work to reduce our carbon emissions. This includes assessing our administration-related carbon footprint and exploring carbon-offsetting methods. Overall, the COVID-19 restrictions have helped us to reduce travel in 2021 and going forwards.

ADRA Norway has encouraged its partners to adopt and implement sustainable environmental policies and practices to ensure that project activities that may have impacts on the environment are properly assessed and managed. ADRA South Sudan uses electronic communication primarily. Local field offices are also primarily powered by solar power and the project is considering introducing a solar skills training course for youth in Upper Nile in 2022, adapted from our TVET program in Ethiopia.

Heavy rain leading to flooding in the project target area from July to November 2021 further affected implementation in the targeted school communities. The rains made it difficult to transport project supplies to the project sites, and children had difficulty accessing school during the period and mentoring activities were limited in areas where flooding occurred. Seasonal flooding is perennial, causing displacement and disrupting learning in the project target areas. Training has been provided to PTAs and teachers on disaster risk reduction. Schools have included tree planting in their school planting at the schools to reduce the risk of wind damage to schools and built dykes around school compounds prone to flooding. In the school construction and renovation work, the project is also reflecting on environmental impacts in decisions relating to the sourcing of construction materials. Children in the school clubs were provided awareness on environmental care messages. Teachers were trained on health and hygiene with components of environment and sanitation. Construction of rubbish pits in schools for dumping waste and rubbish.

Coordination

Education cluster and humanitarian coordination meetings were held in Upper Nile between ADRA, RI, NILE Hope, CAO, CMB, the Malaria Consortium and UNKEA to discuss common implementation issues, such as delays in security clearances for staff travel to the field, joint assessments for flooding in target areas, concerns around fees being charged to staff in the project location or for movement between locations by various authorities for joint

advocacy to authorities and UNOCHA. These meetings contributed towards synergies, limited duplication, and increased mutual awareness of activities being planned and implemented.

Project Cost Efficiency

School infrastructure provision (Output 2.1)

The project coordinated with other organizations operating in Upper Nile to leverage support from other sources to address water needs in the school, enabling additional investment into classrooms, latrines and changing rooms for girls at the target schools. The cost of infrastructure is high in the project target area, with most construction materials coming from Ethiopia. Where possible the project has used local resources in the construction work, while being sensitive about environmental impacts of using local forest resources in the construction of temporary learning spaces and classroom furniture.

Schools are better linked with health and protection services (Output 2.2)

The project originally planned to provide protection and referral services to 200 children and youth by 2021 but has reached 1494 (940 f; 890 m) children and youth cumulatively to date with cases ranging from neglect, early/forced marriage and child labor cases, to provision of psychosocial counselling support, and referrals for health-related services. This higher achievement is attributed towards greater ownership from education personnel, teachers, parents, community leaders, religious leaders, CBO representatives, and involvement of other international and local organizations in the referral process. We see better cost efficiency ratios being achieved under this output both in terms of (a) the number of children and youth being assisted (7 times as many) as a result of the investments in training of staff, counsellors, teachers, PTA/SMCs and communities, (b) the contribution that this makes towards improving children's participation in education activities and their learning and (c) the engagement of parents and communities in the education and protection of the children as they see the relevance of the project's support and services.

Accessing teaching and learning materials (Output 3.3)

The project is using advocacy to ensure that project schools in the opposition-controlled target areas are accessing benefits and resources from national education initiatives. This includes access to textbooks and access to examinations for P8. This does not require a lot of financial input but improves overall outcomes for the program and contributes towards our sustainability and exit strategies.

Increasing community engagement in schools (Output 4.2)

Work with the PTAs and SMCs has resulted in greater engagement of communities in the schools. The support provided by the communities to the schools included, but was not limited to, cleaning of the school compound, clearing of bushes to reduce risk of snakebites, cleaning and repairing latrines, repair to boreholes, collection of water for schools, protecting schools against flooding through construction of dykes and placement of sandbags, building fire breaks, repairs to walls and floors of temporary learning spaces after flooding, building school offices, and supporting the transportation of children and youth for referrals.

Overall cost efficiency of remote management and monitoring reflection

During the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions have been in place and travel from Norway to the field has been severely restricted. For much of 2021, field travel was still not possible. Regular communication was maintained through Zoom or Teams conference calls, WhatsApp, Skype and social media and project teams were able to share updates, pictures, and videos of project activities. While collaboration, partnership and monitoring can't be completely online, we have learnt that we can use these tools more to provide ongoing support to the field teams. The frequency and approach to field visits has changed and is more focused on tasks that can only be done through onsite verification and monitoring.

3. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning

A mid-term evaluation was conducted towards the end of 2021 by external consultants to review the projects status and performance. After the terms of reference was published and tenders submitted, the selection process clearly favored Johnston Ryan Consulting Pty Ltd. Hence the consultants were granted the contract for the MTR on the 15.10.21. The MTR report is submitted to Norad together with this report. The MTR provides ADRA with an independent evaluation and reflection on the progress of the EiE project and provides recommendations on how ADRA can rise to the significant challenges that continued state fragility and COVID-19 has placed on education services in South Sudan. Additionally, the MTR process makes concrete recommendations for the improvement of the program. Please refer to Annex 6 for the full report and findings of the MTR.

Main findings and recommendations that are being taken up by the ADRA team from the MTR are summarized here:

1. Ensure the sustainability approaches are reviewed regularly and progress begins in developing the architecture for the exit strategy. This takes time and significant consultation with stakeholders. In the original design document, ADRA had defined the parameters for sustainability; to increase organisational commitment, capacity at all levels, strengthened systems, and lasting knowledge assets for education. The program planned to bring about this change through capacity building activities directed at institutional, organisational, and individual levels of the education system. According to the approach, this would encourage actors to work together under a common purpose and would subsequently lead to increased government commitment toward the education system, greater availability of resources from the community, private sector and donors toward education services and more effective inclusive education and TVET reforms. It was noted in the design that the strengthening of civil society would create sustainable change that could hold the government accountable for inclusive and quality education policies, practices, plans and budgets.
2. Document and share project successes to support scale up and sharing of good practices. This could include documenting the mentorship program and the approach to gender transformation in relation to traditional gender norms around early/forced marriage.
3. Develop targeted interventions/responses to address challenges that some children and youth, such as teenage child mothers and children living in extreme poverty, face in returning to school
4. Ensure there is action (if not already) based on the recommendations put forward in the Education Conference held in late 2020 with education stakeholders in Nasir and Maiwut.
5. Undertake further analysis of learning gaps in literacy and numeracy to identify a suite of interventions that can support students to strengthen the areas where there is weakness. From this assessment, it appears that listening and reading comprehension requires attention as do most strands of numeracy. A closer look at the gender dimensions is important and observations on how girls respond to assessments is necessary. Evidence suggests that high intensity tutor groups can be beneficial to address learning gaps.
6. It is evident that parents face significant challenges supporting their children to attend school. Besides the financial burden, almost 50 percent of parents reported difficulty motivating their children to attend school. Parents may need assistance on strategies they can use to motivate and encourage their children to persist with their education
7. Continue efforts to scale up mentoring and coaching as an effective TPD strategy but explore opportunities to improve the system to ensure teachers are improving their practices and addressing pedagogical gaps.

4. Overview of Finances

An overview of the annual budget with comments and explanations on deviations is attached as **Annex 1: EiE Upper Nile Expense report with deviation comments.**

Date, signature and title

I am authorized to enter into legally binding agreements on behalf of the grant recipient and attest that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information given in this report is correct.

Date: 31 May 2022



Elidon Bardhi
Programsjef, ADRA Norge

List of Annexes:

- Annex 1: EiE Upper Nile Expense report with deviation comments
- Annex 2: EiE Upper Nile (Project B) Financial Statements
- Annex 3: EiE Upper Nile Uavhengig revisors beretning til prosjektrengskap
- Annex 4: EiE Upper Nile Management Letter
- Annex 5: EiE Upper Nile Results Framework and baseline
- Annex 6: EiE Upper Nile Mid-term Review
- Annex 7: EiE Upper Nile Risk Assessment Multi-Year (updated May 2022)

ⁱ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South_Sudan_Combined_IPC_Results_2020Oct_2021July.pdf