

## SOUTHERN SUDAN BRIEFING



**Right:** Learning English at Mathiang Dhiei school, Southern Sudan.



FELICIA WEBB

*“I would like to become a teacher when I grow up” Sarah, 15, Southern Sudan*

Southern Sudan has seen 21 years of civil war. Millions have died, been abducted, recruited into militias, abused or separated from families. Now Southern Sudan’s population will swell with people returning home, but the education system is under-resourced and run mainly by an under-resourced Ministry of Education. For 10 years it has depended on ad hoc programmes run by aid agencies and faith groups. We’re working to build the Government’s ability to fund schools, teachers and materials.

### The issue

#### Access: not enough places to go round

Four hundred thousand children occupy 339,000 school places, and a further 1.5 million children are out of school, most of them girls. An extra 5,829 classrooms are needed. Many primary places are filled by older pupils who enrolled late and have yet to complete school. Discrimination means that 82 per cent of school-age girls are out of school.<sup>1</sup> Because they can be exchanged in marriage for cows, girls are the main source of family wealth, and their education is seen as a waste.

### The solution

#### Ensuring places for all

- Train teachers and communities to help build new classrooms and so promote community ‘ownership’ of the new resources.
- Demonstrate accelerated learning classes so young people (including girls and children demobilised from armies) can catch up on missed education and free up places for younger pupils.
- Involve communities, parents and teachers in campaigns for girls’ right to primary education and for laws to discourage early marriage.

## The issue

### Quality: Education without motivation

It is hard for children to concentrate and learn well in classes held under trees or in grass-thatched huts. Eighty per cent of them sit on bricks, logs or on the ground.<sup>2</sup> Most teachers are under-trained and unpaid; often they are themselves educated only to grade five and lack basic teaching materials.<sup>3</sup> Textbooks for grades one to four exist but are expensive and, in places, one textbook – often foreign – is shared by up to seven pupils.

### Protection: Danger, violence and disease cast a shadow

Reintegration of children linked to armed fighters is difficult, especially for girls. There is a lack of understanding about 'gender friendly' ways of teaching and children, especially girls, often face harassment and physical punishment. There are high numbers of early marriages and teenage mothers, but poor provision for children to learn about sexual and reproductive health, or life skills such as landmine awareness and HIV and AIDS.

### Finance: An ignored need

Education mostly depends on outside funding. The government cannot yet pay teachers; instead, aid agencies and communities support them in kind.<sup>4</sup> There is almost no tax base to raise new income for education, and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is new. Communities, too, are very poor and can't meet the costs of school. International pledges for aid and development have not yet been met.

## The solution

### Active learning with trained teachers

- Provide desks, chairs and blackboards. Support textbook banks, school libraries and resource centres and classroom store cupboards to ensure materials last longer.
- Help provide enough textbooks to reduce sharing to one between two, and so allow pupils to join in more readily. Supply teachers' guides, stationery, and other teaching materials.
- Contribute to the new network of regional teacher training institutes and county education centres. Aim for one teacher for every 45 pupils.

### Strong, healthy and safe

- Create awareness of the need to protect children, especially girls and those who fled their homes or are now returning.
- Support development of child protection laws and a teachers' code of conduct.
- Help children's advocacy groups, communities and teachers develop child-friendly rules in schools, and influence traditional courts to favour education and protection for girls.
- Press for teaching on sexual health, peace studies and HIV and AIDS.
- Train female teachers to advise girls.

### Ensuring investment for the future

- Lobby international donors to contribute 15 per cent of funds as a catalyst for education over the next five years.
- Persuade the government to commit 15 per cent of total public spend to education, with 58 per cent of that on primary and alternative basic education.
- Set up school gardens as teaching activities.
- Supply school lunches for poor pupils.
- Arrange for education officials to witness best practices abroad to develop their own skills.

## How Southern Sudan measures up

- Around 20% of primary school-aged children are enrolled in primary schools<sup>5</sup>
- 82% of school-aged girls are out of school<sup>6</sup>
- Just 7% teachers have at least one year's pre-service college training<sup>7</sup>
- Only 2% of enrolled pupils are likely to complete primary school<sup>8</sup> and just 0.8% of girls

*"I would like to encourage more girls to gain education. It's far better to learn life skills and lessons than the education of war. If we all go to school maybe there will be no more war."*

Sarah, 15, Southern Sudan

#### References:

1. Towards a Baseline: best estimates of social indicators in Southern Sudan, New Sudan Centre for Statistics and Evaluation, in association with UNICEF, May 2004, p58 2. Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) (BSS) Volume III, Cluster Report, March 18 2005, p171 3. JAM, op cit, p171 4. Ibid, p171 5. JAM, op cit, p171 6. Towards a Baseline: best estimates of social indicators in Southern Sudan, New Sudan Centre for Statistics and Evaluation, in association with UNICEF, May 2004, p58 7. Towards a Baseline, op cit, p58 8. Ibid, p171

## MARY'S STORY

### “For children who go to school, life will be good”

Mary lives with her father and her sister near Rumbek in Southern Sudan.

“When I was younger I wasn't allowed to go to school because I could be attacked by the enemy. There was only one school and it was closed for many hours. My uncle was shot and killed during the war, and his children were taken by the enemies. I've never seen them since. Life was terribly bad – I couldn't go out and play. There was nothing I could hope for.

Since I have gone to school my life has changed. It is bad because I have come to school late, so I'm not learning with other children the same age as me. But education will give me a future. I know how to keep my clothes and myself clean, and how to use cooking utensils, and I've taught my father about these things too. I learned about children's rights – that children have freedom of speech and freedom to be in school.

At school I like to play skipping rope and volleyball. I like spelling games too. I have friends who play with me. It's good to have friends. Children who go to school will help by being doctors or teachers.”

**Right:** Mary, 12 at school in Rumbek, Southern Sudan.



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**Help us rewrite the future of education in Southern Sudan.**

## SOUTHERN SUDAN MEETING THE CHALLENGE

We aim to increase the number of children – especially girls and the poorest children – enrolling in school and to help more of them complete their education in safety. We want to help the new Government's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology become better able to support and increase education on the ground and lobby for increased finance.

### Our target

We need the international community to create a climate in which Southern Sudan has the resources and skills to deliver its education targets for 2009. We will support the south Sudanese government as it works to:

- increase the number of children enrolling in education to 52 per cent by 2009
- increase the number of girls enrolling in education to 35 per cent by 2009
- make education accessible to all.

Our direct practical work with community and government partners will help 250,000 more southern Sudanese children go to school by 2009, and offer these plus thousands more a better and more relevant education.

Save the Children is putting several million dollars towards these aims. We need to raise millions more from our partners and supporters. The issues are complex, the solutions must be versatile. Above all, the world must take seriously every child's right to an education.

We will regularly monitor our work in Southern Sudan, tracking enrolment, attendance and class sizes. We will also monitor the government's relative spend on education. Donors will receive reports of our progress in January 2007, January 2008 and October 2010.

### Help us meet the challenge

Save the Children will work in practical ways to address the availability and quality of schooling for many of Southern Sudan's poorest children, especially girls. Here are some examples of how your support might help.

#### Access: Ensuring places for all

- \$2.3 million will help build 19 schools in Upper Nile.
- \$3.3 million will help build 38 schools in Bahr el Gazal.
- \$173,597 will buy 11,336 school desks.

#### Quality: Active participation with trained teachers

- \$707,000 will pay for four courses for accelerated learning teachers for a year.
- \$4.9 million will supply learning materials to 146 schools.

#### Protection: Strong, healthy and safe

- \$356,538 will train 292 children (half of them girls) from 146 schools to promote child protection and children's rights.

But we cannot do everything. Although Southern Sudan has a clear plan and targets for education, the government does not give it enough resources. We will also press the government to:

- effectively allocate resources and use them to improve finance and management
- raise the profile nationally and internationally of the need for access to quality education in Southern Sudan.

All costs quoted are in US\$

To join our challenge, visit  
[www.savethechildren.net/rewritethefuture](http://www.savethechildren.net/rewritethefuture)

**Left:** Joseph, 10, clutching his schoolbooks at school in North Bahr el Gazal State, Southern Sudan.

