

Introduction

School enrollment rates for girls in South Sudan are alarmingly low: in 2012, an average of seven girls for every 10 boys were enrolled in primary school, while an average of five girls for every 10 boys were enrolled in secondary school¹. Girls’ Education South Sudan (GESS) is a six-year programme by DFID that initiated in 2013 with the aim to increase access to quality education for girls in South Sudan. GESS provides cash transfers for girls in schools to overcome economic barriers to education, and capitation grants for schools to improve the learning environment. GESS is implemented through a consortium structure composed of a fund manager (Mott McDonald), three consortium partners each responsible for a specific programme output (BBC Media Action Group, Charlie Goldsmith Associates (CGA) and Winrock International) and 13 implementing partners working directly with schools.

Upon request from DFID, IMPACT Initiatives provided short-term monitoring and verification from January 2017 through May 2017 of the cash transfer and capitation grant components of GESS implemented by CGA. This factsheet summarises the key

Figure 1: Photo of Malith Thony Primary School



findings of a monitoring and verification visit to Malith Thony Primary School implemented through United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) in Aweil North County, Northern Bahr el Ghazal (NBEG) on 17 May 2017.

School Overview for 2016²

Facility Name	Malith Thony Primary School
Type of Facility	Primary School
Grades	Primary grades 1 - 6 ³
Location	Ariath Payam, Aweil North County, Northern Bhar El Ghazal
Hours of Operation	Morning Session: 8:00-14:00 Evening Session: None
Infrastructure	5 permanent classrooms
Staffing	13 teachers in total (2 government, 11 volunteer) Teachers in Aweil North County are paid based on their level of education ⁴ : <ul style="list-style-type: none">Government Grade 12: 450 South Sudanese Pounds (SSP)⁵/monthGovernment Grade 14: 350 SSP/month Volunteer teacher’s stipend: reportedly not paid in 2016
Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">326 total girls enrolled
Test Scores	0 girls passed the Primary Leave Exam (Grade 8) in 2016

Monitoring Methodology

- IMPACT utilised the following methodologies to assess this project:
- Review of CGA project documents (i.e. proposal, logframe and midline data collection tools) to build understanding of programme structure
 - Two Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with UMCOR County Liaison Officer (CLO) and Malith Thony Primary School Head Teacher (HT)
 - One Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with caregivers of recipients of cash transfer
 - GPS mapping and physical observation of key GESS documents (e.g. School Development Plan, 2016 School Budget) and items purchased with capitation grant at the school site

Summary of Findings

Cash tranfers made to pupils of Malith Thony Primary School reportedly had a positive impact on enrollment and attendance of students. The capitation grant reportedly led to an improvement in the quality of teaching due to the fact that the school was able to hire more teachers and to increase incentives. The grant was also used to improve the general comfort of students and teachers through renovations to latrines and procurement of a watertank, chairs, tables and a volleyball net. However, Key Informants (KIs) reported delays in the disbursement of both cash transfers and the capitation grant. The delays not only prevented the school from implementing budgeted activities and improvements to the school infrastructure in time for the start of the school year, but also prevented the school from fully utilising the intended monetary value of the cash transfers and capitation grant given that high inflation increased material and supply costs. The school reportedly used the capitation grant to address known barriers to girls’ school attendance such as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities that were inadequate for menstruating girls. A KI from the school administration and the CLO both outlined problems with the validation of the list of girls eligible for cash transfers in the offices in Juba, as some girls had reportedly been disqualified from cash transfers because their names had been misspelled, and others were unable to access cash transfers because of errors in the serial number that they had received.

Table 1: Reported Barriers to Girls’ School Attendance in Aweil North County

Factors	Barriers identified by KIs
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some pupils were reportedly unable to buy uniforms or school supplies due to their family’s unreliable or insufficient sources of income.Due to scarce resources, girls often could not afford sanitary pads. This affected their attendance as they had to stay home during menstruation.
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Girls were often required to help parents with household chores or engage in labor such as cultivation, looking after cattle or cooking.
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">KIs reported that there was no widespread insecurity in Aweil North County. However, long walking distances to school exposed girls to the risk of sexual violence.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parents reported that the school’s lack of WASH facilities designed to accomodate girls during menstruation forced girls to stay home for a few days each month, which led them to fall behind academically.

1. Education in the Republic of South Sudan – Status and Challenges for a New System – World Bank 2012.

2. As site visits took place mid-way through the school year, at which point many schools had not yet received GESS funding, the findings presented here relate to the 2016 school year.

3. Primary school grades are labeled 1 through 8 (P1-P8) and secondary school grades are labeled Senior 1 through 4 (S1-S4).

4. Government teacher pay grades as reported by HT.

5. As of site visit date (17 May 2017), exchange rate was 148 SSP to 1US Dollar (USD) based on REACH SSD daily exchange rate monitoring.

Cash Transfers

The cash transfer component of GESS aimed to reduce economic barriers to girls’ school enrollment and attendance.

- **Recipients:** 99 girls received cash transfers for the 2016 academic year.
- **Attendance Reporting:** HT reported that the Class Master took class attendance at begining of every lesson and the absence list was submitted daily to CLO and UMCOR office in Aweil Centre.

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ According to KIs from the school administration, cash transfers increased enrollment and attendance of girls.▪ The cash transfers reportedly allowed most eligible girls to cover basic requirements to attend school such as the purchase of a school uniform.▪ Caregivers reported that the cash transfers had also helped to cover some additional fees levied by the school such as the report card fee.	<p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Forced displacement and food insecurity prevented some girls from enrolling and attending school in 2016. <p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The school experienced problems with the list of eligible girls provided to GESS. The HT reported that some girls did not receive payments because their names had been misspelled or were missing from the payment list. This caused conflict with their parents and discouraged children of these parents from attending schools.▪ Some of the girls eligible for cash transfers misplaced their Cash Transfer Forms and therefore did not receive payments.▪ KIs from the school administration reported that delays in the disbursement of funds, coupled with a lack of communication once the payment had been sent, prevented some of the eligible girls from purchasing the required school materials in time for the beginning of the school year.

Capitation Grant

The capitation grant component of GESS aimed to reduce supply-side barriers to girls’ school enrollment and attendance (e.g. inadequate WASH facilities) and equip schools with the resources to deliver quality education (e.g. improving learning environment).

- **Amount:** 57,000 SSP
- **Tranches Received:** One in September 2016

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ HT reported that incentives provided through the capitation grant increased the number and quality of teachers. Incentives encouraged teachers to offer quality teaching and allowed the school to purchase teachers’ materials, further increasing teachers’ motivation.▪ The capitation grant improved the general comfort of students and teachers through the renovation of the latrines and procurement of a watertank, chairs, tables and a volleyball net.	<p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Inflation caused by the declining value of the SSP increased the price of school materials and decreased the real value of the capitation grant. As a result, the capitation grant was not sufficient to cover activities that had been planned in the budget. <p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The first tranche of capitation grant in 2016 was reportedly paid late and the second tranche had not been received at time of the site visit.

Physical verification of GESS activities

An important part of this monitoring exercise was verifying that schools had the documents in place to receive the capitation grant and that funds were spent as reported to CGA. To this effect, IMPACT physically verified programme documentation, receipts of purchase and physical items purchased under the 2016 capitation grant.

Table 2: Items Purchased with Capitation Grant in 2016

✓ Physically verified items or receipts of purchase during site visit

Verified	Items Reportedly Purchased	Quantity	Total Amount (SSP)
✓	Padlocks	10	4,560 (cumulative for padlocks, table and plastic chairs)
✓	Table	1	See above
✓	Plastic chairs	6	See above
✓	Sand and watertank	1	7,400
✓	Textbooks	11	1,200
✓	Volleyball net	1	4,172
✓	Chalk	10	6,115
✓	Bus ticket and accommodation	1	1,500
✓	Volunteer teacher incentive	11	21,527
✓	Government teacher incentive	2	2,000

Table 3: Key Document Verification Checklist for 2016

✓ Physically verified during site visit

Verified	Document
✓	School Development Plan
✓	School Governance Body (School Management Committee/Parent Teacher Association) Meeting Minutes
✓	Pupil Registry
✓	School Budget
✓	Cash Transfer Enrollment Forms
✓	Cash Transfer Payment List