

UNICEF EDUCATION

Education Case Study

SUDAN

Inclusion of South Sudanese refugees into the national education system

7 December 2021

Since 2013, with the onset of South Sudan's civil war it's estimated in Sudan there are [784,860](#) South Sudanese currently seeking asylum, [338,000](#) are school aged children. South Sudanese children are at a heightened risk of dropping out of school and becoming victims of violence, abuse, and exploitation because of their refugee status. Sudan's education policy states that South Sudanese refugee students can enrol into government schools, but before transferring they must have their learning level assessed to determine their appropriate class. Of those South Sudanese refugee children currently enrolled in school, 17,278 (30 per cent) are in public and private schools, and 40,316 (70 per cent) are in schools for refugee children. These schools teach Sudan's national curriculum and serve as a viable pathway for refugees into the national education system. To make this possible, Sudan's Ministry of Education, in partnership with UNICEF and UNHCR, has trained qualified teachers to deliver the national curriculum in refugee-hosting schools. This solution is part of the [PROSPECTS programme](#) being implemented in East Darfur and West Kordofan, areas that jointly host around 140,000 South Sudanese refugees. A key aim of this programme is to strengthen access to education for refugees. Cross sectoral activities such as issuance of birth certificates, MHPSS and WASH provision are also important for the success of the programme.

Sudan's national curriculum is taught in refugee hosting schools in Arabic, but in refugee camp settings the language of instruction is more commonly English, for many of whom is a second language. Sudan's shortage of teachers has led to the recruitment and training of South Sudanese teachers as volunteers. Moreover, refugee volunteer teachers speak the language of refugee students and share linguistic and cultural commonalities that make learning the national curriculum easier. Together UNICEF and UNHCR are working with Sudan's Ministry of Education to support the training of South Sudanese refugee volunteer teachers, to implement the national curriculum in refugee hosting schools. These volunteers are assigned to work in schools under the management and supervision of the ministry-appointed headmaster. These volunteer teachers lead language exchange among refugee children and their host communities, while also filling the English-speaking teacher gap in the country.

RESULTS

- In West Kordofan and East Darfur State, 14,638 children and adolescents (7,612 girls) from displaced communities as well as host communities were provided access to education in formal or non-formal institutions. 5,302 of the supported children were South Sudanese refugees (2,686 girls) who are enrolled in public schools or stand-alone refugee hosting schools during the 2020–2021 school year.
- To date around 1,611 South Sudanese refugee students (810 girls) in East Darfur and West Kordofan were integrated into the national school system.
- 215 South Sudanese teachers and educational personnel were recruited and trained to teach the national curriculum in refugee hosting schools in East Darfur and West Kordofan.

Cross-sectoral results supporting education outcomes:

- Rehabilitation and construction of elevated water tank systems equipped with a power source and hand pumps for refugees and host communities enabled 2,660 pupils from six basic school to use improved and sustainable water services and to practice proper hygiene.
- Mental health and psychosocial support were provided for 2,906 adolescent South Sudanese refugees (923 girls and 1,983 boys) and their host community.
- UNICEF and UNHCR worked with the State Ministry of Social Welfare in East Darfur, to ensure around 730 school-aged South Sudanese refugees (232 girls and 496 boys) were issued birth certificates. These are required documents for students' advancement to higher levels of learning beyond the primary level.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Training of South Sudanese teachers to teach in schools hosting refugee children has improved social cohesion between host and refugee communities.**
- **Training of volunteer refugee teachers has eased refugee students' transition into Sudan's national education system.** The coupling of volunteer refugee teachers with the Ministry of Education appointed teachers has helped refugee students transition into Sudan's national education system.
- **Standardizing learning assessments helps integrate refugees into the national education system.** Currently, learning assessments are distributed on an ad-hoc basis with each new surge of refugees. To create a more systematic and standardized process, UNICEF and UNHCR are working together to create guidance and procedures on how to integrate refugees into Sudan's national education system.

NEXT STEPS

- From 2021–2022 UNICEF is extending similar support to out-of-camp South Sudanese refugee settlements in Khartoum, White Nile, South Kordofan, South Darfur and East Darfur to ensure enrolment and retention of at least 21,000 refugee and host community children in 60 schools.
- UNICEF, jointly with UNHCR and the European Union Delegation, will continue to support the Ministry of Education to develop a national inclusive education policy and action plan for refugees and host communities, including internally displaced people.

Cost effectiveness: As of September 2021, a total of US \$913,012.23 (\$62 per child) has been spent on education in West Kordofan and East Darfur under the PROSPECTS programme grant.

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