Situation overview
Since the outbreak of conflict in December 2013, South Sudan has been confronted with many challenges, particularly large population displacements, chronic hyperinflation, civil unrest and food insecurity. In this volatile environment, the already fragile education system has deteriorated at both the system and service delivery levels and is characterized by poor educational outcomes and high numbers of out-of-school children including adolescents/youth, particularly those affected by conflict and other emergencies. According to the South Sudan Education Sector Analysis (2016) school coverage rates in South Sudan remain well below the regional average with Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) of 10 per cent at the pre-primary level and 57 per cent at the primary level.

The current trend in female enrolment is particularly disconcerting with the Gender Parity Index (GPI) ranking 0.75 at primary and 0.57 at the secondary level. According to the 2017 Education Cluster Assessment, 26 per cent of functional schools have been affected by attacks on education during the year with the most commonly reported incidences being theft and looting by armed forces/groups.

The capacity of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) to respond to the needs of children remains limited. Meanwhile, the capacity of non-governmental organisations providing frontline services needs continuous strengthening to be actively engaged in quality education service delivery. The Annual Education Census (AEC) 2016 revealed that more than half (58 per cent) of primary level teachers are untrained, impacting negatively on the quality of learning outcomes. Meanwhile, findings of the 2017 Education Cluster Assessment show teachers left schools mainly due to insufficient, delayed and unpaid salaries, as well as insecurity.

Impact of the conflict: The surge in countrywide insecurity in late 2016 and 2017 has undermined the provision of education services. In conflict-affected locations, schools remain closed, often occupied by internally displaced persons seeking shelter and protection. According to the 2017 Education Cluster Assessment schools lost, on average, 1.8 weeks of schooling, as well as more than three weeks in Upper Nile and almost five weeks in Warrap. The main reasons for such closures were insecurity, environmental conditions and non-payment of teacher salaries. With the signing of a peace agreement in September 2018, previously inaccessible areas can now be reached, so that urgently-needed education services can be provided.

Situation of children

- 2.2 million school-aged children out of school.
- 30% of schools are damaged, destroyed, occupied or closed.

UNICEF & partner results 2018

- 559,042 (40% female) # of out-of-school children (aged three to 18 years) provided with access to education in emergencies.
- 460 targeted number of classrooms in temporary learning spaces established/rehabilitated in 2018.
- 7,347 (31% female) # of teachers and members of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and school management committees (SMCs) trained.
- 30 education implementing partners to be targeted across the ten states.

*Education data was not collected in January, since schools were closed for the Christmas and New Year holidays. The new school semester started 04 February, data will be collected and figures reported on in March.
Back to Learning (BTL):
The objective of this initiative is to ensure all children have access to quality basic education. First launched in 2015, the Back to Learning (BTL) initiative addresses the most urgent education needs in conflict-affected and insecure states and also aims to bridge the humanitarian/development divide to realize the right to education for every child. In 2018 559,042 children were enrolled in school through BTL. In 2019, BTL will build on this success, aiming to bring 729,000 children back to school, train 5,500 education personnel and members of 600 parent-teacher associations/school management committees, and establish or rehabilitate 460 learning spaces. There will be a focus on reaching out to particularly marginalised groups such as girls, pastoralists and the disabled.

Education in Emergencies and Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy:
Integral to the BTL initiative is the Education in Emergencies (EiE) programme, supported by donors including USAID, Norway and the EU. The goal of EiE in South Sudan is to ensure that children affected by severe humanitarian crises have access to quality education in a safe and protective environment. UNICEF plans to work with 30 partners to implement EiE across all ten former states.

The USAID-funded Integrated Essential Emergency Education Services (IEEES) programme, which builds upon the results achieved and lessons learned from the previous Emergency Education Programme (EEP), enrolled 559,450 children (227,247 girls) during the past year. Through this and additional funding sources, EIE targets will remain the same as those of the BTL initiative, aiming to reach 729,000 children, 5,000 teachers and education personnel and members of 600 PTAs/SMCs.

In the future, in conjunction with expected support from Global Partnership for Education (GPE), there will be greater focus on strengthening the capacity of teachers and education personnel to enhance the quality of service delivery and quality learning outcomes.

Global Partnership for Education:
In July 2018, the GPE approved USD 6M under the GPE Accelerated Funding Framework (AFF) 2018-19. In addition, UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Education (MoGEI) and education stakeholders to develop and submit the Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant (ESPIG) 2019-21 application for an additional USD 35.7M. The focus of the ESPIG is on reducing the proportion of out-of-school children in South Sudan.

For the first time in four years, a nationwide Annual Education Census (AEC) took place in 2018. This collected critical information about school infrastructure, management and finances which will improve the government’s capacity for policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation.

GPE supported the Ministry for General Instruction and Education (MoGEI) to develop textbooks for five primary and 13 secondary subjects across all grade levels and the nationwide orientation of 16,010 teachers on the new curriculum. Four primary grade one subjects (excluding English) were translated into five national languages and literacy primers developed for these languages. These new materials will support a piloting of mother tongue instruction concurrent with the 2019 roll-out of the newly-developed textbooks.

With thanks to our generous donors including:
- SSHF
- CERF
- ECHO
- German NatCom
- EU
- Global Partnership for Education
- Denmark
- Norway
- USAID
- US Fund for UNICEF

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<tr>
<th>Funding required in 2019</th>
<th>USD 43,740,000</th>
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<td>Funding available in 2019</td>
<td>USD 7,693,857</td>
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82% funding gap

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More information on the situation in South Sudan and UNICEF response, including the latest situation reports, can be found at https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/