

***“What is the role of teachers in improving
Life skills in South Sudan”***

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(Life skills and peacebuilding in South Sudan)



SOUTH SUDAN – (context)

- ❑ Population is estimated at around 8.4 million
- ❑ Access to basic education is low, with 58% of primary school age children not enrolled (NER 2012)
- ❑ A few children achieve MDG 2: in 2012, Standards 1 and 8 enrolments were 394,573 and 32,597 respectively;
- ❑ Primary completion rate still below 10%.
- ❑ Transition from primary to secondary education is a challenge for many girls – about only 7% of girls that enter primary school complete P8, and less than 5% enter secondary schools (EMIS, 2012).
- ❑ Insufficient learning resources, despite low enrolments:
 - 44% teachers untrained
 - 4.8 pupils share one Maths textbook nationally
 - Teacher – pupil ratio is high 1:107
 - Low teacher salaries



CONTEXT– (conflict drivers)

- ❑ Weak governance - systems
- ❑ Poverty and marginalization
- ❑ Insecurity – violence
- ❑ Pressure from returnees – limited resources
- ❑ Socio-cultural norms e.g.
 - early child marriages
 - high bride price
 - pressure to marry
 - gender based violence
 - teachers - sexual relationships with students
- ❑ Trauma - complex multiple losses and emotions
- ❑ Youth unemployment – limited livelihood opp.
- ❑ Conflict insensitivity (Arabic speaking pattern still present despite English being language of instruction)

(Desk review – Conflict Analysis (South Sudan UNICEF 2012))

Key life skills areas in SS

- KNOWLEDGE:
 - Personal and psychological development (personal identity and emotional awareness)
 - Culture of peace and conflict resolution
 - Social and citizenship development
 - Healthy living practices (healthy prevention)
 - Environmental education
 - Career and entrepreneurship and development
- SKILLS (including practical skills):
 - communication, decision making, problem solving, team building, reading and writing, technological skills
- ATTITUDES:
 - Tolerance, respect for diversity, “I can attitude”, sensitivity



ROLE OF TEACHERS IN IMPROVING LIFE SKILLS IN SOUTH SUDAN

Education/teacher “needs to ensure to each child the full development of the human personality, citizenship and lay the foundation for employability; the underpinning knowledge and industry based professional competencies”

Vaidya Shipra (2007:7-9).

“How do we prepare our students to learn, work, and live with each other in the 21st Century? (Department of Education - IOWA STATE, 2001)

- How do we instill self-respect and respect for fellow human beings?
- What personal/social skills are needed?
- What problem solving skills must they have?
- How can we nurture full academic potential?
- What career development programs must be provided?
- How do we ensure equity for all?
- What are the specific employability skills needed by every worker?”

(Cont)

- Assertiveness-respect human dignity (self & others)
- Reduce tribal divisions and promote similarities
- Enable girls to see/find their space in development beyond just getting married – (safe learning spaces)
- Relate education to world of work (career guidance)
- Create opportunity for leadership skills to develop
- Consciousness to trauma and its effects on growth.
- Offer psycho-social support for learners and referrals
- Promote conflict sensitivity – (factor marginalized)
- Role of parental figures (self and others/community)

(Cont)

- Promote basic skills - ability to read and write (numeracy and literacy is key)
- Promote effective communication skills
- Inculcate appreciation and prizing of self-worth
- Appreciation for cultural identity
- Promote productive living to benefit self, community and the nation.
- Widen opportunities to compete nationally, regionally and internationally.

BUT HOW CAN THE TEACHERS DO THIS?

1. INFUSE LIFESKILLS INTO CURRICULUM - STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES

“PREPARE LEARNERS FOR AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE” “Mandela”

PROVISION OF “KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES” PLUS
“LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS” THROUGH INFUSION AND
INTEGRATION

Cross-cutting themes in the curriculum:

- Life skills
- Peace (citizenship, human rights and peace cross and stand alone in Social Studies)
- Environment (conservation and sustainability)

Life skills:

*“Life Skills have been built in across the subjects, but some of the **social and emotional elements** will be covered in **school counseling programmes**”.*



Curriculum and learning experiences should ***“prepare young people for an uncertain future”*** and

“To do this, we need the ***traditional subjects***, but we also need ***young people*** to develop the **key competencies** that will enable them to ***cope with life in the 21st Century***.”

2. DEVELOP EXPECTED LEARNER COMPETENCIES IN RSS?

Learning experiences should build competencies on “knowledge, skills and attitudes”

- **CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING**

- Problem solving
- Decision making

- **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

- Living in diverse communities
- Interpersonal skills

- **COOPERATION**

- Team building
- Getting along with others
- Appreciation for diversity

- **CULTURE**

- Identity (self and others)
- SS core values and beliefs
- Character building



(Presentation by the Undersecretary of MOEST at the National Curriculum Review Stakeholder's Consultative Conference in Juba, South Sudan on 25th Nov, 2013)

3. OFFER PARTICIPATORY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

- **LIFE SKILLS AS A METHODOLOGY IN CLASS:**
- Promote a conducive learner empowering environment
- Recognize individuals as unique and yet social beings
- Relate strengths and weaknesses to self-awareness
- Encourage social cohesion by engaging students from different tribes / clans to mix in class
- Relate life skills to learner's familiar life experiences
- Avoid too much knowledge and be more practical
 - Encourage small group discussions – free space for their voices
 - Use learner discussion stimulation – debates, talk shows
 - Encourage story telling, poetry and drama

4. TEACHERS TO INTERNALISE LIFE SKILLS

TEACHERS ARE AGENTS OF TRANSFORMATION

- Internalizing life skills for personal transformation and role modeling desired behavioral repertoires

(“teachers expect us to change and how can we change when we see them doing things that are not right e.g. smoking, drinking alcohol (Student)”

“teachers should not see girls in school as potential wives – fear of being abuse” (UNICEF staff)

- Sensitivity to context and cultural appropriateness

Awareness of contextual sensitivities (cultural, political, social, geographical etc) e.g. early marriages (e.g. balancing tension between girl’s education and seeing them as potential sources of family wealth is a difficult reality)

- Harnessing teacher resourcefulness and creativity

Learning in SS requires ability to use local materials for teaching aids

5. PROMOTE CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

CO-CURRICULAR ARE CARRIERS OF LIFE SKILLS MESSAGES

- Promote peer participation in various clubs (leadership)
- Support participation in sports (tool for social skills)
- Establish the school mentors and coaches (learning by observing the role models – e.g. university students)
- Promote and support the talent search and mentor it (e.g. talent search in different categories and levels)
- Promote inter-school tournaments and cultural festivals (tolerance and peaceful co-existence).
- Learners participation in arts such as drama, poetry and music as carriers for life skills messages
- Support financial literacy and livelihood initiatives / small projects in school (poultry, school gardening, animal keeping, etc)
- Promote specially designated days such as environmental days, HIV and AIDS day, Life skills Day, Career Guidance Day and invite parents for exhibitions.

6. STUDENT GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

- Promote Life skills through parliament school system
 - Voting for ministers, prefects, monitors to learn governance
 - School governance promotes leadership development
 - Students build confidence to speak for their rights and to articulate issues respectfully
 - Student leaders engage with school management on key problem solving issues (problem solvers and part of the governance – leadership for tomorrow –

Student speaking in the conference

“we are leaders of tomorrow - so we have to be part of what is happening in the school ... even right now”

7. Support school career guidance and counselling services

- Recognize and support vulnerable group / inclusion
- Identify and support children dealing with psychosocial issues and refer cases beyond them
- Promote “peace tables” in schools
- Support career guidance
- Work with training institutions on career preparation
- Support field visits to different working places
- Promote career and job shadowing experiences
- Maintain confidentiality in dealing with sensitive issues

Parental Plea!!!!

Our children go with us, to stay alive. Give us water, for our cows and our children"... "If they can all get education, they will not kill each other..."



8. MENTORING, COACHING & EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

- Mentoring and coaching by locals (e.g. university students and successful women and men from disadvantaged communities)
- Identify local role models and link them with school programmes
- Support exchange programmes – (locally and internationally including on-line for cross pollination of ideas and mentoring) (youth to youth, youth to adults, in & out of school youth and north and south)

9. USE BASIC MEDIA IN LIFE SKILLS

- Use basic technology for skills building e.g. cell phone, radio, TV
- Use radio messages to stimulate discussions
- Build picture stories – collages from magazines
- Where internet is available use it to promote social and technological skills for living

10. BUILD LIASON AND SUPPORT NETWORKS

- Sensitize the community on importance of life skills and peacebuilding initiatives (PTA, Traditional Authorities, NGO groups etc)
- Organize activities that allow the learners, school and the communities from diverse cultures to engage for social cohesion (e.g. cultural festival).
- Facilitate field trips to sites and institutions where learners can exchange experiences and learning practices (e.g. training institutions, vocational centres, youth centers
- Invite key speakers from the community to convey life skills messages and promote public enlightenment or discourse.
- Encourage the private sector, community in participating on educational development.

CAN WE LOCK OUR HEADS TOGETHER FOR THE CHILDREN OF SOUTH SUDAN?



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- *Ke a leboga!!!*
- *Shukran !!!*
- *Thank you!!!*