

ERDF 2010 Proceedings

Day one and two of the ERDF Conference

1. Opening prayers
2. Opening remarks:
 - Undersecretary MoEST
 - Minister of Education Central Equatoria
 - Minister of Education, Science and Technology
 - Lead Agency Representative
3. Officially opened by the representative of the Governor of Central Equatoria State.
4. Review of the last ERDF Resolutions/ Recommendations
5. Presentations of achievements, challenges and recommendations from Directorates of; Finance and Administration, General Education, Examinations and Alternative Education Systems.
6. Presentations from the major Development Partners and other agencies; JDT, USAID, JICA, World Food Program, Save the Children and FAWE
7. Presentations by State Ministries of Education; profile, achievements, challenges and recommendations from the ten States. The major issues noted were;

Achievements

1. Development and distribution of teaching/ learning materials especially mother tongue books
2. Enrolment increase for both regular and AES education.
3. Stabilized and implementation of the payroll management in some States is moving well.
4. Rationalization of staff based on new organization structure is on course
5. provision of bicycles and motorcycles to inspectorate in some states
6. various refresher and training courses held for practicing teachers
7. regular coordination meetings held between state ministries of education and NGOs
8. improved coordination through Thematic Working Group meetings and development of joint road map for financing education
9. Management and head teachers' training for school inspectors and education supervisors among other.
10. Some State distributed teaching/ learning materials.
11. Conducted awareness campaign for AES and general education

12. Conducted needs assessment on e.g SPLA

Successes in Coordination

1. Thematic Working Groups meetings as well as other coordination forums were held and ideas were shared.
2. Some directorates obtained project cars for inspection and project activities.
3. Worked with some partners to produce and distribute teaching/ learning materials.
4. Worked closely with head teacher to collect data for EMIS
- 5.

Challenges

General challenges

1. Persistent gender gap among teachers and student enrolment
2. high dropouts rates in primary schools, AES and secondary schools especially for girls.
3. Shortage of classroom, sanitation facilities and teacher accommodation facilities
4. Gaps between teacher demand and supply more critically shortage of qualified teachers for basic education and lecturers for Higher Education
5. Staff positions occupied by unproductive pensioners
6. Teacher remuneration and welfare still dominated by underpayment, lack of accommodation, and at times absolute failure to pay salaries
7. High percentage of forced volunteer teachers **37%** (page 29)

Curriculum

1. Incomplete curriculum development: Gaps in Primary, secondary and Teacher Education curriculum:
2. Continued use of various and foreign curricula in primary and secondary education
3. operating different school calendars across Southern Sudan
4. Shortage of instructional and Learning materials and high student ; textbook ratios
5. Delay to pass draft Education ACT and Examinations ACT

Coordination

1. Ineffective Horizontal and vertical Coordination of programmes and initiatives undertaken at different levels of governance and those by development partners. Challenges of coordination of programmes mindful of a decentralized system
2. Top bottom decisions and planning still dominate MOEST- State relationship

3. Inequitable distribution of donor support within the states, among states and within departments
4. Some NGOs do not attend coordination meetings
5. Definition of roles-relationship between GoNU/MOHE and GoSS/MoEST

Financing Education

1. Underfunding to education sector and subsequent overdependence on donor funding
2. Inadequate staff salary grant to states; mismatch between student enrolment and budget provision
3. Poor management of the approved budget; diversions, and partial release of the approved budget
4. Poor funding of the TTIs and other training programmes
5. Poor flow of funds from MoFEP: sometimes it delays and budget not fully honoured

Administrative/ governance

1. Insecurity in some places led to school closer, drop out and poor student attendance
2. political interference hinders implementation of reform decisions
3. policy gaps between TTI and Universities
4. Action on ERDF resolutions not fully taken
5. Retrogressive cultural practices mitigating against girls education

Day three (3)

- a. Presentation on setting Sector Wide Objective and there was a consequent group work. The following were the key objectives;
 - a. To construct classrooms.
 - b. To conduct teacher training.
 - c. To procure and distribute teaching/ learning materials.
 - d. To conduct capacity building training.
 - e. To improve teacher working conditions.
 - f. To support and improve enrolment and retention.
 - g. To enrol WES into school feeding program.

Day three

SSLA Presentation

1. Education Act
2. Education Budget

Particular issues of interest;

1. The President, during opening of the SSLA, empowered the education committee to oversee executives on education.
2. The education committee received an integrity award for the role in oversight and integrity.
3. On the budget, the budget is not passed and cannot be discussed.

Achievements noted by SSLA:

- a. Both the committee and the parliament accepted the implementation of the payroll.
- b. Collection and compilation of the data by EMIS.
- c. Several materials developed for mother tongue.
- d. Commencement of the construction of the science and Mathematics Institutes in Aweil and Juba. Need to speed up the construction.
- e. Distribution of the laboratory equipment to the various schools deserves acknowledgement.
- f. The role of AES in accelerating education and increased enrolment.
- g. The admission of the many students to the various Universities.
- h. Completion in the construction of the 14 County Education Centers.
- i. Formation of the Council on scholarships has been appreciated

Challenges noted by SSLA

- a. The debt of 12 million incurred by parliament and from which budget.
- b. Delay and slow construction of the ten (10) National Secondary Schools. Need to see acceleration of the construction.
- c. The 14 CECs constructed need to be put to use/ function. This will accelerate teacher training.
- d. Management of the scholarships will require some decisions. Some decisions are being developed to decentralize. Small portion will be left at the center.
- e. Lack of space and lecturers in some Universities are to be assessed.

- f. There are numerous problems facing Juba University and more donor are needed to provide support.
- g. Concern in the delay of the establishment of the Research Council.

Budget on for Education

- a. Higher education cannot be met entirely by government. Parents have to bear some responsibility.
- b. 15.8 million which is allocated for construction of schools in each County will be reduced and the balance transferred to something. This can meet payment of teachers. 60% of CDF went to education.
- c. Commended Eastern Equatoria State for paying their teacher on time and without complains. While other States like CES not paying them on time.

Legislation in the SSLA

- a. Need to campaign for more funds from government to go to Higher Education.
- b. The Education Act never reached SSLA for discussion.
- c. The NGO Act/ Bill is being developed. Information has been collected from various countries and States. The NGOs have not provided their feed back to the Bill.
- d. The Higher Education Act needs to be submitted to SSLA for discussion to assist in setting up

Recommendations

Recommendations on coordination

- Relax communication protocols on the Secretariat of Examinations. Allow the Secretariat to deal with the States directly and only copies of correspondence are to be furnished to the relevant authorities.
- Provide reliable means of transport to all the Directorate and Departments to facilitate their activities.
- The Directorate should lobby for funding from the partners while sharing the plans of the Directorates at all levels with the respective Development Partners.
- Develop proper coordination strategies and mechanism for all the stakeholders to utilize.
- Development of a Sector Wide Plan to improve coordination to incorporate GOSS/ MOEST, States and Development Partners.

- Improve transport and communication systems with GoSS-MoEST, SMOEs and Development Partners for better coordination of education activities.
- Regular coordination meetings should take place among all stakeholders. The office for Development Partners Coordination should ensure the regularity of the meeting.
- The Ministry to harmonize the academic calendar for better planning purposes by the stakeholders.
- Better working relationships of NGO's with the Ministry at all levels (GoSS, State, County to Payams) to achieve the same goal.
- Participation in the Thematic Working Groups should be broadened for better understanding and information sharing.
- Improve school inspection and supervision to ensure that proper learning is taking place.
- Expedite passing of Southern Sudan Examinations Act to provide the Secretariat a legal framework to operate and fully enforce its policies effectively.

Recommendations on Accountability

- Give the Secretariat its full share of the budget. Value the importance of examinations. Release fund when demanded. Exams matters cannot be rolled over.
- Develop accountability strategies for proper accountability among all stakeholders in the education sector.
- Transparency and accountability mechanisms should be developed and disseminated to all stakeholders.
- Filling the gaps in the Directorate.
- Create mechanism to ensure gender and social issues are integrated in all directorates (even the budget should be gender sensitive)
- There is need for more gender balance (in positions of leadership) across directorates
- Periodic monitoring visits at school level with SMOEs counterparts

- Better accountability of NGO's to the MoEST in terms of information sharing.
- MoEST should facilitate NGO's work by ensuring that policy frameworks are in place; Education Act, Education policy and Examinations Act among others.
- The State Directors should compile reports and share them with Directorate (MOEST/ GOSS) and Development Partners in time.
- Teachers of both general education and AES should be paid in time to improve classroom teaching and attendance in all the States.
- States should follow closely the extra funds from the State revenue collection for full payment of teachers' salaries in addition to what is transferred by GOSS.
- All the partners are to submit their reports to the respective Directorates in the Ministry.
- The Ministry should ensure proper budget execution in line with the planned activities for that particular Fiscal Year.
- A Quarterly reporting mechanism should be developed and disseminated for utilization by all stakeholders.
- Develop a strong financial management system to monitor flow and expenditure of funds.

Other Recommendations

- Further training of education managers at the State level to improve both accountability and coordination.
- Partner and project mapping for education sector priorities.
- Pilot testing school gardening by agencies and partners to determine ways of improving school feeding programs.
- The Ministry to raise the Education Budget from 6-20% to replace the deficit that will be left by donors.
- Closely look into the issues of the school calendar and the contact hours between children & teachers.
- Review barriers in the education system that are still keeping children out of school and making those in school drop out.

Group presentations

Calender

1. The group suggested that school calendar runs from Feb to Dec taking into consideration the following (criteria)
 - Considered the weather condition e.g. from Jan to march-dry and august-October is wet
 - instructional days i.e. number of teaching days
 - interregional relationships
 - unpredicted government and religious holidays
 - Interruption due to un foreseen factors
 - Time for making exams should be before going for holidays
 - Agric activities

Curriculum

Challenges

- 1-Printing of books
- 2- Curriculum gaps
- 3-Curriculum centre
- 4-Review of teacher's training materials
- 5-Curriculum implementation
- 6-Relationship between curriculum and examination

1 Printing

- Books printed and not yet reviewed
- Books printed not yet printed
- Channel of communication; delays of communication between partners and MOEST
- books are printed out side southern Sudan. There for printing press be brought to southern Sudan
- lack of funds for printing
- printing be done at curriculum development centre (MoEST)

- central place needed for coordination but partners support with funding
- we should think of how to budget for printing in the long run
- bidding process should be reviewed because it is a problem
- there is need for material review process for printing
- we need to pay for the review process
- distribution

2 Curriculum gap

- review process is urgently needed
- complete the subjects which are incomplete
- Feedback mechanism is required in the review process
- Curriculum as an important element of education should be reviewed continuously
- Technical group to review and develop the curriculum
- subject specialist be appointed to begin with few subjects and expand with time

3 Curriculum implementation

- not all the states to implement the curriculum
- introduce intensive English language course for Arabic teachers
- Establish curriculum implementation monitoring methods /mechanism
- Train teachers to implement the curriculum (use of materials)
- Feedback and recommendation from teachers
- Establish a curriculum institute not just a centre
- Relationship between curriculum and examination is that there is not unified exams without Complete curriculum
- MOEST must control the curriculum and the whole education system

Examinations

- GOSS carry out evaluation and set time frame when all States must adopt curriculum

- Increase intensive English training of teachers
- Establish Southern Sudan Examination Council
- Complete Southern Sudan Curriculum, (develop books etc.)Teachers' guides
- Reduce Exam fees

Secretariat can manage exams until the council is set

Decentralization

Education Act

- not dissemination to States
- “Stuck”
- Education act will give us (State) roles and clearer responsibilities
- Needs to advocate chairman for education
- Is the act held up because of its content?
- Re-examine Act?
- What can we (States) do once it is passed?
- What can we do if it not passed?
- Need job descriptions
- Circulate organ gram to states
- create more uniformity in organigram countered by comment that this is not decentralization
- suggest that Goss goes to states to work on policy implementation
- Goss should pass over skills and resources to states when they pass policy to state level
- also provide guidelines on roles and responsibilities
- states can take responsibilities for managing school construction (with resources)
- Budget can be created at state level. At least estimate
- when to decentralize and at what level, state and payam
- state ministers needs to meet more frequently to discuss these issues

-states needs to be included in school construction decision making process

Issues arising

1. How can we decentralize the management and financing of the NTTIs to ensure all stake holders play significant roles?
2. What relevant steps do we need to take besides MOEST and SMOEs specially that NTTIs and CECs are expanding
3. What strategies do we need to put in place to increase capacity enrichment of the training institutions?
4. Most CECs are not operational due to lack of water points, dormitory and fencing Finishing up of the remaining CECs and operating the 9 CEC
5. Upto when will our students be internally displaced or be returnees
6. Downsizing is not effective in some states just because those said to have been laid off are still on the pay sheets. so what do we do
7. Collection from states does not reach the government treasury
8. States don't know how much is given to each state for operation, constuction etc
9. Monitoring and evaluation issues not effective
10. Budget constraints both at state and MoEST /Goss levels
11. Policies not effected, what next
12. Lack of guiding policies to govern coordination and planning
13. Lack of unified school calendar, curriculum, and examinations
14. Education act ,exams act, and NGO act not passed by the Assembly
15. Lack of coordination in planning, budgeting, and implementation among all levels / lack of accountability and reporting