

Teacher Compensation in Crisis Contexts

Problems & Paradoxes for Paying Teachers in South Sudan

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Recommendations to develop pathways to sustainable compensation for teachers paid by the government of South Sudan

Reconciling the past (unique to teachers on the government payroll)

Stakeholders

Government of South Sudan (GoSS; MoGEI, MoFP)

Pay salary arrears for all teachers on the government payroll.
Within South Sudan's National Budget for FY 2023-2024, MoFP allocated 50 billion SSP for "arrear funds" (MoFP, 2023). Anecdotal responses from teachers within this study, along with local news reports, cast doubts that salary arrears ever reached teachers. In a speech to the Transnational Legislative Assembly, the Minister of Finance stated that 15% (642.3 billion SSP) of the proposed FY 2024-2025 National Budget would be allocated to salary arrears for civil servants and operational forces (SSEM, 2024). Given past patterns, the GoSS should take measures to ensure that funds allocated for salary arrears reach teachers in practice. This will require coordination between MoFP and MoGEI to ensure allocated funds are transferred and distributed to teachers at the school level.

Donors

Account for salary arrears in current agreements/negotiations for supporting the education sector in South Sudan.

Teachers' Union & Advocacy Groups

Monitor the GoSS's stated promises vs. implementation efforts to address teachers' salary arrears. Engage in ongoing advocacy efforts to pressure the GoSS to follow through on promised actions.

Reckoning with the present

Stakeholders

GoSS

Resume payments now and progressively increase to a "living wage" (in coordination with the MoL) to support teacher retention and motivation.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), determination of a "living wage" is denoted as: "the wage level that is necessary to afford a decent standard of living for workers and their families, taking into account the country circumstances and calculated for the work performed during the normal hours of work" (ILO, 2024a). The establishment of these wages should be carried out in consultation with teachers and the teachers' union (ILO, 2024b)⁸, in order to decrease teachers' reliance on supplementary employment (beyond their roles as teachers) to cover living costs.

Provide the technical and financial support to strengthen the management and accountability mechanisms of the National Pension Fund and National Social Insurance Fund by bolstering their human resources, technical capacity, and legal frameworks, as well as by engaging staff in relevant training to ensure that teachers receive their entitled benefits throughout their employment and into retirement.

Continue to strengthen the State Education Monitoring Committees (SEMCs) and monitor their accountability reports to identify and address funding leakage/misallocations in transfers from the national to state, county, and payam levels (MoGEI & GPE, 2024).

Donors

Continue exploring transitional models to help GoSS fill salary gaps in the short-term and progressively increase teacher compensation to a living wage.

Prioritize funding teacher compensation to ensure that teachers are adequately supported in their efforts to facilitate student learning and well-being, let alone implement new and innovative educational programming. If direct support for teacher compensation is not possible, provide other funding support that would allow GoSS to prioritize teacher compensation payments.

Looking towards the future

Stakeholders

GoSS (MoGEI)

Increase domestic public financing to education from 5 to 20% and fully execute the general education budget (MoGEI, 2023b).

Historic budget execution rates for the education sector have routinely fallen below 50% (UNESCO, 2023). The GESP (2023-2027) aims to incrementally increase the execution rate from a baseline of 46% in 2021 to full execution (100%) by 2027 (MoGEI, 2023b). Moreover, as noted within this report, GPE has further incentivized execution of MoGEI's salary specific budget within their partnership compact. The GoSS should prioritize meeting the 80% salary execution rate outlined by GPE in order to receive an additional 5 million dollars for the education sector (GPE & MoGEI, 2024).

Implement strategies outlined in the GESP (2023-2027) to increase teachers' salaries to two times the GDP per capita on average (MoGEI, 2023b) so that teachers do not need to secure additional employment to fill financial shortfalls.

Develop Education Management Information System (EMIS) to track key metrics (e.g. teacher profiles, attendance, payroll management, recruitment, placement, and retirement).

Follow through on agreement with GPE to develop an MoGEI specific Public Financial Management (PFM) policy framework to ensure greater coordination, accountability, and management of public funding in the education sector (MoGEI & GPE, 2024). In the long-term, developing and implementing this policy would reduce system inefficiencies that currently prevent allocated salary funds from reaching teachers.

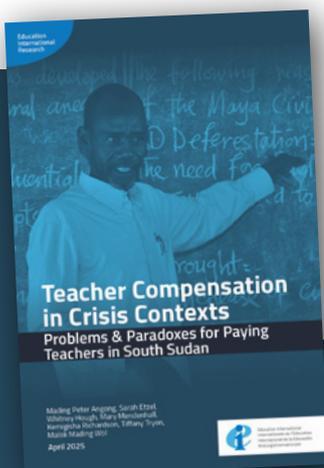
GoSS, Donors & Private Sector

Establish mobile banking system / digital banking platforms to facilitate teacher payments, while reducing losses related to corruption, theft, etc. along the multi-tiered and multi-touch point salary distribution system currently in place.

Donors

Help GoSS diversify revenue streams to avoid future disruptions to public sectors and civil servants, including education.

Consider linking future funding to results-based frameworks that prioritize systems strengthening approaches, following the example of GPE's compact with MoGEI.



The full research paper, in English, can be downloaded by clicking the image or the link or scanning the QR-code.

<https://eiie.io/2025SouthSudan>



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