

Building Resilience to Improve Development and Growth in Education in Sudan (BRIDGES)

September 18, 2025



Program Document

System Transformation Grant

Table of Contents

<i>Country Context</i>	4
<i>Education in Sudan</i>	5
<i>Education Policy: Transitional Education Plan (TEP)</i>	12
<i>BRIDGES</i>	14
<i>Budget Summary</i>	32
<i>Targeting</i>	33
<i>Implementation Arrangements</i>	37
<i>Financial Management</i>	43
<i>Procurement</i>	45
<i>Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning</i>	47
<i>Safeguarding</i>	49
<i>Sustainability and Aid Effectiveness</i>	51

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BRIDGES	Building Resilience to Improve Development and Growth in Education in Sudan
CIU	Cash Implementation Unit
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standards
CP	Child Protection
CSSF	Comprehensive School Safety Framework
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CWD	Children with Disabilities
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement Program
FCDO	UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
FE	Formal Education
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
GAM	Gender and Age Maker Standards
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICT	Information, Communications and Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LEG	Local Education Group
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MoE	Ministry of Education
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MYRP	Multi-Year Resilience Program
NCETP	National Council for Education and Teaching Profession
NTTC	National Teacher Training Center

NFE	Nonformal Education
OOSC	Out of School Children
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SCI	Save the Children International
SCALE	Scaling Access and Learning in Education
SCG	System Capacity Grant
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
SLS	Safe Learning Space
SPEEP	Sudan's Primary Education Emergency Support Project
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
STG	System Transformation Grant
STQF	Sudan Teachers' Qualification Framework
TA	Technical Assistance
TaRL	Teaching at the Right Level
TEP	Transitional Education Plan
TiCC	Teachers in Crisis Context
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAMS	United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WFP	World Food Program

Country Context

On 15 April 2023, a civil war erupted between the President of Sudan supported by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Vice President of Sudan backed by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), plunging Sudan into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. In the past two years, the fighting has devastated the country with conservative estimates of more than 150,000 people killed and close to 12 million people forcibly displaced both internally and across borders, representing one of the largest displacement crises globally.¹ Active conflict has disproportionately impacted the country with fighting concentrated in Khartoum, Al Jazirah, the Darfurs in general (primarily North and West Darfur), and North Kordofan over the past two years, resulting in even a greater need for humanitarian aid and assistance in these areas.

The conflict has fractured Sudan into areas controlled by SAF, RSF, and other actors, creating a complex and shifting landscape where some areas remain engulfed in active conflict while others have moved into early recovery and rehabilitation phases. SAF-controlled areas in mostly the Northern and Eastern parts of Sudan are marked with greater stability and are attempting to provide continuity of basic social services, albeit facing massive challenges. RSF-controlled areas in mostly the Southern and Western parts of Sudan face greater disruptions. There have been credible reports that RSF-controlled areas remain reluctant to reopen schools in the hopes of providing schooling with an alternative curriculum model. It has also been reported that students in these areas have been prevented from taking grade 12 examinations.

Socioeconomic Context

Sudan ranks among the lowest globally on the Human Development Index, placing 176 out of 193 countries.² In 2023, the country's GDP declined by 37.5%, and is projected to shrink by another 32 – 42% by the end of 2025.³ Poverty has surged dramatically, pushing millions more into extreme vulnerability. It is estimated that 30.4 million people, including 16 million children, which constitutes 60% of the population, require life-saving humanitarian assistance today.⁴

Livelihoods have shrunk considerably, and agriculture-related employment is expected to be reduced by half.⁵ Many are without housing and face acute shelter shortages, often living in precarious or makeshift conditions, due to internal displacement, with children accounting for more than half of the displaced population. More than half of Sudan's population face acute food insecurity, with rising malnutrition among children made worse by restricted humanitarian access due to continued conflict.⁶

¹ Center for Preventive Action (2025), 'Civil War in Sudan' from <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/power-struggle-sudan> accessed July 2025; UNHCR (2025), 'Operations Data Portal: Sudan Regional Crisis Development Action Platform' from <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation>, accessed July 2025.

² UNDP (2024), 'Human Development Index 2023: Sudan', from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>, accessed July 2025.

³ World Bank (2024), 'Sudan Country Economic Memorandum: Scoping Note - Pathways to Economic Stabilization'.

⁴ International Rescue Committee, 2025, "Crisis in Sudan: What is happening and how to help," <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help>

⁵ FAO & WFP (2024), 'FAO-WFP Anticipatory Action and Early Response Plan: Sudan'.

⁶ OCHA (2024), 'Sudan: Situation Report'; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) (2024), 'Sudan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation,' from <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1159433/>, accessed June 2025.

It is believed that 24.6 million are acutely food insecure with 638,000 people facing catastrophic famine-like conditions (IPC Phase 5).⁷ According to the World Food Program (WFP), over one in three children are facing acute malnutrition.⁸ Aside from food scarcity, acute water shortages leave one-third of the population without safe drinking water.

Access to basic social services is extremely poor. In terms of numbers, Sudan is among the world's largest education emergency with 52% of schools closed nationwide, and 14 million children out of school.⁹ The health system is near collapse, with thousands of facilities non-functional and health workers unpaid for months. Disease outbreaks—including cholera, malaria, and measles—are on the rise. Cholera alone has resulted in 99,700 suspected cases and claimed 2,470 lives since 2023.¹⁰ Vaccination rates have plummeted giving rise to concern for other potential outbreaks in the future.¹¹

Education in Sudan

Children in Sudan have a fundamental right to education and the state is mandated to guarantee access to education without discrimination, in accordance with the 2019 Interim Transitional Constitution. The Constitution provides the legal basis for all education policies and programs, including an integrated system supporting both formal and nonformal education. This is further reiterated by the 2001 General Education Planning and Organization Act, which also stipulates that children beginning at the age of six years, and typically until the age of 13 years, have the right to free and compulsory primary education for six years. Compulsory education is preceded by two years of non-compulsory preschool education and succeeded by six years of non-compulsory secondary education. The Act also affirms the need for integrated systems of service delivery, utilizing both formal and nonformal education in providing access to education, ensuring government oversight while engaging non-state and private actors, the communities, and families in supporting service delivery.

Education service delivery is decentralized in Sudan. The Ministry of Education (MoE) at the federal level provides oversight for overarching education coordination, policies, and monitoring across all education cycles. They are mandated to develop and monitor the quality of education through various mechanisms like curriculum development and teacher certification. The federal government has its own budget and provides funding to the states primarily for teacher salaries. They are also responsible for resource mobilization, both internally and with donors and development partners. At the state level, the MoE is mandated to oversee education service delivery. Local education authorities are responsible for implementing preschool and primary education, while the state oversees secondary education. State governments are responsible for managing all human resources, including teacher recruitment and deployment. State governments must also manage resource mobilization for everything aside from

⁷ UNICEF (2024), 'Sudan: Acute Food Insecurity Snapshot from October 2024 - May 2025,' from https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Sudan_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Oct2024_May2025_Snapshot.pdf, accessed July 2025; Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) (2024), 'Sudan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation,' from <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1159433/>, accessed June 2025.

⁸ WFP (2025), 'Sudan Emergency,' from <https://www.wfp.org/emergencies/sudan>, accessed August 2025.

⁹ Sudan State Ministry of Education Data (2025); Education Cluster Dashboard (2025); UNICEF (2025), 'Situation Report'.

¹⁰ Al Jazeera, 'Cholera Kills 40 as Sudan Faces Worst Outbreak in Years, says MSF,' from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/14/cholera-kills-40-as-sudan-faces-worst-outbreak-in-years-says-msf>, accessed August 2025.

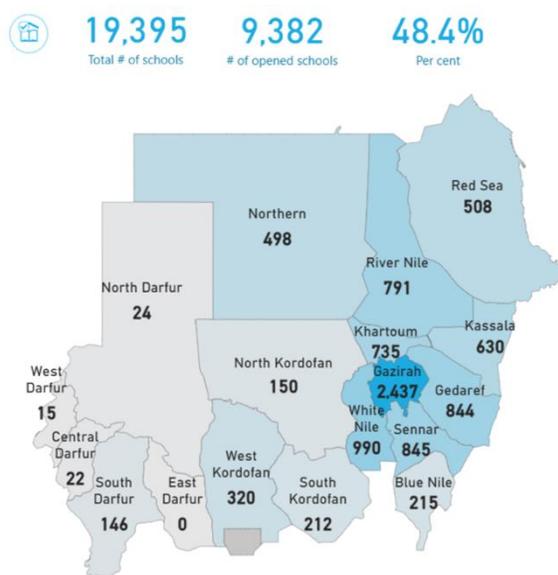
¹¹ Ibid.

teachers' salaries, either through local state budgets or other external services. Local education authorities work directly in the management of schools, staff, and related entities.

Access

Access to education was already a challenge before the current conflict. Sudan's gross enrollment rates for primary education were 76% and primary completion rates were approximately 65% in 2018, the lowest in the Middle East and North Africa.¹² In 2020, Sudan had over 19,300 schools serving approximately 12.5 million children, yet 6.9 million children were already out of school due to protracted conflict and chronic underinvestment.¹³ When fighting erupted in April 2023, nearly 13,000 schools were closed, leaving 16.5 million children without learning opportunities. By the end of 2024, only around two million children had returned to learning, leaving over 16.5 million children without formal schooling for over two years.¹⁴

Although progress has been made in some safer states, the overall situation remains critical. As of mid 2025, only 9,382 out of 19,395 schools (48%) are functioning. The most affected states include East Darfur, West Darfur, Central Darfur, and South Kordofan, where less than 10% of schools have reopened. East Darfur has not reopened any schools, while the remaining Darfurs have had limited openings: North Darfur 2.1%, and South Darfur (9.7%. In contrast, Al Jazirah (100%), Gedaref (100%), Red Sea (100%), Sennar (97.4%), and River Nile (94.7%) have achieved full or close to full reopening. In Khartoum, the education system is slowly recovering, with 735 schools reopened out of 3,796—representing just 19.4%. Insecurity, damaged infrastructure, and resource gaps prevent full reopening in many conflict-affected areas. For example, in Khartoum alone, 63 schools have been significantly damaged by the war.¹⁵



Furthermore, more than 1,800 schools have been converted into internally displaced persons (IDP) shelters, further straining available space. Schools that have reopened face overcrowding, especially those in areas hosting large IDP populations. Many have damaged school buildings, classrooms, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, inadequate numbers of qualified and trained teachers, and lack of teaching and learning materials. Additionally, half of Sudan's teachers remain without salaries, undermining service delivery and accelerating attrition.

¹² Economic Research Forum (2024), Education in Sudan: Disparities in Enrollment, Attainment, and Quality by Ebaidalla M. Ebaidalla and Tarig Alhaj Rakhy, Working Paper No. 1707.

¹³ Sudan Education Cluster (2023) in TEP

¹⁴ UNICEF (2025), 'Humanitarian Situation Report No. 29', from <https://www.unicef.org/media/170421/file/UNICEF%20Sudan%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%2029%20-%20March%202025.pdf>

¹⁵ Sudan Local Education Group (2025), 'Information Provided during July 30, 2025 LEG Meeting'.

Rural and remote

Education inequities in access remain stark, with available data often predating the recent 2023 conflict. According to the 2018 Education Sector Analysis and household surveys, children's attendance rates in rural and remote areas were only 58%, contrasted with 73% in urban areas. Inequities are attributed to long distances to school, lack of school infrastructure, and teacher availability gaps.

Gender

Gender disparities result in girls facing a greater disadvantage compared to boys in terms of access to education. Before the conflict, gender parity at the basic education level was .92, with increased gender disparities in subsequent grades.¹⁶ Girls were also seen as further disadvantaged based on location (urban/rural) and socioeconomic status. Girls' enrollment and retention barriers were multifold: lack of financial resources for girls' education; traditional sociocultural norms including early marriage and female genital mutilation; inadequate number of schools and classrooms and long distances to school; lack of girl friendly school infrastructure and school environment including limited sanitation facilities for girls; prevalence of violence in and around schools including the walk to and from schools; lack of female teachers; and poor quality of education which impacted the family's perception on the importance of education.¹⁷

After the war, in the urban areas of Central and Northern Darfur, girls and boys faced unique gendered barriers to education.¹⁸ According to a 2024 participatory needs assessment with children (both girls and boys) and their families, there were consistent barriers across all locations including conflict-related violence (killings, rape, and bombings), alongside environmental risks like dangerous animals, as well as economic barriers were reported as consistent reasons for not sending children to school. Homes were generally regarded as safe, but public spaces such as markets, hospitals, and schools were met with hesitation. Girls continue to be even more vulnerable to the identified barriers, and less than 30% of girls have access to basic education.¹⁹ Parents reported keeping their daughters at home due to unsafe distances to school, household chores and responsibilities such as cooking, fetching water, and early and forced marriage. Boys have also become vulnerable to education barriers. Parents keep sons out of school so that they may engage in livelihoods to support the family and address food insecurity. Recent field visits across Sudan, including Al Jazirah, by both SCI and UNICEF, have found that significantly more girls than boys are enrolling back to school. While the reasons for this remain largely unknown, boys face larger pressure to work to support their families, especially in dangerous and harmful work, and are at significantly higher risk of recruitment into armed forces, especially in Greater Darfur where BRIDGES will be implemented.

¹⁶ Education Sector Strategic Plan (2018).

¹⁷ World Bank (2021), 'Improving Girls Learning Opportunities and Outcomes in Sudan', from <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/09930540622217409/pdf/P1752420631b0f0b009b3004d1544777be4.pdf>, accessed August 2025.

¹⁸ Save the Children (2024), 'Draft Needs Assessment in Central and Northern Darfur'.

¹⁹ Iny, Shohana (2025), 'The Education Plummet: A Catalyst for Rights Violations Amongst Sudan's Young Women' in *Intersections*, from <https://intersectionsjournalmcgill.com/2025/02/01/the-education-plummet-a-catalyst-for-rights-violations-amongst-sudans-young-women/>, accessed July 2025.

Children with disabilities

Data supporting numbers of children with disabilities is limited, but the 2010 Sudan Household Survey estimates of 49% of children with disabilities between the ages of 6 and 9 years old were out of school, with girls even further disadvantaged. In the last decade, the Government of Sudan has begun prioritizing children with disabilities through the first 2013 – 2016 National Strategy for Children with Disabilities, which aimed to increase access to education for children with disabilities through multiple strategies such as the development of a Special Education Department and improved school infrastructure. In 2017, Sudan began the first of multiple national conferences on the inclusion of students with disabilities. By 2020, the fourth national conference led to the piloting of inclusive education programs among 50 schools.

According to the Education Cluster, only one in ten children with disabilities access any form of education today.²⁰ Children with disabilities face multiple barriers to education, including social norms and social practices associated with the stigma of disability, inadequate capacity among service providers for professional care, lack of early detection, limited physical access to schools and services, lack of accessible transportation, lack of adequate facilities at the school and related equipment and devices to enable learning, and lack of teacher training on how to adapt teaching to meet the needs of children with disabilities.²¹ Numbers are also likely to be under-reported: a 2022 Washington Group diagnostic assessment for disabilities of 401 learners in Central Darfur, West Darfur, and South Kordofan found that over 15% of learners experienced some form of vision, hearing, mobility, and cognitive disability.²²

Children with non-Arabic mother tongue

Children with alternative mother tongue languages than Arabic also face challenges in accessing schools. According to the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), there are 160 languages spoken by 123 racial groups, though fewer than 10,000 people speak around 100 of these languages.²³ Language of instruction policies for over three decades have supported Arabic in schools, and children speaking non-Arabic mother tongue languages particularly from border states such as Greater Darfur and the Blue Nile are vulnerable to grade repetition, or worse yet, dropping out of school.

Internally displaced children

Finally, perhaps the most significant group facing inequity are IDPs. There is an estimated 7.7 million IDPs in Sudan, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates over half (53%) of them to be children.²⁴ This marks a reduction in IDPs since parts of Sudan have stabilized, resulting in over 1.3 million internally displaced people within Sudan returning back to Al Jazirah (71%), Sennar (13%), and Khartoum

²⁰ Sudan Education Cluster Dashboard (2025), accessed July 2025.

²¹ UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2022), 'Final Report'; Save the Children (2024), 'GPE Accelerated Funding in Sudan Mid-Term Learning Workshop Report'.

²² [Save the Children \(2022\), 'Final Evaluation: Provision of Safe, Inclusive and Quality Education to Conflict Affected and Other Vulnerable Boys and Girls in Central Darfur, West Darfur and South Kordofan'](#).

²³ New Lines Magazine (2024), 'Sudan's Struggle to Preserve Native Languages', from <https://newlinesmag.com/spotlight/sudans-struggle-to-preserve-native-languages/>, accessed August 2025.

²⁴ UNHCR (2025), 'Operational Data Portal: Sudan Situation', from <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation>, accessed July 2025; US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (2025), from <https://refugees.org/children-in-sudan/#:~:text=Over%206.5%20million%20children%20are,olds%20were%20the%20youngest%20survivors>, accessed July 2025.

(8%) as well as 320,000 people returning from abroad, primarily from Egypt and South Sudan.²⁵ However, displacement continues, with the most displacement seen in Khartoum (30%), South Darfur (21%) and North Darfur (20%). The highest proportion of states receiving IDPs are South Darfur (18%), North Darfur (18%) and Central Darfur (10%).²⁶

The great number of IDPs and returnees results in significant challenges in terms of education. In host states, public infrastructure such as schools and hospitals has been destroyed or damaged. In the case where buildings exist, they may be used to house IDPs. It has been reported that 8% of IDPs (or 154,038 households) across Sudan are reportedly housed in schools or other public buildings. In a 2025 field visit to Blue Nile, Sennar, White Nile, and Al Jazirah, interviews with education officials showed host schools are significantly strained in space, and face overcrowded classrooms, resulting in double shifts to accommodate larger groups of children.²⁷ Returnee IDPs are also in great need of mental health and psychosocial (MHPSS) support, particularly for women and girls who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Learning

Quality of education in Sudan is poor. Even before the conflict, there was a shortage of teachers in Sudan with 155,000 primary schoolteachers in the 2018/2019 school year, resulting in an overall 36 students to one teacher ratio for primary schools. However, these figures have significant variance by state, with 30 students per teacher in Khartoum, 35 students per teacher in Al Jazirah, and 48 – 63 students per teacher in the Darfurs.²⁸ Furthermore, only a quarter of these teachers were reported to meet the minimum requirements for teaching in 2021.²⁹ The April 2023 conflict has only exacerbated teacher shortages, especially with displacement and lack of consistent teacher salaries.

Teacher professional development in Sudan has been coordinated and streamlined in recent years. In 2021, Expertise France under Education Quality Improvement Program in Sudan (EQUIP) II developed the Sudan Teachers' Qualification Framework (STQF). STQF harmonized three preexisting competency frameworks: pre-service teacher training (supported by Expertise France), in-service teacher training (supported by the British Council), and teacher supervision for head teachers and school supervisors (supported by UNICEF). STQF provides a practical competency framework for teachers, head teachers and school supervisors, and is intended to be a common base for Sudan's education community, guiding partners and stakeholders towards a shared vision of the teaching profession.³⁰

²⁵ UNHCR (2025), 'Urgent Support Needed as Over 1.3 Million War-Displaced Sudanese Begin to Return Home', from <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/urgent-support-needed-over-1-3-million-war-displaced-sudanese-begin-return-home>, accessed July 2025.

²⁶ UN International Organization on Migration (IOM), 'Global Data Institute Displacement Tracking Matrix: Sudan', from <https://dtm.iom.int/sudan>, accessed August 2025.

²⁷ Save the Children (2025), 'Field Visit to Blue Nile, Sennar, White Nile, and Al Jazirah States'.

²⁸ World Bank (2021), 'Teachers and School Leaders in Sudan', from <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099305506222211477/pdf/P17524201aedc50280bd8508944461e6841.pdf>, accessed August 2025.

²⁹ UNICEF (2021), 'Education in Sudan Annual Report', from [https://www.unicef.org/sudan/media/8546/file/UNICEF%20Sudan-Education-%20Report%20\(2021\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/sudan/media/8546/file/UNICEF%20Sudan-Education-%20Report%20(2021).pdf), accessed August 2025.

³⁰ The Sudan Teacher Qualification Framework, October 2021, Expertise France

The roll-out of the STQF stalled due to the crisis but is now being implemented under the EQUIP II program, with limited opportunities for teacher professional development, especially training that is relevant for conflict and crisis settings. Save the Children has been supporting primary schools, though it is believed that only 35% of primary school teachers have received any form of training.³¹ Expertise France is focusing on capacity building for intermediate and secondary schoolteachers. STQF is implemented in close collaboration with the National Teacher Training Center (NTTC) and the National Council for Education and Teaching Profession (NCETP).

State Ministry of Education and local education authorities are expected to provide teacher mentoring or supervision at the state and local levels, but there is no evidence that this is systematically taking place. Teacher student ratios are high, and teachers face overcrowded classrooms and lack basic teaching and learning materials such as classroom teaching materials. Students also lack basic textbooks and materials.

Unsurprisingly, learning outcomes are extremely low, even worse than the low learning outcomes prior to the conflict. In 2018, the National Learning Assessment showed that only 15% of Grade 3 students demonstrated minimum literacy skills, and worse yet, 43% could not read a single word. Since then, the measurement of learning has been supported by donor-led small-scale pilot initiatives. In 2021, one learning assessment showed low levels of learning in reading, with zero scores for 26.1% of learners in recognizing letter sounds, 41.5% in reading familiar words, 44.1% in reading a passage, 43.4% in reading comprehension, and 48% in dictation. In 2022, another learning assessment for Grade 4 learners indicated low learning outcomes, with 49.2% of learners receiving zero scores in recognizing letter sounds, 70.2% in reading familiar words, 80.7% in reading a passage, 82.8% in reading comprehension, and 78.5% in dictation.

Most recently in early 2025, there was a limited sample-based Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessments (EGMA) for Grade 4 host community (79%) and displaced (21%) students across 36 schools in Red Sea and White Nile States. The findings revealed significant gaps in reading skills among the children assessed, with over 70% of students at the lowest level of learning. Boys were found to be underperforming girls in reading, and displaced learners had weaker reading skills than those who had not been displaced. Children also showed weak mathematics skills, with average scores under 42%, and high percentages of children scoring zero in division (50%), word problems (39%), and geometry (37%). Again, boys were found to be underperforming girls in Red Sea State, while the results were more mixed in White Nile. Displaced learners also had higher numbers of zero scores in mathematics.³²

Protection

Children are extremely vulnerable to violence, i.e. killed, maimed, forcibly recruited, displaced, separated from their families, and exposed to trafficking, exploitation, and the worst forms of abuse. The 2025 Children in Armed Conflict report verified 2,041 grave violations against 1,882 children, with boys twice as

³¹ Broken Chalk (2023), 'Challenges in Sudan's Education System', from <https://brokenchalk.org/tag/teacher-shortage-sudan/>, accessed August 2025.

³² Early Grade Reading (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics (EGMA) among Grade 4 learners in Red Sea and White Nile States, Sudan, GPE and Save the Children, February 2025

likely to be impacted than girls (1,081 boys, 564 girls, and the remainder unknown).³³ This marks a significant increase from 1,721 violations reported in June 2024.³⁴ Violations reported in 2025 included the killing and maiming of 1,729 children, as well as sexual violence perpetrated against 74 children, abductions of 57 children, and the recruitment of 25 children to armed groups. Furthermore, schools and hospitals have also been reported to be increasingly under attack, or used for military purposes.³⁵ These violations were perpetrated by various parties involved in the conflict, including the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), as well as militia associated with the RSF.

Since 2023, the number of people at risk of gender-based violence (GBV) has tripled to an estimated 12.1 million people, or 25% of the population. GBV, especially rape, is widespread, especially in areas of conflict primarily impacting women and girls, but also men and boys. Sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) is among the least reported on grave violations against children, but a UNICEF analysis of SGBV using data by service providers documented 221 child rape cases, 66% girls and 33% boys, across Sudan since 2024.³⁶ Child rape was documented particularly during conflict (invasions, fleeing from danger, being held against their will, detention, etc.) but also in everyday activities such as household responsibilities like fetching water or going to the market. According to UN Women, there was a 233% increase in demand for SGBV victim services in 2024.³⁷ Aside from sexual violence, violence in general has greatly impacted children. Children have reported that conflict and the loss of parents and family members have led to an overall state of trauma, stress, fear and sadness. They hope for safe school reopening so that they may resume class and play.³⁸

Systems Strengthening

Sudan's education system remains under extreme pressure. Domestic financing for education has fallen below 2% of GDP, well below international benchmarks.³⁹ These constraints have impacted both capital and recurrent expenditures such as school infrastructure, teacher salaries, and overall systems

³³ UN Secretary General Assembly Security Council (2025), 'Children and Armed Conflict, from <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Secretary-General-Annual-Report-on-Children-and-Armed-Conflict-Covering-2024.pdf>, accessed May 2025.

³⁴ UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (2024), '2023: Alarming Levels of Violence Inflicted on Children in Situations of Armed Conflict,' from <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2024/06/2023-alarming-levels-of-violence-inflicted-on-children-in-situation-of-armed-conflict/>, accessed June 2025.

³⁵ Global Coalition to Protection Education from Attack (2024), 'Sudan', from https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/eua_2024_sudan.pdf, accessed May 2025.

³⁶ UNICEF (2025), 'Sudan's Child Rape and Sexual Violence Crisis', from <https://www.unicefusa.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/Sudan-Child-Rape-and-Sexual-Violence-Crisis.pdf>, accessed August 2025.

³⁷ UN Women (2024), 'Alarming 288 Per Cent Rise in Demand for Gender-Based Violence Services in the Last 12 Months in Sudan', from <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/12/alarming-288-per-cent-rise-in-demand-for-gender-based-violence-services-in-the-last-12-months-in-sudan>, accessed July 2025.

³⁸ Save the Children (2024), 'Draft Needs Assessment in Central and Northern Darfur'.

³⁹ The World Bank (2021), 'Financing Education in Sudan: Strengthening the Efficiency and Equity of Public Spending in Education', from <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/09930610622223918/pdf/P1752420f969b50d6090e10ac53a70e1961.pdf>

development. National and state structures struggle to remain functional. School closures, overcrowding in reopened schools, unpaid salaries, and insufficient teaching materials have deepened systemic fragility.

The Federal MoE and State Ministries of Education continue to provide policy direction and curriculum oversight, but lack operational capacity for service delivery in many regions. Current gaps include weak coordination across governance levels, absence of real-time data for decision-making, and lack of structured teacher workforce planning. State Ministries of Education are responsible for teacher management and supervision, yet limited resources and displacement of personnel hinder their ability to act effectively.

Education Policy: Transitional Education Plan (TEP)

The 2025 – 2027 Transitional Education Plan (TEP) provides a transitional education sector framework ‘to ensure safe learning continuity for vulnerable children and youth affected by crises, and to strengthen the education sector’s capacity and resilience to provide quality education for all’. It offers a roadmap for short-term stabilization and long-term transformation. It aims to ensure that immediate humanitarian interventions contribute to a resilient, inclusive, and well-governed education system.

Its three pillars are:

- (1) Increasing safe and inclusive access to education and retention among crisis-affected vulnerable children and youth:** This pillar supports ‘key programs aimed at reducing barriers to access, promoting equitable education for boys and girls, and fostering supportive environments to improve student retention and completion’ (TEP, 2025). Pillar 1 aims to address the significant impact of Sudan’s ongoing crisis on the education of school aged children. It will reduce barriers to access, promote equitable education for boys and girls, and foster supportive learning environments to improve retention and completion. It will also support flexible learning pathways and remote learning opportunities for children who are out of school or who are at risk of dropping out, while reinforcing the formal education system as the primary mode of education service delivery when schools are opened. Efforts will be supported by an enhanced nonformal education policy, updated regulatory frameworks, and a revised curriculum. This pillar also prioritizes the creation of safe and protective learning environments across both formal and nonformal settings, incorporating measures to address climate risks and establishing child-friendly school models. Finally, this pillar supports the provision of MHPSS support for crisis-affected children, and focused measures to prevent and respond to SGBV.
- (2) Improving the quality and relevance of teaching and learning in crisis contexts, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and life skills.** Pillar 2 aims to address the severe deficiencies in foundational skills for Sudan’s learners. Low quality education is seen as contributing to households devaluing education, which impacts school enrollment and attendance, particularly for marginalized groups, who are more likely to prioritize alternative options such as domestic work or wage labor. Pillar 2 aims to tackle this through a holistic set of interventions, targeting teachers’ capacity and wellbeing, and enhancing the curriculum to incorporate life skills and social cohesion. Activities under this pillar will also focus on increasing access to quality materials, expanding access to the

secondary school examination, and enhance technical and vocational education and the development of skills for youth.

(3) Strengthening the capacity, governance, and coordination of the education system to deliver crisis-resilient services. Pillar 3 aims to strengthen the education sector’s capacity to deliver crisis resilient services. Due to the complexities of Sudan’s current environment, Pillar 3 focuses on leveraging alternative mechanisms to engage with local education authorities, national and international NGOs, school level stakeholders, communities and others to ensure the continuity and sustainability of education. It aims to address the immediate educational needs of crisis affected populations while also laying the foundation for long term recovery and development, and will do this by focusing on immediate, practical and contextually appropriate solutions. It will foster collaboration between humanitarian and development partners, establishing and strengthening coordination mechanisms, and enhancing monitoring and evaluation through an effective data management system.

The 2025 – 2028 TEP framework is designed to be flexible and adapt to Sudan’s evolving context. TEP offers three overarching scenarios for implementation to guide service delivery over the years. These scenarios target both children and teachers as beneficiaries.

The scenarios are defined as follows:

- Scenario 1 (Best Case): Phased Stabilization anticipates 80% of schools reopening by 2027
- Scenario 2 (Middle Case): Status Quo projects 20% of schools reopening by 2027
- Scenario 3 (Worst Case): Deterioration assumes only 10% of schools reopening by 2027

Under Scenario 1 (Phase Stabilization), TEP targets 8.13 million children in 2025, comprising of 6.23 million (68%) in formal schooling and 1.90 million (24%) out of school children potentially accessing nonformal education. By 2027, coverage expands to 10.49 million, with 7.49 million (78%) in formal education and 2.99 million (36%) out of school children potentially accessing nonformal education. Under Scenario 2 (Status Quo), TEP targets 5.11 million children in 2025, comprising of 1.56 million (68%) in formal schooling and 3.55 million (24%) out of school children potentially accessing nonformal education. By 2027, coverage expands to 7.46 million, with 1.87 million (78%) in formal education and 5.59 million (36%) out of school children potentially accessing nonformal education. Under Scenario 3 (Deterioration), TEP targets 4.61 million children in 2025, comprising of 0.78 million (68%) in formal schooling and 3.83 million (24%) out of school children potentially accessing nonformal education. By 2027, coverage expands to 6.96 million, with 0.94 million (78%) in formal education and 6.02 million (36%) out of school children potentially accessing nonformal education.

Across all scenarios, teacher targeting is derived from student numbers using Sudan’s pre-war student teacher ratio of 42:1. For example, 5.11 million students targeted in 2025 (Scenario 2) require approximately 121,670 teachers. Nonformal education becomes increasingly critical in Scenarios 2 and 3, reflecting TEP’s adaptive approach to ensuring learning continuity amid conflict, displacement, and loss of infrastructure.

BRIDGES

UNICEF and Save the Children present ‘Building Resilience to Improve Development and Growth in Education in Sudan’ (BRIDGES) for Global Partnership for Education (GPE) System Transformation Grant (STG) financing. BRIDGES aims to strengthen safe, inclusive, and resilient learning environments for Sudanese children and adolescents (ages 6 – 14), particularly those affected by conflict and crisis. BRIDGES follows a two-pronged approach: (1) restoring service delivery to ensure safe learning continuity for the most affected children and adolescents (ages 6 – 14) and (2) strengthening the education system at both the federal and state level to enable improved humanitarian-development coherence and enhance sustainability. BRIDGES will work in alignment with the Transitional Education Plan, enhancing education access, learning, and systems outcomes. The overall theory of change is presented below, followed by detailed descriptions of the program’s outcomes, outputs, and activities. Key risks are captured in a separate annex.

IMPACT	Strengthened safe, inclusive, and resilient learning environments for Sudanese children and adolescents (6 – 14), particularly those affected by conflict and crisis		
OUTCOME	1. Children and adolescents have accessed safe, inclusive learning opportunities through formal and nonformal education	2. Children and adolescents have improved foundational skills and well-being	3. Federal and state-level Ministries of Education have strengthened preparedness and planning, data and information management systems and human resource capabilities
OUTPUT	1.1 Improved safe and inclusive learning environments in formal education 1.2 Improved school resilience, psychosocial support services, and community engagement 1.3 Expanded access to alternative education pathways through strengthened nonformal education service delivery	2.1 Strengthened teaching practices to remediate learning loss and support safe student reentry to formal government schools 2.2 Enhanced foundational literacy and numeracy textbooks and additional learning materials 2.3 Strengthened learning assessment system to monitor foundational skills	3.1 Ministry of Education and the local education authorities have strengthened technical and planning capacities 3.2 Improved education data systems for planning and decision-making 3.3. Strengthened Workforce Planning and Development
ACTIVITY	1.1.1 Strengthen school-based management through school improvement planning and school-based grants 1.1.2 Provide school, teacher, and student material support 1.1.3 Provide government teacher incentives for continuity of learning 1.2.1. Enhance resilience through school-level continuity and contingency planning 1.2.2 Provide support for child protection, including gender-based violence 1.2.3 Conduct school reopening campaigns for communities and families 1.3.1 Operationalize nonformal education / Safe Learning Spaces aligned with improvement plans	2.1.1 Build the capacity of education stakeholders to deliver teacher training, and state and local inspectors and headmasters to support teachers with ongoing supervision and mentoring 2.1.2 Train school-level teachers and facilitators using Master Trainers or mentors equipping them with skills to deliver FLN instruction and use learner-centered activity-based teaching strategies 2.2.1 Provide foundational literacy and numeracy texts among lower primary students, and additional learning materials 2.3.1 Conduct ASER learning assessment to monitor foundational skills within the program target localities 2.3.2 Stakeholders analyze data to inform TARL programming based on specific needs of children in literacy	3.2.1 Conduct Rapid School Census Surveys 3.2.2. Strengthen institutional Education Management and Information Systems

Outcome 1: Children and adolescents have accessed safe, inclusive learning opportunities through formal and nonformal education

BRIDGES will support safe learning through formal education (FE) and nonformal education (NFE). Outcome 1 interventions prioritize removing key barriers to access, including mitigating access barriers at the school-level through planning and grants, enhancing learning environments, providing safe spaces, etc. These interventions are designed to result in increased enrolment and retention, particularly among IDPs, girls, and children with disabilities. By making learning spaces accessible, safe, and relevant, they contribute directly to ensuring children can re-enter schools and reversing the upward trend in out-of-school children (OOSC).

BRIDGES proposes an overall 70/30 target between FE students and NFE learners to effectively address both immediate education needs and support the longer-term stabilization of the education system in Sudan. This targeted split is calculated based on overall numbers of children accessing FE and NFE for each year of the program, rather than on cumulative numbers over the three years of the program. This ratio aligns with the dual track approach of Sudan’s 2025 – 2027 Transitional Education Plan (TEP), which targets both the reopening of formal schools and outreach to OOSC. The TEP costing model under Scenario 1 assumes 80% of schools are reopened nationally by 2027, allocating approximately 63% of resources to FE and 27% to NFE. However, BRIDGES operates in states where current levels of school reopening are different, i.e. Al Jazirah has widespread opening (all 2,437 schools are reopened), while Khartoum currently only has partial access (735 out of 3,796 schools are reopened) but is projected to have further reopening, and East, North, Central, and South Darfur remain highly disrupted (few schools are reopened). This variation is compounded by large scale displacement which has led to overcrowded schools, or which has left many children without access to functioning schools. Adjusting for this, the 70/30 split reflects both the reduced feasibility of delivering formal education across all sites and the high cost and urgency of reaching displaced and OOSC through NFE. NFE classes (housed within formal education) will reach multiple cohorts of children throughout the three-year period.

For re-opened government schools, BRIDGES will continue safe school reopening through a participatory education stakeholder process. BRIDGES will support the school, community, and parents to engage in school improvement planning using school-based grants to support the funding of interventions designed to mitigate both supply and demand side barriers to accessing education. In addition, schools, teachers, and students will be provided with basic equipment, materials, aids, etc. to support learning. Teachers will be supported with incentives to offset the absence or ad-hoc provision of salary payments. Communities and parents will be supported to participate in community-based governance.

At the same time, BRIDGES will support nonformal education as a strategy for safe school reopening, focusing on re-entry, catchup and remedial education. The NFE approach used by BRIDGES will aim to align with the recommendations of the FCDO-supported Scaling Access and Learning in Education (SCALE) program, which is carrying out a full review of the NFE in Sudan, including learner profiles and alternative education pathways. SCALE will offer recommendations towards the harmonization and standardization of NFE approaches, as well as identifying any gaps in provision.

BRIDGES Outcome 1 Beneficiaries Summary Table

Total Formal Schools	85140
Total Formal Schools Provided School Based Grants & Planning	851
Total Formal School Teacher Incentives	7,910 (3,164 males & 4,746 females)
Total Formal School Teachers Reached	9,174 (3,691 males & 5,483 females)

⁴⁰ UNICEF will target 210 schools in Y1 and 100 different schools in Y2. SCI will target the same 541 schools in Y1 and Y2. 851 unique schools will be supported by the programme.

Total Formal School Children Reached	212,750 (104,247 males & 108,503 females)
Total Nonformal Education / Safe Learning Spaces	1,771
Total Nonformal Education/Safe Learning Spaces Teachers Provided Incentives	2,126 (851 males & 1,275 females)
Total Nonformal Education / Safe Learning Spaces Teacher Trained	2,126 (851 males & 1,275 females)
Total Nonformal Education / Safe Learning Spaces Children Reached	173,580 (85,276 males & 88,304 females)

Output 1.1: Improved safe and inclusive learning environments in formal government schools

Activity 1.1.1: Strengthen school-based management through school improvement planning and school-based grants

BRIDGES will empower schools and communities to determine the best approaches to further access and learning outcomes through school-based planning supported by school grants. School based grants enable schools to meet local needs where government financing is limited. The planned activities will ensure that grants are linked to School Improvement Plans (SIPs) developed through participatory processes involving school staff, PTAs, and community leaders. This intervention will build upon the lessons learned from the results of EQUIP, which provided 221 school grants (totaling 474,500 euro). The grants were found to have a positive impact on mitigating dropouts, enhancing schools’ learning environment, and incentivizing parental engagement to keep children, especially girls, engaged in learning.⁴¹ Moreover, the grants were found to strengthen the self-reliance of communities, and a World Bank report found that the financial management capacities of the communities managing the school grants were also strengthened.⁴²

In recent years, school-based grants have also built upon lessons learned from previous programs supporting structured learning and psychosocial support in Safe Learning Spaces (SLS), especially in areas where security concerns prevented formal school reopening. In 2024, under the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Accelerated Funding (AF) project, 181 schools and 319 SLSs received grants, reaching over 210,000 children.⁴³ These grants acted as a catalyst, incentivizing more schools to reopen. Lessons learned show us that engagement with local communities in planning, monitoring, and school management cultivated a sense of ownership and accountability. The provision of school grants, with the GPE accelerated funding support, enabled school communities to address immediate needs, such as minor school building and classroom repairs, procurement of learning materials, and support for vulnerable learners. When schools managed their own resources transparently, it led to improved school functioning and strengthened local accountability.

For recently opened schools, BRIDGES will follow established school improvement plan (SIP) protocols and provide training to school headmasters and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members (using training of trainers’ methodologies). School headmasters and PTA leaders will engage other local education

41 Action Document for EQUIP 2 (T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-98)

⁴² European Union (n.d.), ‘Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa Action Document’.

⁴³ UNICEF (2025), ‘GPE Accelerated Funding Progress Report’; UNICEF (2024), ‘GPE Accelerated Funding Progress Report’.

authorities such as the Ministry of Education at local levels, as well as school stakeholders such as teachers, PTA members, and students, ensuring the group has gender representation, to establish SIP committees. The SIP committee will then conduct a school-level needs analysis on barriers to safe and inclusive access to learning, prioritizing enabling access for girls and children with disabilities. After the analysis, the committee will develop the SIP. All education stakeholders (including the BRIDGES partner organization facilitating the process) are then expected to sign a memorandum of understanding on the expected outputs and activities supporting the SIP. SIP committees will be required to submit school grant application forms to the partner organization with associated activities and costs. In the case of procurement, the SIP committee will be required to follow all partner organization procurement competitive bidding guidelines and submit invoices to the partner organization. Upon successful completion of the application form and invoices, the partner organization will transfer funds to the SIP Committee typically via the school headmaster’s account. At the end of the grant period, the school will be required to submit technical and expenditure reports to be signed by the both the school headmaster and PTA team. The report will be reviewed by partner organizations for compliance. The SIP Committee will also be trained to monitor use of funds, and to analyze whether interventions are addressing barriers and ultimately increasing access to education and improved learning outcomes.

Beyond school-based support, BRIDGES will support updating the Ministry of Education SIP and school-based grants guidelines emphasizing accountability, community monitoring, and clarifying acceptable uses of grants—including minor repairs, learning materials, and operational expenses lacking alternative funding.

Activity 1.1.2 Provide school, teacher, and student material support

BRIDGES will provide school kits; teaching kits for teachers; and health, hygiene, and dignity kits for children. Information gathered from current programs supports the provision of materials, particularly dignity kits, as an important intervention in improving access to and retention of girls in Sudan.⁴⁴

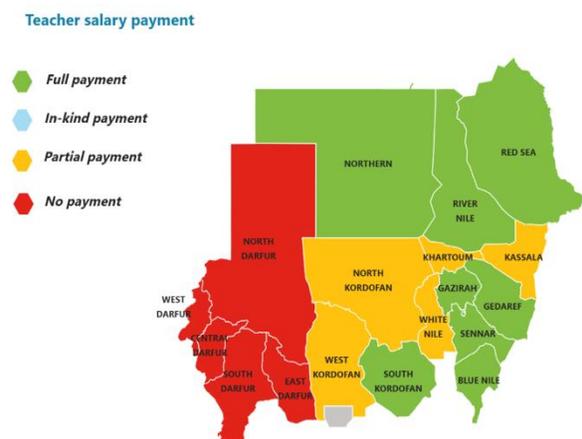
At present, the Sudan Education Cluster does not have a minimum standard for kits for schools, teachers or students. BRIDGES anticipates that school kits will consist of basic furniture such as desks and chairs and teaching and learning materials such as blackboards or whiteboards, maps of Sudan and the world, and educational posters. Teacher kits will include all teaching aids such as basic teaching equipment such as chalk, markers, whiteboard pens, teacher guides and manuals, and a set of student textbooks and learning resources covering Arabic, mathematics, English, science, and social studies, along with age-appropriate storybooks. Student kits will include basic learning equipment and materials such as backpacks, exercise books, pencils and pens, erasers, sharpeners, and rulers. Children with disabilities, identified through the Washington Group Child Functioning Module, will be provided with assistive devices based on need. BRIDGES will also provide three-month hygiene and dignity kits for both boys and girls. These kits will include toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, as well as sanitary pads and underwear for girls.

Beyond the provision of materials, BRIDGES will draw upon INEE and existing programs in Sudan to make recommendations to the Education Cluster on the standardization school, teacher, and student materials.

⁴⁴ Save the Children (2024), ‘GPE Red Sea and White Nile Learning Workshop Report’.

Activity 1.1.3: Provide government teacher incentives for continuity of learning

Teacher incentives will be provided in contexts where salaries have not been paid or only partially paid. This annual incentive provides an opportunity to kickstart school opening and continue learning. This intervention builds on evidence from humanitarian settings in Sudan and globally. In Sudan, the provision of teacher incentives measure builds on lessons from previous GPE and ECW funding in Sudan, where incentives were instrumental in reopening schools and retaining teachers. Teacher incentives have contributed significantly to teachers' economic stability and enabled them to continue delivering learning and protection services for all children. This was also highly appreciated by the communities and government and strengthened the footprint of humanitarian actors. In a specific example, in White Nile State, teacher incentives helped schools accommodate surging enrolment from displaced learners and ensured continuity of instruction.



Globally, experiences from Afghanistan and Nigeria confirm that teacher support—through stipends, materials, and recognition—is one of the strongest predictors of sustained school operations during emergencies. In 2013, teacher incentives for 1,300 teachers in Somalia, including around 900 newly recruited teachers and around 400 that had previously been paid by NGOs, allowed for continuity of learning and reduced the financial burden of education for households and communities.⁴⁵ This program also harmonized and standardized teacher incentives among partners in Somalia.

Currently, teachers' salaries and payments are varied throughout Sudan. Information shared through the Education Cluster indicates that State Ministries of Education are supposed to pay teachers between 158,000 and 257,000 Sudanese pounds per month (approximately \$61 to \$99 per month). But in practice, payments are fully, partially, in-kind, or not paid across states. In some states, including Khartoum and Al Jazirah, State Ministries of Education have reportedly resumed paying teachers' salaries, while in other states, including the Darfurs, teachers are funded primarily by community contributions, education NGOs, or are entirely unpaid.

In addition to providing teacher incentives, BRIDGES will create guidelines supporting teacher incentives dependent on full, partial, and no salary payments according to Ministry of Education teacher remuneration standards. It should be noted that these payments are not a replacement for salary but rather a top up for the additional work that will be undertaken by teachers. The top up is as a result of the insufficiency and irregularity of the salary, even where paid in full, based on the economic situation in Sudan where the exchange rate and inflation rate volatility. BRIDGES will also actively engage with the LEG and Education cluster to advocate for the resumption of full salary payments for teachers. For example, in Khartoum and White Nile, BRDIGES hope that as these areas stabilize, states will be able to resume full

⁴⁵ Federal Government of Somali Education Sector Committee (2014), Progress Report', from <https://www.globalpartnership.org/node/document/download?file=sites/default/files/2014-12-south-central-somalia-progress-report.pdf>, accessed August 2025.

payment. This work cannot be done by BRIDGES alone but is important to be done collectively with all education actors in Sudan to ensure continuity throughout the country.

Output 1.2: Improved school resilience, psychosocial support services, and community engagement

Activity: 1.2.1 Enhance resilience through school-level continuity and contingency planning

Sudan has faced decades of conflict and crisis and there is a need to create humanitarian and development coherence within education. At the local level, BRIDGES will enhance school level resilience by adapting the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF). CSSF is promoted by both UNICEF and Save the Children globally and has been endorsed by over 70 countries. It has known efficacy in Philippines where it has been rolled out in over 47,000 schools and resulted in better school safety, community resilience, and post-disaster planning.⁴⁶ CSSF is intended to (1) protect learners, educators, and staff from death, injury, violence, and harm in schools and other learning spaces; (2) plan for education and protection continuity and limit disruptions to learning; and (3) promote knowledge and skills of learners and education staff to contribute to risk reduction, resilience building, and sustainable development.⁴⁷ In order to achieve these goals, the Framework prioritizes three pillars: (1) Safer Learning Facilities, which includes safer and greener construction (including water and sanitation) standards, assessments, and interventions; (2) School Safety and Educational Continuity Management, which includes participatory education continuity and contingency planning and risk management; and (3) Risk Reduction and Resilience Education, which embeds resilience within curriculum, teacher training, learning materials, etc.

Activity 1.2.2: Provide support for child protection, including gender-based violence

School safe reopening is integrally tied to child protection. Children will have access to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) at school. In this regard, schools will deliver structured MHPSS to children, drawing on globally recognized approaches that have proven effective in emergency education contexts. In Sudan, existing education projects funded by EU, GPE, and ECW have successfully integrated child protection and MHPSS in education through evidence-based programming like We Thrive and Team Up,⁴⁸ to address both students' and teachers' wellbeing and learning needs. Specifically, structured MHPSS activities using mediums such as arts, drama, sports, and music implemented under the ECW MYRP have led to improved student attendance and engagement.⁴⁹ Evidence from similar school-based MHPSS interventions globally, including in Uganda and South Sudan, indicates that when children receive structured psychosocial support at school, their emotional wellbeing improves, and they are more likely

⁴⁶ Global Partnership for Education (2025), 'How Safe are Schools? Introducing the Comprehensive School Safety Policy', from <https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/how-safe-are-schools-introducing-comprehensive-school-safety-policy-survey>, accessed August 2025.

⁴⁷ Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector, 'Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022 – 2030 for Child Rights in the Education Sector', from <https://inee.org/sites/default/files/resources/The-Comprehensive-School-Safety-Framework-2022-2030-for-Child-Rights-and-Resilience-in-the-Education-Sector.pdf>, accessed August 2025.

⁴⁸ SC's We Thrive approach is an integrated package of activities drawing on best practices in EiE, child protection and MHPSS; activities are designed to support social and emotional learning (SEL), foundational literacy and numeracy, as well as play-based and age-appropriate activities that support children to acquire lifesaving knowledge, e.g. how to deal with unexploded ordinance, handwashing, and disease-specific material. Team Up is a psychosocial support (PSS) intervention developed by SC, consisting of structured movement-based group activities based on play, movement and body awareness for children aged between 6 and 18 years.

⁴⁹ Save the Children (2024), 'Sudan Annual Impact Report'.

to remain engaged in learning. BRIDGES will support the training of teachers in child protection, as well as We Thrive and Team Up methodologies, and provide any relevant materials for activities.

In addition, children and adolescents who are victims of violence, including GBV, will also be linked to referral mechanisms where needed. While the STG does not establish new protection systems, it will strengthen linkages between schools and any available child protection mechanisms.

Activity 1.2.3: Conduct school reopening campaigns for communities and families

School reopening and re-enrolment efforts hinge on strong community participation. Locality and state-wide back-to-learning campaigns will complement community level campaigns carried out through school grants to encourage families to send their children back to school, particularly in host and displaced communities. Equity, in particular gender equity, will be considered. Girls face multiple barriers to accessing and remaining in school, particularly in crisis settings. Programs that have incorporated gender-sensitive strategies—such as creating safe learning environments, supporting female teachers, and addressing social norms—saw measurable improvements in girls’ participation and retention.⁵⁰

BRIDGES will plan back-to-learning campaigns and distribute educational awareness materials to the communities. BRIDGES will use both school and community stakeholders as volunteers in supporting back to learning activities. Champion community leaders and parents will function as change makers and role models in their community, promoting girls’ education and mobilizing community members to act in support of girls’ education.

Output 1.3: Expanded access to alternative education pathways through strengthened nonformal education service delivery

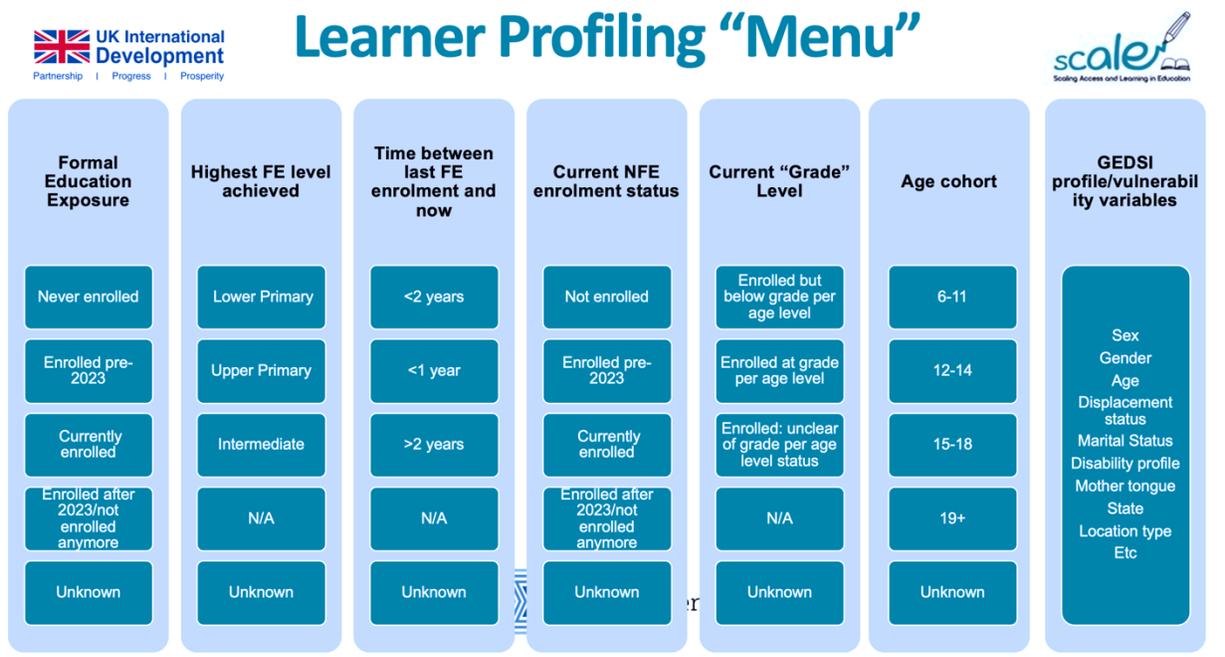
BRIDGES is committed to promoting access to education for out of school children through nonformal education, whether the out of school children have had previous access to formal education or whether they are accessing education for the first time. In Sudan, Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP) and other nonformal education programs vary in terms of scope and objective with some programs remaining close to the formal education curriculum with the purpose of reintegration into mainstream schooling, other programs focusing more on foundational literacy and numeracy, and some programs integrating social emotional learning and wellbeing. Nonformal education programs are unregulated, and the quality of such programs also ranges from many with self-reported success and others less so. Nevertheless, an independent ALP assessment conducted by UNICEF found that Sudanese students self-reported ALPs had positively impacted their learning: 76.6% of sampled students self-reported improvements in literacy and 78.7% of students self-reported improvement in numeracy.⁵¹

BRIDGES will align with FCDO-supported Scaling Access and Learning in Education (SCALE) in Sudan which is in the process of developing learner profiles for OOSC and youth, identifying and harmonizing available ALP and NFE programs, and ensuring quality assurance for NFE in Sudan. During BRIDGES program development, SCALE has developed learner profiles, with variables around the following: (1) formal education exposure; (2) highest level of formal education achieved; (3) time between last formal education enrolment and now; (4) current nonformal education enrolment status; (5) current ‘grade’ level; (6) age

⁵⁰ UNICEF Sudan, Program Reports, Field Visits, etc.

⁵¹ UNICEF Sudan (2022), ‘Annual Results Report’.

cohort; and (7) gender, age, displacement status, marital status, disability profile, mother tongue, state, location type, etc.



As SCALE continues to develop and unfold in its methodology and approach, BRIDGES proposes to support OOSC between the ages of 6 – 14 with NFE intended to lead to formal school re-entry and retention. BRIDGES support for NFE will aim to target the most marginalized and underserved children, including children in rural and remote areas, girls, children with disabilities, children with non-Arabic mother tongue, and IDP children. Based on learner profiles, BRIDGES will identify the most appropriate NFE program that is intended to support formal school re-entry and retention. BRIDGES’ grant agents and their partners will offer the following established and operational NFE programs:

- (1) Re-entry to formal education: A six-month certificate course for out of school learners (for more than a year) intended for formal school re-entry in Safe Learning Spaces
- (2) Catch-up education: A shorter certificate course for out of school learners (for less than a year) intended for formal school re-entry in Safe Learning Spaces
- (3) Remedial education: A shorter class for in-school children to receive additional learning support, thereby encouraging retention and improved learning outcomes likely in formal schools

Activity 1.3.1 Operationalize Nonformal Education / Safe Learning Spaces aligned with improvement plans

Nonformal education with pathways to formal education will have similar inputs to those associated with formal education. Nonformal education programs like remedial education and life skills may have shared costs if already embedded within formal government schools. BRIDGES anticipates the following nonformal education inputs:

Nonformal School, Facilitator, and Material Support

Nonformal education schools and classes will be given similar school, teacher, and material support articulated in 1.1.1 and 2.1 depending on the type of class.

Nonformal Facilitator Recruitment & Payment

NFE teachers will draw primarily from the community, though anecdotal field visits confirm that many NFE facilitators are formal government teachers from unopened schools or opened schools where teachers need supplemental income, and teaching NFE in addition to their standard hours. Partners will ensure that any NFE facilitators who are also formal government teachers will remain committed to government school teaching responsibilities should their schools reopen. The recruitment and training of NFE teachers also provides an opportunity to fill the government schoolteacher shortage gap provided they have a university/college degree. The Education Cluster collects data on the number of NFE teachers “supported” by education partners (which can include incentive payments and/or training), with cumulative data from January to June 2025 indicating that 5,883 NFE teachers had been supported across the country. For BRIDGES targeted states, we know that there are 994 NFE facilitators in Central Darfur, 52 in Khartoum, and no data was provided for Al Jazirah.

Data collected by the Education Cluster indicates that the rates of teachers’ pay from education partners vary significantly, ranging from \$50 to \$123 per month for ALP teachers. Work is ongoing by the Cluster to provide guidance on harmonization of teacher incentives, though this is not yet finalized. Anecdotal information indicates that community teachers in Greater Darfur are paid around 100,000 to 150,000 Sudanese pounds (around \$38 to \$58 per month) through community contributions.

BRIDGES will establish or support NFE provision that takes place within formal education spaces, building on both Grant Agents’ existing approaches. This will be done to avoid creating or supporting a parallel system that will draw either children or teachers away from formal education, and as a way of fostering close and supportive links between communities and learning spaces, to support transition from NFE to formal education.

Nonformal Education Facilitator Professional Development

BRIDGES will provide similar teacher training given to formal government schoolteachers (see Output 2.1), including NFE facilitator training in Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) (see Activity 2.1.1) and Teachers in Crisis Education in Emergencies training (see Activity 2.1.2).

In addition, and specific to the needs of nonformal education facilitators, BRIDGES may also choose to supplement the absence of subject matter teacher training with additional Literacy Boost and Numeracy Boost materials. These evidence-based approaches include teacher training that supports teachers, students, households, and communities to build children’s foundational literacy and numeracy skills in formal and nonformal settings. Teacher training under these programs is aligned with Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approaches, with a focus on grouping and ongoing formative assessment, as well as the inclusion of socioemotional learning. Literacy Boost has been contextualized for Sudan and rolled out by Save the Children under previous and ongoing EiE programs, within structured formal and nonformal education activities, including ALP and catch-up classes.

Outcome 2: Children and adolescents have improved foundational skills and well-being

Outcome 2 interventions aim to improve literacy and numeracy skills, especially among crisis-affected and over-age learners, and lead to measurable gains in learning outcomes and learner confidence. This outcome will focus on teacher continuous professional development, textbook and learning materials, and student learning assessments.

BRIDGES Outcome 2 Beneficiaries Summary Table

Total Number of Formal School Headmasters & Inspectors Trained	748 (329 males and 419 females)
Total Number of Formal Schools Teachers Trained	2,026 (815 males and 1,211 females)
Total Number of Formal School Children Receiving Textbooks and Materials	154,000 (76,235 males and 77,765 females)

Output 2.1: Strengthened teaching practices to remediate learning loss and support safe student reentry to formal government schools

With the basic provision of in-service teacher training in place, this output will complement existing efforts with a targeted focus on supporting teachers to teach at the right level for students to remediate learning loss and improve foundational skills from long-term school closures. It will also enhance teacher resilience and well-being through education in emergencies training. Furthermore, teachers will be trained in socio-emotional skills to enhance child well-being. In fostering sustainable and transformational change, BRIDGES will support state and local inspectors and headmaster to mentor and supervise recently trained teachers to reinforce and support teacher training.

Activity 2.1.1 Build the capacity of education stakeholders to deliver teacher training that remediates learning loss and supports safe student reentry.

BRIDGES will use existing training of trainer models to administer teacher training. Master Trainers tasked to provide initial and continuous teacher training will come from the existing education system, i.e. drawing from Ministry of Education supervisors, university or teaching college lecturers or similar stakeholders. Master Trainers will also train state and local inspectors, headteachers, and promising teachers so that they can continue to provide ongoing supervision and mentoring to teachers once the training has concluded. This follows existing protocols where basic education teachers are intended to be supported by local inspectors but are often supported by state inspectors and headteachers where local inspectors are weak. This will ensure all teachers receive follow-up.

At the national level, BRIDGES will harmonize teacher training packages and advocate for national-level use with the Federal MoE, LEG, and Education Cluster so that teachers are supported with ongoing professional development focused on foundational skills, education in emergencies, and socioemotional skills.

Activity 2.1.2: Train school-level teachers and facilitators using Master Trainers or mentors, equipping them with skills to deliver remedial FLN instruction and use learner-centered, activity-based teaching strategies.

Build the capacity of government schoolteachers to remediate learning loss and strengthen student foundational skills in literacy and numeracy

Teacher professional development for select government schoolteachers will build on existing teacher training pedagogies that focus on remediating learning loss in Sudan, primarily Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL). This approach has shown promise in other conflict-affected contexts, such as Nigeria and Cameroon. In a 2021, research study of TaRL in Cameroon, 44% of learners improved one level in literacy and 57% of learners improved one level in numeracy in just 7 weeks.⁵² In Sudan, BRIDGES will draw from UNICEF's newly designed "Integration and mainstreaming of refugee children into the Sudanese education system (IRCSES) and improving the quality of education" program which provides TaRL pedagogies for teachers and supervisors specifically for foundational literacy and numeracy, as well as SC's Literacy and Numeracy Boost approaches, which are aligned with TaRL.

BRIDGES will promote TaRL and its teacher training strategies such as grouping students based on level, rather than age or grade. TaRL will prioritize already low foundational literacy and numeracy worsened by school closures due to conflict. By focusing on learning levels, TaRL promotes inclusive education pedagogies and allows all children from diverse backgrounds and abilities such as including boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with non-Arabic tongue and others to learn. TaRL methodologies will support diagnostic and classroom-based formative assessments so that the teacher can better group students by level to achieve minimum student competencies. Increase government schoolteacher and child resilience and wellbeing through ongoing education in emergencies training

Teacher training will also embed Education in Emergencies (EiE) knowledge, emphasizing conflict-sensitive teaching techniques, child-centered pedagogies, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). The EiE stakeholder community has already adapted and translated the INEE Teachers in Crisis Contexts (TiCC) resource pack for teachers and shared with the National Teacher Training Council for endorsement. The Local Education Group, under the leadership of UNESCO, has proposed that the Ministry of Education endorse TiCC as a means of streamlining and harmonizing EiE trainings that are currently being provided by disparate education partners for teachers. The Ministry of Education has already provided minor comments on the training package and it is expected to be endorsed as the current Education in Emergencies teacher training package.⁵³

The TiCC training pack is designed to build basic competencies for new, inexperienced and untrained teachers in crisis contexts. The training package consists of both introductory and continuous training. The introductory training package is expected to take place before school begins and comprises of 12 sessions and 23 hours of instruction. The continuous training includes four modules over time:

- Module 1: Teacher's role and wellbeing (4 sessions, 12 hours)
- Module 2: Child Protection, Wellbeing and inclusion (5 sessions, 18 hours)
- Module 3: Pedagogy (5 sessions, 16 hours)

⁵² Street Child (2021), 'Promoting Innovation and Capacity in EiE: Pilot Projects Report'.

⁵³ UNESCO (2025), 'Program Development Discussion with UNESCO', on July 31, 2025.

- Module 4: Curriculum and planning (4 sessions, 14 hours)⁵⁴

In addition, the TiCC competency framework includes a fifth module, to be supplemented based on the needs of the specific context:

- Module 5: Subject Knowledge

BRIDGES will support TiCC training, and the intention behind subject knowledge training, which is expected to ensure that the teacher is proficient in the language of instruction and has basic knowledge of the languages spoken by many parents and guardians; is able to support second language learners; can demonstrate knowledge of basic literacy concepts; and can demonstrate knowledge of basic numeracy concepts. BRIDGES aims to support subject knowledge through TaRL (Activity 2.1.1) and similar trainings that support foundational literacy and numeracy skills.

Enhance student socioemotional learning and skills

There is a need to expand TiCC Module 2 (child protection) and add an additional social and emotional learning (SEL) teacher training module to promote child wellbeing and learning in conflict-affected contexts. SEL contributes to children's improved wellbeing by building their social and emotional competencies and skills across cognitive, emotional and social domains. SEL equips learners with the skills to understand and manage emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions, foundations that are critical for both learning and well-being. In Sudan, where children face the compounded effects of displacement, trauma, and disrupted schooling, SEL provides the necessary scaffolding for emotional safety, resilience, and meaningful participation in education. Both UNICEF and Save the Children integrate and contextualise SEL across all education and learning work, i.e. integrating SEL practices into literacy and numeracy, ensuring that children not only acquire academic competencies but also develop the socio-emotional capacities to navigate adversity and thrive in their learning environments.

For UNICEF, socioemotional skills will be provided through a structured curriculum and teacher training program that prioritizes trauma-informed pedagogy, consistency in teacher-child interactions, and community involvement. Teachers are supported to become emotional anchors for their students, modelling calmness and stability while facilitating safe, predictable routines that help children regulate their emotions and engage during classroom instruction. Through a sequenced, 12-week curriculum with both standalone and embedded SEL activities, children build competencies in self-awareness, empathy, resilience, and relationship skills.

The program strengthens children's capacity for emotional regulation, positive social interaction, and engagement in the classroom. It builds resilience, empathy, and emotional intelligence, supporting the development of a generation of young people equipped to cope with adversity and contribute to their communities. At the systems level, the structured curriculum and teacher training are designed for sustainability and scale, with a pathway for integration into the national education framework in Sudan.

For Save the Children, socioemotional skills will be provided through 'We Thrive', which draws on best practice in EiE, child protection, and MHPSS. It includes teacher training to support play-based activities

⁵⁴ Sudan TiCC (2025), 'Proposed Introduction Training Package'

designed to support children’s foundational literacy and numeracy, and overall wellbeing, as well lifesaving learning, e.g. activities to support learning around contextually-relevant lifesaving learning content such as handwashing, cholera mitigation, etc. The activities are designed to be delivered by community facilitators and do not require trained teachers. It has been contextualized for Sudan and is currently being rolled out in North and Central Darfur and North and South Kordofan, focusing on out of school children, as a means of keeping them connected to learning, as well as supporting their well-being.

Output 2.2: Enhanced foundational literacy and numeracy textbooks and supplementary readers

Sudan has a had a long history of textbook provision, but chronic years of underinvestment and conflict has led to significant textbook shortages over the years. Before the conflict, the Ministry of Education enhanced textbook production

2017 Textbook Ratios (Students: Textbook) ⁵⁵				
	Arabic	Maths	Science	English
Government	3	2	4	6
Non-Government	1	1	3	2
Overall	3	2	4	5

and distribution, supported by GPE-financed and World Bank- implemented Basic Education Recovery Program (BERP) from 2013 to 2018.⁵⁶ During this phase, approximately 13 million textbooks were printed and distributed nationwide. Improvements in design and production meant that these books were more durable, with stronger binding and better paper, extending their useful life from one year to about four years. These changes, along with competitive printing contracts, significantly reduced the cost per book and allowed more children to have access to individual copies. Nevertheless, there was still a shortage of textbooks for children. In 2018, it was reported that in government-run basic education schools, there was one mathematics textbook for two learners, one Arabic textbook for three learners, one science textbook for four learners, and one English textbook for up to six learners.⁵⁷ In 2020, the Federal Ministry of Education delayed school openings from September 27 to November 22 due to textbook shortages.⁵⁸

From 2020 onward—and aligned with the curriculum reform timeline—Sudan accelerated textbook provision again. However, the TEP reports significant issues in textbook quality for Sudan, with textbooks being very dense, with a focus on rote learning for grades 2 to 8 and limited real world applicability. The current materials also do not support gender equality, with limited representation of women and girls. By mid-2024, approximately 14.4 million textbooks had been printed and distributed for Grades 1 – 6, along with 660,000 supplementary readers, to support early literacy. These materials correspond to the updated curriculum, including redesigned Arabic, English, Mathematics, and Science textbooks, as well as revised teacher guides and student books. No updated data is available on current levels of textbook distribution and availability, but anecdotal evidence from school visits to Central States, including Al Jazirah, in August-September 2025 indicates significant amounts of textbooks and other learning materials have been looted and/or destroyed due to occupation of schools by RSF or by IDPs. Post 2023 conflict, textbooks are believed to be a bottleneck and barrier in the reopening of schools.

⁵⁵ World Bank (2017), ‘Rapid Survey’.

⁵⁶ World Bank (2019), ‘Basic Education Recovery Project Implementation and Completion Results Report’.

⁵⁷ General Education Sector Strategic Plan, 2018-2022

⁵⁸ Dabanga Sudan (2020), ‘New Sudan School Year Postponed for Two Months’, from <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/new-sudan-school-year-postponed-for-two-months>.

BRIDGES’ textbook and distribution will ensure access to foundational literacy and numeracy textbooks and supplementary readers with an emphasis on gender equality, mother tongue, children with disabilities, and IDP inclusion. It will develop and deliver appropriate Arabic and math textbooks and supplementary readers in the right language, ensure conflict-responsive formats for durability, and align with the curriculum. The program will provide textbooks and supplementary readers for all Grades 1 – 3 students in the target schools and allow for replenishment buffers to account for student displacement. UNICEF and Save the Children will allocate textbooks and readers to the schools, and all students will have access to them. BRIDGES will leverage World Bank BERP textbook delivery processes and ensure textbook and learning materials comply with rigorous procurement procedures that are competitive, transparent, price-adjusted (in case of cost volatility) and sustainable. Furthermore, BRIDGES will standardize textbooks among partners with specifications such as size, paper quality, binding, digital access points (QR codes), etc. BRIDGES will operationalize digital traceability and involve the community at local levels to ensure materials are delivered in a timely manner even in the most remote and hard to reach areas. In addition, BRIDGES will have independent quality control inspections, staggered call offs, and performance securities to manage risk and ensure resilient supply chains. Supplementary readers will support gender, mother tongue, children with disabilities, and IDP inclusion.

Output 2.3: Strengthened learning assessments for foundational skills

BRIDGES will take a pragmatic and contextualised approach to assessing learning across the program, focusing on administering sample-based learning assessments across BRIDGES implementation sites. BRIDGES will use the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) literacy and numeracy assessment to gauge children’s acquisition of foundational skills. ASER is a ‘lighter touch’ approach literacy and numeracy assessment and is explicitly aligned with the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology. ASER has been contextualised for Sudan, and has been used by one of the grant agents across numerous projects. ASER will be used to assess the extent to which TaRL approaches are achieving their aims of strengthening children’s foundational skills for a sample of Grade 3 (or equivalent) students, which has been indicated in TEP as the level to measure minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy. The ASER methodological approach will be shared with both the LEG and Coordinating Agency for their feedback and endorsement. ASER early results will allow for BRIDGES to adapt and improve programming in localities and states which demonstrate lower student learning outcomes. BRIDGES will work with the LEG to ensure that ASER methodology and findings can contribute to the National Learning Assessment planned under the TEP.

Outcome 3: Federal and State-level Ministries of Education have strengthened preparedness and planning, data and information management systems and human resource capabilities

As a part of its second prong in building institutional support and strengthening systems, BRIDGES will focus on enhancing and operationalizing education sector planning both at the federal and state level; strengthening both immediate and long-term education information and data, particularly adapting to conflict and crisis settings; and supporting policies for improved teacher workforce management.

BRIDGES Outcome 3 Beneficiaries Summary Table

Total National & State MoE trained in planning	90 education officers
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Total National, State, local, and headmasters MoE trained in EMIS	40 education officers
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Output 3.1: Ministry of Education and the local education authorities have strengthened technical and planning capacities

Many federal and state-level MoEs in Sudan currently lack the technical expertise, inclusive tools, and coordination mechanisms needed for effective education planning in fragile and crisis-affected settings. Output 3.1 aims to build core planning capabilities within ministries by strengthening technical teams in evidence-based education sector analysis and planning. It also supports the establishment or revitalization of coordination platforms across federal and state levels to ensure alignment and coherence in policy implementation. Finally, the output includes support for the development of contingency and resilience plans that integrate gender equality, disability, and climate considerations, helping MoEs anticipate and respond to future shocks.

UNICEF will engage qualified consultants or specialist institutes/organizations as technical assistants to help the Ministry of Education to operationalize the Transitional Education Plan. This will be through technical support, personnel training, enhancing institutional efficiency and coordination, and fostering collaboration with national and international partners. Operationalizing TEP will involve clear delineation of responsibilities to facilitate effective service delivery and decision-making, as well as monitor and measure progress. The technical assistants will help the Ministry of Education at national and state level to engage all departments in strategic planning processes that incorporate community needs and build accountability mechanisms to ensure progress towards educational goals and objectives.

This aligns with GPE guidance on sector plan development, which emphasizes the importance of inclusive, data-driven, and crisis-sensitive planning. UNICEF and SCI also support institutional capacity-building as a key element of their global education strategies.

Output 3.2: Improved immediate and long-term education data and information management systems for planning and decision-making

Reliable, timely data is essential for delivering equitable education services in Sudan, especially amid ongoing conflict and displacement. From previous lessons learned, gaps in data collection and analysis provide limitations on effective planning and service delivery.

Activity 3.2.1: Conduct Rapid School Surveys

BRIDGES will support Rapid School Census Surveys for in-school and out-of-school children, with special attention to displaced learners and those in hard-to-reach areas. Rapid education data is intended to enable evidence-based decision-making, equitable resource allocation, and responsive programming. This approach is consistent with GPE’s 2025 Strategic Plan, which prioritizes strong data systems as a foundation for learning and equity.⁵⁹ It is further supported by World Bank education sector analysis tools that stress the importance of timely and disaggregated data in fragile contexts.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Global Partnership for Education (2022), ‘GPE 2025 Strategic Plan’.

⁶⁰ World Bank (2025), ‘Delivering Education in the Midst of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence’.

BRIDGES' co-grant agent UNICEF has experience in advanced rapid data collection, particularly in conflict-affected areas, in Sudan. The project will also draw on successful models such as the Rapid School Survey developed under the World Bank-supported Basic Education Recovery Project (BERP).⁶¹ This streamlined annual school census was conducted over four academic years, generating reliable, timely, and cost-effective data on school location and type, student enrolment by grade, teacher qualifications, infrastructure conditions, learning materials, and community contributions. By grounding school grant targeting, classroom construction priorities, and sector strategies in this data, the Rapid Survey demonstrated how a simple, low-cost tool can have a transformative impact. It combined printed forms with mobile and digital technologies, supported by targeted training at school, locality, state, and federal levels, thereby improving data quality while strengthening institutional capacity and ownership.

Importantly, the Rapid Survey approach has proven highly suitable for emergency and fragile contexts, where resources are limited, infrastructure is damaged, and rapid, adaptable data collection is essential for effective planning. Its cost-efficiency, scalability, and emphasis on local capacity-building make it an ideal tool for Sudan's current challenges, ensuring that education service delivery is both responsive and resilient in the face of ongoing instability. Lessons learned from BERP will be adapted to the BRIDGES context, ensuring that the school census mechanism becomes a sustainable part of education management, one that supports data-driven, equitable, and responsive decision-making even in fragile and conflict-affected settings. In addition, the Rapid Survey will also include an equity element, disaggregating data with variables such as gender, age, location, language, inclusion, etc.

BRIDGES will conduct Rapid School Census Surveys in all 18 states across Sudan during the program period.

Activity 3.2.2: Strengthen institutional Education Management and Information Systems

Sudan's Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) has progressively evolved since 2010 but continued to face significant challenges limiting its effectiveness before the conflict. In a 2021 EMIS analysis, it was reported that Sudan lacks a clearly defined, costed national EMIS policy that has resulted in fragmented governance and unclear roles and responsibilities across federal, state, and local levels. Institutionally, EMIS was said to have ineffective coordination, unclear staff mandates, high turnover, and predominantly paper-based management processes which contributed to delays, data inaccuracy, and limited operational efficiency. Human resource capacity was constrained by insufficient technical expertise in data collection, analysis, and use, exacerbated by a lack of formal career development pathways and inadequate incorporation of EMIS functions into official job descriptions. Technically, the EMIS struggled with inadequate ICT infrastructure marked by limited internet connectivity, unreliable electricity, insufficient digital devices at school levels, and lack of maintenance budgets. Although the introduction of the KOBO digital data collection platform has improved data quality at localized levels, the system lacks a fully integrated, decentralized, web-based platform with analytical dashboards for real-time data access and reporting.

To address these issues, the report provided key recommendations:

⁶¹ World Bank (2019), 'Implementation Completion and Results Report on the Sudan Basic Education Recovery Project' from <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/355781584393510621/pdf/Sudan-Basic-Education-Recovery-Project.pdf>

1. **Development and Implementation of a Comprehensive EMIS Policy:** Establish a costed, national EMIS policy outlining a unified vision, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, data quality and sharing protocols, and a framework for coordination and sustainable financing. This policy should also foster a culture of data use and transparency across all levels of the education system.
2. **Integration and Harmonization of Data Collection Systems:** Merge the existing parallel data collection instruments into a single, harmonized survey with agreed content and procedures to eliminate duplication, improve data coherence, and enhance planning relevance.
3. **Organizational Restructuring and Capacity Building:** Review and clarify job descriptions to embed EMIS responsibilities, reduce staff turnover through structured career development, and create standard operating procedures to institutionalize data collection, validation, and dissemination processes.
4. **Enhancement of ICT Infrastructure and Platforms:** Conduct a comprehensive IT readiness assessment, expand digitization of data collection employing tools like KOBO, and develop an integrated, decentralized, web-based EMIS platform with functionalities such as dashboards, automated reporting, offline data entry, and integration with learning management systems.
5. **Promotion of a Bottom-Up Data Culture and Utilization:** Train and engage stakeholders at school, locality, and state levels to use EMIS data through accessible training materials, community practices, and dissemination of school report cards to improve ownership, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making.

BRIDGES will address the most relevant recommendations. By developing and implementing an EMIS policy, it establishes the institutional clarity lacking in governance, role definition, and data management. Harmonizing existing data collection efforts resolves fragmentation caused by parallel surveys, enhancing data quality and coherence. Targeted capacity building for technical staff at federal and state levels responds to deficiencies in skills and staffing stability, fostering sustainable human resource development. The adoption of digital data collection tools builds on proven platforms to modernize and digitize data capture, improving accuracy and efficiency. Finally, engaging stakeholders across levels through training cultivates a data-driven culture essential for transparency, ownership, and informed decision-making. Overall, these integrated actions closely mirror recommended priorities for transforming Sudan's EMIS into a robust, sustainable system capable of supporting effective education planning and reform.

BRIDGES will also initiate an additional EMIS assessment on how to make the EMIS system fit for purpose given Sudan's current conflict and crisis, with considerations for all of the equity variables (gender, age, location, children with disabilities) as well as any relevant variables such as out of school children, refugee children, returnee children, and internally displaced children for example. After creating a national system, BRIDGES will then pilot EMIS with Khartoum and Al Jazirah State Ministries of Education.

The BRIDGES programme will ensure a logical progression from emergency data collection to structured system strengthening, with clear differentiation of roles between SPEEP, SCG, and EMIS investments. Under this activity EMIS support is intentionally designed as a phased and context sensitive intervention. Rather than attempting immediate national rollout which would be unrealistic under current conditions, the project will pilot EMIS-related activities in two states. These pilots will focus on restoring core planning and monitoring functions within state Ministries of Education, generating practical lessons and operational models that can later inform national scale-up when stability improves.

In contrast, SPEEP's contribution is not to EMIS infrastructure or system development. SPEEP addresses short-term operational data needs through a Rapid Survey, a simplified school census that captures essential information on school functionality, enrolment, teachers, and service delivery across all accessible states. This mechanism enables immediate tracking of education delivery in a conflict-affected environment where full EMIS reporting is not yet feasible.

To prevent overlap with the System Capacity Grant (SCG), UNICEF and UNESCO have already initiated coordination to agree on a division of responsibilities for EMIS support. SCG will primarily focus on system-wide policy and standards, while BRIDGE will handle piloting and operationalization at state level. A formal framework will be established to institutionalize this collaboration.

The sequencing has been deliberately structured to ensure continuity without duplication. SPEEP will conclude its Rapid Survey activities in year one. BRIDGE will then conduct two subsequent rounds of the Rapid Survey in project years two and three. This ensures that data flows remain uninterrupted while progressively transitioning towards more formal EMIS-based reporting systems.

Output 3.3 Strengthened Workforce Planning and Development

Sudan's education workforce faces major constraints, including severe shortages of trained teachers, poor deployment to underserved areas, and limited professional development opportunities. These challenges have been exacerbated by years of budget cuts, conflict, and the displacement of teachers. Output 3.3 supports the development of a national Education Workforce and Development Strategy, informed by a comprehensive workforce assessment that maps current gaps, distribution, and capacity needs. The strategy will address inclusive recruitment, gender balance, deployment in crisis-affected areas, and resilience to conflict and climate-induced displacement. It will also promote continuous professional development and mechanisms to support and retain teachers, particularly in fragile settings.

As background, the management of teachers and educational cadres in Sudan is governed by a decentralized system, balancing national policy with localized implementation. The foundation of teacher management is a multi-tiered legal structure. The Federal Ministry of Education sets national policies and standards through laws like the Education General Planning and Organization Act of 2001. However, day-to-day administration is the responsibility of the State Ministries of Education, which use their own State Education Acts to handle recruitment, promotion, and transfers, as well as teacher professional development. The Sudanese Constitution further decentralizes authority by granting localities (Mahalliyat) direct supervision over schools, making them the on-the-ground link in the chain of command. Teacher salaries are centrally determined based on a national pay scale but are disbursed through state budgets.

The proposed Education and Workforce Strategy will identify immediate, intermediate, and long-term priorities for the education workforce. While BRIDGES is still formulating the approach for the strategy, the proposed methodology is as follows:

Immediate Priorities: Verification and Well-being

- Verification of the Workforce: Verify the number of active teachers, including those who have been displaced and their current locations to understand the immediate capacity of the system.

- **Psychosocial Assessment:** Assess the mental and emotional state of teachers, and identify the teachers’ psychosocial needs to return to work and provide a stable learning environment for students.
- **Administrative System Integrity:** Evaluate the functionality of core administrative systems, particularly payment services. This will involve assessing salary disbursements to retain teachers and potentially prevent further teacher loss from the system.

Intermediate Priorities: Capacity and Utilization Analysis

- **Skills Gap Analysis:** Identify the skills that are most urgently needed, and the training needs to support the gaps, such as trauma-informed teaching, initiating conflict resolution, and adapting to new learning environments.
- **Overall Teacher Utilization:** Determine national and geographic teachers’ employments and gaps and the use of unqualified volunteer teachers and any implications.
- **Specific Teacher Gaps:** Identify which grades and subjects have the most critical teacher shortages, which is essential for targeted recruitment efforts.

Long-Term Priorities: Strategic & Rebuilding Framework

- **Policy and Regulatory Review:** Review and revise existing teacher recruitment, training, and deployment laws and policies for a conflict/post-conflict environment.
- **Resilient Teacher Management System:** Develop a more durable and decentralized management structure that can continue to operate even if national education governance is disrupted by enhancing the mandate of local administrators and principals to manage staff and resources.
- **Sustainable Teacher Professional Development:** Create a long-term strategy for continuous teacher professional development that addresses both immediate and long-term needs created by the conflict and ongoing needs to improve teaching quality.

Budget Summary

BRIDGES’ budget summary for outcomes and outputs is presented below, while consolidated and individual grant agent budgets are available in the budget annex.

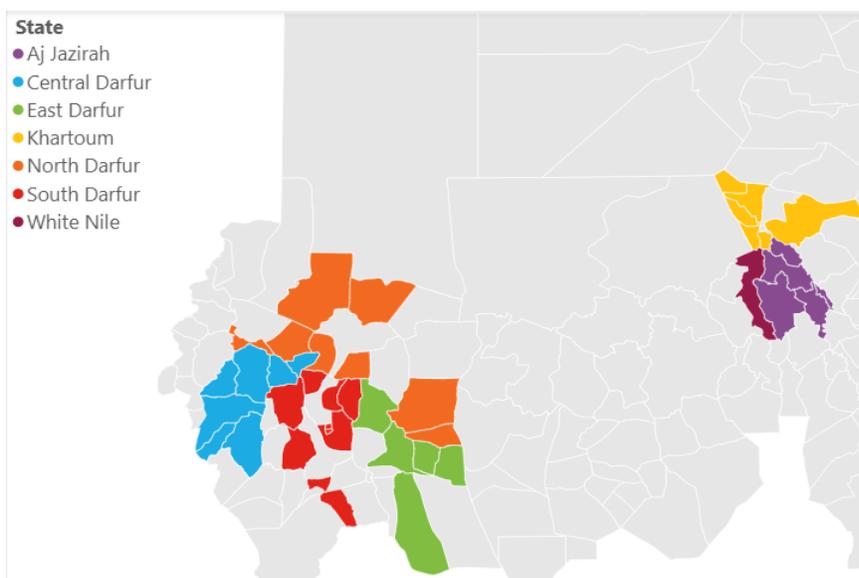
Outcome 1	Children and adolescents have accessed safe, inclusive learning opportunities through formal and nonformal education	\$21,067,827
Output 1.1	Improved safe and inclusive learning environments in formal education	\$11,403,920
Output 1.2	Improved school resilience. psychosocial support services. and community engagement	\$1,296,166
Output 1.3	Expanded access to alternative education pathways through strengthened nonformal education service delivery	\$4,431,852
	SCI Output: High quality field-level project delivery	\$3,935,889
Outcome 2	Children and adolescents have improved foundational skills and well-being	\$4,052,808
Output 2.1	Strengthened inclusive teaching practices to remediate learning loss and support student re-entry to formal schools	\$2,598,616

Output 2.2	Enhanced access to quality education through additional foundational literacy and numeracy textbooks and additional learning materials	\$1,278,888
Output 2.3	Enhanced access to quality education through learning assessments	\$175,300
Outcome 3	Federal and State-level Ministries of Education have strengthened preparedness and planning, data and information management systems and human resource capabilities	\$5,370,000
Output 3.1	Ministry of Education and the local education authorities have strengthened technical and planning capacities	\$636,000
Output 3.2	Improved education data systems for planning and decision making	\$3,950,000
Output 3.3	Strengthened education workforce planning and development	\$784,000
Subtotal	Subtotal (Outcomes 1 + 2 + 3)	\$30,490,631
	Program Coordination and Learning	\$1,353,203
	Grant Agent Support Implementation Costs	\$6,406,166
TOTAL	BRIDGES TOTAL COSTS	\$38,250,000

Targeting

BRIDGES will support both stabilization and recovery contexts. This, combined with Sudan’s diverse contexts—from dense urban centers struggling to rebuild to remote, conflict-affected communities—demands flexible, locally adapted programming that addresses immediate humanitarian needs while laying the groundwork for safe, inclusive, and resilient education systems, with special attention to the needs of girls and vulnerable children.⁶² The program will implement a gender equity and inclusion approach, targeting 135,000 internally displaced children (51 percent girls) and 5 percent of children with disabilities. The participation of refugee children will be monitored.

State Targeting



BRIDGES’ targeted states are Khartoum, Al Jazirah, Greater Darfur (Central, East, South, & North Darfur) and one locality in White Nile. These locations have been selected due to the scale of humanitarian need, high levels of displacement, child protection risks, damage to schools, and limited access by other actors.⁶³ The selection of these states was affirmed by Local Education Group (LEG) partners, and

⁶² UNICEF Sudan (2025), ‘Education Sector Recovery Strategy Draft’.

⁶³ OCHA (2025), ‘Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview’.

reflects urgent need, feasibility, and operational capacity. These states host high concentrations of IDPs and returnees, face severe education service gaps, and maintain active community networks and implementing partners. This positioning offers a viable pathway for delivering both formal and nonformal education models at scale. Government and donors have supported in-school children through school reopening, supply distribution, and teacher training, while NGOs have implemented nonformal education solutions such as accelerated learning and remedial education programs. This combined experience, supported by strong local structures, makes intervention in these states both necessary and feasible.

The target program states—Khartoum, Al Jazirah, Greater Darfur, and White Nile – each face distinct but interconnected security, governance, and humanitarian challenges. BRIDGES will work with State Ministries of Education in Khartoum and Al Jazirah. UNICEF and Save the Children will initiate technical agreements between the State Ministry of Education and the relevant grant agent for agreed upon work, and the agreement will be sent to the Humanitarian Aid Commission at the state level. Because of the challenges around safe school reopening in RSF-controlled areas, BRIDGES will work discredirectly with local level authorities and education officials as well as community structures in Greater Darfur.

Khartoum

In Khartoum, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) regained full control of the city in early 2025 after renewed offensives; however, governance and humanitarian access remain fragile due to widespread destruction, looting, and the breakdown of essential services and facilities.⁶⁴ BRIDGES will coordinate with the State Ministry of Education, alongside civil society groups and teacher associations, though severely weakened, as vital entry points for reconnecting communities with schooling and essential support.⁶⁵ Based on considerations of needs, presence, and stability, BRIDGES has identified the following target localities in Khartoum: Jebel Awlia, Karrari, Um Bada, Sharg An Neel, and Um Durman.

Al Jazirah

In Al Jazirah, SAF maintains control over major urban centers, including Wad Madani, but the state has suffered significant damage to schools, health facilities, and public infrastructure due to conflict and looting.⁶⁶ The influx of displaced populations has strained basic services further. Reports of increased gender-based violence during the conflict have placed girls at heightened risk of early marriage, school dropout, and protection violations, creating significant barriers to girls' safe return to education.⁶⁷ BRIDGES will coordinate with SAF-led State Ministry of Education, local NGOs, women's groups, and teacher associations to rebuild trust and address urgent needs.⁶⁸ Based on considerations of needs, presence, and stability, BRIDGES has identified Al Hasahisa, Al Kamlin, Al Manaqil, Janub Al Jazirah, and Medani Al Kubra as target localities in Al Jazirah.

⁶⁴ OCHA (2025), 'Sudan Situation Analysis Report'.

⁶⁵ Sudan Education Cluster (2025), 'Education Cluster Update'.

⁶⁶ UN Habitat (2025), 'Al-Jazirah Damage Assessment'.

⁶⁷ UNFPA (2025), 'Sudan Gender-Based Violence Rapid Assessment'.

⁶⁸ Sudan Local NGO Coordination Mechanism (2025), 'Sudan Local Coordination Meeting Minutes'.

The Darfurs (Central, East, South, North)

The Darfurs face similar challenges, with contested areas, shifting frontlines, and deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure and aid operations.⁶⁹ Attacks on humanitarian convoys and community groups have severely limited access.⁷⁰ Despite these constraints, BRIDGES will continue to work with local authorities and education officials where there are possibilities for entry, and engage fully with international NGOs and trusted local partners to sustain some education and child protection activities for displaced and conflict-affected children.⁷¹ Based on considerations of needs, presence, and stability, BRIDGES has identified the following target localities:

- In Central Darfur, Azum, Bendasi, Gharb Jabal Marrah, Mukjar, Shamal Jabal Marrah, Wadi Salih, Wasat Jabal Marrah, and Zalingi.
- In East Darfur, Adila, Ad Du'ayn, Shia'ria, Abu Karinka, and Bahr Al Arab.
- In South Darfur, Ed Al Fursan, Mershing, Kas, Sharg Aj Jabal, Tulus, Buram, Nitega, Beliel, Nyala Shimal, and Nyala Janoub.
- In North Darfur, Dar As Salam, Tawila, At Tawisha, Kutum, Kebkabiya, Melit, Al Lait, and Saraf Omra.

White Nile

In addition to the localities targeted in Khartoum State, BRIDGES will also target schools in Giteina locality, in the north of White Nile State. This locality has been identified due to Giteina hosting significant numbers of displaced people from Khartoum, which has placed a major strain on education infrastructure and quality learning. In addition, the targeting of Giteina builds on the positive working relationship with the White Nile State Ministry of Education that was fostered under the previous GPE AF program.

School and Village Targeting

BRIDGES will rely on current conflict scenarios and revised education needs assessments, draw from ongoing Education Cluster data, and consult with State Ministries of Education to select schools with the greatest need for support. BRIDGES will also avoid overlap and duplication with other donor-funded programs to select schools for safe school reopening. Focus will also be given to schools that have been directly damaged by conflict and/or previously occupied by IDPs, as these schools are likely to have experienced infrastructural damage, and loss/looting of furniture and materials. For nonformal education, BRIDGES will target the most vulnerable, with a focus on high number of out of school children in the area, or where existing school infrastructure and low number of teachers are unable to absorb increasing number of children, and areas experiencing high levels of displacement or return migration. During program effectiveness, BRIDGES will agree upon the school and village criteria with the Education Cluster and the LEG.

⁶⁹ INGO Consortium (2025), 'Central Darfur Field Report'.

⁷⁰ UNDSS (2025), 'Humanitarian Convoy Security Incidents'.

⁷¹ INGO (2025), 'Operational Snapshot'.

The following table depicts an indicative distribution of formal school level support by partner and state. SCI and UNICEF have designed this targeting allocation to: (i) enable rapid start-up of activities by leveraging existing operating presence and capacity to scale up in other localities; (ii) contribute to program efficiency and cost-effectiveness by minimizing the field implementation footprint of implementing partners.

BRIDGES Formal School Targeting		
STATES	SCI*	UNICEF**
Khartoum	120	50
Al Jazirah	100	78
Central Darfur	100	21
East Darfur	-	69
South Darfur	100	64
North Darfur	100	28
White Nile (1 locality)	21	-

*SCI intends to partner with Plan International, NRC and NNGO partners to deliver services

**UNICEF intends to partner with INGO/NGO partners to deliver services.

Targeting scenario planning / Responsiveness to access challenges

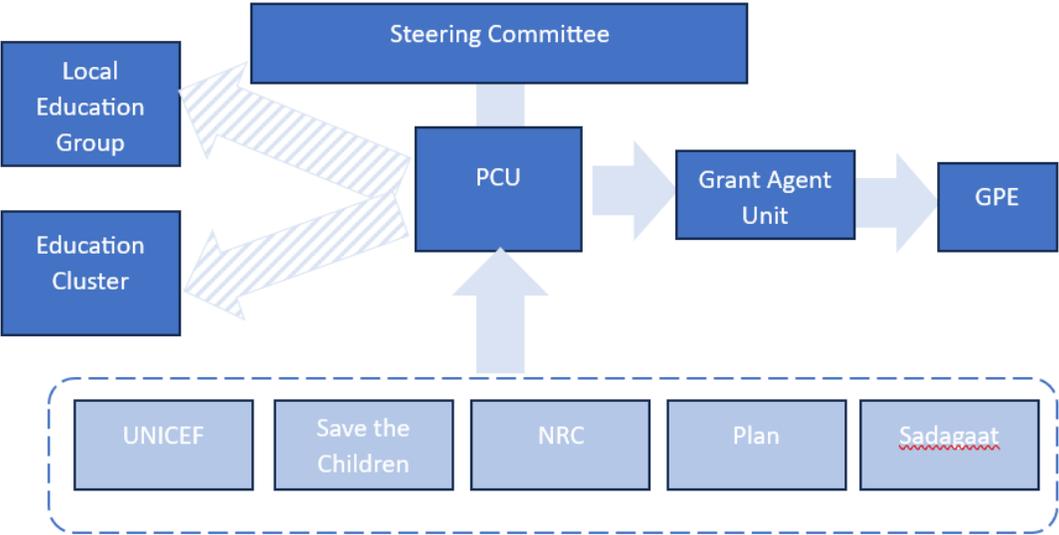
The initially targeted localities (listed above) have been purposefully selected to ensure the program can start to deliver community-level activities almost immediately in accessible localities, while providing flexibility for BRIDGES to reach less-accessible localities over the program implementation period.

The targeted localities can be broadly categorized as follows: (i) localities with high level of need where implementing partners have an existing operational presence and can start up program activities immediately; (ii) harder to reach / underserved localities where implementing partners expect to have sufficient access to scale up operations in year 1 or year 2.

Throughout the program implementation period, the PCU will conduct monthly reviews of implementation progress, including a specific focus on progress in activity delivery per locality, operational access constraints, and opportunities for changes in locality targeting. With the support of the PCU, Save the Children and UNICEF (and implementing partners) are committed to being responsive to access constraints and to making timely changes in locality targeting according to constraints and emerging needs in a dynamic operating context.

In the event of significant loss of operational access in all/part of a targeted state, BRIDGES implementation structure will enable rapid transfer of resources to other localities within the targeted states, ensuring continuity and timely program delivery. Furthermore, the geographic distribution of operations across Greater Darfur, Al Jazirah, Khartoum and White Nile provides an inherent risk-mitigation mechanism, reducing the likelihood of overall program disruption in case of escalating conflict at the state or regional level.

Implementation Arrangements



BRIDGES will be jointly managed by UNICEF and Save the Children. Together, they will form a Program Coordination Unit (PCU) and led by Program Co-Coordinators (one from each GA). The Program Co-Coordinators will be supported by full-time MEAL, safeguarding and gender leads. The PCU will also include technical leads from each consortium member and a lead focal point from each state (all at partial LoE). The PCU will oversee overall programmatic coordination, planning, implementation, MEAL and reporting for BRIDGES. They will work in close collaboration with the GAs and the BRIDGES Steering Committee (comprised of senior members of each organization) and ensure progress against planned activities and address any bottlenecks and barriers. The PCU will provide regular updates on progress against achievements to the LEG and Education Cluster. UNICEF and Save the Children, through Grant Agent STG Unit, will provide ongoing financial and technical reporting to GPE.

Sadagaat, a Sudanese national NGO, has been chosen as part of the implementation consortium, engaged as an implementing partner through UNICEF. They were selected for their established presence across multiple states and their demonstrated ability to sustain operations in challenging contexts. Sadagaat adds value through reliable access, strong community engagement, and consistent implementation capacity, which has been effective in the crisis response, and their long-term presence positions them to support meaningful education system transformation.

Save the Children intends to collaborate with two major implementing partners to deliver its portion of the program: Plan International and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). These partners will play a community-level implementation role and a technical support role, leveraging their technical expertise in education, gender and child protection, and operational capacity. These partners will also have a significant role in the BRIDGES governance structure through membership in the Consortium Steering Committee and participation in the activities of the PCU.

Within its role as GA, SCI will conduct all community-level implementation in its target localities in Central Darfur, Khartoum, Al Jazirah and White Nile, and will oversee implementation of its identified partners in

all targeted states. Plan International will lead implementation in North Darfur and will also support some schools and ALP in Khartoum, while NRC will lead implementation in South Darfur and will also support some schools and ALP in North Darfur.

Plan International will support BRIDGES with its gender-transformative approaches and experience in delivering gender-sensitive, gender-responsive education in emergencies that also addresses gendered contextual norms that cause inequalities. NRC will provide technical leadership for the mainstreaming of its Better Learning Programme, alongside SCI's We Thrive package, as part of efforts to offer MHPSS within classrooms.

Stakeholder	Roles & Responsibilities
Grant Agents (role as legal entities: SC Norway, UNICEF Sudan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide overall quality assurance and approval/submission of mandated reporting to GPE • Submit technical and quarterly financial reporting, and any other required documentation to GPE • Communicate with GPE Secretariat on additional program management related issues such as project modifications related to major changes related to consortium partnership; program interventions, outputs, and outcomes; budget realignment; program extensions; etc.
Grant Agents (role as operational entities in Sudan: SC Sudan, UNICEF Sudan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create terms of reference for PCU • Recruit for PCU roles, in collaboration with consortium partners • 'Dotted line' management of PCU Lead. • Receives funds from SCI Service Center/UNICEF to be managed by PCU. • Establish direct financing agreements with NRC, Plan Intl and Sadagaat. • Provide first line of quality assurance for technical and financial reports received from PCU • Coordinates (via PCU) with SC Norway/UNICEF on donor submission, compliance, etc. • Serve as Education Cluster Co-Lead and LEG members
Consortium members: UNICEF & SC Sudan with Sadagaat, NRC, Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement activities in the target states and localities and/or provide technical support to the program. • Provide technical and financial reporting to PCU
Grant Agent STG Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprised of UNICEF Chief of Education & Save the Children Sudan Head of Education, or designated alternatives • Joint operational management of the Program Co-Coordinators • Joint operational oversight of the PCU • Monitor program progress and suggest timely corrective action as needed. • Act as in-country focal point for GPE during implementation.
Program Coordination Unit (PCU) (100% LoE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform day-to-day coordination of the program in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, UNICEF/Save the Children policies and guidelines, and GPE policies and guidelines

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Co- Coordinators (one each from UNICEF + SCI) • Safeguarding Specialist • Gender Specialist • MEAL Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical guidance and ensure technical coherence across BRIDGES programming, convening Technical Working Groups (from consortium partners) as needed. • MEAL function: Monitor the pace and quality of program delivery and through (i) scheduled and ad-hoc data collection from GAs and consortium members; (ii) data analysis; (iii) production of data and analysis in formats useful for reporting to GAs and Consortium Steering committee, GPE, LEG, education cluster, and other stakeholders.
<p>(Partial LoE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF Technical Focal Point • SC Technical Focal Point • NRC Technical Focal Point • Plan Technical Focal Point • Sadagaat Technical Focal Point • State focal points for BRIDGES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure technical guidance from the MoE, Education Cluster and LEG is consistent across all partners through technical representation from all partners and ad-hoc technical working groups as needed on areas such as school reopening, nonformal education, teacher training, learning assessments, etc. • Collect and compile partner reports into quarterly and annual programmatic reports • Ensure quality assurance through quarterly technical meetings, ad hoc field visits and joint mission monitoring including with UNESCO (GPE Coordinating Agency), and liaise with other major education partners • Contribute relevant data to the Education Cluster • Produce, translate, and disseminate knowledge management, including relevant learning, research, etc. • Provide relevant quarterly program reports to the Steering Committee for their review and feedback • Update risk matrix quarterly (including safeguarding risks) and share with the Steering Committee, and update risk matrix annually for GPE submission • Provide regular BRIDGES progress updates to the LEG • Present program achievements, lessons learned, and promising practices with the Education Cluster, LEG, etc.
<p>State-level focal points for BRIDGES</p>	<p>UNICEF and SCI will each appoint a BRIDGES focal point in each state targeted by the program. UNICEF will be the focal point in their states. SCI will delegate this responsibility to Plan Intl in North Darfur and NRC in South Darfur. The state focal points will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene regular exchanges between UNICEF and SCI implementing teams/partners • Act as focal points for other partners at state level • Act as focal points for the PCU activities
<p>BRIDGES Steering Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Directors/Deputy Country Directors from each consortium member (one from each organization) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review overall performance on an annual basis • Oversee progress against expected outputs and outcomes on a quarterly basis • Review design on a continued basis, and make recommendations for adjustment in program as needed • Review and approve annual budgets and plans for the program; provide advice on the reallocation of resources within the Consortium

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCU Chief of Party (non-voting permanent member) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as escalation mechanism when differences arise among consortium partners • Collectively mobilize and seek additional funding for education activities in Sudan
<p>Education Cluster (Co-led by UNICEF Sudan & Save the Children Sudan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consortium partners meet minimum standards, policies, and guidelines • Ensure interventions do not overlap and/or duplicate service delivery of the same humanitarian programs, such as ECW, in other locations • Involve/consult consortium partners to support any updates on technical guidance • Contribute to monitoring and evaluation, by ensuring program data contributes to the Education Cluster’s overall data, and participate in any joint monitoring exercises • Identify any knowledge management needs, including needs assessment and analysis of gaps, research studies, etc.
<p>Local Education Group (LEG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to technical discussions on program interventions, contribute to joint problem-solving to overcome challenges, manage and assess risk, promote the sharing of lessons learned, and the scaling of best practices • Receive program technical and financial reports from both grant agents (for GPE submission) • Ensure coordination and alignment with TEP • Ensure BRIDGES interventions contribute to country-level strategic planning efforts and reviews of the education sector efforts to advance national education plans
<p>Federal Ministry of Education (MoE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to ensuring that program activities are not duplicated by the MoE or any other donor programs • Contribute to SIP planning processes related to school infrastructure at the local level • Facilitate transfer of NFE students to government schools at the local level • Contribute to the coordination and implementation of the school rapid survey • Participate in the coordination and facilitation of the national activities such as assessments, planning and strategies development
<p>State Ministries of Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure State Ministries of Education are briefed about the project objectives, targets and key activities. • Contribute to the identification of the target schools / ALP centres, trainees and assessment activities • Facilitate transfer of NFE students to government schools and support their retention • Facilitate and monitor the distribution and utilization of the school grants as per the approved SIP in collaboration with PTAs and Implementing Partners • Facilitate EMIS data collection at State, locality and school level.

Principles

BRIDGES will operate with underlying and crosscutting principles of (1) equity and inclusion (2) humanitarian-development coherence and alignment (3) localization and ownership (4) resilience and adaptability (5) conflict-sensitivity and protection and (6) data, evidence, and learning.

Equity and Inclusion

BRIDGES will prioritize equity and inclusion of all children, particularly the most marginalized, including those directly affected by crises and conflict, boys and girls, children from different ethnic groups, IDPs and those with other migration backgrounds, and children with disabilities. In targeting both formal and nonformal education, BRIDGES will support those children whose education has been disrupted by conflict and displacement, as well as those who have been otherwise excluded, access a pathway back to learning that is sensitive and adapted to the learning loss that they have experienced. Teachers and facilitators will also be trained in inclusive pedagogy, and interventions will be aligned with work under the SCG specifically focusing on inclusive education, to magnify impact where possible. Targeting at a locality level will ensure that the children reached by BRIDGES reflect Sudan's diversity.

Humanitarian Development Coherence and Alignment

In alignment with the TEP, the BRIDGES programme is rooted in an integrated humanitarian-development nexus approach, ensuring coherence between responses to the education crisis and long-term system strengthening. It acts as a bridging mechanism between Sudan's humanitarian needs, driven by conflict, displacement, a worsening economic situation, and commitments to long-term education reform. By aligning with both the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HRNRP) and broader sector development objectives, the TEP ensures complementarity between interventions addressing the immediate needs and transformative education investments. This alignment facilitates a harmonized planning and implementation process across actors and levels, enabling continuity of learning for vulnerable children and laying the groundwork for post-crisis recovery and sustainable development.

Localization and Ownership

BRIDGES is being delivered through a locally led, partnership-based approach aligned with the commitment of inclusive sector coordination. Developed in coordination and validated through the Local Education Group (LEG), the programme reflects a commitment to localisation. It empowers state-level education authorities, leverages community- and school-based mechanisms, and draws on the comparative strengths of UNICEF and Save the Children's partners including Plan International, NRC, and Sadagaat, a Sudanese national NGO. Through joint planning, shared accountability, and locally contextualized delivery models, BRIDGES will ensure implementation remains context-sensitive, nationally owned, and community-driven.

Resilience and Adaptability

BRIDGES will incorporate the flexibility required to achieve its intended results within Sudan's crisis-affected and rapidly evolving context. Guided by the scenario-based planning approach set out in the TEP, the programme includes outputs that can be adapted if contingency measures are required, through the nonformal education (NFE) strategy, to sustain learning in areas affected by conflict or displacement.

These modalities can be expanded should the security situation deteriorate in targeted states or if new displacement patterns emerge. The programme coordination unit (PCU) will coordinate preparedness efforts, including support for partners to develop contingency plans, integrate risk-informed and adaptive workplans, and include flexible budget lines for activity adjustments. Geographic targeting will also remain flexible, enabling a shift in focus based on real-time access and vulnerability assessments. Coordination with inter-agency mechanisms and regular security analysis will guide these adaptations, while pre-positioning of learning materials and local procurement strategies will help ensure timely response. BRIDGES also aligns with broader system resilience efforts under the TEP, including strengthened information systems, planning, and coordination, to help safeguard continuity of education services during periods of instability

Conflict-Sensitivity and Protection

BRIDGES sees child protection as central to quality learning environments in both formal and nonformal education, and child protection will be mainstreamed across all interventions. Children attending both formal and nonformal education will have access to structured PSS activities, and teachers and facilitators will be trained on safeguarding, and safe identification and referral for both child protection and SGBV. At system level, BRIDGES will work with the CP AoR and GBV AoR to strengthen links between schools and protection actors and services.

Data, Evidence and Learning

BRIDGES will be driven by quality data and evidence, and prioritize iterative learning within a culture of transparency. BRIDGES embeds data and evidence in the programming with through ASER, Rapid Census Survey, and EMIS.

From a programmatic perspective, BRIDGES' Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning approach will ensure ongoing program monitoring, six monthly review, mid-term evaluation, and final evaluation. The PCU will use program learnings to adapt and provide iterative changes in the technical approach.

Data sharing and knowledge production processes will be locally owned. This could mean building systems that allow national and state education authorities, as well as national organizations, to generate, access, and analyze data themselves—so that evidence is not only collected for program accountability, but also embedded in national planning and policymaking. Prioritizing local ownership of knowledge production will strengthen sustainability and ensure that sector-wide learning truly reflects Sudan's context and capacities.

Program Readiness

BRIDGES primarily aligns with the Sudan Transitional Education Plan, with a broad alignment in vision and impact, as well as access, learning, and systems outcomes to support children with safe and inclusive learning while strengthening systems. BRIDGES' grant agents leverage recent in-country experiences with safe school re-opening and nonformal education for out of school children. BRIDGES also supports existing mechanisms offered by the Ministry of Education like school-based planning and grants or by the grant

agents themselves like school, teacher, and student material support for safe school re-opening; school re-opening campaigns; nonformal education; innovative teacher training like Teaching at the Right Level, Education in Emergencies teacher training, and socioemotional skills teacher training; textbook printing and distribution; child and adolescent protection mechanism like We Thrive and Team Up; and Rapid School and Census Surveys. There are few novel interventions like school, state, and national education planning to enhance resilience and mitigate education disruptions common in the current conflict and crisis environment, but BRIDGES will leverage UNICEF and Save the Children global institutional experience in these areas. BRIDGES will also draw on experts to support policy work in areas like EMIS and teacher workforce development strategies.

BRIDGES grant agents, UNICEF and Save the Children, are global co-leads in the Education Cluster. They are also co-leads in Sudan. This makes them uniquely positioned to manage education programming in both humanitarian and development contexts. While BRIDGES has carefully selected states and localities with a degree of stability that allows longer-term planning, the program is also prepared to pivot service delivery should there be a need. UNICEF and Save the Children have the capability to transition formal safe school re-opening programming to nonformal education on a temporary basis. If long term, UNICEF and Save the Children will consult with the Local Education Group and then GPE on any changes of location in programming.

Financial Management

BRIDGES will ensure that value for money (VFM) is demonstrated and delivered throughout the program. UNICEF and Save the Children International (SCI) will work together to ensure financial management systems are driven by fair cost-allocation methodology which ensures common costs are apportioned objectively between various funders. UNICEF and SCI have robust financial management systems in place that track project spend and produce management and financial reports showing effective and efficient utilization of financial resources entrusted to them by their various funders.

UNICEF maintains a comprehensive control framework that ensures strong financial and administrative oversight across all levels of program implementation. Its systems are built on internationally recognized standards, including those developed by the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs), and are reinforced by the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), which serves as the backbone of UNICEF's global risk management strategy. This framework includes internal controls covering the control environment, risk assessment, control activities, communication, and oversight. Risk is managed at corporate, operational, and partner levels through documented processes, annual risk assessments, and mitigation plans. Before engaging with implementing partners, UNICEF conducts micro-assessments to evaluate financial management and internal controls, applying risk ratings and tailored mitigation measures such as capacity development. During implementation, UNICEF conducts programmatic visits, financial spot checks, and audits to ensure accountability and proper use of funds.

Flow of Funds

Flow of funds for UNICEF

In terms of flow of funds for UNICEF, UNICEF HQ will receive program funds from GPE Trustee in accordance with the Financial Procedures Agreement. Funds will be channeled from UNICEF HQ to UNICEF

Sudan. UNICEF Sudan will transfer funds directly to Implementing Partners selected through a competitive procurement process outlined in the procurement section and in accordance with partner agreements.



In terms of flow of funds for Save the Children, Save the Children Norway (SCN) will receive program funds from GPE Trustee in accordance with the Financial Procedures Agreement. Funds will be channeled from SCN to Save the Children International (SCI) headquarters in London, UK and subsequently transferred to Save the Children Sudan Country Office. The Save the Children Sudan Country Office will transfer funds directly to selected Implementing Partners in accordance with partner agreements.

Flow of Funds for Save the Children



Partnerships

Implementing partners are eligible to receive funds if they are selected through UNICEF’s competitive expression of interest processes and Save the Children’s partner selection process. The transfer of funds will depend on regular cash flow forecasts and cash requests in accordance with partner annual work plans and budgets. Localization will underpin all BRIDGES interventions in the proposed program, with the engagement and active participation of local partners in implementation. Formal program partnership documents will be signed between the grant agents and the partners, followed by transfer of resources. The respective grant agents will retain accountability for results and funds utilization. For UNICEF this includes advancing funds for program delivery (Direct Cash Transfer), making payments directly to vendors on behalf of partners (Direct Payment), or reimbursing partners for agreed expenditures (Reimbursement). Beyond financing, UNICEF strengthens partner systems through the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), offering tools, training, and workshops to build capacity in managing programs and resources effectively.

Acquittals for advances will be done monthly and will be reviewed by UNICEF Sudan and Save the Children Sudan respectively. All partners will be required to record expenditure in a cloud-based accounting system, controlled by UNICEF Sudan and Save the Children Sudan respectively. Apart from the first advance, all subsequent withdrawals will be based on successful acquittal of the previous withdrawal. At the expenditure level, each eligible expense will be tracked by a unique budget code. Budget codes will be used to monitor the expenditure through the monthly budget versus actual analysis (BVA).

Cash Transfers

Monitoring of the school grants and teachers’ incentive cash component will be conducted through a combination of internal oversight, third-party monitoring (TPM), and participatory mechanisms to ensure transparency, accountability, and efficiency. Monitoring of the payment process will be carried out by UNICEF’s Cash Implementation Unit (CIU), and SC’s MEAL team and state-level education lead, working

closely with the Financial Service Provider (FSP), the Ministry of Education, and implementing partners. The CIU/SC MEAL team will provide regular progress updates, track disbursements, and reconcile payment lists against actual beneficiaries paid. To complement internal oversight from the UNICEF CIU, a Third-Party Monitor will be contracted to observe cash disbursement at distribution points, verify the accuracy of transactions, and conduct post-distribution monitoring (PDM) to assess whether intended objectives were met. Beneficiaries will be engaged through structured feedback mechanisms, including community focal points, UNICEF and SC's feedback and accountability mechanisms (hotlines, WhatsApp, helpdesks and site-level feedback boxes), ensuring that grievances, fraud allegations, or sensitive cases such as PSEA are reported and addressed promptly. Risk management and compliance will be reinforced through spot-checks, financial reconciliation, and the application of environmental and social safeguards to ensure safe, dignified, and gender-sensitive cash delivery. Together, these layered monitoring mechanisms will provide assurance that resources are being used as intended and that corrective actions are taken swiftly when challenges arise.

Compliance & Audit

The Grant Agents will conduct compliance monitoring to ensure financial accountability. This will include programmatic visits to verify progress, financial spot-checks to confirm resource use, and periodic audits to provide independent assurance of program integrity. These measures will reinforce transparency and accountability at all implementation levels.

SCI will commission annual audits of its grant by a qualified international audit provider, which will include a review of financial systems, internal controls, and overall operational efficiency, conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. SCI will share the key findings of this audit with the LEG and GPE.

UNICEF is subject to external audit exclusively by the United Nations Board of Auditors. The Board is comprised of the heads of the Supreme Audit Institutions from three Member States serving six-year terms. These audits assess whether expenditures are incurred for approved purposes and whether financial records comply with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The audit also includes a review of financial systems, internal controls, and overall operational efficiency, conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Audit findings, along with management responses and remedial action plans, are published online, reflecting UNICEF's commitment to transparency and accountability. Data from field monitoring is triangulated with third-party monitoring, government reporting, and external evaluations to verify program delivery and ensure proper use of funds.

Procurement

BRIDGES will be responsible for ensuring procurement policies are aligned with international standards and meet GPE requirements. BRIDGES' grant agents UNICEF will follow HACT Procedures while SCI will follow SCI's Global Procurement Manual.

UNICEF

UNICEF's procurement under the program will be guided by UNICEF's globally recognized procurement policies and procedures, which are aligned with international standards and compliant with GPE

requirements. These procedures prioritize transparency, fairness, and value for money, and are supported by robust internal controls, including segregation of duties, contract review mechanisms, and the use of UNICEF's internal systems.

Procurement activities will be carried out through a combination of offshore sourcing via UNICEF's Supply Division and local procurement using Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) and competitive bidding processes. All suppliers will be vetted through the UN Global Marketplace (UNGM), ensuring due diligence and compliance with UN sanctions and ethical standards. Where feasible, UNICEF will apply its Sustainable Procurement Procedure, integrating environmental and social considerations into procurement decisions.

In emergency contexts, UNICEF leverages expedited procurement modalities to ensure timely delivery of essential goods and services. Risk management is embedded throughout the procurement cycle, with continuous market analysis and contract-specific strategies to mitigate supply chain disruptions, inflation, and logistical constraints. UNICEF also applies the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) to assess and strengthen the financial and procurement capacities of implementing partners.

Procurement performance will be monitored through key performance indicators and regular reporting, with third-party monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure accountability and verify delivery. UNICEF's extensive experience in managing large-scale procurement operations in fragile settings ensures that the project will benefit from efficient, compliant, and responsive supply chain management.

Save the Children

SCI will procure and supply program materials, good and services in accordance with strict national/international procurement procedures, following SC Global Guidelines ensuring transparency and reducing risk. SCI has a fully functional procurement team based in Port Sudan and across the 13 states in which it operates in Sudan, with global and regional procurement support. The Head of Logistics will provide overall oversight of SCI and partner procurement for BRIDGES.

Program procurement will include educational supplies (pencils, sharpeners, pens, erasers, notebooks, etc), teaching materials (chalk, geometric sets, poster paper, etc.), hygiene kits (toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, sanitary pads), stationery, laptops, printers, and IEC materials including posters and flashcards. SCI and its implementing partners will rely mostly on local markets since most equipment and goods are locally available. Framework Agreements (FWAs) will be used for strategic categories with consistent demand, aiming for over 60% procurement via FWAs. Sustainable procurement incorporates social, economic, and environmental considerations to maximize positive community impact.

SCI and partners will procure from local suppliers in the operational areas whenever possible through a competitive process. Procurement will be tailored to each target state, drawing on local markets where feasible. SC also seeks to support sustainable procurement – incorporating social, economic, and environmental considerations to maximize positive community impact. All suppliers, implementing partners, staff and any sub-contractors are vetted through the legal department before finalization, as per SC's Anti-Terrorism Policy. To prevent fraud on procurement by partners, SC will ensure robust oversight of procurement, establish clear guidelines, and conduct routine financial spot-checks.

BRIDGES Common Procurement Approach

All procurement for BRIDGES will follow a transparent and competitive bidding process within pre-established financial thresholds, requiring either receipts or quotations and a minimum number of quotations depending on the procurement value of the goods or services. When the value of procurement requires at least three formal quotations, a procurement committee will be formed to review and decide on the selection. For competitive procurement processes, requirements are specified to make the tender open and competitive.

During the competitive processes, the procurement committee will check interested suppliers for official business registration and visit them personally to verify physical establishments if necessary. The grant agents' respective supply systems will assess vendors from a financial, reputational, safeguarding, and technical perspective. Potential vendors will also be screened and vetted as a part of the due diligence process to gather information on the economic sanctions and terrorism financing standards on any sanction lists will be excluded. Contracts will be awarded based on the principle of value for money and past performance among other criteria. All vendors will adhere to anti bribery, anti-fraud, and corruption, as well as child safeguarding policies.

For both grant agents, BRIDGES will follow basic procurement principles including developing a procurement plan and sourcing pipelines for the three-year program. All implementing partners will be required to create their own procurement plan for the duration of the program, update procurement plans on a regular basis, and share procurement plans with the PCU. The procurement plans will include details for goods/services to be purchased over a specific amount and will also include an annual sourcing pipeline for programmatic and operational requirements. The sourcing pipeline will help to maximize value-for-money and prevent delays in program implementation. Each grant agent will review procurement plans and seek to identify opportunities for standardization and benchmarking of basic unit costs between UNICEF and SC Sudan with contextual considerations of operational costs by state.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning

BRIDGES' Monitoring and Evaluation will be guided by UNICEF and Save the Children's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) results framework to ensure that program interventions are of high-quality; there are systematic and on-going data collection processes to inform program management decisions; program activities are on track; and to measure contribution to program outcomes and impact. The MEAL framework will provide feedback on the quality and relevance of the interventions to achieve intended program outcomes while providing information for evaluation, adaptation, and improvement.

The results framework provides the foundation for all MEAL efforts. BRIDGES will collect data, verify information through field visits and other sources, and report progress under each output and activity indicator. Wherever possible, BRIDGES will use indicators and targets identified in the Transitional Education Plan, to feed into existing strategic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Depending on the program requirements and availability of tools, specific tools will be designed to facilitate data collection, analysis, and reporting. The results framework is responsive to UNICEF's IASC Gender and Age Marker standards (GAM) and Save the Children's Indicator Performance Tracking Table which disaggregates data

by sex, disability, IDP/refugee status etc. to allow for analysis, reporting, reflection and learning throughout the life of the program.

The MEAL plan and data collection procedures and tools will be updated during the inception phase by BRIDGES implementing partners, and in-line with the agreed upon results framework. The MEAL plan will then be revisited periodically by the BRIDGES Steering Committee to ensure its continued effectiveness and relevance. The PCU, along with other relevant stakeholders, will conduct lessons learned exercises to ensure good practices are shared between grantees and other LEG members, and that challenges are met through collaboration and consultation.

Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted through regular tracking by implementing partners using their own internal systems. The grantees will participate in periodic monitoring and evaluation through the following collective means:

- **Ongoing program monitoring** will inform relevant stakeholders of progress and challenges and will systematically identify opportunities for improvements. They will include joint site monitoring visits between UNICEF and Save the Children with implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders including beneficiaries. These visits will help identify issues at an early stage along with information received through feedback mechanisms. This also includes post-distribution monitoring exercises to ensure goods such as texts and materials are received by the beneficiaries and identify any types of problems they encountered when accessing goods or services.
- **Six-monthly review** of progress against outcome, output, and intervention level indicators to track progress. This will include systematic collection of quantitative data to track progress on activities, ensuring disaggregation by gender, age, geographic location, children with disabilities, and host/IDPs. These reviews will also be verified through field visits and other sources.
- **Mid-term evaluation** will evaluate the progress towards achieving outcomes, identify issues in the design and in implementation methods, and identify good practices that can be shared and scaled up.
- **Final evaluation** will evaluate all program achievements against outputs and outcomes, highlight promising and good practices, and offer recommendations for equitable and inclusive school reopening and re-entry back to school and nonformal education in providing access to education in conflict and crisis settings.

Data collection will rely on 1) the existing data systems present at national, state, local, and organizational levels; 2) specific data collected through assessments and evaluations; and 3) through individualized partner reporting. To supplement the existing data collection initiatives/mechanisms, participatory and child-centered data collection methods will be utilized along with structured focus group discussions, standardized surveys, and key informant interviews.

In areas where access is restricted due to insecurity or logistical constraints, BRIDGES will employ alternative monitoring methods. These may include remote monitoring through digital tools, partnerships with local organizations, and the use of third-party monitoring (TPM) firms where appropriate. Community feedback and participatory approaches will also be prioritized to ensure information flow from hard-to-reach areas.

Accountability and Learning

UNICEF and Save the Children will set up formal accountability mechanisms aligned with the Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) on Quality, and Accountability in the BRIDGES' locations to enable children and communities to express their views and concerns on our approach, activities and impact, as well as on safety issues and the behaviour of our staff. Key considerations of these mechanisms will be safety, accessibility, gender, culture and literacy level to ensure the equitable and meaningful participation of women and girls. BRIDGES will provide opportunities for stakeholders to express serious concerns and complaints regarding our activities through multiple community-friendly channels. The Feedback and Reporting Mechanism (FRM) will include both reactive (such as hotlines) and proactive (community satisfaction consultations, focus group discussions) channels. Feedback and critical issues will be reviewed by the PCU, as well as by respective grant agent senior leadership to ensure coordination, resolution and reinforce the overall accountability framework.

Implementing partners will formally commit to ensuring accountability to the children and communities. To this end, they need to ensure that there is continuous dialogue with the children and communities at all stages of delivery and implementation. Implementing partners will consider communities' preferred ways of communication, offering them different inclusive, gender-sensitive, child-friendly, and culturally appropriate means that allow engagement without fear of retaliation.

BRIDGES is committed to becoming a learning program. BRIDGES will contribute to the evidence base of formal and nonformal education, child protection, learning, and broader systems strengthening. Specifically, BRIDGES will capture learnings related to access and retention of children in formal schools and nonformal education, safety of children in learning settings, numeracy and literacy levels, school resilience, emergent and long-term education data and information systems, and workforce development. BRIDGES will produce learning products for a wide variety of audiences, including a research and learning product on the role of MHPSS in learning and wellbeing at the household level. Study results will be widely disseminated in the target communities and with wider Sudanese stakeholders for learning and advocacy purposes. Towards the end of BRIDGES, a learning workshop will be held with all relevant stakeholders, including children, PTAs, teachers and MoE. The learning workshop will share perceptions towards the interventions, progress, challenges and lessons learnt. An endline survey of project evaluation will be conducted to assess relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project. The project's key findings and recommendations will be used to inform future programming.

Safeguarding

BRIDGES has been designed with respect to children, adults and staff safeguarding concerns. As such, BRIDGES is fully committed to child and adult safe programming, ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are not deliberately or inadvertently harmed. The protection and provision of safe and equitable services/solutions for all children, especially girls and adolescent girls, and vulnerable adults, especially women, and people with disabilities, with particular attention and enhanced safeguarding function as part of program implementation.

Child safeguarding explicitly addresses the heightened risks of gender-based violence, particularly early and forced marriage, sexual exploitation, and abuse in conflicted-affected and displacement settings. Implementing partners will ensure that safeguarding mechanisms are both gender- and age-sensitive, with clear and accessible referral pathways to child protection and GBV service providers. Staff, teachers, volunteers, and community focal points will be trained to recognize local risk factors, and reporting mechanisms will be adapted to allow children, especially girls, to safely disclose misconduct.

Adult safeguarding will prioritize the protection of women, men, and people with disabilities from gender-based violence, especially sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and exploitation in conflict and displacement contexts. Implementing partners will work closely with local women's organizations, health providers, and protection groups to ensure survivor-centered referral pathways are available and accessible. Training will focus on safe practices, maintain confidentiality, and providing culturally appropriate responses in line with Sudan's legal and social frameworks.

BRIDGES will ensure specific measures on awareness, risk management and accountability are in place to prevent, report, and respond to children's and adults' safeguarding concerns. The PCU is responsible for ensuring implementing partners have the capacity and mechanisms in place to implement child and adult safeguarding measures. The PCU will maintain responsibility and accountability for ensuring that all implementing partners have and implement robust safeguarding policies and procedures through the course of the program. All implementing partners will be required to sign safeguarding agreements translated into Arabic, that are inclusive of PSEA clauses and signed by contractors, vendors, and partners. They will undergo institutional capacity assessments on PSEA, and support will be provided to strengthen mechanisms where gaps are identified. Recruitment, procurement processes, and subcontracts must include explicit commitments on GBV/PSEA/SH, and all employees will be required to sign a Code of Conduct. The PCU will ensure that staff, contractors, and volunteers of implementing partners are trained on PSEA, Child Safeguarding, and the Zero Tolerance to SEA policy. In addition, the PCU will also conduct regular SEA risk assessments of partners to identify vulnerabilities and guide appropriate mitigation actions and ensure compliance with SEA policies. In collaboration with sectors such as Child Protection and Health, referral pathways will be mapped, and essential supplies—including post-rape kits, PEP, and dignity kits with PSEA brochures—will be pre-positioned in hotspot areas to ensure timely and dignified responses for survivors.

The PCU and implementing partners will also use multiple outreach platforms, including community engagement, radio, TV, and IEC materials, to raise awareness on rights to free humanitarian services and to disseminate key PSEA messages, including what constitutes SEA and prohibited behaviours by humanitarian workers. The partners will establish a child and adult safeguarding referral policy with focal points for safe, ethical and accessible referrals and follow ups. Safe, accessible and alternate reporting mechanisms will be established by the partners in each state. Children and communities will be involved in the design of the mechanisms and informed as to how they can share their concerns/feedback. It will be made clear to children and communities exactly what their rights are, what measures will be taken to ensure their protection, what type of behavior they can expect from the staff of grantees and implementing partners, and where and how to report concerns.

Child and adult safeguarding concerns will be investigated in a timely, confidential, and safe manner. The PCU will ensure that safe and confidential reporting and follow-up mechanisms for allegations of sexual exploitation, abuse, fraud, or harassment are in place across the programme. All reports will be recorded

in accordance with data privacy best practice and monitored to track trends and identify opportunities to improve the organizational practices of the partners. Dedicated PSEA and GBV focal persons will be designated, and existing grievance redress mechanisms (toll-free call center, WhatsApp, and confidential email address) will be promoted as trusted channels. To reinforce accountability, a programme-wide PSEA action plan will be implemented, focal persons will be placed across offices, and awareness programmes will be conducted to ensure compliance and to strengthen monitoring and reporting systems.

Additional care will be taken to protect communities, especially vulnerable adults like young women, from unnecessary exposure via strong communications campaigns. All external communications will be vetted by grantees and their agency-level communications experts to ensure that beneficiaries and their communities and their education activities are not unnecessarily exposed. Further, each implementing partner will be required to implement strict data security measures that backs up critical information in safe storage locations and encrypts any information that may put beneficiaries or their communities at risk.

Sustainability and Aid Effectiveness

Inclusive and Participatory Design

BRIDGES is a result of an inclusive and participatory design process including national and state-level engagements among grant agents, prospective international NGO, national NGO, and CSO partners, and whenever possible government education actors at the national and state levels. These consultations, alongside a participatory workshop, guided the selection of key interventions and geographic focus areas. UNICEF and Save the Children then continued to design the program based on their experience in implementing education humanitarian and development education programs across the country.

Two Prong Approach Supporting Service Delivery Primarily through Localization & Systems Strengthening

BRIDGES prioritizes localization as a core strategy for sustainability. This involves investing in local systems, actors, and capacities to deliver and sustain education outcomes. The program will maximize the use of local supply chains where feasible to reduce costs, minimize delays, and support the local economy. It will place local civil society organizations and community structures at the center of service delivery efforts. Local partners will focus primarily on delivering education services, including safe school reopening, provision/delivery of learning materials, community mobilization, and psychosocial support. Strengthening community-based organizations—such as mothers' groups, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), youth groups, and local relief groups—will build lasting community capacity to maintain education services even beyond the duration of the project.

Complementing local initiatives, UNICEF and Save the Children will lead in multiple system strengthening interventions identified in the program, working closely with national and state-level education authorities. These efforts include developing relevant recognized nonformal education opportunities for out of school children who will not matriculate back to formal education, reinforcing teacher management and developing teacher professional development responsive to education in emergencies, supporting the development and operationalization of the Education Management Information System (EMIS), building

institutional capacity for education planning and governance, and enhancing policy frameworks to embed resilience and accountability across the sector. System strengthening activities ensure that gains are institutionalized and can be scaled or sustained beyond the life of the grant.

Together, this two-pronged approach—combining immediate local service delivery with deep, systemic strengthening—ensures that the STG delivers tangible short-term results while laying the foundation for a more resilient, sustainable education system in Sudan.

Strategic Capacity Building

The program will support strategic capacity strengthening of government authorities, education stakeholders, and local organizations. While detailed assessments and mappings will be conducted during the early stages of the program to refine priorities, key areas of intervention have already been identified. Capacity strengthening efforts will focus on national and state-level Ministry of Education officials, who will be supported to develop and implement teacher management systems—including systems for teacher recruitment, deployment, continuous professional development (CPD), and performance management, and of course to teachers themselves with teacher professional development.

Officials will also be trained to develop, operationalize, and utilize the Education Management Information System (EMIS), including new technologies (real-time information, SMS) to improve the quality and monitoring of program interventions. This includes building technical skills for data collection, analysis, and reporting at the state and federal levels to support evidence-based planning and decision-making. In addition, training will be provided to education cluster coordinators and planning units at national and state levels to enhance education in emergencies (EiE) preparedness and response, strengthen monitoring systems, and improve coordination mechanisms across humanitarian and development education actors.

Capacity support will also extend to local organizations and community-based structures, strengthening their ability to engage in education service delivery, monitor school functioning, mobilize communities, and support child protection referrals.

Aid Effectiveness

First and foremost, the BRIDGES directly aligns with TEP’s three pillars, programs and activities. This ensures BRIDGES is contributing to the education sector’s priorities and maximizing donor resources.

BRIDGES’ Alignment with TEP

BRIDGES (Output and/or Activity)	TEP (Program and/or Activity)
1.1.1 Strengthen school-based management through school improvement planning and school-based grants	1.2.1 Provide and manage financial incentives to school reopening and operation through school grants
1.1.2 Provide school, teacher, and student material support	1.1.2 Provide essential learning supplies and equipment, including ones adapted for children with disabilities 1.1.3 Provide essential health supplies to students including hygiene kits for girls
1.2.1 Enhance resilience through school-level continuity and contingency planning	1.2.3 Establish the Comprehensive School Safety approach including mine safety, and endorse the Safe Schools Declaration

1.2.2 Provide support for child protection, including gender-based violence	1.5.1 Provide Psychosocial Support Service (PSS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) for students 1.5.2 Establish child protection mechanisms to prevent and respond to violence related issues, including GBV
1.2.3 Conduct school reopening campaigns for communities and families	1.2.4 Conduct 'back to school campaigns and awareness-raising at community level, with a focus on girls' education and children with disabilities
1.3.1 Ensure ALPs are operational	1.4.1 Provide nonformal education services for out of school children and children at risk of dropping out including through physical and human resources 1.4.3 Implement remedial and catch-up programs in open schools to address learning loss
2.1.1 Build the capacity of education stakeholders to deliver teacher training, and state and local inspectors and headmasters to support teachers with ongoing supervision and mentoring	Program 3.3 Establish the foundation for effective management of teachers and education staff
2.1.2 Train school level teachers and facilitators using Master Trainers or mentors equipping them with FLN instruction and use learner-centered activity-based teacher training activities	2.1.1 Design and deliver training to teachers from G1-G6 on literacy and numeracy skills 2.1.2 Develop, procure, and distribute high-quality teaching resources and guides for all subject-matters, including Teachers in Crisis Contexts (TiCC) manuals 2.1.3 Promote and provide teachers' access to mental health and psychosocial support 1.5.1 Provide Psychosocial Support Service (PSS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) for students
2.2 Enhanced foundational literacy and numeracy textbooks and supplementary readers	2.2.3 Provide students with updated and quality textbooks with learning material and aids
3.1 MoE and the local education authorities have strengthened technical and planning capacities	Program 3.1 Build the capacity of education stakeholders, with a focus on education in emergencies
3.2.1 Conduct Rapid School Census Surveys	3.2.6 Promote research and prepare data-driven evaluations for learning, including studies on access barriers, out-of-school children, impact of cash transfer programs, remote learning, inclusive education, etc. as well as the use of rapid assessment surveys
3.2.2 Strengthen institutional Education Management and Information Systems	3.2.2 Outline a Roadmap towards a phased development of an EMIS for both formal and nonformal education
3.3 Strengthened Workforce Planning and Development	Program 3.3 Establish the foundation for effective management of teachers and education staff

Second, BRIDGES is aligned with other GPE financing such as the System Capacity Grant (SCG) to be implemented by UNESCO and other complementary financing such as ECW MYRP II.

BRIDGES anticipates STG and SCG will work together for ongoing collaboration and alignment. Major areas of programmatic complementarity include:

- EiE training, where the SCG will lead on national-level stakeholder mapping, contextualization of training materials, and the development of national-level expertise, while the STG will support the operationalization of training at the level of localities and schools
- NFE, where the SCG will lead on system-level review and reform, while the STG will directly implement NFE programming aligned with these reforms.

In addition, the SCG and STG will work towards ongoing alignment of communications; advocacy and resource mobilization; data collection, monitoring and reporting; and research and evaluation.

The BRIDGES will be fully aligned and harmonized with the Sudan Primary Education Emergency Support Project (SPEEP), with particular emphasis on coordination of activities and geographic targeting in Khartoum and Al Jazirah states. While SPEEP emphasizes access to formal education, BRIDGES will strengthen holistic community-level systems and support nonformal education, ensuring that both programs maximize coverage and avoid duplication. BRIDGES interventions under the STG are designed to complement SPEEP's focus on formal education, ensuring that both formal and nonformal education needs are addressed without overlapping. With SPEEP initiating the Rapid School Census in 2025, BRIDGES will utilize this data and support MOE to publish the data. STG will operationalize and build on Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS) and other system reforms supported by complementary grants, ensuring a unified approach to education system strengthening. Planned assessments and education workforce reviews will generate complementary data on learning outcomes, access, and teacher deployment, providing a robust analytical foundation for targeted interventions.

Third, both UNICEF and SCI are part of the Reference Group for the ongoing SCALE review of NFE and have held separate consultation meetings with SCALE to identify areas in which SCALE's emerging findings should inform the development of BRIDGES. SCALE recommendations related to learner profiles for different NFE pathways will be adopted by BRIDGES when identifying children for NFE. Additional indicative recommendations around NFE content and dosing will require more gradual adoption within BRIDGES, and may require flexibility of targeting, depending on what recommendations are validated and adopted by education partners in Sudan. However, BRIDGES remains committed to the direction of travel indicated by SCALE, and to the reform and harmonization of NFE provision in Sudan more broadly.

Fourth, aid effectiveness under BRIDGES requires a clear and disciplined approach to defining the roles and responsibilities among the grant agents, i.e. UNICEF and Save the Children, coordinating mechanisms such as the LEG and Education Cluster, consortium partners, and relevant government actors wherever possible. Cooperation with the Ministry of Education and sub-national education authorities is central to identifying the most pressing outputs and activities, avoiding duplication, and ensuring complementarity across all interventions.

To maintain alignment with national ownership and sector coherence, STG implementers have agreed on specific boundaries for intervention identified in this program. Through this focused, collaborative approach—supporting but not replacing government functions—the STG will ensure that interventions are both effective and sustainable.