

Terms of Reference – Teachers Without Borders Finland

Distance / hybrid position, South Sudan

Location	Juba, South Sudan
Host Organization	Finn Church Aid (FCA) South Sudan Country Office (SSUCO)
Length of Posting	2-4 weeks in-country, 4-5 months distance prior and post deployment
Time of Deployment	Between June and December 2025
Number of Positions	2
Title of the Position(s)	Education Advisor (TWB Volunteer): (i) ECD Specialist and (ii) Institutional Teacher Capacity Development Specialist

NOTE the realization of the positions is conditional to securing funding, and the global and local security situation.

Context and background

The education sector in South Sudan continues to be in a state of crisis, severely affected by conflict, climate change, and economic instability. The country has some of the lowest education indicators globally, with more than 2.8 million children out of school, over 58% of classrooms being temporary or makeshift structures, 75% of schools lacking essential learning facilities such as toilets, water sources, and playgrounds, and a shortage of trained ECD teachers, and with less than 20% of primary school teachers formally trained (UNICEF, 2022). Primary school enrolment stands at 1.6 million, of which only 43% are girls. Early childhood education remains a low priority in national education policies and Play-Based Learning (PBL) is rarely implemented due to the preference for traditional, teacher-centred instruction (UNESCO, 2023). Early childhood education remains underfunded and underdeveloped, with very few trained ECD teachers and limited government support, while many parents and caregivers also lack awareness of the benefits of play, often perceiving it as a waste of time rather than a fundamental part of child development.

(i) Early Childhood Development

The Gorom refugee settlement in Central Equatoria State of South Sudan provides a particularly critical context for implementing ECD in emergency through play-based pedagogy. This refugee settlement located about 26kms outside of Juba city hosts 16,000 refugees from Sudan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic and Burundi, many of whom are children affected by violence, loss, and insecurity. These children face profound

challenges in accessing quality education, and the existing educational infrastructure in the settlement is underdeveloped. The settlement education programs are highly dependent on external humanitarian aid, and the shortage of trained teachers, materials, and learning spaces further complicates efforts to provide adequate education. Despite the growing global recognition of play-based methodologies in ECD, there is little application and effectiveness in emergency humanitarian settings, particularly in South Sudan.

FCA SSUCO intend to start ECD intervention in such operational areas but wishes to build internal capacity on emergency ECD before embarking on a full scale ECD intervention. To pilot this initial learning, FCA wish to work in an ECD centre using a play-based learning pedagogy approach as an entry point into ECD education programming in South Sudan. Therefore, having a TWB with expertise on ECD with technical skills on PBL development, emergency ECD material development and teacher training would be required to support this learning phase. The TWB will be expected to build FCA SSUCO education team on ECD PBL approach, who will then pilot the approach for future scale up.

(ii) Teacher training and qualifications

Similarly, South Sudan's education sector faces significant challenges regarding teacher training and qualifications. Of the 49,750 teachers in South Sudan, only 35% have received some form of training, but not professional pre-service teacher training. Less than 10% of primary school teachers, totalling just 3,683 individuals, are considered qualified (MoGEI, AEC, 2023¹). The shortage of qualified educators results in alarmingly high pupil-teacher ratios, with some areas reporting as many as 120 students per teacher, compared to the national average of 59:1 (MoGEI, AEC, 2023). A critical issue is the reliance on volunteer teachers, who make up over 70% of the workforce and are not on the government payroll. Those who do receive compensation earn an average of only \$40 per month from development partners, which is inadequate to attract and retain qualified professionals. The gender disparity in education is also a major concern, as only 20% of the 606 secondary schools in South Sudan have one female teacher or more. Additionally, just 40% of schools have a single trained teacher. The capacity for training new educators is also limited, with only four public National Teacher Training Institutes (NTTIs) operational nationwide.

Since 2018, FCA SSUCO has been supporting Maridi NTTI on pre-service teacher training with University of Juba (UoJ) as quality assurance and accreditation institution. The capacity assessment of 37 tutors/instructors done in 2024 at Rombur and Maridi NTTIs point to gaps in tutor's capacity to effectively interpret and deliver competency-based curriculum, undertake supervision, assessment and learning evaluation. These needs are representative of existing gaps in the other 2 operational NTTIs. Building on the recommendation from the recent visit of the Ministry of General Education delegation to Finland in October 2024 coupled with the need to strengthen the capacity of the Directorate of Teacher Development and Management service (TDMS) at the National Ministry of General Education, FCA SSUCO believes that having a TWB with expertise in Institutional Teacher Capacity Development should be seconded to work in collaboration with TDMS and UoJ to deliver coaching of tutors on technical supervision and assessment of pre-service student teachers, orient NTTI tutors on fundamental aspects on how to teach CBC curriculum, set assessment/learning evaluation

¹ South Sudan Ministry of General Education and Instruction, Annual Education Census, 2023

and curriculum interpretation and delivery. The TWB will further work with TDMS and UoJ to contextualize the national assessment and school practice protocol for pre-service teachers.

Description of TWB collaboration

The assigned TWBs will support in two different areas: in the capacity development on ECD and foundational learning, and in the professional development of teachers to enhance education quality, accessibility, retention and completion in South Sudan. The TWB education experts will, depending on their individual roles, collaborate and actively engage with the Directorate of Teacher Development and Management service at the National Ministry of General Education, with the principals of the National Teacher Training Institute, and the School of Education, Department of Education at the University of Juba as well as with the FCA SSUCO Education Unit. To the extent possible, one of the TWBs will collaborate with refugee schools, ECD teachers and learners in the refugee settlement while the other TWB will have interface with the department of basic and secondary education at the Ministry of Education and technical working group for Teacher Training and development at national level.

If the local and regional security situation allows for in-country travel, the TWB volunteers would travel to Juba, South Sudan, for a period of 2-4 weeks, to deliver in-person support to the target audiences. The remaining part of the volunteer period would be conducted via distance support. To ensure the success of the collaboration, the TWB assignments will be planned in a manner that all tasks can be conducted fully from distance.

TWB volunteer's main tasks may include:

- TWB ECD Specialist will provide technical support on ECD Play Based Learning development, including development of relevant ECD materials and orientation of ECD teachers on PBL pedagogy. The TWB will be expected to build FCA SSUCO education team capacity on ECD PBL approach and support the piloting of the approach for future scale up.
- FCA SSUCO believes that the TWB for Institutional Teacher Capacity Development Specialist shall work in collaboration with University of Juba (UoJ) to deliver training of tutors on curriculum interpretation and delivery, coach tutors on technical supervision and assessment of pre-service student teachers, including aspects of how to teach, and set assessment/learning evaluation. In addition, the TWB will work with UoJ to contextualize the national assessment and school practice protocol for pre-service teachers.

Position-Specific Qualifications and Competencies

ECD specialist

- Experience and expertise in early childhood development, including relevant experience in play-based pedagogy for early years' learners.
- Experience in material development for ECD levels (for teachers or learners)
- Co-creation and setting up ECD infrastructure is an asset

- Experience in teacher training, peer support and teacher mentoring is an advantage
- Experience or knowledge of Education in Emergencies, particularly from ECD levels is an added benefit

Institutional Teacher Capacity Development Specialist

- Expertise in teachers' professional development, including pre-service teacher training
- Experience in curriculum interpretation and delivery is an asset.
- Experience in coaching and mentoring other teachers, experience with pre-service student teachers is a plus.

Supervision and Support

FCA SSUCO will ensure the security and wellbeing of the designated TWBs during in-country assignment. The SSUCO Education Advisor will support and supervise the seconded TWBs in all aspect regarding delivery of agreed deliverables during the entire volunteer deployment.