My semester mapping project topic is to better understand the conflict over how to provide effective education in South Sudan with a central time frame of independence (July 9, 2011) through the continued escalation of violence (December 13, 2015), and to the intensified civil war occurring today that is devolving South Sudan toward a failed state status by the United Nations. I will look at several factors and their breakdown, including: the availability of teachers, the training of teachers, the cultural competency of teachers, the cultural acceptance of teachers by students; and the economics of who is paying for the teachers, pay scale, and teacher effectiveness. What I hope emerges from this conflict mapping is a nuanced picture of the motivations, connections, and relationships toward education in South Sudan by identified stakeholders, requiring intervention concepts that draw on a holistic understanding of the interplay between identified stakeholders and issues.

BACKGROUND

July 9, 2011 is a celebrated birthday for the South Sudan. After 22 years (1983-2005) of the Second Civil War between the Khartoum-based Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, and the vote for independence by Southerners in the January, 2011 referendum, South Sudan became an independent nation. Yet, with all the celebrations of independence, South Sudan is faced with building not only an education system from scratch, but also an entire nation. Infrastructure systems of government, transportation, security, technology, health care, and electricity are being built simultaneously with an education system. It is a daunting task and involves governments, multinational companies, aid agencies, and donors from around the world, each stakeholder with their own agenda for developing a sustainable South Sudan. A further challenge is the continued escalation of violence since December 15, 2013 between the forces of President Salva Kiir and former Vice-President Riek Machar and is rooted in the power struggle within the governing Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) with non-binding cease-fire agreements between January, 2014 and October, 2015. (BBC News, 2015; Daoust & Novelli, 2015).

The education system in the South Sudan faces many shortages, challenges, and obstacles. The adult population literacy rate is 27% and the population that lives below the poverty line is at 51%. Even with a country population the size of New York or London, according to UNESCO (2011), "The entire secondary school population could be accommodated in just five schools in those cities – and the girls in the last grade of high school in fewer than a dozen classrooms" (p.1). The World Bank (2012) also describes the situation of schools and service delivery challenges due to the lack of infrastructure and that 75% of primary schools and 22% of secondary schools do not have permanent structures, which leads to safety concerns, the loss of working days, and stable, consistent attendance by both teachers and students. A response to the low literacy rate has been to hire teachers from other countries such as Uganda, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. These teachers bring their cultural contexts, perceptions, and biases with them as well as interact with the cultural contexts, perceptions, and biases of their students (Lazaraton, 2003; Mashiningo, 2016; Weinstein, Freedman, & Hughson, 2007). School and classroom resources have been a constant challenge pre- and post-independence. Under Sudan, southern Sudan was the neglected, Christian portion of the country and education and required infrastructure systems were and unfortunately, continue to be low to non-existent with the Bible as the only consistently available "textbook" (Aleu-Baak, 2012; Brown, 2005; Cook, 2011; Degu, 2005; UNESCO, 2011). Also, the lack of resources to implement a nation-wide curriculum have forced schools across South Sudan to use Sudan, Kenyan, Ugandan, and/or Ethiopian curricula (Maphalala, 2015).

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PARTIES

- In order to understand the parties' relationships, the circles are to be viewed as in constant motion and not necessarily moving in the same direction. Envision the circles rotating in the varying directions, which can be affected by the interconnections of the events, disruptions, escalations, and resolutions. The center "eye" of the map is the project topic. The orange circle represents the Level 3 or local parties. The innermost white circle represents the main, broad issues that connect the orange Level 3 and the yellow Level 2 parties. The wider white circle represents the narrow, specific issues that connect the yellow Level 2 and purple Level 1 parties. The issues and parties can function as both the fuel and the engine. So, how does this make sense? Imagine yourself as a South Sudanese secondary student trying to finish your last term and take the national exam in order to graduate.
- The Factors for Effective Education on the left are positive (de-escalation) factors that are needed to develop a comprehensive, all-inclusive, diverse, and effective education system in South Sudan. The arrows are directed toward the best possible entry point, yet as you follow the feedback loops, there are interferences and negative (escalation) that can prevent the factors from developing long-term sustainability.

KEY "AH-HA" ELEMENTS

- **Positive and negative effects of collaboration in education development**: It occurred to me as I was drawing this out and reflecting on my research work in South Sudan schools' that the conflicts affecting and effecting education are in constant motion. Some conflicts move faster, such as a fight between students of different ethnic tribes grinding classes to a halt. This envisions the Level 3 orange circle to spin faster than the others, as it's a local occurrence. Other conflicts may move slower, such as multiple governmental and non-governmental partners collaborating over the course of three years on the South Sudan National Curriculum Framework. The Framework was published in 2015, yet no funding was raised or allocated to purchase resources (UNICEF, 2015). This envisions the Level 1 orange circle to spin slower as conflicts are created between the development partners and the South Sudanese government and Ministry of Education, yet the desire for continual funding and support may not stop the circle from spinning, yet can create a slow moving spin that may pick up speed as development partners leave South Sudan due to increased violent conflict (Launspach, 2016) or increased influence of education development partners outside of the South Sudan education system such as government officials and non-native teachers from Zimbabwe, Uganda, and Kenya (Lazaraton, 2003; Mashiningo, 2016).
- **Systematic interconnectedness of civil war and education learning gaps**: South Sudan is currently in a civil war that has spread across all 10 states and has forced over one million people to flee the country. The students and teachers I interviewed last summer are now scattered across South Sudan and into neighboring countries. One day they were in school and the next, the teachers have fled home to Uganda; the schools are closed, abandoned, or taken over by government or rebel soldiers. The Director of the secondary school that I conducted research at stated that that 60% of his students are now in Uganda. Approximately 40 students are now enrolled in six other schools within "safe locations" in South Sudan. The remainders are "assumed" to be "at home." The Executive Director of an NGO that sponsors students at the school also stated: "we can't forget that reported 500+ boys who were conscripted by military factions last month, yet at the same time UNICEF is celebrating the release of 140 child soldiers. Where are they going and where are they now?"
- **Communication and education progression**. Due to a lack of communication infrastructure (internet, cell phone, computers, printing) teachers and students may not be aware of education mandates and curriculum changes; or they may not have ownership or agency in the education system and be able to be effective drivers for positive change in education. (Brown, 2005; World Bank, 2012).
- **Lessened influence of international education development partners:** I am quite shocked at how "unnecessary" the international development partners are in my conflict map. I thought that every factor would intersect with international development partners, yet as I recognized the location of feedback loops, and escalation and de-escalation relationships, it became apparent that the people of South Sudan have the ability to serve as the main influence driver toward developing their own education system. International development partners can play assistive roles rather than being the main influencers of education development. This is a broad statement, yet there are opportunities for further research on this topic – and maybe research by those outside of a western lens.

POTENTIAL INTERVENTION "LOCATIONS"

- **Framing the competing understandings of the South Sudan education system**. Even though I worked and conducted research in South Sudan, I do not own the daily-lived experience and therefore, may miss nuances that could change the results of the conflict mapping. I try to be cognizant to my lens, yet realizing that if I showed and explained this to a South Sudanese teacher and/or student, what would they take away? Would it seem correct to them? The competing understandings could drive possible interventions between international development partners, the South Sudan government, the Ministry of Education, public and private schools, students, teachers, families, and communities.
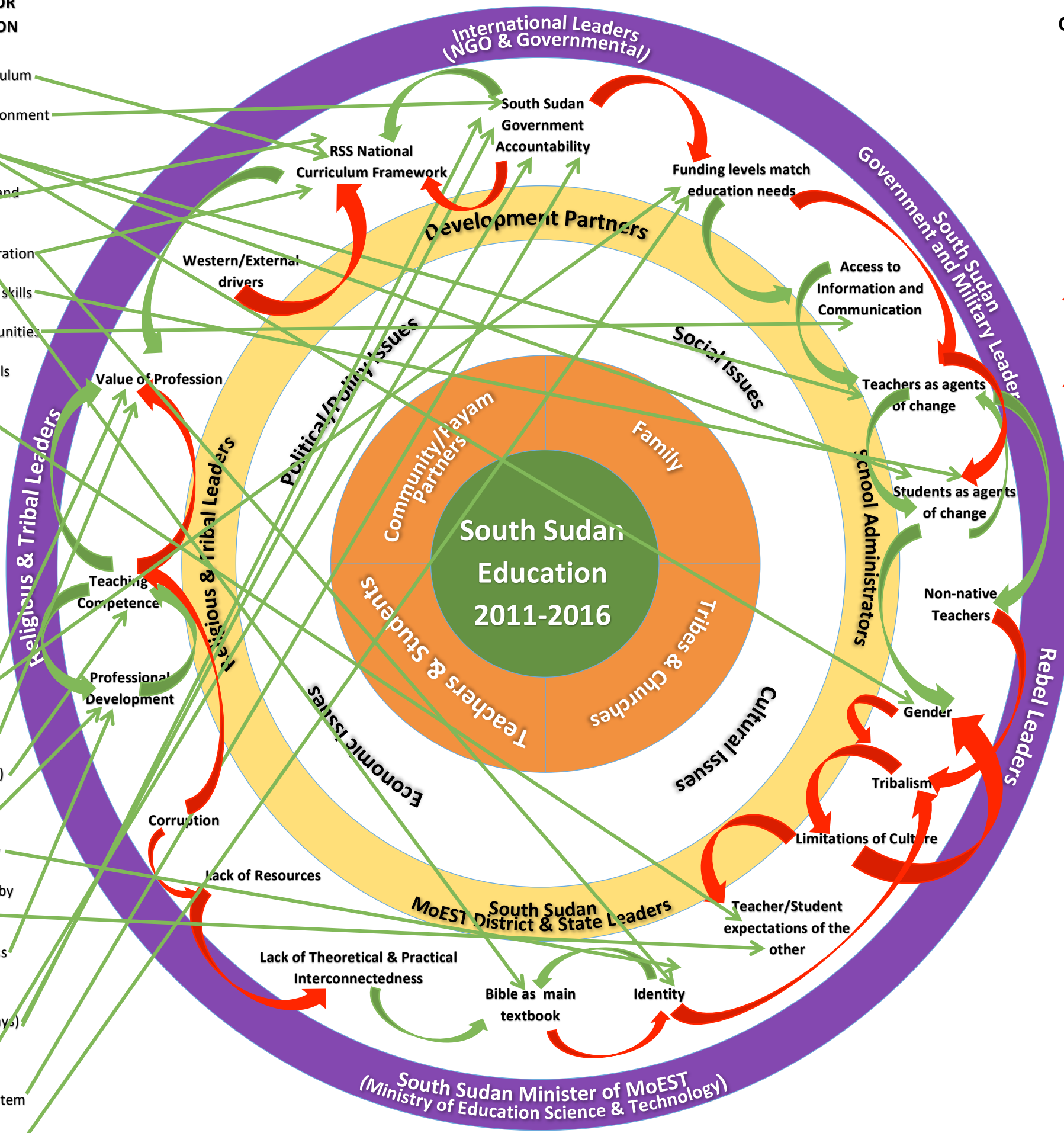
- **Teachers and students as transformative agents**. Teachers and students may use their agency to resist change as well as facilitate change to promote peacebuilding as well as to facilitate conflict. In the promotion of social cohesion, teachers and students can address the history of conflicts where tribalism and religion have been divisive factors. Or, as Social Reproduction Theory argues, schools are not institutions of equal opportunity but mechanisms for perpetuating social inequalities. For example, corruption, tribalism, and gender inequalities.
- **The Bible as a key mechanism in the South Sudan education system.** It is not used in isolation, and its content is mediated by teachers and students in order to create meaning in specific contexts. The Bible may have the potential for cohesion and/or division in education as well as throughout the curriculum framework.

  Civic education. Civic and history education are particular challenges as conflict-affected societies struggle with facing not erasing the past in hopes for a more effective and informed citizenry as well as government. A challenge to South Sudan and its education system is how to support an individual's right to build a self-image with the country's developing national identity, and in a conflict-affected society, this challenge is occurring simultaneously. Language, history, religion, and gender are parts of every nation, and as the newest nation, South Sudan is trying to navigate these conflict identifiers, which must now serve as routes to unity, peace, and equality, with navigating capacity development through decimated social and economic infrastructure systems.
- **Influence of non-native teachers.** A teacher's ethnicity, geographical location, personal beliefs, and perception of the relationships with the "other" can impact on how they use their agency. It can also impact their acceptance or rejection as agents of change by their students.
- **South Sudan National Curriculum Framework**: The first national curriculum was developed in partnership with the South Sudan Ministry of Education and multiple western development partners. The framework is comprehensive and with funding allocation, teacher training, resource materials, and assessment tools, this could be a driver of peace, national identity, support of diversity, and developing a positively engaged citizenry.

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Conflict Mapping: Providing Effective Education in South Sudan

FACTORS NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATION

Education
- Unified school curriculum
- Safe education environment
- Access to schools
- Peacebuilding, life, and civic skills
- Child soldier reintegration
- Employment/Career skills
- Employment opportunities
- Identity dialogue skills (tribal, gender, South Sudanese)

Teachers
- Available teachers
- Teacher attendance
- Training (pre-service)
- Training (in-service)
- Cultural competancy
- Cultural acceptance by students
- Teacher effectiveness

Economic
- Teacher pay (who pays)
- Teacher pay scale
- Access to market system
- Government vs. private schools

Diagram labels

Outer ring (Level 1): International Leaders (NGO & Governmental) · South Sudan Government and Military Leaders · Rebel Leaders · South Sudan Minister of MoEST (Ministry of Education Science & Technology) · Religious & Tribal Leaders

Middle ring (Level 2): Development Partners · MoEST South Sudan District & State Leaders · Religious & Tribal Leaders · Political/Policy Issues · Social Issues · Cultural Issues · Economic Issues

Inner ring (Level 3): Community/Payam Partners · Family · Tribes & Churches · Teachers & Students

Center: South Sudan Education 2011-2016

Nodes: RSS National Curriculum Framework · South Sudan Government Accountability · Funding levels match education needs · Access to Information and Communication · Western/External drivers · Teachers as agents of change · Students as agents of change · Value of Profession · Non-native Teachers · Teaching Competence · Gender · Professional Development · Tribalism · Corruption · Limitations of Culture · Lack of Resources · Teacher/Student expectations of the other · Lack of Theoretical & Practical Interconnectedness · Bible as main textbook · Identity

KEY EVENTS and STATISTICS

2006-2012: Over 30 NGOs involved in s(S)outh Sudan teacher education projects.

July 9, 2011: South Sudan becomes an independent country.

2012: 450,000 new teachers needed in the Republic of South Sudan (RSS); 90% of current teacher workforce is untrained or undertrained; average pay is $100 (USD) per month.

May 7, 2013: Republic of South Sudan launches additional programs to teach teachers.

September 8, 2015: RSS Ministry of Educaiton, Science and Technology (MoEST) launches the first-ever comprehensive national education curriculum.

October 2, 2015: President Salva Kiir issues Presidential Order No. 36/2015, replacing the RSS 10 country states with 28. Due to the balance of powers estacblished in the RSS Transitional Constitution, the 28 states are not officially recognized by the UN.

December 13, 2015: Civil war erupts when President Salva Kiir accuses, then dismisses, Vice-President Riek Machar of plotting to overthrow him. Thousands are killed.

February 26, 2016: Zimbabwe and RSS Minstries of Education agree to Zimbabwe sending 20,000 gradutes to RSS as nurses andteachers at UN level staff pay rates.

April, 2016: Riek Machar returns to Juba and sworn in as first vice president in a new unity government. President Kiir dismisses him in July after further violence.

July, 2016: South Sudan polulation is 12,500,000.

September 16, 2016: Report from the UNHCR states the number of South Sudan refugees is over one million. Death toll is over 50,000. Schools across RSS close and teachers and students flee to refugee camps inside and outside of RSS.

LEGEND

- **Level 3:** Grassroots/Local Leaders and Stakeholders
- **Level 2:** District and State Leaders and Stakeholders
- **Level 1:** National and International Leaders and Stakeholders
- Core Issues and power sources in education conflict and/or peacebuilding
- Conflict Event
- Negative (escalation) relationship
- Positive (de-escalation) relationship
- Feedback Loop

*Levels based on John Paul Lederach's *Pyramid of Levels of Action*. (Maise, 2003).