

### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

<b>Title of Consultancy:</b> Mid-Term Review of the GPE System Transformation and System Capacity Grants (STG and SCG)	<b>Funding Codes</b> <b>WBS:</b> <b>Grant Number:</b> <b>Grant Expiry Date:</b> 31 July 2027	<b>Type of Engagement</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant	<b>Duty Station:</b> Freetown, Sierra Leone
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The Section must provide a clear explanation of why the deliverable can be completed without the use of artificial intelligence (AI). In cases where AI tools are employed, the Section is required to confirm that the scope and timeline of the deliverable have been appropriately adjusted to account for any efficiency gains. This justification should be thoroughly documented prior to submitting the draft TOR to the P&C Section.

The timeline for the completion of activities within the consultancy is based on efficiency gains through the use of AI tools. To this end, the following provisions are expected to be observed:

- The use of AI-assisted research is accepted for any public data/documents
- The use of AI-assisted writing is accepted, provided the end quality of the result is up to UNICEF standards for comparable work.
- The consultant is requested to disclose their approach to AI tools (including at minimum: which software/model(s) will be used, what prompt methodology, and what responsible and ethical use of AI best practices will be followed, including to ensure personal and confidential data protection as well as quality of outputs) in the Inception Report.

In addition, UNICEF Evaluation Specialists will provide the consultant with examples of similar reports of perfect quality to help steer the AI-assisted work in the right direction.

#### **Background**

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL), in collaboration with UNICEF, is implementing the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) System Transformation and System Capacity Grants (STG and SCG 2023-2027), which are focused on “Delivering Foundations of Learning for All.” The STG and SCG are aligned with the country’s Education Sector Plan (ESP) and the Partnership Compact, which identifies foundational learning as the priority reform within the education sector. The STG and SCG reflect Sierra Leone’s commitment to transformative education reforms to ensure all children achieve foundational learning outcomes by the end of primary school. These grants focus on building systemic capacity to improve literacy and numeracy for early-grade learners, targeting the most marginalised children, including girls and those identified in the Radical Inclusion policy.

“Delivering the Foundations of Learning for All” aims to address the root causes of poor foundational learning outcomes, including lack of readiness-to-learn among children entering primary school, lack of teaching-learning materials, misaligned curricula and teacher training, limited support for teachers, and inadequate learning assessments. The grants are based on four components:

1. Component 1: Raise children’s readiness to learn through targeted pre-primary education.
2. Component 2: Strengthen instructional core, teachers’ cadre, and capacity to deliver foundational learning
3. Component 3: Increase the use of data and technology to support foundational learning and education service delivery
4. Component 4: Strengthen governance, management, and accountability for performance on foundational learning

The mid-term review (MTR) of the STG and SCG is critical in assessing activity implementation progress, identifying achievements and challenges, recommending strategic adjustments to meet its objectives and providing a sustainability plan that will enable Sierra Leone to prepare for the end of the grant period and for future funding that may become available.

The MTR of the grant will also align with country monitoring processes wherever possible, particularly the Mid-term Review of the Partnership Compact and the Education Sector Analysis. This should include but not be limited to:

- Findings from the MTR snapshot report and monitoring questionnaire
- Findings from the MTR inclusive policy dialogue
- Review of the final MTR memo
- Consultations on the ESA

#### **Purpose of Activity/Assignment:**

The primary purpose of this consultancy is to support a comprehensive mid-term review of the STG and SCG grants to provide actionable recommendations for the remaining implementation period and provide a pathway for sustainability.

The key objectives include:

1. **Stocktaking** of progress toward implementing the activities under the STG and SCG funding windows.
2. **Assess progress** in achieving the outcomes and immediate result indicators specified in the consolidated results framework, with attention to key achievements and implementation challenges.
3. Review the **delivery modalities** used for implementing the activities under each of the four components of the STG and SCG.
4. Evaluate how the grants' activities and delivery modalities address **equity** and **gender** equality, particularly for marginalized groups identified in the Radical Inclusion policy.
5. Document **challenges** faced in the implementation of activities.
6. Recommend **strategic adjustments** including to course correct or accelerate as needed in order to meet the grants' objectives.
7. Propose any **formal restructuring** that may be required under the terms of the grant.
8. Produce a **sustainability plan** that prepares the country to maintain progress toward foundational learning reform after the end of the grant period.
9. Provide data and learnings on foundational learning to the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) process and the Partnership Compact mid-term review (according to their respective timelines).

#### **Scope of Work:**

The consultant will adopt a participatory and systems-strengthening approach, working closely with Government counterparts and partners to ensure that all technical assistance and implementation activities are aligned with existing national systems, institutional structures and coordination mechanisms. This will include close collaboration with Government institutions (MBSSE/TSC, MTHE and Local Education Group (LEG)).

The consultant will ensure that all interventions are consistent with UNICEF Education approaches, including safeguarding and ethical standards.

Implementation modalities will include:

- Desk review
- Key informant interviews and participatory stakeholder consultations
- Qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis

#### **Specific Tasks:**

- 1) Prepare a comprehensive Inception Report
- 2) Conduct stakeholder consultations, key informant interviews (KIIs) and workshops with Government, partners and beneficiaries of grant activities.

- 3) Conduct a comprehensive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data (from available progress reports, monitoring information, KIIs and consultative workshops on program implementation), to identify progress (and gaps) against the grants' program document and results framework.
- 4) Prepare a draft report that synthesizes findings from the data analysis and includes findings from implementation-achievements and challenges- delivery modalities, gender and equity indicators, as well as recommendations to address challenges, enhance implementation of the grants, formal restructuring (if required). The sustainability plan should be a component within the report.
- 5) Incorporate feedback from the Government, UNICEF and partners.
- 6) Present the findings of the Mid-Term Review Report to MBSSE and MTHE Senior management and the Local Education Group (LEG).
- 7) Submit final Mid-Term Review report, final PPT presentation, updated results framework, and fact sheet.

**Management, Organization and Timeframe:**

(please include a brief description of reporting lines/schedule including collaborative reporting to UNICEF and its partners)

This is an individual consultancy for a 42 day assignment. The Consultant will be stationed at home with an estimated 21 days of in-country travel/international travel.

The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the of the Education Specialist (GPE Coordinator) at UNICEF Sierra Leone office and in close collaboration with the UNICEF Education team, the Evaluation Specialist and the Regional Technology/AI Specialist.

**Government collaboration:** The workshops, interviews and focus group discussions are attended by members of the MBSSE, TSC and MTHE to ensure fruitful collaboration. The consultant is expected to present their approach to the Ministries at the beginning of the assignment. The final deliverables will be validated in a government-led validation workshop, which is one of the consultant's deliverables. The final report will be shared with the Government and the Local Education Group of Government and development partners.

Consultants are expected to provide their own work tools including laptop and any other communication tools required.

**Mode of Submission of Applications**

Candidates will be required to submit a technical proposal and a financial proposal, and the financial proposal should quote a lump-sum inclusive of fees, travel and visa costs as well as communication costs. Financial proposals may be negotiated.

**Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES  NO If YES, check all that apply:

**Direct contact role**  YES  NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

**Child data role**  YES  NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

Work assignments overview	Deliverables /Outputs	Delivery deadline	Estimated budget
1. Prepare a comprehensive Inception Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed methodology and work plan based on document review and initial stakeholder consultations. This should include a list of stakeholders to be consulted at national and district levels. The methodology and work plan should be validated by the UNICEF and MBSSE Chief Education Officer.</li> </ul>	Week 1 (2 days)	
2. Conduct stakeholder consultations, key informant interviews (KIIs) and workshops with Government, partners and beneficiaries of grant activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop agendas and materials for consultations, KIIs and workshops (questionnaires, interview protocols etc).</li> <li>Documentation on the outcomes of the workshop proceedings.</li> </ul>	Weeks 2-5 (20 days)	
3. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data (from available progress reports, monitoring information, KIIs and consultative workshops on program implementation), to identify progress (and gaps) against the grants' program document and results framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis report, including an analysis against the results framework</li> </ul>	Weeks 6-7 (6 days)	
4. Prepare a draft report that synthesizes findings from the data analysis and includes findings from implementation-achievements and challenges-delivery modalities, gender and equity indicators, as well as recommendations to address challenges, enhance implementation of the grants, formal restructuring (if required). The sustainability plan should be a component within the report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1st draft Mid-term review report</li> </ul>	Week 8 (5 days)	
5. Incorporate feedback from the Government, UNICEF and partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2nd draft Mid-Term Review Report</li> </ul>	Week 9 (3 days)	
6. Present the findings of the Mid-Term Review Report to MBSSE and MTHE Senior management and the Local Education Group (LEG).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials for the presentation (draft MTR report and PPT);</li> <li>Documentation on the feedback received and the outcomes from the presentation.</li> </ul>	Week 10 (2 days)	

<p>7. Submit final Mid-Term Review report, final PPT presentation, updated results framework, and fact sheet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive Mid-Term Review report, including the sustainability plan, detailing progress against key objectives, challenges, lessons learned and recommendations (including restructuring); PowerPoint presentation of the report's key findings; updated results framework; and fact sheet.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 11 (4 days)</p>	
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<b>Budget Year:</b>  2026	<b>Requesting Section/Issuing Office:</b>  Education/Freetown, Sierra Leone	<b>Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff:</b>  The assignment requires full time dedication and specific technical expertise in monitoring and evaluation. Existing staff are already fully engaged in the GPE program, and the activities will require a dedicated expert working on the data collection, analysis and recommendations full time, it cannot be carried out by UNICEF staff. A consultant will ensure focused, timely execution of the mid-term review analysis and the production of high-quality deliverables.
<b>Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify:		
<b>Consultant sourcing:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both  <b>Competitive Selection:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Roster  <b>Single Source Selection</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (Emergency - Director's approval)		<b>Request for:</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Consultant  <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment
<b>If Extension, Justification for extension:</b>		
<b>Supervisor:</b> Education Specialist (GPE Coordination)	<b>Start Date:</b>  10 April 2026	<b>End Date:</b>  25 June 2026
<b>Supervisor confirms that the funding is secured for the duration of the contract and all conditionalities of the grant allow for payments to be made from the assigned grant.</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify		

<b>Estimated Consultancy fee</b>		<b>42 days</b>		
Travel International (if applicable)		1 trip		
Travel Local (please include travel plan)		21 days		
DSA (if applicable and only in Freetown)		21 days		
<b>Total estimated consultancy costs<sup>i</sup></b>				
<p><b>Minimum Qualifications required*:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Economics or Economics of Education.</li> <li>• Public Policy and Administration</li> <li>• Monitoring and Evaluation</li> <li>• Statistics, Data Science or Information Management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required *:</b> At least 8 years of demonstrated experience in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master’s degree required.</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation, particularly in conducting baseline, mid-term, or final reviews of large-scale education programs.</li> <li>• Strong understanding of GPE-funded projects, including alignment with education sector plans.</li> <li>• Proficiency in developing and implementing results frameworks, including theory of change, programmatic reviews, and performance monitoring.</li> <li>• Proven experience in gender-responsive planning and addressing equity considerations for marginalized groups aligned with GPE priorities and national policies.</li> <li>• Skilled in policy development and strategy alignment, ensuring coherence between national and global education objectives.</li> <li>• Demonstrated ability to engage diverse stakeholders and facilitate workshops or validation sessions to gather insights, build consensus, and enhance the relevance of findings and recommendations.</li> <li>• Advanced research, analysis, and reporting skills, synthesizing complex data into actionable insights, comprehensive reports, policy briefs, and fact sheets.</li> <li>• Demonstrated understanding of best practices in responsible use of AI tools for evaluation and writing purposes.</li> <li>• Experience working in Sierra Leone’s education sector and on early learning is an advantage.</li> <li>• Understanding of principles of child safeguarding and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and violence is a minimum requirement for this assignment.</li> </ul> <p><b>*Listed requirements will be used for technical evaluation in the competitive process</b></p>			

<p>*Minimum requirements to consider candidates for competitive process</p>		
<p><b>Evaluation Criteria (This will be used for the <a href="#">Selection Report</a> (for clarification see <a href="#">Guidance</a>))</b></p> <p>A) Technical Evaluation (e.g. maximum 75 Points)      B) Financial Proposal (e.g. maximum of 25 Points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has demonstrated, strong monitoring and evaluation experience, particularly in conducting baseline, mid-term, or final reviews of large-scale education programs.</li> <li>- Skilled in policy development and strategy alignment, ensuring coherence between national and global education objectives.</li> <li>- Demonstrated understanding of best practices in using responsible use of AI tools for evaluation and writing purposes.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Administrative details:</b>          Visa assistance required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based   <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based:   <input type="checkbox"/>          Hybrid:</p>	<p><b>If office based</b>, seating arrangement identified: <input type="checkbox"/>          IT and Communication equipment required:   <input type="checkbox"/>          Internet access required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	

<sup>1</sup> Costs indicated are estimated. Final rate shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. Consultants will be asked to stipulate all-inclusive fees, including lump sum travel and subsistence costs, as applicable.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

Individuals engaged under a consultancy will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants. Consultants are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

The selected consultant is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected consultant are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. The vaccine mandate, does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.

UNICEF offers [reasonable accommodation](#) for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

