

## TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

<b>Title of Assignment</b>	National Consultant for the development of National Learning Assessment Framework	
<b>Requesting Section</b>	Education And Adolescents	
<b>Location</b>	Place of assignment: Malawi- Remote with travel to selected districts and UNICEF office in Lilongwe	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based:	
<b>Contract Duration</b>	<b>4 and a Half Months</b>	
<b>Number of working days</b>	<b>85</b>	
<b>Planned Start and End Date</b>	<b>From: 15<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>To: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b>

### BACKGROUND

Malawi is like most sub-Saharan African countries has made significant progress in access to primary education. The Education Sector Performance Report (2019) highlighted that Malawi continues to maintain high rates of participation at primary education level with gross enrolment ratios (GER) exceeding over the last 100 per cent for the four years (112 percent in 2019). This indicates that the system has the capacity to host all children of the relevant school-going-age. The net enrolment rate at primary is 91 percent<sup>1</sup>. These improvements could be attributed to the free primary education policy the government introduced in 1994. Furthermore, in the recent past there has been an increase in the number of new primary schools and additional classrooms constructed at existing schools, with support from various partners including UNICEF, the Global Partnership for Education(GPE) and the Royal Norwegian government. However, primary school infrastructure remains inadequate with permanent Classroom ratio at primary at 1 classroom to 120 pupils<sup>2</sup>. In the new education sector plan 2020-2030, Ministry of Education(MoE) plans to expand equitable access, improve quality and learning as well as governance and accountability in the system.

At secondary level, the growth in enrolment is still very slow, with only about 38.4 per cent of children transitioning to secondary school<sup>3</sup>. Over the last four years, secondary education has had “a growth rate of 5.5 percent from 358,033 students in 2015 to 377,731 students in 2019”<sup>4</sup>. The net enrolment at secondary level is paltry 15%. Malawi requires significant investment to expand access to secondary education including open and distance, online learning and double shifting as alternative strategies for increasing access to secondary education.

Gender parity in school participation at the national level has been achieved at primary level and has remained consistent over the last 4 years. However, at secondary level, gender parity is yet to be achieved and is currently at 0.94, with glaring disparity between rural and urban secondary schools at 0.92 and 1.03 respectively.

Challenges remain to ensure the **quality** of the education provided. Learning outcomes in primary schools in Malawi continue to remain poor as reported in the Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) Survey at Standard

<sup>1</sup> The 2018/19 Education Sector Performance Report

<sup>2</sup> 2018 EMIS

<sup>3</sup> EMIS, 2015/2016.

<sup>4</sup> 2019 ESPR

4 and 7 that was carried out by the Ministry of Education and supported by UNICEF when it was conducted in 2015. The results showed a declined percentile of learners meeting minimum proficiency in English and Mathematics by 6 percent and 52 percent, respectively as they progress from standard 4 to 8. Most learners failed to reach a 40 percent mark in the national primary curriculum performance specification.<sup>5</sup> At secondary level, only 50 per cent of the Form four learners who sat for the 2019 Malawi School Certificate examination passed.

Several factors have been attributed for this low learning achievement. Firstly, there is inadequate school readiness, with only 48.73 percent children accessing Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres<sup>6</sup>. At primary level, large classes in early grades, in some districts up to one teacher to 120 learners, inadequate teaching and learning materials, insufficient number of qualified teachers (1:68), including female teachers, and teachers requiring continuous professional development needed to build and sustain a qualified cadre of teachers. Additionally, teachers lack the requisite skills to support learners with learning difficulties.

As part of the mechanisms addressing learning challenges, the Ministry of Education, would like to improve the assessment systems in Malawi. Of concern is how can assessment contribute to improving teaching and learning processes at all levels of the education system. To this effect, the MoE requested UNICEF for technical support to undertake the scoping of the assessment system in Malawi, make recommendations for improvement and design a national assessment system based on approved recommendations.

## JUSTIFICATION

The National Education Sector Investment Plan (NESIP- 2020 to 2030) details the MoE priorities and strategies to improve education delivery at levels. Specifically, the NESIP has the following strategic objectives: 1) Improve equitable access to education (entry on age and completion) and participation in inclusive education at all levels (ECE, primary, secondary); 2) Improve quality and relevance of teaching and learning at all levels of education and 3) Improve governance, management and accountability of education service delivery.

To achieve these objectives especially objective 2 on improving quality and relevance the key priority is to “Enhance systems for assessment of learning outcomes”. This proposed technical support in form of a consultancy will thus form the basis of generating evidence and development of the a national assessment system that the country aspires for, that would oversee learning assessments at all levels.

The timing of the development of the national assessment is also significant as it is at the beginning of the last decade towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It thus gives the country the opportunity to push for the attaining of the SDG 4 goal and targets, particularly target 4.1 which states that “ by 2030 , ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes”. A well defined national assessment system will contribute to tracking learning achievements and providing feedback to learners, teachers and education managers on how to improve education delivery. The national assessment framework will further strengthen the monitoring learning achievement , which is conducted every four years. The last one was conducted in 2015; another one is planned in 2021.

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<sup>5</sup> National Education Sector Investment Plan 2020-2029

<sup>6</sup> Early Childhood Development Sector Analysis Report, 2019.

## PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The purpose of the assignment is as follows:

1. To undertake the scoping study to understand the types of assessments taking place in Malawi school system with a view to:
  - a. The inter linkages among the assessments and how the assessment results are utilised to improve policy, strategies and delivery of quality education for all
  - b. to identify the roles played by the various directorates, organisations and development partners in conducting assessments in Malawi
  - c. to identify and document best practices, overlap and omissions in assessment policy and practice in Malawi
  - d. To make recommendations for assessment reform in the Malawi education system.
2. To undertake comprehensive literature review of the National Assessment systems in Sub Saharan African, document best practices and inform design of assessment framework in Malawi.
3. To lead the development of the national assessment framework for Malawi.

## SCOPE OF WORK/OBJECTIVES

The scope of work is based key parameters is as follows:

**Scope:** The scoping and development of the national assessment framework will be limited to Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary levels.

**Geography:** The consultations will be undertaken at national and sub national levels.

**Stakeholders:** These include Ministry of Education Directorates, District Education offices, Malawi Institute of Education, Malawi National Examination Board and Divisions, Development Partners and NGOs working in education sector.

The work will be undertaken in two phases;

- a. **Phase one:** Scoping, data collection and report validation - This will respond to objectives 1 and 2 of the assignment ( June to July 2021).
- b. **Phase two:** Design and Development of National Assessment Framework – this will respond to objective three of the assignment and is dependant on successful completion of phase 1. (August to October 2021)

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### **To whom will the consultant/ individual contractor report (supervisory and any other reporting/communication lines):**

The consultant will work under the overall supervision of the UNICEF Education Specialist responsible for Primary and the Chief of Education at critical junctures and on navigating and strategic issues on a need basis.

The Directorate of Inspectorate and Advisory Service (DIAS) will set up a Technical Working Group (TWG), with members drawn from its directorate, Basic Education, Secondary, Teacher Education, Malawi Institute of Education, Malawi National Examination Board and co-opt other relevant stakeholders when necessary to provide technical support throughout the consultancy. The team will review, provide feedback reports on agreed task/deliverables submitted by the research team.

### **What type of reporting will be expected from the consultant/ individual contractor and in what format/style will the submissions of reports/outputs be done:**

The consultant will be expected to submit narrative reports, in Arial 10 font style detailing key progress per deliverable.

The consultant will also submit the draft national assessment framework per subsector from ECE to Secondary, Arial 10 font style

### **How will consultant/ individual contractor consult and deliver work and when will reporting be done:**

The consultant will consult via electronic means and also physical meetings where necessary while observing COVID 19 guidelines. The reports will be submitted electronically to the UNICEF staff member supervising the consultancy.

## EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

In alignment with the scope of work as described above, the consultant will be expected to perform the following activities and deliverables as per the schedule and estimated dates below. It is envisaged that the entire consultancy will be a total of 85 working days spread from mid June 2021 to October 2021, with work days overlapping from month to month. Note that UNICEF weekends are not included as work days and there will be no double payment for the same days should the consultant work on two different activities at the same time.

<b>Task/Milestone</b>	<b>Deliverable/Outcome (e.g. Inception, progress, final reports, training material, workshop, etc.)</b>	<b>Estimated # of days</b>	<b>Planned Completion date</b>
1. Develop and submit Inception Report articulating the for both phase 1 and 2; methodology/ framework for data collection, analysis and development of NAF.	Detailed Inception report capturing the following: a) methodology, framework/ approach for Phase 1 and phase 2 work b) data collection- primary and secondary section	5	22 June 2021

	instruments, and data analysis, outline for the report		
2. Undertake primary and secondary data collection in line with objective 1 of this consultancy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To scope and understand the types of assessments taking place in Malawi school system</li> <li>Under primary and secondary data collection</li> <li>Document best practices and lessons from the sub-region</li> <li>Identify gaps in current assessment practices and feedback loop</li> </ul>	Draft Scoping Report capturing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. analysis of types of assessments taking place in Malawi school system;</li> <li>b. roles played by the various directorates, organisations, and development partners in conducting assessments in Malawi</li> <li>c. best practices, overlap and omissions in assessment policy and practice in Malawi</li> <li>d. recommendation for national assessment framework in</li> </ul>	28 (from 23 June to 30 July)	30 July 2021
3. Lead development of national assessment framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stakeholder consultations</li> <li>drafting of the assessment framework</li> <li>validation of assessment framework</li> </ul>	Draft national assessment framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining assessment system at all levels ( classroom based, surveys and national examinations )</li> <li>Interface of</li> <li>Feedback mechanism</li> <li>Roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	40 (from 2 August to 24 September )	24 September
4. Validation and finalisation of national assessment framework	Final copy of national assessment framework	12 (from 27 September to 12 October)	12 October

However, as the actual starting date may impact the dates estimated in the TOR, a detailed workplan with exact timeframes and actual delivery dates will be jointly agreed upon between the consultant/ individual contractor and the supervisor upon contract signature.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- Completion of tasks specified in TOR
- Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables
- Quality of work
- Demonstration of high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All payments, without exception, will be made upon certification from the supervisor of the contract, of the satisfactory and quality completion of deliverables and upon receipt of the respective and approved invoice.

#	Item	% of Payment	Due
1	Upon satisfactory submission and approval of inception report.	20%	22 June 2021
2	Upon Submission of satisfactory draft scoping report	30%	30 July 2021
3	Upon Submission of satisfactory draft National Assessment Framework	25%	24 September 2021
4	Upon Submission of satisfactory version of National Assessment Framework	25%	12 October 2021

Travel (international and local) costs will be reimbursed on actual expenditures and upon presentation of original supporting documents. As per UNICEF operational guidelines, travel for international consultancies, will be in economy class and will use the most economical route.

## DESIRED COMPETENCIES, TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

### Academic qualification:

- Advanced university degree in Education, Educational Assessment and Measurement, Curriculum development , Social Sciences or other relevant subject

### Work experience:

- At least five years of experience in programme design; institutional development, policy dialogue, reform of the educational system
- Experience in development of curriculum or assessment guidelines
- Experience in participatory consultative techniques

### Technical skills and knowledge:

- Excellent communication and writing skills in English and interpersonal skills
  - Fluency in local languages is an asset
  - Ability to work independently and accurately
  - Ability to work effectively in teams and in a multicultural environment
  - High sense of integrity and results oriented
  - Computer skills, including internet navigation, and various office applications
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  - Fluency in local languages is an asset
  - Computer skills, including internet navigation, and various office applications

**Competencies:**

Competencies
Builds and maintains partnerships
Demonstrates self-awareness and ethical awareness
Drive to achieve results for impact
Innovates and embraces change
Manages ambiguity and complexity
Thinks and acts strategically
Works collaboratively with others

**Languages:** English

**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant and provide feedback and guidance and necessary support so to achieve objectives of the work, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the performance and quality of work.

As per policy on consultants and individual contractors, the individual will be expected to complete a list of mandatory training, including policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption; Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgment upon acceptance of the offer. Prior to the issuance of the official contract, the consultant is requested to complete the applicable mandatory trainings.

The assignment will be carried out remotely. The consultant is expected to provide her/his own computer. The consultant will undertake field trips within the country with his own transport and will be reimbursed based on actual expenditures.

**CONDITIONS**

- The consultancy will be on a short-term arrangement basis over a period of 4 and a half months; however, the consultant will only work for 85 days during this contract period.
- The candidate selected will be governed by and subject to UNICEF's General Terms and Conditions for individual contracts.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- The consultant will be based in Malawi and will work remotely.
- The consultant will be paid an all-inclusive fee (stationary, communication and other miscellaneous expenses) as per the stipulated deliverable and payment schedule.
- Under the consultancy agreements, a month is defined as 21.75 working days, and fees are prorated accordingly for actual days worked.
- The consultant is not entitled to payment for overtime, weekends or public holidays.
- Travel expenses for official in-country trips, including living costs, will be covered in accordance with UNICEF's rules and tariffs, by the consultant and reimbursed against actuals, unless otherwise agreed.
- No travel should take place without an email travel authorization from section prior to the commencement of the journey from the duty station.
- Standard UNICEF procedures will apply for invoicing and all other financial management requirements set out in the contract.

- Standard penalty clauses will also apply for late and poor-quality deliverables. The supervisor of the contract will provide the consultant with the criteria for the evaluation of the quality of each deliverable.
- Additional details of UNICEF rules, regulations and conditions will be attached to the contract.
- Consultants will not have supervisory responsibilities or authority on UNICEF budget.
- Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract 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 and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors 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 assignment is an off-site support.

## HOW TO APPLY

Interested consultants should provide the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. Brief technical proposal (no longer than five pages) demonstrating the consultant’s understanding of the assignment and approach/methodology to the assignment
3. Financial proposal including a breakdown of their all-inclusive fees (including professional fees, travel, living cost, visa and other costs). Complete the attached form.



Financial  
Proposal.xlsx

4. References details