

## ROSTER TERMS OF REFERENCE

### SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

Education Consultancy: Analysis on learning outcomes in Kiribati, FSM and RMI

### BACKGROUND

Globally, 70 per cent of the world's 10-year-olds were unable to understand a simple written text (World Bank, 2022). In the Pacific, there are also concerns on learning outcomes - after four years of participating in primary school, 33 per cent of the children cannot do basic mathematic problems and 57 per cent cannot read or understand a simple story (PILNA, 2021). In Kiribati, the Early Grade Reading Assessment (2016) shows that reading comprehension levels are below the recommended benchmark with over 80 percent of students in Years 1 and one-third in Year 2 having zero reading comprehension. In Year 3, comprehension improves where nearly half of the students could comprehend at least 60 percent of text however, it shows that 50 per cent cannot comprehend a simple text. For numeracy, in Grades 2, 3 and 4, less than 20 per cent of children have the expected foundational numeracy skills measured at Grade 2 to 3 level (MICS-EAGLE, 2021). In the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), more than half of the students in Grades 4,6 and 8 did not meet the expected levels of competency in literacy and numeracy (NMCT, 2023) and in Republic of the Marshall Islands(RMI), 54 per cent of Grade 3 children cannot read or understand a simple text in their local language and in 25 of the most at-risk primary schools in the country, more than 70 per cent of 10-year-olds does not have basic literacy skills (MISAT, 2023).

The ministries of education in the pacific countries acknowledge the challenges faced on the quality of learning for their students and have set key strategies for their learners to attain skills that are necessary to achieve their full potential. *'Student Outcomes and Wellbeing'* is one of the key policy areas in the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF), with one of its outcomes set to increase the percentages of learners that achieve expected levels of literacy and numeracy, particularly by the end of primary school. Strategies include providing specific and sustained teacher training on literacy and numeracy as well as building awareness and capacity of students and teachers to continuously utilize assessment for learning (PacREF, 2018-2030).

The Ministry of Education, National Department of Education, Public School System and education agencies from Kiribati, the Federal State of Micronesia (FSM) and RMI, have introduced numerous programmes to improve the learning outcomes in their respective countries. As part of their System Capacity and Transformation Agenda in the education sector in Kiribati, FSM and RMI the countries have requested to generate evidence on contributing factors that influence learning outcomes in their respective countries.

This consultancy will engage an education consultant with significant experience in analysis of learning outcomes who will undertake an analysis in partnership with the three countries (Kiribati, FSM and RMI), providing an overall report as well as country specific findings and recommendations. By working in this manner, this work will both contribute to the specific areas of national interest and the priority focus area of PacREF overall.

## OBJECTIVE / SCOPE OF WORK

Although each country has a specific emphasis as outlined below, the overall objective of this consultancy is to conduct a comprehensive analysis on the current landscape of learning outcomes and linkages with teachers' teaching practices, including challenges, opportunities, and trends impacting their practices. This will include consideration of:

- Regional and national assessments of learning outcomes including formative assessments
- National policy and programme interventions related to teachers' professional development
- Current teaching and learning materials including textbooks
- Classroom practices

Both desk reviews of relevant documentation and stakeholder engagement, through a range of modalities, are expected to contribute to both an overall report and individual country briefing papers with national level findings and recommendations. The approach to stakeholder engagement should be carefully considered and discussed with each country in order to use the most relevant approaches. The Pacific Guidelines for Consultation should also be reviewed and applied including potential engagement of members of the PacREF Implementing Agencies Fono.

**The consultant will deliver the following specific deliverables through this contract:**

**1. Desk Review and Inception Report**

A desk review and initial inception report that identifies methodology and approaches to the work (including specific attention to the use of Pacific research and participation methodologies), co-constructed with each national agency to ensure their leadership and ownership, and the use of strategies and consultative processes fit for context.

**2. Stakeholder consultation and field work**

Data collection tools for interviews with teachers and other education stakeholders including observation tool for classroom observation will be developed. In-country visits to schools outside of the capital is required based on the request by the ministries. After the data collection in the field, a brief report of the findings will be presented together with the raw data and preliminary recommendations.

**3. Draft Report and individual country briefs (findings and recommendations)**

The full draft report as well as individual country briefs for the two countries to be disseminated for feedback. Consideration of remote joint meeting or at least national level presentations to encourage feedback.

**4. Final Report and Country briefings validated and submitted**

Feedback to draft report and country briefs completed and shared back for validation (remote) by relevant stakeholders. Finalisation and submission of final report and country briefs.

**5. Cross country learning and sharing**

Hosted virtual meeting of all countries engaged in the research to share findings and recommendations and discuss possible next steps.

The below outline particular areas of interest of each country to be taken into account in the desk review and stakeholder engagement and development of country briefing papers.

**For RMI**

Based on the findings of an Education Sector Analysis currently underway, undertake further work to expand and respond to initial findings, including but not limited to:

- Linkages to the learning outcomes and the current curriculum, including classroom delivery, use of summative and formative assessment tools, including Year 8 and above
- Understanding the use of language in the classrooms and its links to the teaching practices

**For FSM**

- Mapping interventions on educational programmes related to teachers’ professional development and understanding the linkages and trends with the learning outcomes
- Understanding the uptake of the different educational programmes by the teachers and school leaders on their teaching practices

**For Kiribati**

- Identifying the foundational learning needs (focusing on literacy, numeracy and socio emotional development/Pacific-all life skills) for Years 1 to 3 students in the country to support the review of the existing curriculum.
- Mapping of past and existing programmes, studies, teaching and learning resources targeted for Years 1 to 3 including the regional and national assessment to understand the key areas for review for the national curriculum.

**ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES, PLUS PAYMENT SCHEDULE PER DELIVERABLE**

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLES	ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE	PAYMENT (%)
1. Desk Review and Inception	Desk Review and Inception report		
2. Stakeholder consultation and field work	Data collection tools, data, field report		
3. Drafting of overall report and country briefing papers	Draft report and country briefs		
4. Validation with countries, integration of feedback.	Updated draft report and country briefs		
5. Finalisation of reports and country briefs post validation activity with each country.	Final report and country briefs		
			<i>TOTAL 100%</i>

**QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES**

Bachelors  Masters  PhD  Other

*Provide details of the expected educational qualifications.*

Master’s degree in social sciences, education, psychology or other relevant field

- At least 7 years of demonstrated experience in education, social science, learning outcomes/assessments Proven experience in the analysis of learning outcomes data and research
- Strong writing and analytical skills and report writing experience, including the development of user-friendly syntheses.
- Proven ability to work with a team, including government and non-government bodies, and facilitate consultations with a high degree of stakeholder participation.
- Previous relevant work experience in Pacific contexts will be well regarded.
- Experience in working with UNICEF, other UN agency or regional organization preferred.
- Excellent spoken and written English language skills.
- Excellent presentation and facilitation skills for a variety of audiences.

#### **CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION**

The consultant will be supervised on a day-to-day basis by the UNICEF Education Specialist in the Suva MCP office in coordination with the Education Specialist from the relevant Field Offices (North Pacific) in coordination with relevant department staff and team of the different Ministry of Education. Final approval of deliverables for payment will be done by the UNICEF Education Specialist in consultation with the Pacific Chief of Education.

The consultant is expected to travel to the country for in-person work (estimated 14 days respectively in Kiribati, FSM and RMI ). Travel is expected to be coordinated between countries with linking flights for efficiency. When working remotely, the consultant is expected to be available for discussions as required during working hours in the countries (Fiji, Kiribati, FSM, RMI). All costs associated with the travel are to be included in the total contract value, including travel outside of the capital in the selected countries.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures. They 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 candidate is solely responsible for ensuring 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 candidates 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. It 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 during your assignment.

- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- Consultant will be required to complete mandatory online courses (e.g. Ethics, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Security) upon receipt of offer and before the signature of contract.

#### GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

- This consultant is for individual consultants only. Candidates are requested to submit a brief technical proposal and CV.
- Candidates are asked to submit a **separate financial offer** along with their application. The financial proposal should be a **lump sum amount for all the deliverables** and should show a breakdown for the following as applicable:
  - Monthly / Daily fees: based on the deliverables in the Terms of Reference above
  - Travel: economy air ticket where applicable to take up assignment and field mission travel
  - Living allowance: where travel is required
  - Miscellaneous: to cover visa, health insurance (including medical evacuation for international consultants), travel insurance, communications, and other costs