

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

Title: Development of a school-based disaster risk and resiliency preparedness strategy, early warning system and guidelines	Funding Code: Grant: WBS:	Type of Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant (International) <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant (National)	Duty Station: Hybrid
<p>Background:</p> <p>The climate crisis poses a formidable threat to children's rights in Sierra Leone, with rising temperatures, intensified rainfall, increasing sea levels, and recurrent droughts and water scarcity becoming more common. Regrettably, educational systems have been slow to adapt to these challenges. Many classrooms lack the necessary resources to withstand extreme weather conditions, and there is a glaring absence of disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies within the education system.</p> <p>The repercussions of the climate crisis, particularly for vulnerable groups like girls, are profound. According to UNICEF's global 2021 Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI), children in Sierra Leone face an 'extremely high risk' of being affected by climate change impacts. Those categorized in the 'extremely high risk' category face multiple climate and environmental shocks, compounded by low primary school completion rates and basic reading skills. Urgent action is imperative to safeguard the survival and livelihoods of children, young people, and their communities.</p> <p>In response to these challenges, UNICEF in Sierra Leone is actively working to enhance the disaster risk reduction and resilience of the education system. Recognizing the pivotal role of education in addressing climate change, UNICEF is collaborating with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) to develop emergency-responsive and climate-resilient education sector plans. These plans aim to establish standards and strategies for ensuring the safety of school facilities and learning environments, implementing disaster risk reduction measures in schools, and protecting children from violence and abuse in and around schools.</p> <p>Globally, partnerships such as UN-Water, comprising 30 United Nations organizations addressing water-related challenges, and the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES), are pivotal in advancing school safety. Aligned with the sustainability climate action plan (2023) objective of protecting the lives, health, and well-being of children and their communities, the CCSP 2023 aspires to ensure safe school facilities and learning environments, disaster risk reduction in schools, and protection from violence and abuse in and around schools.</p> <p>Disaster risk reduction and resilience of the education system play a crucial role in preparing young people for the challenges of climate change. This approach involves strengthening school systems to withstand climate-related hazards and integrating disaster risk reduction measures into education policies and practices. It also entails empowering children and young people with the knowledge and skills to cope with disasters and contribute to building resilient communities.</p> <p>To support these efforts, UNICEF will collaborate with government partners, other UN agencies, and a network of key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plan for the education sector, inclusive of early warning systems and</p>			

resilience-building measures. The consultant will provide technical expertise and leadership of a stakeholder committee to guide the development of the strategy.

Purpose and Objectives:

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide technical leadership to a committee which will comprise of key stakeholders from MBSSE, the Office of National Security/Disaster Management Department, other relevant ministries, UN agencies, children, youth advocates and climate activists, and CSOs (NGOs/INGOs) to develop a school-based disaster risk and resiliency preparedness strategy, early warning system and implementation guidelines.

Additionally, this consultancy will complement the ongoing effort to integrate climate change and environmental education curriculum standards into the education system. By collaborating closely with the aforementioned committee, the consultant will ensure that the disaster risk reduction strategy aligns with the broader goals of climate-smart education. This integrated approach will empower children and young people to understand and address the challenges of climate change, contributing to a sustainable and resilient future for Sierra Leone.

The consultant will work under the supervision of the UNICEF Education Specialist, System Strengthening, and in close collaboration with the committee. Through a participatory process, the consultant will leverage technical expertise to guide the development of the disaster risk reduction strategy and early warning system, ensuring that they are contextually relevant and responsive to the needs of children and communities in Sierra Leone.

Methodology and Technical Approach:

Through remote and face-to-face consultations/workshops with key national, district and school-community stakeholders and the committee the consultant will deliver the tasks listed below.

Specific Tasks

- Conduct a desk review of relevant national policies, strategies, and documents related to DRR and early warning systems in Sierra Leone, including in the education sector. In addition, identify regional best practices.
- Conduct interviews/focus group discussion with relevant national, district and school-community stakeholders, including teachers', parents, children, and youth to gather information and perspectives on DRR plans in education.
- From the desk review and stakeholders' consultations' findings, to develop a comprehensive report on strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and opportunities of DRR and early warning system policies and practices in education.
- From the desk review and stakeholders' consultations' findings, develop a school-based disaster risk and resiliency preparedness strategy, early warning system and implementation guidelines.
- In coordination with UNICEF, MBSSE, the Office of National Security/Disaster Management Department, district and school-community stakeholders to pilot the DRR guidelines and early warning system and to document findings.
- To finalize the DRR and early warning strategy, guidelines and tools.

Management, Organization and Timeframe:

The Consultant will work under the overall guidance and oversight the UNICEF Education Specialist, System Strengthening and support from UNICEF Emergency Specialist. In delivering the tasks, she/he will work in close coordination with Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, the Office of National Security/Disaster Management Department, and other relevant national stakeholders. The consultant will operate from home with travels to Sierra Leone as

required (at least two travels). The need for travel in the field will be discussed with the Consultant at the inception of the work.

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:

The number of field visits and hrs needed to conduct focus group discussions with children and parents will be determined at the inception of the consultancy. Note that the consultant will be supported by UNICEF staff in conducting the focus group discussion.

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 Assignment Overview			
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline: 8 months	Payment schedule: Payment on acceptance of deliverables
Start date of consultancy		1 st June 2024	
Submit inception report/ detail work plan and road map	Inception report outlining the methodology and work plan for the consultancy	15 days from signing of contract	35%
Conduct a desk review of relevant national policies, strategies, and documents related to DRR and early warning system in education in Sierra Leone.	Desk review report detailing the findings of the desk review of national policies, strategies, and documents related to DRR and early warning system in education in Sierra Leone.	End of 1 month	
Conduct interviews/focus group discussion with relevant national, district and school-community stakeholders, including teachers', parents, children, and youth to gather information and perspectives on DRR plans in education.	Qualitative report outlining finding from the consultations on Disaster Risk Reduction plans in education system, detailing perspectives and aspirations.	End of 2 months	
From the desk review and stakeholders' consultations' findings, to develop a comprehensive report on strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and opportunities of DRR and early warning system policies and practices in education.	A comprehensive report and pitch deck on strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and opportunities of DRR and early warning system policies and practices in education.	End of 2.5 months	35%
From the desk review and stakeholders' consultations' findings, develop a school-based disaster risk and resiliency preparedness strategy, early warning system and implementation guidelines.	Draft school-based disaster risk and resiliency preparedness strategy, early warning system and implementation guidelines.	End of 3.5months	

In coordination with UNICEF, MBSSE, district and school-community stakeholders to pilot the DRR guidelines and early warning system and to document findings.	Identify implementing partner to pilot the DRR guidelines and early warning system in selected districts and report findings.	End of 5 months	30%
To finalize the DRR and early warning strategy, guidelines, and tools.	Final DRR and early warning strategy, guidelines, and tools.	End of 6 months	

* **Expected timelines for completion are estimated and may vary depending on progress**

Budget Year: 2024	Requesting Section/Issuing Office: Education UNICEF Sierra Leone	Reasons why work cannot be done by staff: The role requires significant and specific technical capacity and expertise on disaster risk reduction and early warning system in education. The consultant will develop a school-based disaster risk and resiliency preparedness strategy, early warning system and implementation guidelines based on this technical expertise.	
Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Consultant Sourcing: <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both Consultant Selection Method: <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)		Request for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Consultancy <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment	
If Extension, Justification for extension: N/A			
Supervisor: Education Specialist, System Strengthening	Start Date: 1 st June 2024	End Date: 30 November 2024	Number of (working) Days/Months: 132 days

Estimated Consultancy Fee			
DSA for 40 days (when consultant should be in Freetown at different times)			
Travel International			
Travel Local (please include travel plan)			
Residency Permit Costs			
DSA			
Total Estimated Consultancy Costsⁱ			
<p>Minimum Qualifications required:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>Enter Disciplines:</p> <p>Enter Disciplines – Climate Change; Environmental Science; Environmental Education; Science Education or another related field.</p>	<p>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 8 years of experience in environmental science and/or environmental education • A minimum of 5 years of experience advising government and other education stakeholders on DRR, climate change adaptation, and education issues, preferably in Sierra Leone or similar contexts. • At least 5 years of experience translating environmental science into practical and actionable policy documents for education stakeholders and policy makers. • Demonstrated expertise in policy analysis, research, and report writing. • Strong understanding of the education sector and its role in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse stakeholders. • Strong knowledge of the Sierra Leone (or at least other developing countries) context and understanding of international development issues, including the status of the humanitarian-development nexus nationally and at the state level in Sierra Leone, particularly as it relates to education for girls and marginalized populations. • Strong working knowledge of Sierra Leone education and climate change. <p><u>Other skills and attributes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience working in Sierra Leone, West and Central Africa region, or other similar development contexts. • A good understanding of UNICEF's programmatic areas, namely Education (especially Education in Emergencies) and Climate Change 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and oral communication skills, with experience translating evidence for and communicating with a broad range of actors (including government and children/young people) on various issues including sensitive ones.. • Ability to present ideas concisely for diverse audiences and to give practical, actionable advice grounded in evidence. <p><u>Language requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in English is required.
Administrative details: Visa assistance required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation arranged by the office: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office Based: If office based, seating arrangement identified: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IT and Communication equipment required: <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Request Authorised by Section Head	Request Verified by HR:
<div> <div> <i>Endorsed by Deputy Representative Programme</i> <hr/> </div> <div> <i>Approved by OiC, Representative</i> <hr/> </div> </div>	

ⁱ 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 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 selected candidate 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 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 afterwards in your assignment.