

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

(Title) Consultant to support Ministry of Education with research to investigate challenges and solutions for strengthening Numeracy competencies for Teachers and Learners in Zambian primary schools.	Funding Code/WBS: SC SC229904 WBS 44980/A0/06/400/002/005	Type of engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Part-Time <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Full-Time	Duty Station: Lusaka, Zambia
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Purpose of the Assignment:

Consultancy to support the Ministry of Education (MoE) to conduct research to investigate challenges and solutions for improving Numeracy competences for grade 3 and 5 Teachers and Learners in Zambian primary schools.

Background

Zambia is a signatory to the United Nations Declaration of Universal Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in which Education is a human right for all children. To this end, the education sector has been actualizing the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4): *Ensuring inclusive, equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all* following its adoption in 2015. The Government of the Republic of Zambia is committed to provide accessible, equitable, quality, and inclusive education to all learners. To this regard, Zambia has achieved near universal primary school completion levels with national statistics indicating a completion rate of 86.7 per cent at Grade 7 (ESB 2020).

In general, learning outcomes for a majority of learners at primary level in all learning areas has not been desirable. The 2021 National Assessment results revealed a stagnation in learner performance and not better than that of the previous surveys. For instance, the mean score in Mathematics for grade 5 learners was at 31.07 percent in 2021 compared to 36.98 percent in 2016, indicating a drop of almost 6 percentage points. Further analysis showed that only 5.4 percent of the learners reached the desirable level of performance, 74.8 percent reached the minimum level, and 19.7 percent were below the minimum level of performance.

The 2021 National Assessment Survey further revealed that learners still experienced problems on items that involved comprehension skills, interpretation of terms and spatial abilities. Symbolic questions such as those that dealt with shapes and diagrams also presented problems. Additionally, questions that were concerned with mathematical terms such as *'difference or product of numbers'* continued to pose a challenge to the learners. Further, conversions to other units also posed problems to the learners, for example, calculating the number of seconds in a number of minutes or halves in a number.

Objectives of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to support the Ministry of Education to:

- a) Examine: 1) current teacher pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in contributing to the enhancement of students' operational skills and conceptual understanding of numeracy, 2) materials/resources available for the teachers that are necessary for their effective lesson preparation and delivery; 3) status of the pre-service and in-service trainings (CPD), mentoring support that teachers have received and academic qualifications; and 5) challenges of students in gaining the mathematical concepts
- b) Evaluate the effectiveness and potential gaps of the Numeracy framework policies in supporting numeracy teaching in primary schools.
- c) Present the major study findings to key stakeholders in a consultation workshop to agree on the required course of actions with timeframe.

Description of the Assignment

The assignment requires that the Consultant is engaged to work with key Ministry of Education staff at national, provincial, district, and school level. The Ministry of Education Directorates will include Planning, Teacher Education and Specialized Services, Standards, Curriculum, and Primary Education. The consultant will also engage with various stakeholders including partners that are supporting MoE in the implementation of numeracy, this includes Colleges of Education

The consultancy will be undertaken in a phased manner as follows:

Phase 1 - Review of key documents on: 1) national policies/guidelines/curriculum documents (incl. teacher training curriculum) as they relate to quality education, teacher capacity development, numeracy pedagogy, challenges in numeracy learning at primary school level in Zambia; 2) international best practices, especially from those that share the similar demographic context with Zambia.

- The Consultant will conduct a comprehensive literature review of existing documents and guidelines on numeracy teaching.

Phase 2: Based on the results from the desk review, draft an inception report, summarizing the findings and proposing the data collection methods., and conduct a consultation workshop with the participation of key stakeholders to present these for their finalization, while also developing data collection schedule and tools.

- Draft an inception report, summarizing the findings, recommendations and proposing the data collection approach and methods, and present these in a consultation workshop with the stakeholders and jointly finalize the inception report contents.
- Develop tools for both quantitative and qualitative data collections, data collection schedule and finalize them after the consultation with the MoE.
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Phase 3 - Train the data collectors on the data collection tool and methodologies and undertake data collection and produce a report that will reflect information on challenges and recommendations for improving Numeracy competences for teachers and learners in Zambian primary schools at school, colleges of education, district, provincial and national levels, and document good practices, gaps/challenges and opportunities.

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- The Consultant will assist MoE to come up with recommendations to sustain the good practices and actionable ways to address the gaps/challenges.
- The research will consider in-depth interviews with MoE HQ, Provincial and District officials, School administration, teachers and learners

- The research will also conduct numeracy lesson observations as well as interviews (including individual and FGDs) at schools, colleges of education and SPRINT meetings focused on numeracy as a critical part of the analysis.
- Draft a report with the summary of inception report together with the findings from the data collection/analysis as well as the proposed recommendations.

Phase 4: Present the major study findings to key stakeholders in a consultation workshop to agree on the required course of actions with timeframe.

- Develop a consultation workshop agenda and finalize it together with the list of participants in consultation with the MoE. Together with the MoE, facilitate the workshop, while making presentation of the key findings, coming up key actions to be undertaken with a timeframe.

Reflecting the things discussed and agreed in the consultation workshop, prepare and submit a final report to UNICEF for feedbacks/inputs for its finalization.

Population and sampling methods

Overall, the research will be conducted in 5 provinces and will cover 15 government primary schools, 5 colleges of education, MoE HQ staff, 5 Provincial Education Offices, 10 District Education Boards (urban and rural), teachers and learners in grade 3 to 5. Stratified sampling will be utilized to select schools, considering the diversity of the characteristics of the schools (urban and rural parameters will need to be taken into consideration). However, the external research consultant is encouraged to propose the sampling sizes, methods and approaches that are deemed appropriate for this research.

The individual consultant will be required to use statistical software for analysis of both qualitative and quantitative information. Data collected through classroom observations and interviews will also be analysed using coding and categorization of the observations and perspectives into themes. Analysis of the data will be conducted by the research consultancy firm through close consultation with UNICEF and MoE. Triangulation of the data will be done through comparing data on practices and perceptions among various levels of education stakeholders (from MoE to school-level) and to the classroom observations. The research consultant will ensure regular meetings are held between UNICEF and MoE to update the progress of the research and consult key areas of the research. Review meetings of the assessment results will be organized by the consultant. Key findings and practical recommendations will be shared in a reader-friendly manner to stakeholders.

Applicants for the consultancy should provide an all-inclusive budget proposal, which includes the estimated costs of travelling to five provinces. As the work requires engaging various stakeholders, the consultant should prepare a budget that would include travel to two districts in all five. Selection of districts should consider various aspects such as urban and rural. Risks related to travel restrictions that might arise due to any epidemic (Covid – 19, Cholera etc.) shall be borne by the consultant, who will be expected to work with UNICEF on finding flexible ways to navigate any travel restrictions and adhere to safety measures. UNICEF will not provide logistical support to the field missions.

Ethical Considerations

The consultant will be required to consider all ethical considerations related to this research, including the practice of obtaining the consent of all research participants and ensuring the protection of children engaged in the research. The consultant will also need to get clearance and approval from the local institutional review board (IRB) on all protocols to be used. The firm must respect the principles below:

- *Anonymity and confidentiality.* The survey must respect the rights of those providing information, guaranteeing their anonymity and confidentiality.
- *Responsibility.* The report must state any conflicts or differences of opinion that may have arisen between the consultants and the heads of the departments concerning the conclusions and/or recommendations of the study. The whole team must confirm the results presented, and any disagreements must be indicated.

- *Integrity.* The consultant should highlight the questions that are not expressly mentioned in the TOR to obtain a more complete analysis of the information requested.
- *Independence.* The consultant must ensure s/he remains independent of the program under review and must not be associated with its management or any element thereof.
- *Incidents.* If any problems arise during fieldwork, or at any other time during the survey, they should be reported immediately to the direct supervisors and the primary study consultant. If this is not done, the existence of such problems can in no way be used to justify the impossibility of obtaining the results envisaged by UNICEF in these terms of reference.
- *Validation of information.* The consultant must guarantee the accuracy of the information collected.
- *Intellectual property.* In using the various sources of information, the consultant must respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities examined.

UNICEF has a Zero Tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse; and prohibits any conduct that undermines the protection and safeguarding of children. It is therefore required that all individuals working under this consultancy should undertake the Online Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) training offered on the UNICEF learning platform AGORA (ref. <https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=7380>). A certificate of completion issued on the Agora platform will be required as proof. Kindly review attached UNICEF list of prohibited behaviour with regards to child safeguarding.

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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 consultant will conduct classroom observations in order to ascertain the teaching of numeracy by teachers. The consultant will also check on available teaching and learning materials. The consultant will further have FGDs with learners to get their views on numeracy teaching and learning. The consultant will be accompanied by a school official during his work in the schools and will at no time be left alone unsupervised with children. Field data collection will be under 21 days.

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](#)

Budget Year: 2024	Requesting Section / Issuing office: Education/Zambia	Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff: The research requires specific technical expertise to investigate challenges and solutions for strengthening Numeracy competencies for Teachers in Zambian primary schools, which is not available within the section.	
Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No. If no, please justify:			
Consultant sourcing: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both		Request for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New SSA – Individual Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment	
Consultant selection method: <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)			
If Extension, Justification for extension:			
Supervisor Misheck Mwanza	Start Date: 27 th May 2024	End Date: 30 September 2024	Number of Days (working) 168 days (4 months – 15 days per month)
Work Assignment Overview:			
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline	Budget
Produce an Inception Report and Workplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of key documents, draft and present an inception report and workplan. Revise and finalize the Inception Report based on comments from MoE and other stakeholders. 	Draft Inception report, presentation, and workplan Approved Inception Report detailing the approach, deliverables, and timelines. Field data collection tools (lesson observation sheet, interview sheets, etc.) and assessment tools	May 2024	15%
Develop data collection tools and collect data.	Finalized data collection tools, data collectors trained and data collection report, transcripts/translations and audios of all qualitative interviews and focus groups discussions	May and June 2024	30%
Conduct data cleaning, analyse/interpretation, and produce a draft report on the research on numeracy in primary schools	Submission of draft report on findings on the research on numeracy in primary schools	June and July 2024	20%

<p>Conduct validation meeting of results and submit a final report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a mix of face to face HQ/provincial and virtual (<i>with district teams</i>) validation workshop with key stakeholders to disseminate research findings to validate the findings and brainstorm potential recommendations. Production of final research report and recommendations. Presentation of the findings to the senior management of MoE (Minister, PSs, Directors) 	<p>Validation workshop report.</p> <p>Submission of final research report with all products (desk review, data sets, findings, recommendations)</p>	<p>August 2024</p> <p>August and September 2024</p>	<p>35%</p>
<p>Travel International (if applicable)</p>	<p>One economy class return</p>		<p>NA</p>
<p>Travel Local (please include travel plan)</p>	<p>Yes, consultant is expected to travel to select districts to be determined agreed by MoE and UNICEF.</p>		<p>Luapula, Northwestern, Lusaka, Central and Southern provinces</p>
<p>DSA (if applicable)</p>			<p>All inclusive</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines: Enter Disciplines Education, development, or other relevant social sciences</p>	<p>Minimum Qualifications required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Master's Degree in Education, or any relevant social science with a minimum of 10 years' experience in Education. Experience in policy review or development will be an added advantage. In the absence of a master's degree, a university degree in education with 15 years of relevant experience will be considered. Experience in development of strategic documents and good understanding of numeracy teaching will be an asset. Familiarity with the Zambia education landscape and its policies. Excellent verbal, writing and analytical skills, and the ability to synthesize large and diverse sources of information. Have a good working knowledge of computers and proficient in word processing High level proficiency in standard computer software Microsoft word and Excel. Excellent English skills 		
<p>Administrative details: Visa assistance required: <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Transportation arranged by the office: <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based: If office based, seating arrangement identified: <input type="checkbox"/> IT and Communication equipment required: <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access required: <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

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

Text to be added to all TORs:

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.

